

The Workers' Advocate

Supplement



50¢

vol. 4 #4

VOICE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA

April 15, 1988

What did Nicaragua get from the Sandinista-contra pact?

The Sandinista-contra pact was signed on March 23. (See pages 7-8 for the text of this pact.) It represents the highest product of the Arias peace plan.

Big concessions

The Sandinista government gave up big concessions to get this pact. They agreed to negotiate directly with the contras, something they had always refused. They legitimized the contras as a force that should help determine Nicaragua's political and social life. They agreed to making internal changes to allow the contras political room in Nicaragua.

The contras are to be given full political rights. And all contras without exception are to be forgiven for any "political-military acts they have carried out", such as burning down collective farms, assassinating government officials, running drugs to finance their operations, etc.

The pact presents the established church as a neutral force and whitewashes its constant counterrevolutionary acts. It promotes arch-reactionary Cardinal Obando y Bravo as a neutral force, suitable to be a witness for the pact and a judge of who is satisfying it. It backs up the Arias plan sort of "democracy" in Nicaragua. According to the Arias plan, press freedom is when the foreign capitalists and the CIA can flood Nicaragua with reactionary newspapers, radio stations and TV coverage.

Nicaragua had to agree to allow "humanitarian" funding of the contras.

Nicaragua has to implement various of these concessions before a final cease-fire is arranged and before any contra disarms. The Sandinistas have already released 100 prisoners under the plan.

And what did the Sandinistas get for their concession?

Only Nicaragua is bound to anything

This pact reaffirms, in essence, that all the provisions of the Arias pact are binding on Nicaragua, and only on Nicaragua. Nicaragua is to

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PROTESTERS DENOUNCE COVER UP IN RACIST ABDUCTION OF TAWANA BRAWLEY

Protests continued through March demanding justice for Tawana Brawley. In New York City 300 people marched from Columbus Circle to the Times Square Armed Forces Recruiting Center on March 11. And on March 17, 300 people held a protest meeting at a Brooklyn church. About 400 people marched in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. on March 20. And 200 people picketed outside the Poughkeepsie Armory March 22 and 23 to denounce the cover-up underway with the opening of another grand jury in the case.

The protesters are enraged at the whitewash of the racist attack on Tawana Brawley that has been conducted by the Dutchess County officials and by N.Y. Governor Cuomo's special prosecutor, Robert Abrams.

Brawley is a black teenager, just turned 16. Last November her family reported she was missing. But the police refused to investigate. After four days she was discovered wrapped in a plastic bag, with "KKK" and "nigger" scrawled across her body in charcoal. Feces were smeared on her face, and her hair had been partially chopped off. She reported to her family and investigators that

she had been kidnapped and repeatedly raped and sodomized by about six white men, one of whom displayed a badge. While being questioned by local investigators hours after she was found, Brawley identified one of the officers in the room as one of her attackers.

That was four months ago.. Several investigations ago. Two grand juries ago. And not one arrest has been made. In fact, it appears the authorities don't even have suspects. Why? Why?

The authorities claim that it is because Brawley, on the advice of her lawyers, has refused to cooperate. But this is a lie. With the information she's already given and the numerous other leads that have come to light, the investigators could easily find the culprits. The real issue is that the government officials don't seem to be looking for the racists. Instead, they've been investigating Brawley and her family, trying to dig up any dirt that might discredit Tawana's story or blame family members for her disappearance.

Dutchess County is notorious for racism. But Governor Cuomo was reluctant to take the case out of the county officials' hands. Only after numerous mass protests did Cuomo appoint Abrams as a special prosecutor. But Abrams and his investigators also seem to be struck with disbelief. Instead of arresting the racists, they have busied themselves "leaking" mud on Tawana to the media.

None of these government officials can be trusted. Remember that the authorities also originally claimed there was no evidence of a racist attack in Howard Beach last year and tried to blame the victims. Only the anti-racist protests forced out the truth. Justice for Tawana Brawley can only be won by building up the mass anti-racist movement. <>

The Workers' Advocate



Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the
Central Committee of the
Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

Rates: 75¢ for single copy; \$4.50 for 6 issues; \$9 for 12 issues by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).

From distributor: 25¢ ISSN 0276-363X

The Workers' Advocate Supplement



Rates: \$1 for single copy; \$12 for one year by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).

From distributor: 50¢ ISSN 0882-6366

LETTERS: The Workers' Advocate or The Supplement
P.O. Box 11942 Ontario St. Stn. Chicago, IL 60611

ORDERS: Marxist-Leninist Publications
P.O. Box 11972 Ontario St. Stn. Chicago, IL 60611

A modern odyssey:
FROM
NO CONTRA AID
TO
"BENEFITTING BOTH SIDES OF THE CONFLICT"

On March 30 the House of Representatives approved a big contra aid bill. The Chicago section of "Pledge of Resistance" put out a leaflet for a demonstration on Friday, April 1 against this bill. What demands did they put forward?

The top of the leaflet reads **"Humanitarian' contra aid means more bloodshed"**. One might think from this that Pledge of Resistance was opposed to all contra aid, "humanitarian" or not. Indeed, near the bottom of the leaflet it states "Stop contra aid" next to a graphic of contras burning down a village.

But underneath the headline, the leaflet continues: **"Flawed plan dashes peace effort in Nicaragua."** It turns out that the leaflet supports humanitarian aid to the contras, but only opposes the House bill as being only so-called humanitarian aid, rather than real humanitarian aid.

According to the leaflet **"true humanitarian aid would benefit both sides of the conflict"**. One might think that to be a true humanitarian one would have to help the anti-contra fighters and the many victims of CIA-contra atrocities. But it seems that humanitarians now have to benefit both sides. That is, they have to benefit the contras too. How low can you go?

The leaflet goes on to glorify the Arias plan and the Sandinista-contra agreement of March 23. It says that **"Approval of this recent aid package represents one more example of the U.S. government's outright defiance of Central Americans' efforts to settle their conflicts among themselves without U.S. interference."**

Really? Can Pledge of Resistance really regard the Sandinista-contra agreement of March 23 as an example of "Central Americans' efforts to settle their conflicts among themselves without U.S. interference"? Can recognizing the CIA-paid and organized contras as a legitimate political force in determining Nicaragua's destiny be regarded as excluding U.S. interference?

Or perhaps Pledge of Resistance regards the Arias plan as an example of Central Americans working by themselves? In carrying out this plan, Arias and company shuttled to Washington D.C. to discuss each step of this plan. And the pro-U.S. Costa Rican, Honduran, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran regimes live on American dollars and

are propped up by American bayonets. They jointly wiped out even the facade of independent verification of the Arias plan and simply handed everything over to Congress. And this is supposedly an example of Central American self-determination.

Besides, in supporting aid that "would benefit both sides of the conflict", Pledge of Resistance is supporting further interference by Congress and the White House in Nicaragua. They are painting a picture where U.S. interference would provide a benevolent flow of dollars to support the Nicaraguan revolution.

Why do Congress and the White House support the contras anyway? The Pledge leaflet lists some facts about the evil nature of the present "humanitarian" aid and it points to the Reagan administration trying to expand the economic embargo against Nicaragua. **But it never labels this imperialist or gives any explanation whatsoever.** It presents matters at random, as if these facts come from nowhere. And presumably they could be replaced by other random events, such as the same U.S. government that overwhelmingly funds the attempt to strangle the Nicaraguan revolution simply deciding overnight to become true humanitarians benefitting the people of Nicaragua.

Indeed, the Seattle section of Pledge of Resistance attended a press conference to support the Democratic Party's humanitarian contra aid bill that was defeated on March 3. By reducing the movement to squabbling over different humanitarian aid bills, the entire force is removed from the movement. It becomes a plaything in the hands of the Democratic Party liberals.

Pledge's Chicago leaflet on the March 30 contra aid bill opens the way for supporting further humanitarian aid bills. It states that **"Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega has welcomed U.S. aid that would alleviate the suffering of Nicaraguans on both sides of the conflict..."** And indeed, in signing first the Arias Pact and then the March 23 pact with the contras, the Sandinista government endorsed the humanitarian contra aid provided for by these agreements. But just because the Sandinistas have illusions in the U.S. government, it doesn't mean that the solidarity movement with the Nicaraguan toilers should. Just because the Sandinista government is

demobilizing the workers and peasants and relying on subsidies to the Nicaraguan capitalists and deals with Western imperialism, doesn't mean that the solidarity movement should abandon support for the Nicaraguan toilers and their struggle.

No real movement can be built up on the basis of believing that U.S. aggression is simply an accident that can as easily be replaced by a humanitarian flow of dollars. It would be a crime for the solidarity movement to support the Congressional plan to undermine the Nicaraguan revo-

lution through concessions extracted from the Sandinista government. It would be a crime to lie to the masses about what most Democratic Party congressmen openly say is the aim of the Arias plan. Not a penny for benefitting the contras! Not a penny for "humanitarian" contra aid! No support for imperialist dictation to Nicaragua through the Arias plan! Down with all attempts to strangle the revolution, whether from the White House or Congress, whether from the capitalist liberals or the capitalist conservatives! <>

LIBERALS FOR AID TO THE CONTRAS

Excerpted from a March 5 leaflet by the Seattle Branch of the MLP:

For the past two weeks the Democratic Party leadership in the U.S. House has been trying to pass a bill to aid the contra mercenaries. Previously, most Democratic liberals pretended to oppose aid to the contras. But now, many of them, including Seattle's own rep. Mike Lowry, have begun to support contra aid directly. This is yet more proof that the Democratic Party fully agrees with Reagan's war on Nicaragua.

Although the bill failed to pass on Thursday, March 3rd [House Democrats and Republicans united to pass an even bigger contra aid bill on March 30], it has caused a **crisis** among the many anti-intervention organizations that take their cues from the Democratic Party and in particular from Lowry. Several of these groups jumped out in support of Lowry's contra-aid bill. **This is treachery pure and simple. ...**

Arias "peace" plan OKs contra aid

Lowry stated that his bill is a "positive package that really helps the peace process." And it is true that the Arias Pact allows "humanitarian aid" to the contras. **Aid to the contras necessarily follows from support for the Arias Pact.** This does not show the virtue of contra aid, but is one more proof that this "peace" plan has been used as a simple tool of blackmail against Nicaragua. The blackmail goes like this: "Let the pro-contra capitalists publish a newspaper, or

we will vote more contra aid." "Give them back Radio Catolica or you will be labeled a violator of the Pact." ["Sign a pact with the contras, or we will vote more contra aid." And finally, after the March 23 Sandinista-contra pact, the Sandinistas got their reward. The Democratic House leadership stated that since the pact was signed, it was especially important to immediately vote yet more contra aid.] ...

How can Lowry say that aid to the mercenaries is necessary for the peace process? Is Nicaragua doing anything at all to cause or continue the war? Before the Arias Pact, everyone thought the U.S. government was causing the war. Reagan was feeling some heat from the contragate scandal. But the Arias Pact has recast all this. Now the microscopes are all trained on Nicaragua's alleged violations of democracy -- which boil down to failing to let the contras run the country! And Lowry agrees with this Reagan-Arias blackmail. ...

Lowry shaves his beard and dons a three-piece suit

Some people are shocked that Lowry and other liberals are openly supporting the contras. We aren't. Lowry has been a fairly typical, token left-liberal that one finds in the House of Representatives. He would talk about Reagan's policy on this or that issue, act indignant, vote against Reagan's bills, and watch as all these measures were passed into law, with the help of the votes of other, more moderate Democrats. The Democratic Party for decades has had a division of labor whereby a few left-liberal clowns like

Lowry, or Ron Dellums, or Pat Schroeder can mouth off impotently in the House of representatives. But now, Lowry wants retiring Senator Evans' seat. Lowry is tired of being the impotent liberal clown in the House. Now he wants to be a more serious, moderate, Pompous Senator.

The left-liberal tokens in the House are used by the Democratic Party to give them credence among the credulous in such places as the anti-war mass movements. Dangling such icons in front of these movements, various "grass roots leaders" then shout: "see, if we just write enough letters to our other Congressmen, then Congress will really represent the people and ban contra aid." Instead of building a militant movement against Congress, against the rich, they strive to maintain a timid, servile movement -- begging at the knees of the corrupt politicians; always preventing any expression of anti-imperialism, any expression of righteous hatred for the crimes of the U.S. government; any utilization of angry, bold tactics; any expression of real support to the revolutionary struggles in the countries victimized by the U.S. "After all, this would not go over well with the 'swing votes' we are trying to woo." In short, the Lowry-type Democrats are crucial for the misleadership of the mass movement.

Now Lowry wants to play a different role in the overall scheme of imperialist politics, and he must convince the establishment of his new-found 'moderation' and 'pragmatism'. But he is also twisting arms to try to keep his campaign staff from the anti-war movement from jumping ship.

...and the opportunists squirm

The reformist leaders in the movement find themselves in an uncomfortable position right now. Lowry has been pressuring them hard to support his contra aid bill. And while they are for the Arias Peace Blackmail, they aren't sure they want to go straight to hell, supporting the contras outright. To do so leaves them in the unenviable position of being pro-contra aid while trying to maintain the fiction of being the leaders of an anti-contra aid movement. You can almost see the sweat on their collective brow.

The Central American Peace Campaign (CAPC), which seems to be little more than an office for Lowry, has been twisting and turning. Spokeswoman Beth Brunton said, "Mike did the best he could...If you have one fight...you wouldn't necessarily get a divorce." (*Seattle Times*, Feb. 24) Apparently this display of a speck of independence did not go over well with Lowry. After further meetings with his staff, CAPC President Duncan Hanson stated: "We feel, although we oppose all contra aid, that it's necessary to support this

humanitarian aid." (*Seattle Times*, March 1) Now that's proper groveling for you.

CAPC is part of the Emergency Coalition Against Contra Aid (ECACA). At its Feb. 25th meeting, ECACA's steering committee was stridently in support of Lowry's contra aid bill. And although it has yet to win over a majority of the coalition, it apparently continues to try. The *Seattle Times* of Feb. 26th reported: "Craig Schwartz, a Seattle lawyer and coordinator of an anti-contra aid coalition, said Lowry appears to have 'rolled up his sleeves' and crafted a pragmatic compromise. 'It sends some pretty good signals down there -- like \$14 million in aid to children who are victims of a U.S.-sponsored war.'" ...

The pro-contra aid stands aren't all bad. They help reveal, without a doubt, that rot has spread very far in the official leadership of the anti-intervention movement. The diagnosis is necessary for the cure.

This rot was blatantly evident last spring when the April 25th Coalition (whose leaders formed ECACA) liquidated the spring demonstration in Seattle (under the pretext that people should attend the one ... 800 miles away in San Francisco!).

The rot multiplied with the signing of the Arias "Peace" Pact. Since then the opportunists have been dropping their stress against contra aid and favoring euphoric, and empty, slogans about the peace plan. In practice, this meant that they had joined in the imperialist pressure on Nicaragua. And since the Arias Pact ok's "humanitarian aid" to the contras, from there it is only a short hop to land in the position of being pro-contra aid.

How to cure the disease

The way things are going, the sellouts in ECACA may try to liquidate the annual Spring demonstration again. This shows that the anti-intervention movement must be freed from the influence of the Democratic Party and its hangers on.

Activists: Organize militant demonstrations and draw the ordinary masses into them. This will ensure actions that are really broad. The issue is not to tone things down to win over the "respectable" types; not to invite the slick politicians and priests to bore people to death at rallies with their empty bombast. All this type of "broadness" narrows, by excluding ordinary people who have a real spirit to fight. (And so does the tactic of holding citywide protests only during working hours.) ...

Strengthen the fight against Reagan's dirty war on Nicaragua! <>

WHAT DID NICARAGUA GET FROM THE SANDINISTA-CONTRA PACT?

Continued from the front page

rearrange its political life more to the liking of the pro-U.S. regimes in Central America and the U.S. Congress. And the Sandinistas agreed to this at a time when the other Central American governments have repudiated all their obligations under the Arias plan. The contra bases are to remain in Honduras and Costa Rica. El Salvador can still be used as a base for American support for the contras.

Nor did this pact tie the hands of U.S. backing of the contras. Right after the pact was signed, the House Democrats stressed the need to fund the contras precisely because the pact was signed. The House of Representatives passed, on March 30, a new contra aid bill by the lopsided vote of 345-70. This bill provided more money than the bill defeated on March 3. This bill included \$1.5 million for communications equipment to allow contra coordination of battlefield activity. Called a \$48 million bill, it includes an open-ended commitment for transportation expenses. (The \$2.5 million to the State Department's Agency for International Development is only for administering the contra aid program.)

Other U.S. aid to the contras also continued. While the Democratic Party liars assured the people that all contra aid was tied to the bills being debated in Congress, they were in fact covering up for various types of ongoing aid. Contrary to the lies of the press and congress, contra aid was never cut off. For example, it has recently been revealed that secret payments were made to contra leaders and family members. The contras are, in effect, paid U.S. military personnel, but the payments did not go to them directly, but to family members in Miami, Honduras and Costa Rica. CIA "support payments" ranged from \$200 to \$1,000 a month. Congress had authorized this, but the bill was due to expire at the end of March. Meanwhile a separate bill authorized ongoing salaries for contra leaders, ranging from \$22,000 to \$70,000 a year.

Who will judge the pact?

The verification commission for the pact is stacked against Nicaragua. It includes pro-contra diehard Cardinal Obando y Bravo. The only other member is the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, an organization dedicated to the consolidation of capitalist regimes of ex-

ploitation. It will be paid for by \$10 million of the contra aid bill.

And Congress will be the final judge of the pact. The Democratic Party leadership agreed with the Reaganites that if the pact breaks down, there will be an immediate new vote on even more aid for the contras. This amounts to pressure on the Sandinistas to surrender to any demand. Sign, said the congress, or we will pass more contra aid. Well, you signed, so we must therefore make a special effort to pass contra aid. And if the pact doesn't work, we will pass yet more contra aid.

More to come

Nor are there limits to what will be demanded of the Nicaraguan government. The pact itself left everything up to further negotiations. Thus it leaves open abundant opportunities to insist on further concessions from the Sandinistas.

And this is what happened. Faced with defeat after defeat on the battlefield, with even their CIA organizers despairing of their chances, the contra leadership signed the pact. But they are demanding one new concession after another. They regard the concessions in the plan only as a springboard to demand new concessions.

Already, days after the pact, the situation has gotten so bad that the Sandinistas have had to tone down their euphoria over the pact and start making threats.

The contras are already demanding that the Sandinista government remove all government officials from the seven relocation zones and allow the contras to set up their own government.

The pact talked of "exclusively humanitarian aid channeled through neutral organizations". And it was said that the Nicaraguan government would have to agree to the agencies delivering the aid. But now the U.S. government has said that it will proceed with contra resupply through Honduras and only the part that goes through Nicaragua will be subject to approval.

Meanwhile the contras are demanding that the Sandinistas allow them to receive military supplies in the relocation zones. They phrase this as "the replacement of all arms destroyed during the war, in case of a breakdown in the cease-fire". And this demand deadlocked the negotiations and resulted in calling off the April 8 session of the Sandinista-contra technical talks on implementing the cease-fire.

Right after the pact the Sandinistas looked

forward to American money. The **New York Times** claimed that "President Daniel Ortega Saavedra has made several public pleas in recent days for American economic help and a diplomatic thaw, suggesting that a desire to rebuild relations with Washington was his main reason for approving a cease-fire agreement." (March 31) But the reality of American aid has already put the Sandinistas on edge. For example, take the much ballyhooed token medical aid to children injured in the war. The U.S. government isn't going to allow the Nicaraguan government to administer this money; instead it is to go through various relief agencies. This is to stress that the Nicaraguan people should be properly grateful to the imperialists who funded the killing and maiming of the children in the first place.

Ortega has also been quoted as saying: "We cannot accept any type of aid to the contras because it would be legitimizing the interventionist

policy of the United States. It is illegal because the United States has no right to decide what type of government Nicaragua ought to have." (**New York Times**, April 6) But in fact he already agreed to this both in the Arias Pact and in the March 23 pact. These new statements however reveal the friction that now exists over the implementation of the pact.

The struggle continues...

So the Sandinista-contra pact has not ended the U.S. effort to strangle Nicaragua. It has not yet even ended the contra war, which is only paused. Even if the Sandinistas succeed in getting most of the contras to disarm, it will only be at the cost of concessions that allow the CIA and the contras to work on a destabilization campaign to take over Nicaragua from within. <>

TEXT OF THE SANDINISTA-CONTRA CEASE-FIRE

Below is the text of the agreement signed in Sapoá, Nicaragua on March 23 by the Sandinista government of Nicaragua and the CIA-organized contra thugs. It is as translated by the **New York Times** (March 25).

The Constitutional Government of Nicaragua and the Nicaraguan Resistance, meeting in Sapoá, Nicaragua on March 21, 22 and 23 with the aim of contributing to national reconciliation in the framework of the Esquipulas II Accord [Arias pact -- **Supplement**], and in the presence of witnesses His Eminence Miguel Cardinal Obando y Bravo, president of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference and His Excellency Ambassador Joao Clemente Baena Soares, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, have reached the following agreement.

1

To halt military operations in the entire national territory for a period of 60 days beginning on

April 1 of this year, during which an integral process of negotiation will be carried out for a definitive cease-fire to end the war, to be carried out effectively together with the other commitments contained in the Esquipulas II Accord.

Both parties agree to meet at the highest level in Managua next April 6, to continue negotiations for a definitive cease-fire.

2

During the first 15 days, the Resistance forces will locate themselves in zones, whose location, size and modus operandi will be mutually accorded through special commissions at a meeting in Sapoá to begin Monday, March 28.

3

The Government of Nicaragua will decree a general amnesty for those tried and convicted for violation of the public security law, and for members of the army of the previous regime for crimes committed before July 19, 1979.

In the case of the first group, the amnesty will be gradual. Taking into account the religious sentiments of the Nicaraguan people on the occasion on Holy Week, on Palm Sunday the first 100 prisoners will be freed. Later, when it is verified that Nicaraguan Resistance forces have entered the mutually accorded zones, 50 percent of the remaining prisoners will be freed. The other 50 percent will be freed at a date following the signing of a definitive cease-fire, which will be agreed at the meeting in Managua on April 6.

In the case of the prisoners mentioned in the final part of the first paragraph of this numeral, their release will begin at the moment of signing a definitive cease-fire, following judgement by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission of the Organization of American States.

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States shall be guarantor and depository for the compliance of this amnesty.

4

With the aim of guaranteeing food and basic supplies for the irregular forces, exclusively humanitarian aid channeled through neutral organizations may be solicited in conformity with Numeral 5 of the Esquipulas II Accord.

5

The Government of Nicaragua will guarantee unrestricted freedom of expression, as contemplated in the Esquipulas II Accord.

6

Once the Resistance forces are concentrated in the mutually accorded zones, they will send to the national dialogue as many representatives as they have constituent political groups, up to a maximum of eight. In the national dialogue, the matter of military service will be taken up, among others.

7

It is guaranteed that all those who have left the country for political or any other reasons may return to Nicaragua and incorporate themselves into political, economic and social processes without any conditions beyond those established by the laws of the republic. They will not be tried, punished or persecuted for the political-military acts they have carried out.

8

The Government of Nicaragua pledges that

people who return to peaceful life will be able to participate with equal conditions and guarantees in the election for Central American Parliament, in municipal elections on the date they are held, and in national elections on the dates established by the political constitution.

9

To verify compliance with this agreement, a verification commission will be created, made up of the president of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference, His Excellency Miguel Cardinal Obando y Bravo, and the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, His Excellency Joao Clemente Baena Soares.

The technical assistance and services necessary to allow the expeditious functioning of this commission will be sought from and entrusted to the Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

Transitory

Both parties agree to prolong until April 1 of this year [i.e. until the 60 day cease-fire specified in paragraph I comes into effect--**Supplement**] the halt to offensive military operations that was agreed by both parties on March 21.

With faith in the above, those who sign below accept this agreement in four copies of the same original, in Sapoa, Rivas, Nicaragua, on March 23, 1988.

For the Government of Nicaragua:

General of the Army Humberto Ortega Saavedra, Minister of Defense.

Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, adviser; Paul Reichler, adviser.

For the Nicaraguan Resistance:

Dr. Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, director; engineer Alfredo Cesar Aguirre, director; Dr. Aristides Sanchez Herdocia, director.

Cease-Fire Commission of the Nicaraguan Resistance:

Jaime Morales Carazo, chief negotiator; engineer Roberto Urroz Castillo; Dr. Fernando Agüero Rocha; Walter Calderon Lopez (Comandante Tono); Diogenes Hernandez Membreno (Comandante Fernando); Arturo Salazar Barberena (Comandante Omar); Oscorno Coleman (Comandante Blas); Adm. Ramon Emilio Jimenez, adviser.

Witnesses:

Miguel Cardinal Obando y Bravo, Ambassador Joao Clemente Baena Soares. <>

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT THE DEMONSTRATIONS IN MASAYA?

The April issue of the **Workers' Advocate** carried reports from comrades of the MLP, USA who recently visited Nicaragua on the invitation of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua. There were two articles: "Inside the Nicaraguan workers' movement" and "The Arias plan and the class struggle in Nicaragua". In this issue of the **Supplement** we carry additional material from this trip.

The demonstrations in Masaya over the draft and the clashes resulting from the Sandinista attack on them have been reported in the American press. The nature of these events has been grossly distorted. It is presented as the people of Masaya turning against the revolution. While our delegation was in Nicaragua we talked to the Marxist-Leninists about what really happened and we ourselves visited Masaya and talked to the people.

The Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua is preparing to resume regular publication of the newspaper **El Pueblo**. The March 1 **El Pueblo** gives a good account of the issues at the first demonstration in Masaya, so we shall begin with this.

The paper begins by pointing out that the various big papers in Managua all give differing accounts of the events in Masaya. They don't even agree on the simplest details, such as whether the demonstration took place in the afternoon or at night. But they all present the matter in lurid colors, differing in what conclusion they draw from it.

The reactionary rag **La Prensa** for example says that "the people of Monimbo [a barrio of Masaya] rose up in insurrection" and shouts about armored personnel carriers in Masaya. The Sandinista paper **Barricada** talks of a "group of approximately 400 provocateurs, led by recently pardoned ex-Somoza National Guardsmen and right-wing activists", while the pro-Sandinista **El Nuevo Diario** also talks of a "counterrevolutionary action carried out by instigators".

Against the Dirty Rag "La Prensa"

El Pueblo denounced **La Prensa** for trying to incite people to join up with the counterrevolution. **El Pueblo** denounced **La Prensa** for its clumsy attempt to manipulate, in **El Pueblo's** words,

"the just sentiments of the mothers of Monimbo who didn't want to see their sons leave for the combat zones. There was also a manipulation of the youths themselves, who didn't want to participate in a war whose protagonists were in the process of dialogue, espe-

cially when counterrevolutionary leaders like Negro Chamorro are being allowed to peacefully return to the country after having murdered Nicaraguan youth. The youths see that the Yankee mercenaries who are captured are allowed to go free after being pardoned."

The Actual Events

El Pueblo opposes both the Sandinista and right-wing account and goes on to comment that:

"What really happened was a protest by mothers who have draft-age sons. It was not against the participation of their sons in military activities, because the Monimbosenos [people of Monimbo] have a long history of militant and victorious struggle ever since the beginning of the popular insurrection against Somoza. It was in this zone that the first detachments of the popular militias were formed. It was also the birthplace of the contact bomb. From Monimbo came the fourth region's most militant battalions which confronted the counterrevolution. So the reason for the march was not to oppose military service itself, but the coercive, repressive, violent methods that the EPS [Sandinista army] and the police use in recruitment. Another reason behind the march is the sharp economic crisis which the masses are now going through, while the bourgeoisie and the state bureaucracy swim in privileges.

"To give up a working age son is an economic blow to an artisan family. ..."

Seen in perspective

"If the situation was really a maneuver by recently pardoned ex-Somoza National Guardsmen, then the government should not review these people's cases and should not keep pardoning them so liberally. As well, there should be popular vigilance over those who are pardoned to prevent them from committing irresponsible acts.

"If the problem is the age of recruitment, a change in the age of recruitment should be considered, so that the youth will have more maturity and a stable political consciousness before taking

up the task of military service."

Why in Masaya?

"This event happened in Masaya because of the high level of organization of the people there, from which comes the authority of their elected officials. This tight organization comes from a strong neighborly unity which is in turn a product of the artisan character of the relations of production, an intrinsic part of the way of life there. Masaya also has the characteristic of being an area where a large number of inhabitants live in a reduced space. The population uses parks, plazas, and churchyards as places of communal conversation on political and family problems, which in other regions seldom happens.

"All of these elements indicate that it was the high degree of organization of the inhabitants of Monimbo which permitted an immediate response to the government's methods, which negate convincing and persuasion and instead involve force. The effective and dynamic response of the people can only be the fruit of the deeply rooted participation and centralization in the organizational forms in Masaya, which in the eyes of the Sandinistas, the authorities, and the official newspapers, looks like too much organization.

"An attempt was made to manipulate the demonstration. In the Plaza de Nuestra Señora de Magdalena, Liberals and Social-Christians gave themselves the job of manipulating the just sentiments of the mothers. During the march they succeeded for a few moments in raising banners supporting the counterrevolutionary right-wing. But there were also slogans against the high cost of living and against the joint CST-MICOIN [CST is the Sandinista trade union confederation] policy on supplies, which is causing shortages; these tended to link up with the slogans which are raised by the workers' movement.

"The essence of the events in Masaya has nothing to do with an insurrection. This is a pretense of the reaction. To say that the action was a manipulation is a superficial explanation. It was a popular mobilization with just sentiments on the part of the mothers of draft-age youth, and in which the youth were perceiving that the revolutionary process is stagnating in the hands of the

FSLN."

The Second Demonstration

Another demonstration, similar to the one of February analyzed above, occurred on March 6 in Masaya. (This time MLPN discussed it over **Radio El Pueblo**.) This march was called by the right-wing parties, but also had some mass participation by mothers of draft-age youth. Here the right wing raised slogans against military service itself. The government called a counterdemonstration and sent in "turbas" (armed gangs) which smashed up the original march.

A few days later some comrades from our delegation visited Masaya and talked with the residents about these two demonstrations of February and March.

The main reaction of the marketplace vendors and artisans we talked to was anger at the Sandinista government for attacking the two marches. The mothers' grievances were just, they said, and the government is turning a deaf ear to the people's needs.

They felt that the war has eaten up all the youth and ground the people down to nothing. As well, there are shortages such as the country has never seen and an unaffordable cost of living. In their opinion the government was not dealing with the situation correctly and was insensitive to the hardships the people are going through. Of course it is necessary for the country to defend itself militarily, the townspeople pointed out; but the Sandinistas' way of running the military service is harsh, and the government thinks the people can keep on fighting year after year without food and basic supplies.

The townspeople also vigorously dissociated themselves from the right wing. "We Masayans are not right-wingers," they asserted, "The right-wing supports the contras." At the same time they did not seem too conscious of the danger of the right wing's attempts to influence the demonstrations and to mobilize itself. When we expressed our concern about its role, their response was that the right wing has very little support.

These views of the inhabitants of Masaya give a picture of the hazards the Sandinista program is creating for the Nicaraguan masses. <>

**THE PRO-SOVIET REVISIONIST PARTIES IN NICARAGUA
ARE IN BED WITH THE RIGHT-WING**

It is often presented that there are three main Marxist parties in Nicaragua critical of the Sandinistas: the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua and two revisionist parties, the wildly pro-Soviet Communist Party and the more Eurorevisionist-style Socialist Party. But this is not true. There is nothing in common between the revolutionary stand of the MLPN and that of the two pro-Soviet parties. The MLPN organizes the working class to stand up for its own class interests, to maintain the socialist perspective, and to organize the poor peasants and other toiling elements around itself. But the revisionist parties try to get the workers to join together with the capitalists and the right-wing parties.

Our delegation to Nicaragua saw this dirty role of the pro-Soviet revisionist parties in practice. Sure, they are critical of the Sandinistas. But they oppose the Sandinistas from the right. They oppose the Sandinistas for not conceding even more to the capitalists. The Socialist Party and the Communist Party actually joined into the bloc of 14 right-wing and capitalist parties that was recently created.

The SP and CP feel right at home among the contra-lovers and the representatives of the exploiters, capitalists and landlords. And this is no surprise. For years these parties have operated in coalition with straight-up bourgeois parties. The revisionist parties sought to tie the revolutionary movement to the bourgeois opposition during the time of Somoza. Since the overthrow of Somoza, they have worked with these same capitalist parties who have become the bourgeois opposition to the revolution. The CP even works closely with the most rabid pro-contra parties like the Conservatives, while the Socialist Party is more conciliatory to the Sandinistas.

**The right-wing uses the revisionists
for a "pro-worker" disguise**

The right-wing parties make use of the revisionists in order to influence the workers, to dress up capitalist demands in pseudo-"Marxist" language, and to have organizational influence over the workers. (The CP is especially active in trying to give "Marxist" arguments to justify surrender to the capitalists.) The revisionist unions, especially the CGT(i) union confederation affiliated to the SP, help them bring rightist influence into the workers' movement. (The CP's CAUS has much

less influence.) Through the vehicle of these unions, the right-wing forces can seek to call strikes and demonstrations on the workers' economic demands. At present, most workers will join any demonstration which puts forward their just demands; they don't care who organizes it, although they reject rightist slogans. (For that matter, the Sandinistas have been telling the masses for years that the rightist political parties don't pose any threat.) But the right-wing keeps trying to inject their pro-capitalist political slogans into the actions and to present themselves as friends of the people rather than propagandists for the murderous contra fiends.

The construction strike

The construction strike shows how the right-wing uses the revisionists.

The construction workers have many grievances. And like other workers in Nicaragua, they suffer from the provisions of the Sandinista labor code, which was basically taken over from the old labor code, dating from the 1940's, of the former Somoza dictatorship.

The SP's CGT(i) has affiliated to it one of the biggest construction unions, SCAAS (not to be confused with the Sandinista construction union of the same name). In mid-January the SP called a demonstration in Managua on the construction workers' upcoming contract and against the Sandinista labor code. The demonstration dealt with these economic demands of the workers and left out political demands. Ten thousand out of the 12,000 construction workers participated in the action.

In February the SP called another march, this time endorsed by the 14-party coalition of the right-wing and the revisionists and by the associated trade union coalition, the CPT. This time the right-wing parties were aggressive in trying to attach the pro-contra slogan "general amnesty" and the political program of the 14 parties to the workers' demands at the demonstration. This demonstration was much smaller as most construction workers were turned off by the right-wing politics being promoted. This is typical of the present situation in the country. The masses will join actions which give their demands, no matter who organizes them. But they reject the right-wing slogans.

On February 29, after the construction work-

ers' new contract was in place, a strike was called by the CP's CAUS, which does some organizing in construction, and the CGT(i)'s construction union SCAAS. (The Sandinista SCAAS union opposed the strike). The demands of the strike were: a 200% wage increase, the abolition of the Sandinista wage scale SNOTS, and the voiding of job combination provisions contained in the new contract. One thousand workers went on strike.

The Ministry of Labor declared the strike illegal which, according to the Labor Code, means that the employers can fire any worker, even those not participating in the strike. Strikebreakers were brought in by the government, but were chased away by the workers. And lo and behold, **La Prensa** supported the strike, praising CGT(i) to the skies.

The CPT called another demonstration for March 10 on the construction contract and other labor demands. When the 14 pro-capitalist parties endorsed the march, the government restricted the march permit to only allow a gathering in the park. **La Prensa** railed about Sandinista repression of the workers, promising that the march would take place and that the 14 parties would be the workers' saviors. But in the end, CPT canceled the event in which several thousand workers were expected to participate.

MLPN Against Rightist Corruption of the Workers' Movement

The true Marxists, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua, and its Frente Obrero trade union center, had planned to participate in the March 10 action with literature and slogans defending the construction strikers' demands. They also would explain to workers the danger of the rightist parties and their slogans.

MLPN (originally MAP-ML) has a long history of influence in construction. MAP-ML militants led the successful 6-week construction strike against the 60-hour week in 1973, under the Somoza dictatorship. Out of this strike MAP-ML organized the most consistent fighters into the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist trend of the workers' movement. Since the revolution MLPN has continued to do work in the construction industry.

This time, however, MLPN didn't get to carry out the tactics of attending demonstrations and preventing the right from gaining leadership over the putting forward of the workers' just demands. This was because the march was canceled. MLPN comrades discussed the situation with construction strikers. They describe that the majority were determined to take action on their economic demands regardless of which political parties were calling the march. A smaller number, workers with

the most political clarity, were outraged that the right-wing was trying to coopt their strike. And there was also a small number of workers who believed the right-wing parties supported their demands; for this, the Sandinista opposition to the workers' movement and the revisionist coalition with the right was responsible.

At the Socialist Party/CGT(i) Office

Some comrades from the MLP, USA delegation to Nicaragua visited the SP office in Masaya (which was side by side with a CGT(i) office). We had seen Socialist Party slogans about the proletarian struggle all over Masaya, accompanied by graphics of Karl Marx. We wanted to get a taste for how this organization, with its socialist words and right-wing deeds, portrays itself among the masses.

First we asked how the construction strike was going, since the SP's CGT(i) was involved in organizing it. The representative in the Masaya office was very reluctant to endorse, or even discuss the strike, claiming he had nothing to do with it. Some other leaders might be connected with it, he said, but his office was dedicated to "serious ideological and political work." His attitude suggested that there might be disagreements in the SP over the strike. When pressed, the SP spokesman acknowledged that it was necessary for the construction workers to go on strike because of the job combination being imposed on them.

Nearer, Oh Capitalists, to Thee

The SP man then volunteered his analysis of the Nicaraguan economic crisis. The problem, he said, is that the Sandinistas are unable to manage the large national debt. What the government should do, he claimed, is borrow more money from the capitalists to pay off this debt. (He apparently was unaware that this was how Nicaragua and other countries had got deeper into this hole in the first place.) He advocated that the Sandinistas should establish better relations with the businessmen.

With this type of view, it is presumably understandable that he might not be enthusiastic for anything so crass as a strike.

Class Conciliation

Finally, we discussed the labor march which the SP was advertising for March 20. The SP man told us that the 14 parties and the CPT had endorsed this march. When we pointed out that the 14 parties would raise counterrevolutionary slogans in support of the contras he tried hard to assure

us that this would be no problem. At this point in Nicaraguan history, he explained, there can be an historic reconciliation between the left wing and the right wing. The SP has been fighting for this for 14 years, but, he sighed, class conciliation is a difficult thing. On March 20, he promised, the left and the right would join hands to the benefit

of the workers. This alliance would put an end to the hunger of the workers, concluded this "Marxist" theoretician, hoping he had convinced us that the pro-contra parties are the friends of the Nicaraguan working masses.

We think that we shall continue to support the path of class struggle and revolution instead. <>

**THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL
THE PEACE SLOGAN, AND TODAY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR**

Today the chatter about peace is becoming deafening. The imperialists are dressing up their attacks on the Central American working people in a flowing gown of peace. And there are those in the solidarity movement in the U.S. who are all agog at the prospect.

There was a time when the solidarity movement demanded the end to U.S. intervention in Central America. But now it would seem that for some it would suffice if Congress and the White House stay active but in the name of "peace".

There was a time when the solidarity movement demanded that the U.S. government stop aiding the CIA-contra war on Nicaragua. But now, for some, it would seem that even funding the dirty contras is fine so long as it is done in the name of "peace" and "humanitarianism".

There was a time when there was some support for the revolutionary fights of the workers and toilers of Central America. But now there is a big campaign for universal reconciliation of worker and capitalist, peasant and landlord, victim and death squad murderer. The rotten conditions that gave rise to the working masses rising in revolt in the first place are to be solved by unity of exploited and exploiter, or with pious phrases about peace and progress, or with dreams of U.S. government aid.

The solidarity movement is being corroded. And what is more, groups that claim to be left-wing or even Marxist are in the van of the parade. They are dancing circles around the

"peace" plan of the Democrats. The class struggle -- the heart and soul of Marxism -- has been quietly laid away.

One of the theoretical roots of this revisionist betrayal can be traced to the backward turn in the world communist movement at the 7th Congress of the Communist International. To one degree or another, all the revisionist groups find a Marxist-sounding justification for their abandonment of the class struggle, and their love-dance with the liberals, in the arguments unfolded at the 7th Congress.

In the fight against the revisionist betrayal, and to revitalize the solidarity movement, it is useful to look back, to criticize the 7th Congress views on war and peace, and to once again bring to the light of day the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the fight against imperialist war.

**The call for a "new way" to fight against
imperialist war**

The world's communists met in the summer of 1935. Hitler had taken control in Germany and begun his saber rattling. Japan had already invaded China. A new world war was in the making. No one with his eyes open could deny it.

One of the principal tasks of the 7th Congress of the Comintern, then, was to strengthen the Leninist orientation for the fight against imperialist war. And it was a question of preparing the proletariat for its tasks when war breaks out.

The 7th Congress took up the question of imperialist war preparations. But, unfortunately, instead of strengthening the Leninist orientation, it turned away from Leninism and called for a "new way" to fight imperialist war.

In his closing remarks to the 7th Congress, Georgi Dimitrov declared,

"Ours is a Congress of struggle for the maintenance of peace, against the threat of imperialist war." (emphasis as in the original)

But -- saying that "the world today is not what it was in 1914" -- Dimitrov suggested that changed conditions meant Lenin's revolutionary policy for fighting imperialist war no longer applied. Dimitrov proclaimed,

"We are approaching this struggle now in a new way."¹ (Emphasis as in the original)

Peace slogan used to detach the anti-war struggle from the class struggle

What was this "new way"? Togliatti gave the main speech on this subject entitled, "The Preparations for Imperialist War and the Tasks of the CI."² This speech, like all the materials of the 7th Congress, is deceptive. It repeats phrases for show in one place, while the main thrust of its analysis is to deny these phrases. It proclaims adherence to the line of Lenin during World War I and the line of the Sixth Congress, while at the same time advocating that this line should be discarded due to the new possibilities opening up for a peace policy. In discussing theory it stresses that the heart of the work must be "revolutionary mass actions" while it gives example after example to prove how narrow and sectarian it would supposedly be to base the anti-war movement on such revolutionary action.

Here we shall not dwell that much on Togliatti's window dressing. We shall point to the basic thrust of what Togliatti said instead.

Well, when all was said and done, what was Togliatti's "new way" for the anti-war struggle. Explaining it, Togliatti declared,

"The slogan of peace becomes our central slogan in the fight against war."³
(Emphasis as in the original)

So the peace slogan was thrust into the center.

And how does this "new way" differ from the past? How does it differ from the policy that went before, the policy of Lenin and of the first six congresses of the Comintern?

Togliatti, in his reply to the discussion of his speech, explains,

"...we know that there have been and still exist tendencies to adopt a fatalist

attitude on the question of combatting war."

And this

"fatalist attitude...is the result of a pedantic distortion of the exact meaning of the Marxist assertion of the impossibility of separating war from the capitalist regime."⁴

Here Togliatti makes it appear that he is simply opposing distortions in Marxism -- not Marxism itself -- and that he is fighting a fatalistic tendency to not fight against imperialist wars before they break out. But why then is it necessary to change the policy from the previous six CI congresses, to have a "new way" of fighting imperialist war?

The fact is that Togliatti was not opposing distortions. Rather, he was upset with Marxism itself, with the Marxist understanding that modern war is connected to capitalism and that the struggle against war must be connected with the class struggle.

Lenin put it aptly in his article "Socialism and War" in 1915. In one place he pointed out:

"...we understand the inseparable connection between wars on the one hand and class struggle inside of a country on the other, we understand the impossibility of eliminating wars without eliminating classes and creating Socialism..."⁵

The 6th Congress of the CI, in 1928, argued similarly:

"The Communists do not regard the struggle against such a war [imperialist] as being separate from the class struggle. On the contrary, they regard it as part of the general proletarian struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. They know that imperialist wars are inevitable as long as the bourgeoisie remain in power. This postulate is sometimes interpreted to mean that it is useless to carry on a specific struggle against imperialist war. Indeed, the Social Democrats deliberately charge the Communists with encouraging imperialist wars in order to accelerate the advent of Revolution. While the first-mentioned attitude is a mistaken one, the second is a silly calumny.

"Although convinced that war is inevitable under the rule of the bourgeoisie, the Communists, in the interests of the masses of workers and of all the toilers who bear the brunt of the sacrifice entailed by war, wage a persistent fight against imperialist war and strive to prevent imperialist war by pro-

letarian revolution. They strive to rally the masses around their standard in this struggle, and if unable to prevent the outbreak of war, they strive to transform it into civil war for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie."⁶

This seems clear enough. But not for Togliatti. On no, to him these ideas are "fatalistic".

Should the anti-war movement be based on the working class?

And he goes on to claim that this "fatalistic" approach led to a "narrow sectarian character" of anti-war work. The communist parties

"limited themselves to propaganda against war solely within the ranks of the vanguard of the working class, on the assumption that they were the only force that could be convinced of the inevitability of war under the capitalist regime. This led to the loss of contact with the masses, which, entering the struggle, wish to have before them the prospect of a successful outcome to this struggle."⁷

So here we get a fuller understanding of the "new way" being advocated to fight imperialist war. Don't connect the anti-war struggle to the class struggle -- that's supposedly fatalistic. Don't center the anti-war work of the communists on mobilizing the working class for revolutionary struggle against imperialist war -- no, that's supposedly sectarian. Don't tell the truth -- that's narrow and sectarian because only the working class will uphold it. Don't build up the force and consciousness of the working class movement as the basis for rallying the other toilers and any potential allies -- no, that's supposedly loss of contact with the masses.

Instead of a "fatalistic" approach, Togliatti argued for a realistic policy. One that could pander to petty bourgeois prejudices for "a successful outcome" without the class struggle. One that could appeal to bourgeois liberals equally with the working masses. And so we get the bare appeal for peace, stripped of all content. A slogan that all can support because all content has been removed from it.

Words, Empty Words

In practice this concentration on the peace slogan meant setting aside the mass struggles of the workers and peasants and other oppressed. Instead, the communists were to promote paper resolutions, empty declarations for peace, and the like.

For example, Togliatti suggests that a model for

the fight against imperialist war was the British peace ballot organized by the Friends of the League of Nations. Gushing with enthusiasm, Togliatti declares,

"We must shatter the narrow bounds of our former anti-war and anti-militarist work; our fight for peace must assume the widest possible character, embracing as far as possible the whole of the people.

"Take the peace ballot held in England, which mobilized eleven million people. Here is an example which our comrades should follow, here is an initiative which the British comrades should have taken in hand in order to place themselves at the head of the masses willing to defend peace."⁸

But what Togliatti is referring to as "breaking the narrow bounds" of former communist work and as "embracing as far as possible the whole of the people" is simply seeing how many people are for sweetness and light. How many people are willing to say nice words for peace. The British peace ballot did nothing to prevent or even delay the approaching war. It was not a call for strikes and demonstrations. It did not direct the masses toward a fight against the imperialist exploiters. It did not even say who was the enemy of peace. It was simply a vote stating a preference for peace over war. A vote that liberal bourgeois could support even as they prepared to fight for their imperialist spheres of influence against other imperialists.

We have seen much of the same sort of thing in the U.S. in recent years where the reformists subordinate the solidarity movement to the maneuvers of the liberal Democrats. Don't organize demonstrations, we are told, the energy is needed for campaigns for local peace ballots. Don't march against U.S. imperialist aggression, rather write or phone your congressman to ask that he vote against Reagan's latest contra aid bill. Or recently, write or phone in favor of the latest bill, because now the contra "humanitarian" aid bill has been written by the Democrats. And everything else is to be put on ice so everyone can campaign for "peace" candidates of the Democrats. These are liberal candidates like Jesse Jackson, who talk of peace while backing "humanitarian" contra aid and promoting the use of the U.S. military as world policeman against the toiling masses. (For more on this see articles in the April 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**, including "Why so few actions against the contra aid bill?", "Jackson: candidate for peace or for the U.S. big stick?" and "Jackson supports 'humanitarian' contra aid".)

Once the class struggle is stripped away from the fight against imperialist war, then talk of "peace" simply becomes a cover for the imperialists' war moves, a disguise for the liberal capitalist politicians, a means of undercutting mass struggle and subordinating the mass movement to the latest congressional maneuver of the liberals.

"Democratizing" the blood-stained armies of the exploiters

In a similar way, the 7th Comintern Congress forgets about the class struggle when it comes to communist work in the imperialist military machine. It creates confusion on the class character of these armies. They are not the negation of democracy, the tool for suppressing the masses. No, indeed, by the simple means of extending democracy, they can be turned into tools of the people.

Togliatti talks of

"transforming the present bourgeois army into a people's army"

and thus

"destroy[ing] one of the bulwarks of fascism and...curb[ing] its war preparations."⁹

This is supposed to be accomplished by simply putting the generals under workers' control. Don't laugh! This utopia is an example of Togliatti putting before the masses something that can give them "the prospect of a successful outcome to this struggle". All it requires is such presumably simple measures as

"that the army be put on a democratic footing by granting the soldiers all political rights"

and that

"fascist officers should be dismissed from the army and that the reactionary general staffs should be subjected to democratic control, in the exercise of which workers' organizations should participate."¹⁰

Who needs revolution anyway, if the army itself could be turned into a people's army by some simple reforms? Why not transform the rest of the state, the police, and the giant monopolies themselves.

Naturally there should be a fight for the rights of the soldiers and against the reactionary general staffs. This is one of the means of organizing the soldiers, who are mostly workers and peasants, and rallying them to the working class movement. But Togliatti disorients this struggle with his unrealistic perspective.

Indeed, this really isn't a prescription for soldiers' struggle at all. Togliatti puts aside the fight to improve the conditions and rights of the

soldiers in favor of empty promises by liberals.

Take the French army for example. This was one of the biggest, most mechanized, and strongest of the imperialist armies in the 1930's. It was riddled with pro-fascist generals and served nothing other than the imperialist interests of the French bourgeoisie. But the 7th Congress identified the task of purging fascists from the French army with the empty talk of parliamentarians (from the liberal bourgeois Radical Party) about the supposed loyalty of the French army to democracy. This is the same army whose General Staff would hand over France on a silver platter to Hitler. It is the same army whose military hero Marshall Petain would serve as figurehead ruler for the German Nazis in the fascist Vichy government that was set up after the fall of France in World War II.

Today we get the same prettification of the reactionary armed forces of the exploiters. In El Salvador, for example, it has been proposed that the revolution can be replaced by democratizing the death squad regime of the exploiters. One of the chief ways to carry this out was to be by merging the guerilla forces into the reactionary army.

If this were merely one of the tricks of the imperialists and Salvadoran exploiters to smash the revolution, one might laugh at it. But this is actually a proposal from the leaders of the FDR/FMLN. Their program for a Broad Provisional Government talks of "restructuring the governmental armed forces" and the formation of a unified national army by merging these with the FMLN forces.¹²

Target imperialism, Mobilize the working masses

Another part of the "new way" for the anti-war movement was creating illusions in the bourgeois-democratic imperialist powers. There was the rhetoric about certain powers being interested in peace. This was connected to subordinating the anti-war struggle and the line of agitation among the workers to diplomacy and maneuvering with the various capitalist powers. But a more detailed discussion of this question will have to wait for another article in this series.

What should be pointed out here is that this "new line" did not forestall World War II. What it did, rather, was to confuse and weaken the revolutionary resolve of the working class. It left the communist parties confused and disoriented in face of various of the twists and turns taken by World War II. And, although in a number of countries the communists spearheaded partisan warfare against the fascists, even then their struggle was

weakened by the wrong stands of the 7th Congress. (We will soon deal in particular with the 1939-1941 period of World War II.)

These wrong stands were one of the sources that led to the utter revisionist corruption of party after party.

Today the movement is still plagued by the confusion from the mid-1930's. The confusion must be swept away. And the solidarity movement must be built up on a sound anti-imperialist basis. It is not just a question of restoring the slogan against all contra aid. It is a question of rebuilding the movement stronger than before, eliminating the weaknesses that gave rise to its present plight, and basing it on the class struggle of the workers and other oppressed.

References:

- (1) **Abridged Stenographic Proceedings**, p. 554. All quotations from the 7th Congress are from this source.
- (2) Togliatti is the Italian communist who became notorious in the mid-1950's for fathering the

brand of revisionism known as "Eurocommunism". At the 7th Congress he used the pseudonym of Ercoli. His report begins on p. 386.

- (3) "The Preparations for Imperialist War and the Tasks of the CI", Ercoli, p. 414
- (4) "Reply to discussion", Ercoli, p. 494.
- (5) "Socialism and War", Lenin, 1915.
- (6) 6th World Congress of the C.I. resolution entitled, "The Struggle Against Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communists", Ch. I "The Attitude of the Proletariat Towards War", Section A "The Proletariat Fights Against Imperialist Wars", Sub-section 1 "The Fight Against Imperialist War Before Its Outbreak"
- (7) Ercoli in "Reply to discussion", pp. 494-5.
- (8) *Ibid.*, pp. 496-7.
- (9) Ercoli, "The Army and Our Tasks", p. 442.
- (10) *Ibid.* pp. 441-2.
- (11) For more on this program see "On the debate on the FMLN-FDR's new reformist program -- For a revolutionary triumph in El Salvador over U.S. imperialism and the bloodstained regime," in the August 10, 1984 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**. <>

PRESS REVIEW:
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SPAIN (ML) ON NICARAGUA AND SUPER-REVOLUTIONARIES

Nicaragua Needs an Effective Solidarity

An article with the above title appeared in the Feb. 4-10 issue (#619) of **Vanguardia Obrera**, central organ of the Communist Party of Spain (ML). It reported on the concessions being made by the Sandinistas to imperialism and the local reaction. It then added:

"But it is essential to not lose sight of who are those truly responsible for the calamities of the people of Nicaragua and the situation that they and their government have become obliged to confront."

The article continues by describing the unfavorable international situation facing Nicaragua. It then comments:

"Such are things for Nicaragua and its people. It is hard to find a people with such a need for solidarity, for the consistent exercise of internationalism. Today, for this valorous people, unconditional praise for the vacillations and errors of this government are as pernicious and empty as the humbug 'super-revolutionaries' who forget the difficult trap in which it [Nicaragua] finds itself." (Translation by the Workers' Advocate staff. Emphasis added.)

Comment by the Supplement:

At one time **Vanguardia Obrera** carried reports on the class-conscious proletarian forces who are distinct from the Sandinistas. For some time, it has not done so. In the above passage, it disassociates itself from some vacillations and errors of the Sandinistas. This puts it to the left of some reformists. But it identifies the Nicaraguan revolution and people with the Sandinistas. And it apparently identifies the forces that support a proletarian revolutionary policy, whether in Nicaragua or elsewhere, as super-revolutionaries. They are supposedly as harmful as the reformists.

Every article we have written on Nicaragua refutes such a centrist view. We will not repeat this analysis here. We did however wish to inform our readers of the stand now taken by **Vanguardia Obrera**. Beyond that, it will suffice to say that, in our view, Marxist-Leninists and class-conscious workers around the world should extend solidarity to the proletarian forces in Nicaragua. It is not sufficient to explain away the concessions and errors of the Sandinistas because of the difficult international situation. It is also necessary to support those forces who are willing to stand up for the revolution and socialism despite difficult conditions. It is necessary to support the class-conscious proletarian forces against the pressure of the petty-bourgeois policy of the Sandinistas, a pressure which is not only ideological but also involves repression. <>

CORRESPONDENCE
FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

(The following three letters are translated from the Spanish by the **Workers' Advocate** staff:)

Feb. 22, 1988

The Friends of the Oppressed Peoples
"Unity for liberation"

Dear MLP,USA:

Our organization of solidarity with peoples in struggle has been observing the theory and practice of the national and international revolutionary movement, and we have arrived at the following conclusions:

1) that the revolutionary movement needs a revolutionary orientation in agreement with the historical reality that surrounds each people;

2) against sectarianism, dogmatism, reformism, and revisionism;

3) we condemn the attitude of those revolutionaries who deny the class struggle;

4) we condemn the little group of the PCT of the Dominican Republic for their rightist positions, which are:

a) -- giving an internal bulletin to their militants, that they should not read **El Estandarte Obrero** [Spanish supplement of the **Workers' Advocate**];

b) -- for having phantom popular organizations;

c) -- for participating in a meeting of the PRD [social-democratic party, which was the ruling party in the Dominican Republic until an election brought in the present rightist ruling party] and Pena-Gomez [a leader of the PRD and a big figure in the social-democratic "Socialist International"] justifying the massacre of April 24, 1984;

d) -- on Feb. 14, 1988 in a meeting of mass organizations they put forward to the movement a national accord to overcome the crisis, and at the same moment they put forward the position that the movement should participate in the state mechanisms, such as INESPRES, price control, and others;

e) -- for declaring at their conference that they would participate in the 1990 elections;

f) -- for the bombardment against the MLP,USA.

5) We support without conditions the positions of the MLP,USA because they are correct and to those that say the contrary we the members of

LAPO reply, although with a high level of debate, based on positions of principle;

6) We condemn the MLP,USA for its sentimentality and collaboration with the group which, in our country, has a campaign to discredit **El Estandarte Obrero**.

Hoping for a response,

[Name omitted], Secretary General of
Los Amigos de los Pueblos Oprimidos

Feb. 1988

Dominican Committee of Readers of
El Estandarte Obrero

Our committee of readers condemns the attitude of those pseudo-Marxists of Spain who negate the participation of the masses, like the PCT of the Dominican Republic is doing, running propaganda against the line of the MLP,USA. [This is apparently a reference to the sectarian Madrid Communique of July 26, 1987, which is reprinted and commented on in the **Supplement** of Sept. 10, 1987. These materials later appeared in **El Estandarte Obrero**. The Madrid communique negated the role of the masses in dealing with the controversial issues in the revolutionary movement.]

We are and we will remain loyal followers of **El Estandarte Obrero**, and we are not afraid of anyone in any field.

We wish that you would send a document in order for us to be more prepared in the face of the pseudo-revolutionaries of the PCT of the Dominican Republic, who want to discredit your line by basing themselves on pro-Albanian positions.

With nothing more, I sign off with greetings,
[Name omitted]

Feb. 25, 1988

Dear **El Estandarte Obrero**,
Dear revolutionary comrades,

It gives me great pleasure to greet you and at the same time to wish that you are well.

My aim is to tell you that a revolutionary is not born, but is created, and this is what you have done with me.

I am at present a revolutionary thanks to you, and with that I am defending the positions of the Marxist-Leninist Party because I am sure that they are correct.

I am sure that you have come to believe that the correspondence that you have has been in vain. On the contrary, it has served to strengthen the position of principle in the face of opportunism, revisionism, etc.

With nothing more, sincerely,
An internationalist member
of the Marxist-Leninist Party

[Name omitted]

Comment by the Supplement:

Above are three letters we have received from comrades in a poor barrio of Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic. We do not have direct knowledge of the activities of these comrades, or their views, other than what they write. But we think that they express a sentiment that must have arisen in response to a number of years of deviation towards the right in the line of the PCT, the Communist Labor Party of the Dominican Republic.

A number of years ago our Party had warm, fraternal relations with the PCT.

The PCT arose out of the breakup of the former MPD, Dominican People's Movement. The MPD had a tradition of militant struggle against the oppressors. It reflected the revolutionary aspirations of the Dominican activists. It also reflected the state of political development of the revolutionary movement in the Dominican Republic. Although it came to call itself a Marxist-Leninist Party, it was more of a broad organization of struggle with unclear views and without a strong proletarian class orientation. And the decline of the high tide of struggle in the Dominican Republic left it at loose ends. The PCT was formed as comrades from the MPD set themselves the task of developing a new, proletarian character in the Dominican movement, and establishing a true Marxist-Leninist Party. We enthusiastically supported the PCT in this.

But after a period of time, the line of the PCT deviated back to the right. Among other things, it was strongly affected by the rightist degeneration of the line of the Party of Labor of Albania. The General Secretary of the PCT, comrade Rafael

Chaljub, wrote a book called **The Character of the Dominican Revolution**. It gives a wrong idea of the nature of both democratic and socialist revolutions. It expresses petty-bourgeois nationalist views. Among other things, it downplays the importance of the independent role of the working class and of socialist agitation, both of which are needed at any stage of the revolution.

In 1983 we informed the PCT leadership in detail about our worries about **The Character of the Dominican Revolution**. But they didn't want to discuss these issues of revolutionary strategy and tactics with us. Later, they broke relations with our Party when we made public our criticisms of the mistaken views of the Party of Labor of Albania. However, this split was not discussed in the press.

But **El Estandarte Obrero** continued to have many dozens of readers in the Dominican Republic, some from PCT circles, some not. According to the letters, the PCT has now demanded that its supporters not read **El Estandarte Obrero**.

Meanwhile, in the last few years, the PCT leadership has moved further to the right. In essence, it moved back towards petty-bourgeois nationalism and vague radicalism, reminiscent of the old MPD, but without its revolutionary fire.

For example, the PCT's press often denounces "vanguardism". In effect, this means preaching against the party concept. It also means opposing the spirit needed to stand up independently against the opportunist marsh. In sum, it means a retreat from the attempt to establish a new Leninist tradition of party organization in the Dominican Republic.

Another example is the PCT leadership's wrong views on united front tactics. Instead of laying emphasis on revolutionary action as the core of united front tactics, it falls back into sentimental ideas of unity.

Today it requires an act of defiance of the Madrid Communique and, apparently, of an internal bulletin of the PCT, to even read **El Estandarte Obrero** in the Dominican Republic. In this situation, it is our responsibility to explain to our readers in the Dominican Republic what has happened. This is why we are giving our worries about the current path of the PCT leadership which we think is leading towards petty-bourgeois nationalism and away from proletarian communism. Due to the gradual and confusing way the PCT leadership ended fraternal relations with us, due to our heavy work load, and due to the step by step method which we have used in breaking the anti-Leninist norm of silence which has existed for some time in the world movement, we have not done this before in the press. One of the letters condemns this silence on our part, and indeed,

perhaps it was a mistake on our part. In any case, within our limited abilities to translate materials into Spanish, we have always tried to inform our readers in the Dominican Republic about developments in the Marxist-Leninist movement worldwide and about the struggle in the U.S. What is going on with the PCT is not something distinct from world development, but reflects the

debates and controversies that have been going on for some time in the world Marxist-Leninist movement. (The PCT leadership has taken up the rightist and centrist side of these controversies.) We shall continue to do so, and we shall also try, over a period of time, to outline in more detail some of our views about the line of the PCT. <>

**CORRESPONDENCE FROM SPAIN:
ON THE LITERARY DEBATE**

March 3, 1988

To Tim Hall
[the editor of] **Struggle**

...Of course I have followed with interest the debate that arose around **Struggle** in the pages of the **Workers' Advocate**. I must admit that I was surprised -- as some of those readers who have sent letters on this subject -- to hear that some Party members were opposed to the line **Struggle** had marked itself. For me, since its first issue up till today, **Struggle** has been a very inspiring magazine and a support for my own work of trying to set up a revolutionary cultural trend. Besides, the very same fact that a debate is going on such an important subject as what should be the content of a present-day revolutionary literary journal, is an expression that your Party is alive, that your Party opens its newspaper to debate, that it does not hide discussion, all in a comradely and communist spirit. How far this attitude [differs] from those in other countries -- including Spain -- who calling themselves "Marxist-Leninists" are incapable of accepting any criticism and considering any expression of difference as "provocation", "trotskyism", etc. Regarding the literary debate around **Struggle** receive the expression of my complete support for the work you are doing, and which I have tried to show through my illustrations and translations and I will continue contributing as far as I can. ...

Hoping to hear soon from you,
warmest revolutionary greetings

[Ediciones Nuevo Octubre, Spain]<>

NEWS FROM "RED CHRONICLE" IN SPAIN

Nuevo Octubre (New October) is a communist political-cultural journal published in Madrid, Spain. It stands for the rejuvenation of a current of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism in the Spanish workers' movement. **Nuevo Octubre** has begun an English-language newsletter, **Red Chronicle**, to inform revolutionaries in other countries about the situation in Spain. The following material is from the first issue, dated March 1, 1988. It can be reached at Ediciones Nuevo Octubre, Apartado 35171, 28080 Madrid, Spain.

Spanish Revisionist PCE Hold 12th Congress
JULIO ANGUITA, THE NEW REVISIONIST CALIPH

The Spanish revisionist party (PCE, the "Communist Party of Spain") held its 12th Congress in Madrid between February 19 and 22. A lot of fuss was made in the local media during the weeks preceding the Congress on who would be its future General Secretary. Why?

The 11th Congress of the so-called "Communist" Party of Spain (held a few years back) removed Santiago Carrillo (that arch-revisionist and one of the inspirers of the anti-Leninist ideas of Eurocommunism) from his post as General Secretary after several decades in charge. The fiasco of the PCE in the 1982 elections and the crisis which the Party was suffering led to the election of a new General Secretary, Gerardo Iglesias. But these last years have not been years of "wine and roses" for the PCE. The Party suffered new splits (Carrillo established his own Party -- the PTE -- with his loyalists, and an openly pro-Soviet party [the PCPE] was set up with the economic support of the Soviet Union and the revisionist embassies in Madrid). The internal battles led hundreds of rank-and-file members to leave the Party. Many of its cadres ran to the day-to-day increasingly bureaucratic apparatus of the social-democratic PSOE. The financial situation of the Party, according to the report submitted to the 12th Congress, is "very serious", with a debt exceeding a thousand million pesetas!

Under this situation how could the PCE, in the words of a journalist, try by all means not to perish in a cemetery's peace? Once again, a pack of names, to replace Iglesias, started to tinkle. At first, all candidates denied their interest in becoming General Secretary. But a name had been sounding strongly: Julio Anguita. At the break of Monday, February 22 the Spanish revisionist party gave birth to its new leader: Anguita.

45-years-old, a school teacher born in Malaga, Anguita is one of the few revisionist cadres

capable today of preventing the PCE's definite collapse. With his "philosophical" and populist oratory, he managed to be elected Mayor of the city of Cordoba in 1979 (receiving from then onwards the nickname of "red caliph"). His ascending sprint has not stopped as leader of the Andalusian branch of the IU (United Left), the electoral platform set up by the revisionists in the last elections, which summons around the PCE a series of small social-democratic circles and "personalities" and the pro-Soviet PCPE and which allowed the revisionists to control a number of Andalusian towns after the 1987 elections to the city councils.

Now as new General Secretary of the PCE, Anguita will try to transplant his personal success in Andalusia to his Party, making as many efforts as possible to attract to the United Left all those who disagree with the present social-democratic government. The absence of an organized revolutionary alternative to the IU may well maintain the PCE's foundations.

The PCE's 12th Congress went without sleep in order to elect a new General Secretary, but had no problems in fixing its political lines, a revisionist policy far away from Marxism-Leninism, which the PCE drags along for several decades. Among other decisions, the Congress "declared its support on contributing to a coordinated international action of communists, socialists, social-democrats and progressive people from Europe", "renounced the idea of establishing an international organization of communist parties", and several similar resolutions.

In the corridors of the building where the Spanish revisionists held its 12th Congress the different "families" discussed who to choose as General Secretary. Outside, a few meters from the gate, the works of V.I. Lenin piled up on a table and none of the assistants paid attention to them.

<>

SPANISH WORKERS FIGHT JOB LOSS

The following is article based largely on news from **Strikes and Workplace News in Red Chronicle**.

Factories, mines and mills are closing all over Spain. Workers in many areas are launching mass actions against the loss of jobs. The unemployment rate in Spain now stands at 21%, the highest in Europe. All this is a big exposure of the anti-worker policies of the ruling social-democratic party.

On February 8, the workers of the Euskalduna shipyard in Bilbao barricaded a bridge as part of a protest against loss of jobs. Then on February 26 they set up barricades in the same place and set them afire. One policeman was injured in a fight with the workers. Later the workers marched through the city to the government headquarters. They were joined by a demonstration of students. Before the demonstrators reached the government offices they were attacked by police. The workers and students repelled the police with stones and metal objects.

Miners from the "Josefina" pit in the province of León are protesting the proposed job cuts in that area. Local authorities have announced that 1,000 mining jobs will disappear in the province this year. On February 11 the "Josefina" miners

cut the highway between Madrid and Coruna by setting fire to rubber tires in the roadway. Then on February 12 they marched through Ponferrada, disrupting traffic for two hours.

Workers of the ASTANO shipyard in Ferrol, northwest Spain, are struggling to defend their jobs. On February 20 the workers organized a sit-down on the main rail line to Ferrol. Police tried to disperse them and arrested eight. The workers then demonstrated outside company offices until the arrested workers were set free.

On February 7th, 20,000 workers from all over Galicia demonstrated in the city of Santiago against factory closings in this region.

The Socialist Workers Party of Spain (PSOE) has ruled Spain since 1982 and has been known as one of Europe's strongest social-democratic parties. But its anti-worker policies are now becoming so blatant that at its last congress the PSOE's own trade union bureaucrats felt compelled to complain. Many workers wonder if there is any difference between the PSOE's policies and those of a conservative bourgeois "monetarist" like Britain's Margaret Thatcher. <>

MEANWHILE, SPANISH SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY STRENGTHENS THE REPRESSIVE APPARATUS

The following items are taken from the **Other News** section of **Red Chronicle**.

*The Police Gazette published on February 13 the decision of the Minister of the Interior, the social-democrat Jose Barrionuevo, granting the Golden Medal for Police Merits to Jesus Martinez Torres, General Commissary of Information, for "carrying out extraordinary services in behalf of public order". Some months ago, several anti-fascist denounced Martinez as having tortured them while a member of Franco's political police, BPS. At present Martinez has testified at Court regarding the spying of his department on political parties.

*The social-democratic PSOE group at the Spanish Parliament has presented several amendments to the new legislation which will replace the present Anti-Terrorist Law. One of the amendments allows the Minister of the Interior or the

Director of the State Security "to order the inspection of mail and listen to telephone calls in the course of investigation of activities of armed bands or terrorist or rebellious elements for a period of 3 months, capable of being extended for the same period".

*In the letter delivered by the Spanish ambassador to NATO to its General Secretary, Lord Carrington, dated 18 January -- and published now -- the social-democratic Government accepts the possibility of Spanish troops intervening in NATO missions outside Spanish territory. In the course of the campaign previous to the referendum to decide Spain's entry in NATO last year, the social-democratic leaders of the PSOE promised that no Spanish soldier would operate outside Spain. <>

SWEDISH MARXIST-LENINISTS ON REFORMIST TRADE UNION BUREAUCRATS

Below is the lead article from **Röd Gryning (Red Dawn)**, paper of the Communist League of Norrköping, #2, 1988. In a letter to the **Workers' Advocate**, the CL of Norrköping explained the background of this article as follows:

"...The 'Dala Uprising' is the popular name for something which is officially called the 'Dala Statement' ... This is a maneuver by the lower strata of the trade union bureaucracy to posture as allegedly opposed to the openly bourgeois policy of the social-democratic government, which was dealt with in the article 'Build the Independent Movement of the Working Class' in **Red Dawn** #2, 1987. (The name comes from the province, Dalarna, where this started.)

"Those hacks, whose only aim is to take control over any kind of dissatisfaction and protests in order to keep it within the framework of the 'Swedish model' (i.e. the corporatist system which has been built up by social-democracy) called for a 'national assembly' which was held in mid-September last year. The statement included a list of demands, which was presented in 'Build ...'. They include, among other things, wage increases (most for those who have lowest wages); a seven hour work day (six hours for shift workers); no to the interference of the government in contract negotiations; and the right for union members to vote on a contract (self-evident, one might think, but in fact there is no such right in Swedish unions since 1938!). Of course, these are progressive demands, which have to be supported --and not just supported, but also actively agitated for among the workers -- but at the same time the 'leadership' of this 'uprising' must be exposed and adequate means for rank-and-file action be organized, if these demands really are to be carried through to the end. Such is our stand."

WAKE THE DALA UPRISING UP!

More than five months have now passed since the national convention in Falun. The negotiations for contracts are going on. But what actually happened with the Dala Statement? Despite trade union organizations containing in all about 300,000 members, the majority of whom are workers, standing behind the Statement, no mass mobilization has been seen. Why?

A popular explanation is that "the working class is passive". There may be some truth in that, in so far as social-democracy does pacify people. The alpha and omega of reformism is class collaboration, which stands in direct contradiction to militancy and mass mobilization even for purely economic demands. Instead, it is based on bureaucratic regulation, something which presupposes rule from above and absence of democracy in and for the union. Even the unconscious worker feels this, spontaneously, through his very situation in life.

Is it, then, so strange if many people regard the trade union as "they", as an authority colossus, instead of identifying themselves with it as their own organization?

But what then does the leadership of the Dala Statement try to do about this? They mainly concentrate themselves on lobbying inside the apparatus". They lay stress on the "internal union" character of the Statement, oppose ideas about independent rank-and-file committees and try to narrow everything into being just a matter of about one thousand crowns more a month.

Although the Dala Statement of today is just a ripple on the surface, it is nevertheless unique in itself -- that so broad masses of workers oppose the cutback policy and want to give this organizational expressions. This is the embryo of a proletarian united front from below -- a mass movement independent of party and union affiliation. Something which would be very difficult for both the social-democrats and the existing "left" parties to

control and direct. Therefore, it is in their interest to keep the Dala Statement inside the given framework of the union apparatus, obeying its rules in the main.

Here lies, we think, a not unimportant part of the reason for the passivity in the ongoing contract movement. But there is not only one line, but two which are contrary to each other. We communists can never see the union apparatus, and what belongs to it, as some kind of fetish. The important thing is the rank-and-file mobilization. We must organize the struggle independent of and against the union hacks, break all those frames of party affiliation and group egoism, which split the working class, and use all methods of struggle that are suitable according to the circumstances, and then not least wildcat strikes and similar actions. Something which, in its turn, requires that the fire is directed also against the labor court and the entire anti-union legislation. Only in this way can the Dala Statement win success! <>

Also in Red Dawn, #2, 1988

*The continuation of last issue's article criticizing the line of the 9th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania. This article noted that the big campaigns to revolutionize the life of the country, which took place in the 1960's and 70's, have not continued; moreover, there are signs that their achievements have been fading away. Some reforms, carried out as a result of discussions about how revisionist degeneration took place in the

USSR and the People's Democracies of eastern Europe, have even been taken back. But, the article states, it does not yet have enough facts on the socio-economic situation in Albania and so its observations are only fragmentary.

*Speech on the Arias plan and the tasks of the solidarity movement delivered by a comrade of the CL of Norrköping at a public meeting in Uppsala on Feb. 11, held jointly with the sympathizers' association of the CP of Iran. (Slides from the MLP, USA solidarity tour to Nicaragua were also shown at this meeting.)

*"Don't Give Up the Streets to Reaction", translation of an article that originally appeared in **Prensa Proletaria**, journal of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua.

*Translations of some articles from the **Workers' Advocate** on Nicaragua, revolutionary Kurdistan, and the stand of the Arab regimes towards the Palestinian struggle.

*A commentary by a sympathizer of the CP of Iran on a recent TV program which glorified the Khomeini regime.

To get in touch with **Red Dawn** or the Communist League of Norrköping (NKF), write:

NKF
Box 190 15
161 19 Bromma
SWEDEN <>

A COMMENT ON SOME VIEWS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN ON SOCIALISM

The revisionists in the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe are busy dragging through the mud the ideas of Marxist, scientific socialism. Their countries are capitalist, showing all the features of capitalism in crisis and decay. But instead of admitting that they are running capitalist societies, the revisionists keep up the signboard of

socialism. And behind such slogans as "socialist rejuvenation", "perestroika", and the "further development of socialism", the revisionists deal with their stagnation and crisis by adopting more and more openly capitalist methods.

The "reform" programs in the revisionist countries have only added to the clamor from the

avowed defenders of capitalism that socialism doesn't work. Thus the revisionists help the capitalists spread the message that the workers are better off to accept the status quo. They suggest that the workers should abandon the struggle for a society run by the working class and organized according to the needs and interests of the working majority.

The Stand of the Revolutionary Communists

This campaign against socialism is a new challenge before the class-conscious workers and all those who believe in striving for a new, socialist world. And in many countries, revolutionary communists are rising to this challenge. The Marxist-Leninists who reject revisionism are standing up against the capitalist-revisionist assault upon socialism.

To fight this offensive the revolutionary Marxist-Leninists are faced with several key tasks which are being carried out to varying extents.

**In the working class and revolutionary movements, they uphold the perspective of socialism. There must be a relentless criticism of the disaster which capitalism has brought to the masses. The class struggle at the center of economic and political questions must be brought to light. The revolutionary communists oppose the attempts of reformists and even of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries to limit the goal of the toilers to tinkering with and refining capitalism. They spread agitation for the socialist alternative and work for the socialist education of the working class.

** The Marxist-Leninists stand for a workers' socialism which is distinct from the state capitalism of the revisionists and the welfare agencies of the liberal bourgeoisie. They denounce the revisionist garbage being promoted as socialist renewal, market socialism, etc. by Gorbachev or other traitors to the working class.

** Besides the topical exposures of the nature of today's revisionist countries, the anti-revisionists also are dealing with the history and theory of socialism. They are excavating the actual Marxist-Leninist view of socialism from underneath the petrified layers of revisionist and reformist distortions and they are striving to sum up the lessons that should be drawn from past efforts by the revolutionary working class to build new societies.

In this regard, one of the main issues is how capitalism was restored in the Soviet Union. The revolutionary communists uphold the earth-shaking legacy of working class rule ushered in by the October Revolution in 1917. They also hold that this path-breaking experiment in workers' rule only lasted a certain time. Soviet society eventually degenerated and the Soviet Union became a capi-

talist country. Recognition of the capitalist nature of the present-day Soviet Union separates revolutionary Marxist-Leninists from the revisionists and Trotskyists who prettify the present-day Soviet Union or China, Poland, etc. as either socialist or some form of workers' rule.

In the anti-revisionist movement, a new historical study of the Soviet Union has only just begun. It is not being pursued as an academic exercise but as a weapon to strengthen the workers' movement and the struggle against revisionism. Thus it goes hand in hand with taking part in the current-day class struggle.

Revolutionary communist forces in different countries have begun to publish materials on the question of the Soviet Union. Some differences in views exist. But we are confident that, through the course of international collaboration and discussion, common assessments on many key issues will emerge. We believe that this will be part of the process of reinspiring the world movement with the scientific socialism of Marx, Engels, and Lenin.

Our Party is taking part in this effort. We welcome other forces who are also involved in it. And we look forward to fighting shoulder-to-shoulder against the world bourgeoisie and world revisionism with these forces, at the same time as we share ideas, views, research and conclusions with them on the theoretical and historical issues.

The CP of Iran on Soviet History

The Communist Party of Iran is one of the anti-revisionist groups that has published studies on the history of the Soviet Union. Most of this material is in the Farsi language but some of it is in English.

The CPI's writings on this subject have been discussion articles. The comrades of the CP of Iran have not yet come to party-wide agreement on the question of Soviet history. Nevertheless we have seen certain themes come up repeatedly in these articles and in our discussions with CPI comrades. There are some views being expressed which concern us. We wish to speak on one of these questions in this article.

The analysis of the CPI denigrates the role of large-scale production in the building of socialism. They tend to counterpose industrialization to socialism. It seems to us that they use a rather abstract approach to the study of the Soviet Union. This approach downplays consideration of many of the concrete features of the sharp class struggles of the time. One aspect of this approach is that it ends up condemning the program of industrialization of Russia, but let us briefly examine the general approach first.

The CPI stresses that it puts the emphasis on the economic conditions and the relation of classes. For example, as comrade Hamid Taghvaei puts it in his theses:

"2- In analyzing the history of the development of Russia after the [October 1917] revolution, like any other scientific analysis based on historical materialism, one must at the beginning and as the main key for understanding and criticizing the question, investigate the economic conditions and the objective interests and relations of the two main classes in the Russian society (i.e., the proletariat and the bourgeoisie)." ("Introductory Theses on the Question of the Soviet Union", **Bolshevik Message**, #8, May 1987, underlining as in the original. This is one of the most authoritative statements in English of CPI's views on this subject.)

Very well. But what does comrade Taghvaei regard as the economic conditions and the relations of classes? Economic backwardness, the form of production, how the working class was mobilized to solve the issues of production, how the working class actually supplanted the bourgeoisie in the factories, or in the state machine, or elsewhere, are all ruled out in this article and elsewhere as secondary issues. The issue of the nature of Russia as a peasant country, one of the main and overriding economic factors, is disregarded; it is mainly not talked about. In the above quotation, for example, it is stated that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are the two main classes, which slurs over the majority of the population.

The above passage by Comrade Taghvaei continues as follows:

"The form of the state, goals and policies of the classes, the social and cultural relations and the position and role of each class in the political developments of the Russian society can be investigated and criticized only after bringing to light the objective interests and positions in the sphere of social production." (*Ibid.*)

Following this stand, Comrade Taghvaei goes on in the theses to rule out such questions as workers' control, the policies towards production, the transformation of small-peasant production, etc. as secondary issues. It seems to us that in the name of economic analysis, this and other CPI articles tend to rule out not only political factors, but economic ones as well.

What then is being referred to as the economic conditions? For one thing, it is the industrializa-

tion of Russia. This is called the program of the bourgeoisie and is counterposed to abolishing commodity production and building socialism.

Counterposing Socialism to Industrialization

The CPI comrades define the plan for the industrialization of Russia as a capitalist program. The CPI comrades don't say that the problem is that there was something flawed in the way the industrialization plan was conceived or actually implemented, but that the program of industrialization meant a capitalist path of development.

One of the places where this view of the CPI comrades is succinctly stated is in the document quoted above. Part of the eleventh thesis states:

"The Russian big bourgeoisie always (from the time of the 1905 revolution) wanted to eliminate the backwardness and the obstacles in the way of growth of capital in Russia and of industrial development in that country. **The concept and ideal of complete and all-sided development of capitalism in Russia, and the development and expansion of industry and productive forces, was a notion which the Mensheviks and even 'old' Bolsheviks did not criticize and dissociate themselves from, and for the entire Russian social-democracy 'socialist economy' was blurred and unclear against 'industrial development and growth of Russia.'**" (*Ibid.*, emphasis added)

The Russian Marxists and the Question of Industrialization

This passage chides the Russian Marxists for supporting the idea of the industrialization of Russia. It is suggested that this meant being susceptible to the program of the bourgeoisie.

It is true that there were currents of "Marxist" opinion which held that the workers should support the capitalists because they were developing the productive forces in Russia. Such was the stand for example of the "legal Marxism" of P. Struve which came up in the 1890's. Eventually Struve was one of the founders of the liberal monarchist party called the Cadets (short for Constitutional-Democratic Party).

But Lenin and other Russian Marxists opposed the liberal bourgeois views of Struve and company. In this struggle, the Russian Marxists emphasized that recognizing the progressive character of capitalism over pre-capitalist economic forms didn't mean giving up the class struggle and supporting the bourgeoisie.

Later the Mensheviks came up to champion the idea that after a democratic revolution, the proletariat shouldn't fight for socialism but allow the bourgeoisie to further develop Russian capitalism and industry.

But the CPI comrades aren't just pointing to the faults of the liberal "legal Marxists" and the Menshevik reformists. They are also criticizing the Bolsheviks on this question. This criticism is reiterated in another article where a CPI comrade suggests that this weakness existed in the 1918 program of the Bolshevik Party. In response to the views of another group, he writes:

"...I can neither agree with the comrades about their assertion that the 1918 program of the Bolshevik Party (which contained emphasis on the abolition of commodity production and money) could be regarded as a program embodying the necessary measures for the building of socialism. The essence of the matter is: precisely what measures are necessary to abolish commodity production? **The eventual capitalist course of development of Russian society did not simply infringe the 1918 program, it conformed with those peculiar (and incorrect) interpretations of socialism, prevalent at the time, which considered the ever greater and the ever extensive development of the productive forces as the determining step in the abolition of commodity relations, and thereby could even claim that they were thoroughly faithful to the 1918 program.**" (Iraj Azarin, "A critique of OMLWP's article: To get to socialism we need a Marxist-Leninist analysis of Soviet Union," Bolshevik Message, No. 9, June 1987.)

But comrade Azarin is wrong to counterpose socialism to industrialization. The Russian Marxists, Lenin and the Bolsheviks, were right in not counterposing 'socialist economy' to 'industrial development'. They were right to hold that industrial development and the growth of productive forces under proletarian state power were necessary for moving towards socialism. One could not speak of the transition to socialism, one could not speak of building the economic basis of socialism, without carrying through the industrialization of the Soviet Union.

This wasn't just some peculiar view of the Russian Marxists. It was a basic idea of Marxism from its earliest days. Large-scale production always played a big role in the conception of scientific socialism.

The Communist Manifesto

The Communist Manifesto is the first program of the international communist movement. Here Marx and Engels wrote:

"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; **and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.**" (Emphasis added.)

And the Manifesto also spelled out that "In bourgeois society, living labor is but a means to increase accumulated labor. In Communist society, accumulated labor is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the laborer."

It seems to us that to "widen, enrich, and promote the existence of the laborers," there has to be expansion of the productive means of society.

In other writings where Marx and Engels talked of socialism, they also said that when the workers take power, the building of socialism will involve an expansion of the productive forces of the society. Indeed, a basic Marxist criticism of capitalism is that while capitalism brings into being modern means of production, i.e. large-scale socialized industrial production, capitalist appropriation puts fetters on its capacities. The proletarian revolution breaks these fetters. It opens the way to a wider development of the productive means, which can then serve the needs of the working majority.

The Bolsheviks Continued This Marxist Tradition

Not at all surprisingly, the Russian Marxists held to the same stand. And after the October revolution, there are innumerable places where Lenin pointed out the essential need for industrialization as the basis for socialism. In one speech he put it this way:

"Large-scale industry is the one and only real basis upon which we can multiply our resources and build a socialist society. Without large factories, such as capitalism has created, without highly-developed large-scale industry, socialism is impossible anywhere; still less is it possible in a peasant country...." ("Report on the Tax in Kind" at the Tenth All-Russia Conference of the RCP(B), Collected Works, Vol. 32, p.

408)

Indeed Lenin paid a great deal of attention to working out a plan for industrialization based on the electrification of Russia. This was the famous GOSPLAN. In connection with this plan, at the 8th Congress of the Soviets, Lenin coined the famous agitational slogan,

"Communism is Soviet power plus electrification."

This plan was the starting point for the industrialization of Russia under the Soviet power of the working class.

Why Does Socialism Need Industrialization?

Why was industrialization needed?

Capitalism introduced large-scale industrial production. Under capitalism, it is used to exploit the working class. And factories are often prisons where workers are run ragged, poisoned, injured, and regimented. Nevertheless the class-conscious proletariat does not reject industrialization. Socialism turns the factories from yokes on the workers' shoulders into instruments of the workers' will. Marxism showed that socialism requires the utilization and extension of large-scale production.

There are a number of reasons for this.

***We've already noted that proletarian revolution has the task of bursting the fetters retarding production. If socialism is going to provide for the needs of the toilers, it must increase the productive capacity of society. That can only take place with the use of large-scale production and industry.

***The backbone for building socialism is the working class. It is the development of industry which creates a modern proletar

at. It not only creates the working class numerically, but also give the working class a different character than other toiling classes. Large-scale production under capitalism not only tortures and cripples the workers, but also steels them into a united army, breaks them out of the narrow framework of individual production, and helps prepare them for the disciplined building of common undertakings, such as their own party and such as a society based on cooperation. The torture is removed under socialism, but large-scale production continues to play a vital role in forming the working class and its character.

***Socialist planned economy -- and even more so communist economy which replaces the production of commodities altogether by planned production -- requires large-scale production. Individual and petty production spontaneously tends towards anarchy and capitalist market relations. The development of industry is one of the most

powerful force pushing forward the development of large-scale production in all fields. For example, it is essential for providing the basis for the development of collective and large-scale methods of farming.

***Indeed, in a largely agrarian country, a vital issue is the transformation of small-scale peasant farming into large-scale socialized agriculture. As long as small farming exists, there is a powerful economic basis for capitalism. As Lenin put it,

"...small-scale production is still widespread in the world, and small-scale production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale." (Lenin, "Left-wing Communism -- An Infantile Disorder", Chapter 2)

The step-by-step transformation of individual peasant farming into large-scale socialized agriculture requires the support of industry. This transformation can only be undertaken when there is an economic basis for it, when it can actually improve the situation facing farming.

Russia was a largely rural and peasant country, dominated by individual peasant farming, throughout the 1920's. The articles we have seen from the CPI in the Soviet Union evade this important issue. In quite a few places they pass over the existence of the peasant majority. For example, we have seen above that comrade Taghvae's theses speak of "two main classes in Russian society: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat." But the question of the petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry, cannot be bypassed.

In regard to the relationship of industrialization to the agrarian question, Lenin wrote:

"7) The victory of socialism over capitalism and the consolidation of socialism may be regarded as ensured only when the proletarian state power, having completely suppressed all resistance by the exploiters and assured itself complete subordination and stability, has reorganized the whole of industry on the lines of large-scale collective production and on a modern technical basis (founded on the electrification of the entire economy). This alone will enable the cities to render such radical assistance, technical and social, to the backward and scattered rural population as will create the material basis necessary to boost the productivity of agricultural and of farm labor in general, thereby encouraging the small farmer by the force of example and in their own interests to adopt

large-scale, collective and mechanized agriculture." ("Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question for the Second Congress of the Communist International", Collected Works, Vol. 31 p. 161)

***There is also the important question of standing up to the pressure from counterrevolutionary capitalist states. In Russia, for example, industrialization was vital for both military defense against the hostile capitalist world encircling it and to prevent Russia from becoming an economic satellite of the more industrially developed capitalist countries.

Two Types of Industrialization

The articles from the CPI comrades on the Soviet Union, however, refer to the program of industrialization as the bourgeois program for Russia. Comrade Taghvae's theses, for example, talk of the bourgeoisie infiltrating Soviet society and putting this program into effect. He writes, in thesis 11:

"...[the] Russian bourgeoisie, which after the revolution used to hide its nationalist aspirations under the name of revolution and socialism and had its sympathizers, and political representatives in various party and state institutions, in the struggle for determining and adopting those economic goals and policies, which were to be put into effect by the ruling party and state, could finally promote its own aims and policies. It was able to materialize the old ideal of a 'developed, industrial and independent Russia on a par with western countries' under the name of 'moving towards socialism and building socialist economy'. In brief, the socialist revolution in Russia was defeated in the face of its economic tasks." (underlining added)

Comrade Taghvae does not indicate what defects or distortions of socialist industrialization were carried out. Recall that he regards this economic issue as "the main key" and other issues, such as the form of the state, the policies of the various classes as things that

"can be investigated and criticized only after bringing to light the objective interests and positions in the sphere of social production." (Ibid., see thesis #2)

And it seems that thesis #6 clarifies that such issues as

"workers' democracy, workers' control over production, mechanism of workers' mass participation in the state..."

are among those issues that are also secondary to

the key issue. So that the issue ends up to be the program of industrialization in itself is identified with the bourgeoisie.

But this misses an important point. There are two paths or roads to industrialization, two types of industrialization. One path is by the road of capitalist slavery. The other is by the road of the proletarian power on the road to communism. They are very different paths. The whole point is how to distinguish between capitalism and state-capitalism on the one hand, and socialism on the other. The whole point is to know how to industrialize without slipping into capitalism.

It is possible for power to slip from the hands of the proletariat. That is indeed what happened in Russia. Lenin was conscious of such dangers. Referring to a particular threat at that time, he said at the 11th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1922:

"...'I am in favor of supporting the Soviet government,' says Ustryalov, although he was a Constitutional-Democrat, a bourgeois, and supported intervention [against the Soviet power]. 'I am in favor of supporting Soviet power because it has taken the road that will lead it to the ordinary bourgeois state.'

"This is very useful, and I think that we must keep it in mind. ... We must say frankly that such candid enemies are useful. We must say frankly that the things Ustryalov speaks about are possible. History knows all sorts of metamorphoses. ...

"... The enemy is speaking the class truth and is pointing to the danger that confronts us, and which the enemy is striving to make inevitable." (Collected Works, vol. 33, pp. 286-7)

But the point is, how is this danger to be fought? It may seem simple to say that industrialization was the program of the bourgeoisie (or, at least, of part of the bourgeoisie). But in this case, what about other social and political issues?

For example, how was the proletariat to deal with serfdom. The abolition of serfdom was the "program of the bourgeoisie", or even of tsardom itself, in the same sense in which one could say that industrialization was the program of the bourgeoisie. But the Russian Marxists insisted on the difference between the revolutionary-democratic smashing of serfdom and feudalism and the bourgeois-tsarist program of preserving as much as possible of the old filth and of the oppression of the peasantry. Were they wrong to distinguish two different paths on this question?

Or again, consider the elimination of the

autocracy. Here too there were two paths: the bourgeois program of converting the autocracy into a bourgeois, constitutional monarchy and the proletarian path of revolution. The proletariat wanted a people's revolution against autocracy. The class-conscious proletariat knew that a democratic revolution, no matter how radical, is still in its economic essence a bourgeois revolution. It clears away the obstacles to capitalist development. But the Bolsheviks held that the democratic revolution would also clear the way for the class struggle and for the revolutionary organization of the proletariat. It would open the way for the socialist revolution.

If the revolutionary proletariat of Russia was right to counterpose its own program to that of the bourgeoisie on such issues as the freeing of the peasantry and the elimination of the autocracy, then why not also on the issue of industrialization?

The First Five-Year Plan

But by simply labelling industrialization as the bourgeois program, the CPI's articles slur over the issue of how socialist industrialization and capitalist industrialization differ. This can also be seen in how the CPI's articles deal with the first five-year plan in Russia. They tend to regard the key turning point in the Soviet Union to take place in the late 1920's with the adoption of the first five year plan, and they are also skeptical about the Sixth Congress of the CI of 1928.

But although they denounce the first five-year plan, we are not yet aware of much of any concrete assessment of what was wrong with it.

For example, comrade Taghvaei's theses state:

"Until the late 20s, the Bolshevik Party and Soviet state, although having committed numerous mistakes, had a proletarian character. The mistakes of the Bolshevik Party were reversible and correctable until this time. But by carrying out the first five-year plan the way for return was blocked and the ruling party and state became subservient to bourgeois goals and policies and gained an anti-worker character."
(Thesis 12, part d)

In other places too, the CPI comrades have made the same point about the first five-year plan. They refer to this plan as a program for the capitalist development of the economy, a program which sealed the consolidation of capitalism in the Soviet Union. We hope that the CPI comrades will publish in English some details of their explanation of why they think the first five year plan was a capitalist program. But so far their

views seem rather abstract. It is not at all clear what the CPI comrades are saying should have been done concretely in the Soviet Union in the late 20's.

Our Party has published some general views on the degeneration of socialism in the Soviet Union. We think that the crucial turn came in the mid-30's. In the last several years we have published extensive materials showing that at this time the Soviet leadership championed a rightward turn in the line for the international communist movement. We believe that the same rightward turn took place inside the Soviet Union as well. (See "On the 70th anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia: Defend the principles of scientific socialism" in the **Supplement** for Dec. 20, 1987)

Our historical study so far leads us to believe that positive steps in socialist construction were taken in the period of the first five year plan and that there were major accomplishments. At the same time, problems also emerged in this period. The rightward turn in the mid-30's appears, in part, as an erroneous response to the difficulties of the preceding period -- an attempt to resolve these difficulties through abandoning revolutionary principle.

Thus the period of the first five year-plan deserves careful attention. We certainly don't object to the CPI comrades giving this period a close study. The final word has not yet been said on this period. Our worry is that the CPI's articles have not in fact looked deeply into what happened and don't give a concrete analysis of this period. We don't think such generalities as talking about industrialization being a bourgeois plan bring one a single step closer to understanding what went on.

Advancing to Socialism and Communism Requires An Economic Basis

While counterposing industrialization to the abolition of commodity economy, in saying that the issue in 1928 was to establish "socialist economy" instead of industrialization, and similar such formulations, the CPI comrades haven't described what steps should have been taken to accomplish this. They sometimes describe this as the abolition of wage labor or the elimination of commodity production. But what these things would entail isn't described any more concretely than that. It is not even clear to us whether the CPI comrades are saying that such could have been carried out in the late 1920's in Russia or whether some other steps were needed at that time in order to obtain the abolition of wage labor later.

Nevertheless it appears that what the CPI com-

rades are suggesting is that a higher stage of socialist society should have been established.

But when they discuss this, they don't deal with the need to abolish want, scarcity, and the prevalence of petty production before commodity production and wage labor can be abolished. And to abolish scarcity requires a high development of labor productivity and the economy.

It is true that workers' rule must immediately introduce measures to improve the situation of the masses. There should be more equitable distribution than exists under the capitalist regime. The whip of starvation and insecurity over the workers must be eliminated. Socialism can only exist as part of a huge advance by the working masses. But, in the long run, in the final analysis, the extent of this advance is limited by how far the working class can prove in practice that it can run the economy better than the bourgeoisie.

From time immemorial, the exploited masses have dreamed of a more just and equal society. There have been many experiments to bring such visions into reality. And many failures. It is only with the emergence of large-scale industry that for the first time the possibility has been created to establish a more just society based on the cooperation of the working people. Only this kind of productive system allows for the social ownership of the means of production and the elimination of private ownership. Only this brings into existence the higher productivity of labor which makes socialism into a real possibility. Without this any attempts to introduce a just order will end up as utopian failures.

Nor is it sufficient to say that the carrying out of a proletarian revolution proves that all the conditions are sufficient. Comrade Taghvaei argues as follows:

"...if the objective conditions in Russia had matured enough to allow the proletariat, as the motive force of socialist revolution, to step in the struggle and take the political power, then one cannot go back again to the 'backwardness' and 'immaturity' of the objective conditions in order to explain the defeat and inconclusiveness of this revolution." (Thesis 9.)

He is right that the socialist revolution wasn't doomed in Russia because of backwardness. But only if the working class took that backwardness seriously and overcame it.

Lenin, for example, denounced the view that Russian economic backwardness prevented socialism. He stated:

"Infinitely stereotyped, for instance, is the argument they [petty-bourgeois democrats speaking in the name of

Marxism] learned by rote ...that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain 'learned' gentlemen among them put it, the objective economic premises for socialism do not exist in our country." ("Our Revolution", Collected Works, vol. 33, pp. 477-8)

But he doesn't go on to advocate ignoring Russian backwardness, but for revolutionary development to overcome it:

"If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism ..., why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?" (Ibid., pp. 478-9)

In conclusion

We welcome the interest of the CPI comrades in analyzing the degeneration of socialism in the Soviet Union. But we think that they are making a theoretical mistake by counterposing socialism to industrialization and channeling the study of socialism away from the concrete issues of the class struggle.

At the present time, when they are not face to face with the practical questions of socialist construction, this error has only limited significance. Furthermore, the CPI lays stress on mobilizing the the industrial proletariat in Iran. It strives to organize the working class as the vanguard of the revolution. This provides the CPI with the class instinct and class interest to sort out various problems of theory. We believe that when the Iranian workers are faced with the practical tasks of state power, the CPI comrades will be quickly forced to give up their mistaken notion about industrialization. But if today they build up a whole theoretical edifice based on this notion and fail to deal with the concrete issues of socialism, they will be losing the chance to prepare themselves for the practical issues that will face them and possibly weaken other theoretical work and agitation.

We have published these comments as part of the developing cooperation between our Party and the CPI and the increasing exchange of views. We hope that they are of some use to the Iranian comrades in their own study and theoretical work and to our Party comrades as well. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration with the CPI in the struggle against world capitalism and revisionism. <>