

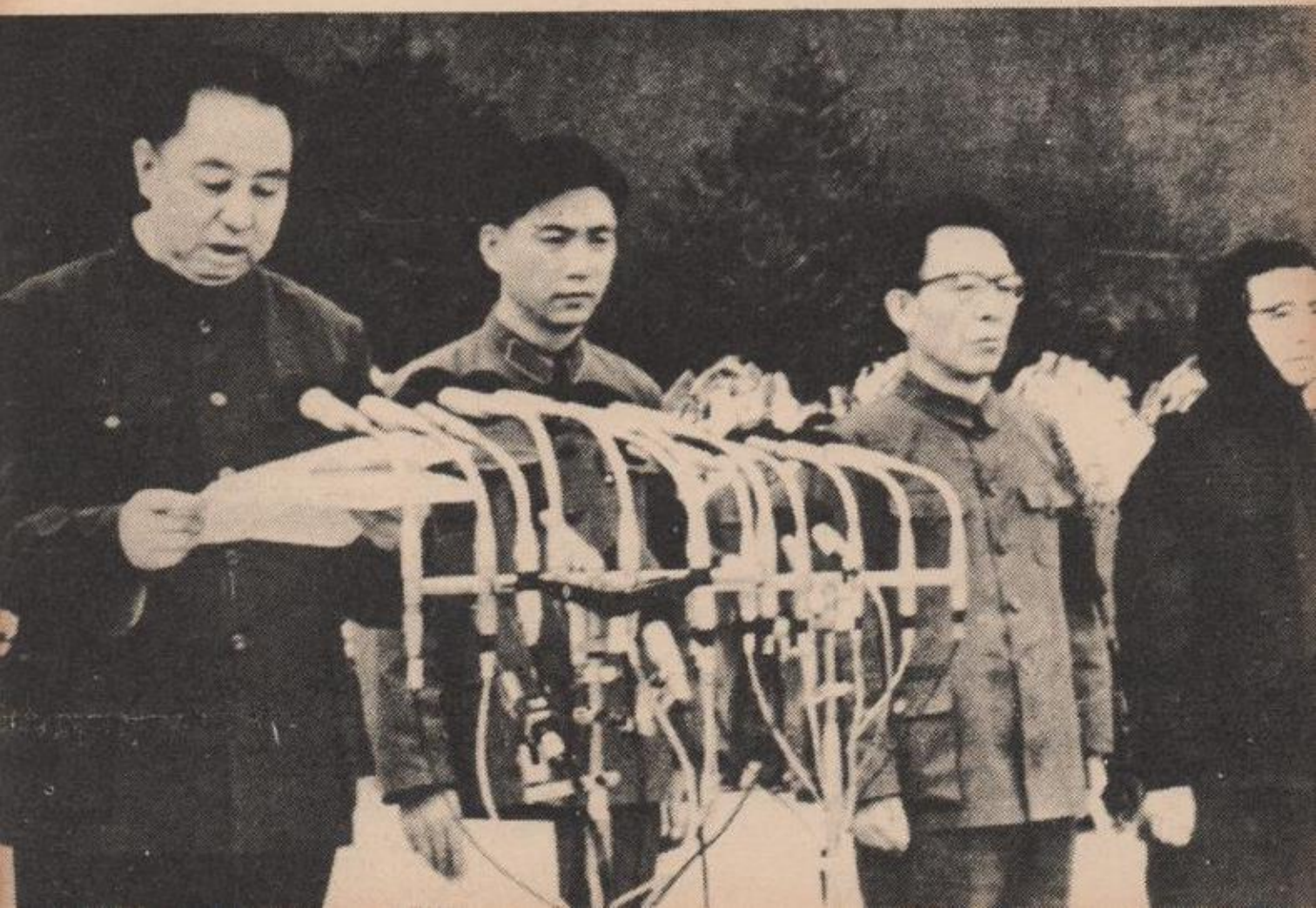
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the shake-up in china





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china

OUSTER OF THE "RADICALS"



Wang Hung-wen



Chiang Ching



C. Chun-chiao

If current reports are confirmed, it appears that the so-called radical faction of the leadership of the Chinese Communist party has been ousted from power immediately after being deprived of its unassailable protection by the death of Mao. There can scarcely be any illusions about the character of this "radical" faction. It does not at all represent an expression, even an indirect one, of the "left Red Guards," the advanced wing of the mass mobilizations that occurred during the cultural revolution. On the contrary, it is a faction of the bureaucracy that won its stripes by repressing both rebellious workers (in particular in Shanghai) and the independent Red Guards. It was this repression that enabled Mao to make his right turn at the end of the cultural revolution, a turn that affected both foreign and domestic policy.

The elimination of Chiang Ching and her comrades thus appears as a conflict within the bureaucracy. At this point it is impossible to determine whether one of the two factions desires — or could be led — to "normalize" relations with the Kremlin, a temptation that has solid objective bases on which to arise sooner or later. It is probable that the "radicals" will enjoy some support from the broad masses during the immediate period ahead. But this does not mean that the victory of the "moderate" wing of the apparatus will leave the masses indifferent or will fail to have deep repercussions on the evolution of the situation in the People's Republic of China.

First of all, the most politicized layers of the proletariat and youth are exhibiting deep and mounting hostility to the apparatus as a whole. Resentment against social inequality and bureaucratic privilege is widespread. The temporary "victors" in the succession struggle identify with the line of consolidation of the apparatus and its privileges. The resistance of the masses to this line will not be long in coming.

Second, the profound disarray the elimination of the "radicals" will provoke among the "Maoists" (and not only in China itself) will further loosen the leadership's control over the political and ideological thinking of the middle-layer cadres and rank and file. This thinking will become increasingly critical, even in regard to Maoism as such.

At bottom, what is becoming increasingly clear in the present political dynamic is that in China, unlike the USSR in the 1930s and 1950s, the independent mobilizations of the masses who are not depoliticized or demoralized will intensify and this will shake up the inner-bureaucratic maneuvering. In this sense, Mao has already died a second time, and "orthodox" Maoism has perished with him. The rebirth of revolutionary Marxism in a China on the road to political revolution is now on the agenda.

mao tse-tung & the chinese revolution

The article below is a contribution to the discussion of the historical significance and role of Mao Tse-tung and Maoism, a discussion which is a necessary part of this rebirth of Chinese revolutionary Marxism. It is the second and concluding installment of a study by Comrade S.S. Wu. (The first installment appeared in the previous issue of INPRECOR, No. 59, October 7.) It deals with Mao's conception of socialism, the import of the cultural revolution, and the prospects for the post-Mao era. As in the first installment, the quotations from Mao are from the Chinese editions of Mao's collected works and the 1969 collection Long Live Mao Tsetung Thought. Future issues of INPRECOR will offer analyses of the meaning of the latest stages in the factional struggle in the Chinese Communist party.

by S.S. WU

III. MAO'S CONCEPTION OF SOCIALISM

After the ebb of the 1919-23 revolutionary upsurge in Europe, the center of gravity of the world revolution shifted to the underdeveloped countries for a relatively long period. This detour of the world revolution led Mao to conclude empirically that revolution could explode more easily in backward countries than in advanced capitalist ones. He mistakenly held this to be a general historical law, which he then extended to the notion that underdeveloped countries could even achieve socialism more easily than the advanced countries. In his Reading Notes on the Soviet Union's Political Economy he wrote:

"Lenin said, 'For the backward countries the transformation from capitalism to socialism will be more difficult.' Now it seems that this remark is wrong. The fact is that the more backward the economy, the more easy is the transformation from capitalism to socialism; it is not more difficult. The poorer the people, the more they want revolution." Here Mao obviously confused two separate questions. One was the leading role the colonial revolution may play in certain specific historical periods, while the other related to the socialist transformation of the underdeveloped countries. From the fact that the revolution had broken out in the backward countries earlier than in the advanced ones, Mao deduced that the backward countries would achieve socialism at an earlier date. On the one hand this error reflected Mao's historical empiricism. On the other hand it expressed his political thought, which never assimilated the Marxist concept that the transformation from capitalism to socialism would necessarily be a worldwide and organic process. This was the ideological origin of his theory of socialism in one country, national socialism, and his subjective approach to the building of socialism in China.

Mao's notion of socialism in one country is perhaps most graphically expressed in this sentence: "Even if we complete the building of communism, so long as imperialist countries exist, the existence of the state is still necessary." In other words, according to Mao not only so-

cialism but even communism can be achieved before the victory of world revolution. More, a state apparatus can exist in a communist society. This idea of communism in one country is the extreme version of the theory of socialism in one country.

Within this general framework, Mao conceived of the construction of a socialist society as a purely national process: "The correct method (of building socialism — S.S. Wu) is that each country should do its best, should rely on itself, and should try to do this independently to the extent possible, but in principle should not depend on the others, only doing what can be done. In particular, they should develop agriculture by all means. To depend on other countries for food is very dangerous." The expression "very dangerous" is a reflection of Mao's own bitter experience of having to depend on the Soviet Union while surrounded by imperialism. And it was precisely this experience that led him to formulate his policy of self-reliance. As a tactical move in a harsh situation this policy may have been conjuncturally correct. But to extend it to a general orientation for the building of socialism implied rejecting the transformation from capitalism to socialism as a worldwide process. This generalization has an extremely reactionary character, of which Peking's foreign policy is the most recent manifestation.

Mao understood that the productive forces of the old China were fettered by the prevailing relations of production and by imperialist exploitation. Thus, the Chinese revolution was an attempt to eliminate the obstacles to the liberation of China's forces of production. The new relations of production created by the revolution were more advanced than the actual forces of production, which is a contradiction posed in all underdeveloped countries in which the proletarian revolution achieves victory. For revolutionary Marxists this contradiction can be finally resolved only through the victory of the revolution on a world scale. For Mao, though, it could be resolved within China's own borders. The driving force in this process was seen as the subjective and voluntarist will of the population. Hence: "As soon as the communes have strong economic force, complete

a historical assessment



communal ownership can be realized. Then the system of ownership by the whole people can be achieved. We need probably two five year plans for this. We should not be too hasty. This was precisely what was stated in the Peitai Ho resolution. It would take three or four years, five or six years, or even longer. Then it would go through several phases of development, so after fifteen years, twenty years, or longer the socialist communes would develop into communist communes."

In the same talk Mao continued his presentation of the rosy picture: "It took four years, 1953-56, to go from mutual aid teams to advanced cooperatives, which went through several different stages. It may take four years or longer to go from the collective ownership of advanced cooperatives to the collective ownership of the communes. Perhaps it will take five years, six years, seven years, during which a hasty approach should be resisted. The point is to promote the level of production of the poor teams to that of the rich teams. We need a process for this. Since the commune is large and has many production teams, we need a longer period for the process of agricultural mechanization, electrification, communal industrialization, national industrialization, the promotion of the socialist and communist consciousness of the people, the promotion of the ethical and moral qualities of the people, the promotion of the cultural, educational, and technical standard of the people. We have calculated that after four years the production of steel can reach the level of 50 million tons. Next year we will supply one million tons of steel, the year after 2 million tons, the third year 3 million tons to the communes. With these six million tons of steel materials and equipment the communes can probably achieve agricultural mechanization. Therefore, it will be enough for communal industrialization in four, five, six, or seven years. Certainly, this is still the first stage. After that there will be the second and third stages so as to complete socialist construction (which means that it will take fifteen, twenty years or longer)." Mao advanced this schema in 1959. Seventeen years have passed since then, and even communal ownership has not yet been achieved, let alone communal industrialization and mechanization.

This is not to say that we oppose agricultural collectivization and communalization before the victory of world revolution. In fact, the collectivization of agriculture is a foundation stone of the proletarian dictatorship during the transitional period, for without it there is no starting point for the backward countries' developing toward socialism. Agricultural collectivization has two meanings in a transitional society. First, it lays the basis for the advance of the forces of production within the national borders. Second, it represents a tactical policy without which the national transition to socialist property relations in the means of production cannot sustain itself until the victory of the world revolution. In this sense it extends beyond national borders. Mao left this second consideration out of account and believed that socialist construction would be completed in China provided the process of agricultural collectivization was properly completed. And this in turn depended primarily on the mobilization of the revolutionary will of the population. It was in this sense that the policy was subjectivist at bottom.

Mao's conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat was likewise empirically derived. It was not through the experience of the international workers movement, the Paris Commune, the October Revolution, etc., that Mao arrived at his idea of the proletarian dictatorship. Rather, it was through his own experience in the soviet regime in the Chinese countryside during the 1930s and 1940s, combined with his understanding of the so-called proletarian dictatorship that existed in the Soviet Union under Stalin.

As early as 1928 Mao submitted a frank report to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party describing his practical experiences in organizing the regime in the countryside. "Soviets were established on all levels," he wrote, "but mostly in name only. As for the worker and peasant masses, and even the members of the party, most of them do not understand the meaning of the soviet. In many places the Representative Congress of the Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers does not exist. On the village and regional level, and even the county level, the executive committees of the



As Mao Tsetung's body lies in state, workers, peasants, soldiers and others wait to pay their last respects.

soviets are elected by the masses in one way or another. But the mass meetings are poorly organized. That is, there are no real discussions, no political training, and they are easily dominated by intellectuals or opportunists. They cannot understand what a soviet is, that the Representative Congress of Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers is the supreme authority and that the executive committee is only an administrative body when the Representative Congress is not in session. This is the biggest mistake regarding the political apparatus in the border areas. In other places there are Representative Congresses, but they are only regarded as ad hoc bodies for the election of executive committees, which after the elections centralize power and no longer talk about congresses. Real soviet organization does exist, but it is very rare. The reason is that we have insufficient propaganda and education on the soviet as a new political system. The bad dictatorial and authoritarian habits inherited from the feudalist era are still rooted in the consciousness of the masses and even the average party member and cannot be wiped out immediately."

At that time the soviet system of the October Revolution was still fresh in Mao's mind, and he could thus vividly point out the contradictions involved in building a soviet system in the countryside amid the backwardness of the peasantry. But it was also clear that Mao did not understand that the soviet system was the highest expression of the autonomous Russian workers movement, that the soviet system was constructed from top to bottom by the workers movement itself. Mao viewed the peasant "soviets" primarily as creations of the party.

By 1934 he discussed the question of the soviets from a somewhat different angle: "The democracy of the soviet has been developed, but it should be pointed out that in many places it is still very insufficient. The struggle against bureaucratism should be rigorously launched and the rubbish standing between the soviets and the masses should be thrown away. This rubbish is bureaucratism and commandism. The people working for the soviets should carry out the tasks of the soviets based on mobilizing and convincing the people. They

should not use methods of compulsion or command. They should pay attention to every demand and proposition of the people and should not ignore these demands and propositions." Here Mao is no longer stressing the notion that the soviet is the supreme authority expressing the will of the masses. Rather, the soviet is viewed as the vanguard of the masses and his concern is that they play their vanguard role in a non-bureaucratic manner.

This conception of the soviet system was reinforced by the strategy followed by the Chinese Communist party in the third Chinese revolution. The workers movement itself played no independent role in the seizure of power, since the cities were surrounded from the countryside. Thus, the CCP entered the cities as the liberators of the workers, who had not themselves created a soviet system as the highest expression of their own independence. Thus, the Communist party was naturally led to establish a sort of "substitutionist" proletarian dictatorship, which was, moreover, in line with the Maoist conception of the "soviets" that already existed in the countryside. It is in this sense that the proletarian dictatorship in China acquired its deformed expression from the very moment of its appearance; it is in this sense that the Chinese workers state was bureaucratically deformed from birth.

In this regard, Mao's position in defense of the basis of the Chinese bureaucracy was a theoretical and ideological justification and expression of the deformed proletarian dictatorship in which the party substituted for the working class in ruling the country. The reactionary character of this position was not fully exposed as long as the working class remained docile and did not challenge the rule of the party by demanding the direct application of its own power. When the January 1967 events occurred in Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution, Mao complained, "If Shanghai and the whole country are transformed into communes, what should the party do? Where will the party be then? Since there are party members and non-party members in the committees, where shall we place the party? Nevertheless, there should be a party! . . . There should be a party in the communes. Can the commune replace the party?"

The message is clear. The efforts of the workers and students of Shanghai to build their own soviet-type structures from top to bottom represented a challenge to the very existence of the party; the commune system tends to outflank the party's concentrated power. So long as that concentrated power and the consequent bureaucracy is to be preserved, workers democracy can be allowed to find forms of expression only within the limits set forth by the party.

From the sociological standpoint, then, the vision and practice of the proletarian dictatorship under Mao has an affinity with the vision and practice of the Stalinist system. But the two systems differ in their historical formation. Stalin's was imposed in a reaction against the October Revolution and thus rested on a passive or hostile working class. Mao's arose in the upsurge of the revolution and thus enjoyed fraternal relations with the masses to some extent.

IV. MAO AND THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was the most significant political event following the national seizure of power in 1949. Why did Mao initiate it?

First we must understand the nature of the tendency headed by Liu Shao-chi. Fundamentally, it represented the rightist current within the CCP during the so-called transitional period of new democracy. We have already outlined the process of permanent revolution followed by the CCP. (See the first installment of this article, INPRECOR, No. 59, October 7, 1976.) But did the CCP, which had been educated on the programmatic basis of Mao's theory of new democracy, shift to the policy of permanent revolution as smoothly as did the empirical Mao? Did the old political line of the CCP not clash with the new line, which contradicted the previous one?

As early as June 14, 1950, during the second meeting of the National Committee of the People's Political Consultative Congress, Liu Shao-chi expressed himself as follows: "The policy we adopt to preserve the rich peasant economy is surely not a temporary one, but rather a long-term policy. That is to say, the rich peasant economy will be preserved throughout the whole period of new democracy. The rich peasant economy will cease to be necessary only when machinery can be extensively used in the countryside, collective farms can be organized, and socialist transformation can be implemented in the countryside. But this will be achieved in the comparatively far future." (Selected Works of Liu Shao-chi, Chinese edition.)

Even in June 1956 he still argued: "Some comrades think that collectivization could be realized in the countryside through mutual aid teams, cooperatives, and substitute cultivation teams. This is impossible.

This is fantastic agricultural socialism and it is wrong." (Materials of the Cultural Revolution in Communist China, Ming Pao publishers, Vol.1, p.284, Hong Kong, 1971.)

Concerning the question of nationalization of industry, as late as 1957 Liu still approved the development of spontaneous capitalism: "The existence of a part of capitalist industry, commerce, and underground factories should be permitted so as to let them 'fill the holes' (of the socialist economy)." (Same source as above.) In essence, Liu persisted in continuing to follow the old line of "new democracy" and was willing to make concessions both to the rich peasants and to spontaneous capitalist development. This tendency, whose rightist political nature is clear, differed with Mao's line. When the Great Leap Forward was initiated in 1958 the Liu tendency did not wage an open fight against Mao's left turn (probably because of a combination of factors: Mao's high personal prestige, the relatively positive outcome of agricultural collectivization, which contrasted with the gloomy tableau of collectivization in the Soviet Union, and the promising future of the socialist transformation of industry and commerce). But Liu did acknowledge the existence of such political differences: "There were debates between different opinions within our party over the questions of the Great Leap Forward and the People's Communes. . . . Over the question of the socialist transformation in the field of industry and commerce a debate inside our party reflecting different viewpoints did occur." ("The Triumph of Marxism-Leninism in China," 1959.)

RED GUARD ACTIVISTS MOURNING MAO IN PEKING'S GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE



But the differences between the two tendencies went beyond economic policies. Mao stressed a special connection between the masses and the bureaucracy, his idea being that the party's policies should be implemented in the form of mass movements without especially relying on a social caste made up of experts and technocrats as the mediating mechanism through which the party accomplished its policies. Conflicts between the two tendencies thus surfaced and evolved in virtually all fields: education, ideology, philosophy, arts and literature. In some cases these conflicts had political implications.

In this respect the cultural revolution was a full political battle between the two tendencies, which stepped up their organization and self-awareness and thus became de facto factions in the course of the cultural revolution itself. Mao was forced to initiate the cultural revolution the way he did because of the combination of his weakened position in the party leadership and his reliance on the mass movement. His attempt was to liberate the creative energy of the masses and direct it against the opposing faction.

At first, the development of the cultural revolution seemed to coincide with the schema laid out by Mao. The masses, filled with new vision, confidence, hope, courage, and militancy, stormed the party and even the army apparatus, dealing heavy blows to the Liu Shao-chi faction. But the mass movement did much more than Mao had expected. The locus of the struggle was largely determined by the masses' deep-seated hostility toward the bureaucracy, their desire for revenge, and their willingness to resist openly. The more mass initiatives developed, the more the masses went through struggles, the clearer the antibureaucratic character of the mass movement became. It is true that in the end even the most left wing current of the Red Guards continued to uphold the banner of Mao Tsetung Thought, but the essence of the movement was nevertheless a negation of Mao in particular and the bureaucracy in general.

When the workers and students attempted to establish their own rule in Shanghai in January 1967, Mao's confidence in and patience with the mass movement ran out. For Mao the masses had gone beyond the prescribed limits. With no hesitation whatsoever, he chose the side of the bureaucracy, the first time he openly betrayed the revolution in front of the revolutionary masses. This betrayal itself decided the future of Mao: with the rise of revolutionary consciousness among the masses, the legendary image of Mao the revolutionary would gradually be emptied of content. The cultural revolution, initiated by Mao, offered the Chinese people a political renaissance. But even as the new infant was born, it cried, even if unconsciously, for an end to the Mao era.

V. THE END OF THE MAO TSE-TUNG ERA

From what historical perspective can it be judged that the era of Mao Tse-tung is approaching its end? The first point that must be clarified is what is meant by the expression "Mao Tse-tung era." This era did not appear as merely a period of revolutionary transformation on the one hand or bureaucratic degeneration on the other. It represented a historical process in China in which



the Three Great Revolutions unfolded in a specific way under the Mao leadership, a leadership that constantly vacillated between the two counterposed axes of Stalinism and revolutionary Marxism. Moreover, the era represented a historical conjunction in which, given the lack of political maturity of the Chinese working class and the stagnation of world revolution during that period, the Chinese Communist party nonetheless created a bureaucratic structure and constructed a workers state with a distinctively deformed character. Finally, this era saw the sociological growth of the bureaucracy toward a self-conscious existence as well as Mao's resistance to this particular trend of development of the bureaucracy. It thus saw conflicts between Mao Tse-tung and the natural sociological trend of evolution of this bureaucracy. Here Mao's subjectivist approach to the building of socialism is the most clear-cut feature of the era. The culmination of the era came with the cultural revolution, in the sense that during this period Maoism genuinely gripped the minds of the people and was seen as the only possible road to socialism. Ironically, however, it was precisely the same cultural revolution that prepared the disintegration of the Mao era.

The essential significance of the end of the Mao era thus lies in this: Given the failure and futility of Mao's subjectivist approach to the building of socialism and given his final choice of defending the very basis of the bureaucratic system, now, for the first time, in a broad historical sense Maoism no longer coincides with the progressive and revolutionary tendency among the masses of China. The Chinese masses are now seeking their road to liberation outside the platform of Maoism and objectively oppose the framework of Maoism. The demonstration in Tien An Men Square on April 5, 1976, vividly illustrated this historical trend. (See INPRECOR, No.50, April 29, 1976.)

In this context the death of Mao will enable the masses to break with Maoism more easily. What, however, will be the immediate impact of the death of Mao in the present Chinese political situation? Obviously, the inner-party factional struggle will be affected most sharply. The repeated professions of unity issued on the occasion of Mao's death were surely only an expression of a temporary truce between the two factions. But the deep differences between the Maoist and rightist factions will not and cannot disappear with the death of Mao. On the contrary, the struggles will sharpen. This is especially the case since the Maoist faction was able to take initiatives and launch offensives because of the fact that Mao himself was both head of their faction and the highest arbiter of the party's factional struggle. The rightist faction was thus forced to retreat and defend itself. With the death of Mao the Maoist faction can no longer use the same tactics, and the rightist faction will no longer be permanently on the defensive. Strength will now become the most decisive factor.

Broadly speaking, there are three possible roads the coming factional struggle could take:

1. It may mainly express itself as an inner-party power struggle, the victorious faction purging its oppo-

nents by resorting to the bureaucratic machine.

2. It may totally or partially involve the mobilization of the army and the militias and take the form of a violent struggle.

3. It may extend to the mobilization of the mass movement itself.

If the struggle is limited to the inner structures of the party, the Maoist faction will be at a disadvantage. On the other hand, with the experience of the cultural revolution behind them, the Maoists have good reason to be hesitant about trying to resolve the conflict through resorting to a mass movement. There has already been evidence of such hesitation. Thus, the Maoist faction will not opt for the third possibility unless no other choice is open to it. Given the fact that the Maoist faction has been building the strength and social prestige of the militias for the past several years, it is most likely that the Maoists will try for the second possibility. Moreover, should the struggle extend to the mass level, the militias will constitute a useful social vehicle through which the Maoist faction can try to mobilize and arm its supporters among the masses.

For the rightist faction, the best choice is certainly to contain the struggle within the party apparatus itself. For one thing, the rightists are powerful in the apparatus. For another, society at large will not be deeply shaken by such a struggle. In spite of the fact that a not negligible portion of the population has illusions in the rightist faction, this faction will be more than reluctant to utilize this support actively, for to allow the struggle to take the form of the third possibility listed above would be to risk the party's social control.

Provisionally, then, one may conclude that the following tactics will be stressed by the opposing factions, according to the manner in which they calculate the relationship of forces within the party, the army, and the militias: The Maoist faction will try to strengthen the militias under its control, to divide and neutralize the army, and to capture as many of the important positions in the state and party as possible. The rightist faction will try to divide and weaken the militias, dominate the army, and retain and extend the posts they hold in the party and state apparatus. The immediate period ahead will be marked by a hidden struggle within the party, army, state, and militias.

But this evolution will unfold within a much broader framework in which the development of the mass movement will be important. The situation will be radically altered if an anti-bureaucratic mobilization develops. At the same time, the longer the factional struggle drags on and the more acute its forms become, the lesser overall bureaucratic control will be and the more favorable the objective conditions will be for the development of a genuinely anti-bureaucratic mass movement. Ultimately, history will confirm that the death of Mao Tse-tung coincided with the opening stages of the political revolution in China.

September 15, 1976

SOLIDARITY WITH THE POLISH WORKERS!

The explosion of workers strikes and demonstrations in Poland last June in response to government-ordered price increases was the most massive outbreak of workers struggles to occur in East Europe since the rebellion of the Polish workers in the Baltic ports in December 1970. Even more important, however, the regime's subsequent repression against the workers has led to a widespread response, both nationally and internationally. For the first time in decades, a public committee has been formed in a workers state to defend victimized workers. International solidarity with the Polish workers has also begun to develop. The dossier below presents some of the materials of this national and international campaign. In addition to the explanatory article that follows, the dossier includes the text of a petition being circulated in France, the founding statement of the committee to defend the workers in Poland, and an appeal issued by thirteen intellectuals in support of the workers. The Polish workers and opposition movement have shown that the June events were not a one-shot affair, but the opening of a new period of struggle against the bureaucracy. Solidarity with that struggle has now become a task of the entire international workers movement.

The intellectual opposition in Poland has reacted very quickly to the police repression against the workers which followed the events of June 25, when thousands of workers demonstrated and went on strike against the government's decision to order price increases. This was a change from what had occurred after the workers rebellions in December 1970. To our knowledge, the first letter of protest was dated July 2 and was followed by further initiatives, such as the open letter of oppositionist Jacek Kuron to Italian Communist party secretary Enrico Berlinguer and the letter of thirteen intellectuals. But the most striking event has probably been the formation of the Committee to Defend the Workers Victimized by Repression, which was set up by fourteen intellectuals in Warsaw on September 26. On several past occasions the Polish opposition has come out for defense of democratic rights, but this is the first time it has come out in defense of the rights of the workers.

This is extremely important. It testifies to the leftist evolution of the practical activity of this opposition. For the first time since 1956, the campaign of defense and financial support for the victimized workers (according to the committee's first communiqué, as of September 29 it had collected and distributed 160,000 zlotys; the average monthly wage of a worker is 3,000 zlotys) has permitted the establishment of links between the intellectual opposition and the workers movement. The intellectuals participating in this campaign are doing so at considerable risk. Several of them have been denied the right to publish (the militia has confiscated a manuscript that was the product of several years' work

by Professor E. Lipinski) and several people have been arrested and charged with having ties to Radio Free Europe (as if this CIA-connected radio station was interested in the fate of the workers). When some arrested intellectuals were released they were told that they would be held accountable if any further documents were published in the West. The financial support the intellectuals have contributed to the families of the workers who have been arrested or laid off is quite important, for these families find themselves in a very trying situation, not only because they have been deprived of their major source of income, but also because of the court costs and fines they have been forced to pay.

To our knowledge, the July 2 letter of support to the workers has not been published in the West. It reads as follows:

"We the undersigned consider that it is high time to put an end to the mental terror being generated by the government campaign and to say out loud what we believe the immense majority of the Polish population is thinking. We are indebted to the workers for their action of June 25, which forced the regime to take public opinion into account. We consider it a national tragedy that the population is unable to intervene effectively in the decisions of the regime except through strikes and serious riots. We think that the moral and political responsibility for the turn taken by events in Plock, Ursus, and Radom falls upon the authorities, who have suppressed all other possibilities for the manifestation of the popular will. We thus protest against the epithets 'hooligans,' 'cyni-

cal thugs,' and 'irresponsible adventurers' which have been used against the workers. We protest against the repression, the arrests, and the threats against the participants in the workers' demonstrations. This reaction by the regime, far from resolving the existing problems, leads only to the deepening of popular discontent."

The letter is signed by the following individuals: J. Bulat, J. Cywinski, L.Darn, L.Gluzinski, L. Jankowski, S. Kowalec, R.Kiszka, M. Kozak, S.Kowalski, D. Lachowska, M.Lukasiewicz, S.Krajewski, B.Mazurkiewicz, S.Puzyna, A.Rusiecki, P.Stasinski, P.Sawicki, W. Sawicki, W.Wypych, W.Zawadzki, and A. Zdzierski.



Others letters and appeals followed, among the best known being the letter of the thirteen intellectuals addressed "to all those who solidarize with the struggle of the workers of the entire world for the liberation of labor," and the open letter of J.Kuron to Berlinguer.

Reactions began emerging after the first appeals for international solidarity were issued by the Polish intellectuals. After Kuron's appeal, the Italian CP asked that

"measures of moderation and even clemency" be taken in favor of the sentenced workers, and Berlinguer sent a letter to Gierek, first secretary of the Polish United Workers party (the CP), the text of which was not made public. Following the appeal of the thirteen, Günther Grass and Heinrich Böll sent protests to the Polish authorities. Toward the end of July trade-union sections and workers in France sent petitions asking that all prosecution of the Polish workers be halted. Several petitions were circulated, particularly in the St. Lazare postal sorting center in Paris, among the workers of the ministry of finance, and in the Montparnasse postal sorting center, also in Paris. Here is the text of the petition signed by ninety workers of the St. Lazare sorting center:

"Several thousand arrests, at least a thousand imprisonments throughout the country, thousands of workers disciplined, demoted with reductions in wages, hundreds wounded to one degree or another, an avalanche of trials — such is the balance of the wave of repression unleashed by the bureaucracy against the workers movement in Poland after the strikes of Friday, June 25.

"The French workers movement cannot remain silent before such events, which can only benefit the anti-working-class propaganda of the international bourgeoisie.

"The postal workers of the Paris-St.Lazare sorting center, militants of the CGT, CFDT, and FO (the three French national trade-union federations) express their solidarity with the Polish workers in struggle for their demands, condemn the police measures taken by the government, and ask that all sanctions taken against the Polish workers since June 25 be lifted immediately."

In Toronto, Canada, a meeting was held this month by a committee that has the support of several well-known trade unionists. This is the road that must be followed. The Polish workers movement and intellectual opposition need massive support from the western workers movement. The bureaucracy has already had to back down. During the appeal of seven workers from Radom all the accused won reductions of their sentences, but if we do not intensify our solidarity, other trials will surely follow. The revolutionary situations in West Europe will have much greater impact on the antibureaucratic movements in the countries of the East if the intensity of the solidarity of the working class of these countries with the repressed Polish workers is increased.

The Italian Federation of Metalworkers (FLM) has already asked for a halt to prosecutions of the Polish workers. Other trade unions must protest too. The future of the Polish workers movement is at stake.



Solidarity with the Polish workers against repression!
Solidarity with the Polish intellectual opposition!
Halt all prosecution of the Polish workers!



SOLIDARITY PETITION IN FRANCE

Below is the text of a petition that has begun to be circulated in France. It has already been signed by F. Chatelet, M.F. Kahn, J. Marie Vincent, Dominique and S.T. Desanti, Maurice Nadeau, Maxime Le Forestier, Maxime Rodinson, and A. Krivine.



Three months after the wave of strikes and demonstrations that occurred in Poland after the sudden announcement of a large increase in the prices of food products, a severe repression continues to be imposed against workers whose only crime was to have tried to defend their standard of living by going on strike. There have been many trials — at least a hundred guilty verdicts have been listed, although the Polish authorities admit only fifty-three — and some of the sentences have gone as high as ten years in prison. But how many still remain in prison after suffering repeated police violence, without even knowing the charges against them nor how long they will have to remain?

Thirteen Polish intellectuals have addressed themselves "to all those who have taken up the defense of the persecuted in Chile, Spain, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR, to all those who solidarize with the struggle of the workers of the entire world for the liberation of labor." Recently, a support committee for the workers victimized by repression following the events of June 25, 1976, was formed in Poland itself. The members of this committee, in fact all those who have manifested their solidarity with the victims, risk paying a high price for their courage through the continuous harassment of the regime and through the loss of their jobs.

We ask the Polish authorities to immediately release all those who have been imprisoned in the wake of the events of June 25, 1976, and we demand:

* The rehiring of all those removed from their jobs, with no loss in wages or job classification.

* The halt to all administrative and judicial harassment and also a halt to police brutality against the intellectuals who have manifested their solidarity with those imprisoned.

Committee to Defend the Workers

The following is the appeal that was issued by the Committee to Support the Workers Victimized by Repression After the Events of June 25, 1976. It was signed by: J. Andrzejewski, S. Baranczak, L. Cohn, J. Kuron, E. Lipinski, J.J. Lipski, A. Macierewicz, P. Naimski, A. Pajdak, J. Rybicki, A. Steinsbergowa, A. Szczypiorski, Mgr. J.J. Zieja, W. Ziembinski. A well known actress, H. Mikołajska, joined the committee several days later.



The revolt of the workers against the price increases, which reflected the reaction of the entire population, has been met with extremely brutal repressive measures. In Ursus, Radom, and other cities masses of demonstrators were arrested and beaten, not to mention the layoffs, which, like the arrests, especially affect the families of those victimized by the repression. These measures reflect total contempt for the law on the part of the official organs of the regime. The courts have rendered their verdicts without any evidence being presented. And the layoffs are in violation of the labor code. Things have gone so far that people have been made to give forced declarations. Unfortunately, such methods are not new in our country. It is sufficient to

recall the repressive measures taken against people who had signed letters protesting the modification of the constitution: some were expelled from universities, others were subjected to illegal interrogations and various sorts of blackmail. But it has been a long time since repression has been so massive and brutal.

For the first time in several years, physical violence has been used during interrogations. The victims of the current repression can in no way rely on the aid of the organs that are supposed to defend them, such as the trade unions, whose activities are nearly non-existent. The social institutions have also refused to extend any support.

It is thus incumbent upon the population to play this role, since those who have been arrested were defending everybody's interests. The only way for the population to defend itself against the non-application of the law is to resort to mutual aid and solidarity.

That is why the undersigned have decided to found the Committee to Support the Workers, in order to stimulate this indispensable defense on the judicial, financial, and medical levels.

We must know the full truth about the cases of repression. We are convinced that only full knowledge of the methods employed by the regime will permit an effective defense. Consequently, we ask all those who have been victimized by repression or who know of such cases to please transmit this information to the members of the committee.

To our knowledge, 160,000 zlotys have already been collected to aid the workers. But the needs are much greater, and only an initiative taken by the entire population can satisfy them. We must organize ourselves in order to be able to aid victims wherever they may be. In each city, each factory, we must find courageous people who will come to the aid of the workers and establish collective support.

The measures of repression adopted against the workers are contrary to human rights as recognized by international and Polish law: the right to work, the right to strike, and freedom of expression, assembly, and demonstration.

That is why the committee, in accordance with the resolution of the episcopal conference of September 9, 1976, demands that amnesty be granted all those who have been arrested and sentenced and that they be rehired on their jobs.

The committee calls upon the whole population to support these demands. We are deeply convinced that in founding this committee we are fulfilling our duty as citizens and human beings, for the good of the country, the nation, and humanity.

Appeal of the Thirteen Intellectuals

Below is the text of the appeal of the thirteen intellectuals, one of the statements in defense of the workers victimized by repression after the June 25 events. It was issued after the trials of workers who had participated in the protests against the price increases decreed by the government.



Last July 20 sentence was pronounced in the trial before the Warsaw regional tribunal of seven participants in a workers demonstration which had taken place June 25 at the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw. Those who had taken part in this demonstration, one of the largest ever to occur in Poland, the aim of which was to protest against a massive increase in prices, were sentenced to prison terms of up to three years. This trial was held under conditions that violate the principle of public trials. Only the families of the accused had the right to enter the courtroom, access to which was completely forbidden to foreign journalists as well as many intellectuals and students who came to try to enter. These workers were accused of having taken "an active part in acts of hooliganism." All the defense attorneys were court-appointed.

At the same time in Radom there was a trial of people who had participated in a mass demonstration. These defendants were sentenced to prison terms of up to ten years. Further, the press announced that new trials would be held.

We feel obligated to oppose qualifying what are in fact workers protests against the unjust social policies and authoritarian methods of the regime as acts of "hooliganism." We must forcefully stress that the responsibility for violations of rights that occurred during the events in Ursus and other cities of Poland falls upon the administration, which through its behavior has undermined the major forms of workers democracy, reduced to nothing the workers councils that were created in 1956, and transformed the trade unions into dead and fictitious bodies subjected to the apparatus of the regime. We believe that if such tragic events are to be avoided in the future, it is indispensable to grant the workers the rights they deserve and not to resort to repression.

The struggle of the Polish nation for these rights, which was also manifested in many protests against the reform of the constitution, is a struggle for democratic socialism, which, according to Marx, "is the opposite of all relations in which man is a humiliated being, an abandoned or despised slave."

We are conscious of the fact that Polish public opinion cannot hear our voice through normal channels, even though we are convinced that what we say expresses the sentiments of the majority of the Polish community. That is why we address ourselves, through the vehicle of our editorial board, to all those struggling for the rights of the workers, which are an integral part of human rights, to all those who have taken up defense of the persecuted in Chile and Spain, in Czechoslovakia and the USSR.

We launch the following appeal: Come to the aid of the Polish workers in prison. Reports we have received from the prisons and police stations indicate that the security organs have used physical force during interrogations. In addition, it is universally known that workers suspected of having participated in the demonstra-

tions have been laid off in great numbers. This represents a danger to the material existence of these workers and their families.

We address ourselves to Jean-Paul Sartre, André Malraux, Pierre Emmanuel, Louis Aragon, Jean-Marie Domenach, Claude Roy, Jean Daniel, Laurent Schwartz. We address ourselves to Günther Grass, Heinrich Böll, Arthur Miller, Saul Bellow, Eugenio Montale, Ignazio Silone, Stephen Spencer, and Robert Conquest. We address ourselves to all those who solidarize with the struggle of the workers of the entire world for the liberation of labor. Demand the release of the participants in the workers protest in Poland.

Signers: Stanisław Baranczak, poet of the young generation; Jacek Bochenski, writer; Kazimierz Brandys, writer; Stefan Kisielewski, writer and Catholic publicist; Andrzej Kijowski, writer and publicist; Ryszard Krynicki, economist; E. Lipinski, professor; Jan Josef Lipski, literature critic and historian; Adam Michnik, historian; Halina Mikolajska, actress; Marek Nowakowski, writer; Julian Strykowski, writer; Jan Zieja, priest.



correction

In the article on the Swedish elections published in the previous issue of INPRECOR (No. 59, October 7), the first sentence on page 15 reads: "The optimism results from the fact that the bourgeoisie has been working for an election victory over the labor parties for forty-four years now." The sentence should have said that the bourgeois parties have been working for such a victory. Otherwise the special sort of collaboration between big capital and the Social Democratic government, as well as the bourgeoisie's lack of enthusiasm for a change in government, is obscured.

FRANCE

WORKERS SAY "NO" TO AUSTERITY

PIERRE JULIEN

October 7, the day of struggle against the government's "austerity" plan, during which strikes and demonstrations took place throughout the country, was the biggest day of struggle of the French working class since May 1968. This was true in terms of both the number of strikers, especially in the private sector, and the size of the demonstrations, hundreds of thousands in Paris, tens of thousands in the provinces. It was a massive and clear response to the austerity plan that had been presented several days earlier by the new government of Prime Minister Raymond Barre.

The plan had been greeted with much skepticism in the bourgeois press and among the employers. Their openly expressed fears related essentially to two points: the economic credibility of the measures taken to reduce inflation; the government's political ability to get the public to accept a plan that is undoubtedly the most severe one the workers have faced since 1958.

The economic situation in France is not good. Not only is production no longer growing (after a small upturn of about six months' duration) but foreign trade is running into heavy deficits because of an inflation rate that is twice that of the other major capitalist powers. The government's objective is thus to significantly reduce price increases in order to conserve the competitive strength of French products abroad. This initiative implies a very violent attack on the workers, who are accused of being responsible for the situation because of their excessive wage increases. The prime minister has said it several times: "The French people are living beyond their means."

The employers want to strike hard

To achieve a lasting decline in the standard of living of the workers is a necessity for French capital in its present stage of crisis. The essential feature of the past two years has been that in spite of the economic crisis, the division of value-added between wages and profits has returned to its 1972 level, which was a time of strong economic growth. The result is an extremely difficult situation for the French employers. The fall of the rate of profit induces them to freeze their profits

instead of investing, the immediate consequence of which is to render a lasting upturn of economic activity impossible. Thus, the employers require austerity in order to reestablish a division favorable to their own profits. This is what explains the severity of the measures announced by the government.

The Barre plan is certainly the toughest the workers have faced since 1958. For the first time, a government has openly declared a freeze on purchasing power for an entire year as one of its objectives, even though the measure is cleverly camouflaged behind statistical artifices. The mechanism advocated is this: In 1977 wages must not rise by more than 6.5 percent, it being understood that price increases are not to exceed this figure. This, of course, amounts to a twofold scandal. First because the French government has always lied in its predictions of the rate of inflation. Was it not Fourcade, minister of finance in the previous government, who announced in June 1974 that inflation would be held to 6 percent in 1975? The real rate of inflation that year, according to the CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail — General Confederation of Labor, the country's largest trade-union federation), was 14.2 percent. Second, it is an enormous fakery to attempt to make wage increases coincide with price increases as measured by the official index of the INSEE (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies). This index has been broadly discredited for several years now. In 1975, for example, the INSEE set the rate of price increases at 9.6 percent, while the CGT said it was 14.2 percent, a rather large difference. Which clearly means that when the government speaks of maintaining purchasing power, what it really means is a decline in living standards of about 4.6 percent.

The attack on purchasing power does not relate simply to the freeze on wage increases, which will be strictly applied during the contract negotiations in the public services and will be automatically recommended for the negotiations in the private sector. The plan also entails a series of measures that directly eat into the workers' wallets.

The most spectacular of these measures relates to the increase in the price of gasoline and the rise in the vignette (the annual automobile tax). As of November

If the price of a liter (roughly a quart) of "super" will rise from 1.96 francs to 2.25 francs (about US\$.39-.45) and the tax on automobiles will go up by more than 50 percent on the average. It's easy enough to add up the figures. For a family that owns an "economy car" the bill will come to something like 500 francs a year (slightly more than \$100).

The second important measure relates to taxes. A surtax of 4 percent will be imposed on all those who pay more than 4,500 francs in taxes each year and of 8 percent for those who pay more than 20,000 francs. It can quickly be seen that this can hit families with modest incomes. As of November 15, for example, a family consisting of a skilled worker, an office employee, and two children living in the Paris region will have to pay a supplementary tax of 200 francs.

In addition, the payments the workers have to make for social security went up 0.7 percent on October 1 and the tax on alcohol will be increased 10 percent in 1977. But even more serious, the government has announced its intention to further increase taxes next year through the vehicle of measures that appear to be technical but will in fact lead to an aggravation of fiscal pressure on wages.

The gravity of the attack on the workers is accompanied by big gifts to the companies. Facilities of amortization will be accorded as well as aid for investments in the export industries. In addition, a loan of 3,000 million francs will be floated in favor of the small and middle-sized companies and a fund of 2,500 million will be constituted to aid companies in the event that stagnation of production continues.

This largess will run to a total of several thousand million francs, that is, considerably more than what the state will recuperate through an increase in corporation taxes, the rate of which will increase from 50 percent to 54 percent. And everyone knows that 46 percent of the companies do not pay any taxes at all because of the tricks they use in their accounting systems.

The government was compelled to try to get people to swallow the bitter pill of austerity through a big dose of demagoguery on income inequalities. A recent report of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development revealed that France occupies a solid last place among advanced capitalist countries in this domain. The Union de la Gauche (Union of the Left) and the trade unions raised this battle cry, although not without ambiguity.

The Socialist party and the CFDT (Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail — French Democratic Confederation of Labor) in particular suggested before the measures were made public that SP and CFDT acceptance of a certain degree of sacrifice would be possible only if the government clearly affirmed its will to attack the problems of inequality. This, of course, amounted to granting Barre a small margin for maneuver.



But Barre was unable to seize this opportunity because of electoral constraints. In particular, to severely attack white-collar workers, for example, would have alienated the most unstable portion of the electorate, people whose votes will be decisive during the next legislative elections. Now, Giscard's project is precisely to make inroads into these layers by making some reforms in order to assure himself a more solid social base for his political project. This is precisely what provoked the crisis between Giscard d'Estaing and his prime minister, Jacques Chirac, who did not agree with this tactic and still doesn't. (On the Giscard-Chirac clash, see INPRECOR, No. 57, September 9, 1976.) Chirac's call for a special congress of the Gaullists at the very moment when Giscard was trying to put his plan across on television in front of millions of skeptical viewers testifies to the depth of the crisis of the parliamentary majority and to the open will of the Gaullists to throw obstacles in the president's path.

Given the present state of affairs, the plan's measures for reducing inequalities remain as scanty as possible. The high ranking white-collar workers have been spared on a number of important points: continuation of the plafond* on social security contributions; possibility of

*The system of the plafond (ceiling) on social security contributions consists of limiting the basis of assessment to about 3,000 francs of income. The high-paid employees are thus able to subscribe to supplementary security plans of a corporatist type, beyond this income.



the government's credibility during the contract negotiations.

Finally, we must add two supplementary elements to the analysis of the plan. No measure has been envisaged to reabsorb unemployment, which now stands at 1,200,000, even though all institutes of economic prediction expect an increase in underemployment during coming months. Finally, the "plan of struggle against inflation" (which is the official name for austerity) is but a stage preliminary to further and even more serious measures. In this regard one may mention the broad attack that is being prepared against social security for next spring, which, like the decrees of 1967,* will challenge some of the fundamental gains of the Liberation.

A unanimous 'NO'

The reactions of the workers movement to the Barre plan were unanimous. Nevertheless, the position "No to the austerity" was argued differently by the Socialist party and the Communist party. The former, which is looking toward its probable accession to the government after the next legislative elections, wants above all to lend itself the image of a "responsible" organization. It thus explained its rejection of the austerity plan on the grounds that no concurrent measures of "social justice" had been taken. And the Socialist leaders seized upon the example of Germany to say that it might be possible to assemble a consensus for austerity if the present majority in parliament changed. Clearly they were addressing themselves to the French bourgeoisie to inform the bourgeoisie that its plan had no chance of success but that when the SP is in the government the Socialists will be able to obtain the consensus of the workers.

The Communist party took advantage of the SP's attitude to appear as the most intransigent defender of the demands of the workers. In many cities the CP had organized demonstrations against the austerity even before October 7, sometimes in a quite sectarian manner. Its initial "No" to the austerity plan nevertheless gave way to more nuanced statements, for example: "The effects of the austerity plan must be limited."

On the trade-union level, the essential aspect of the October 7 general strike was the realization, for the first time in two years, of a common front of the CGT, CFDT, and FEN (Fédération d'Education Nationale — National Education Federation, which includes several hundred thousand teachers). The FEN, which last year had signed contracts in the public services amounting to a decline in real purchasing power, was no longer able to justify in the eyes of its rank and file the signing of a contract for next year that would guarantee only a 6.5 percent wage increase, with an official freeze on purchasing power. It should also be noted that some

*In 1967 the government, acting through "rulings" not controlled by the parliament, decreed a reduction in payments of health insurance as well as an end to the right of the workers themselves to choose which social security agency to utilize.

escaping the fiscal surtax by resorting to borrowing, which simply amounts to a transfer of savings, etc. In principle, the non-salaried middle layers are supposed to receive increases in income that do not exceed the official 6.5 percent. But since the state has no means by which to impose such a norm and since the rate of fiscal fraud among these categories runs to an average of 50 percent of income, it may be expected that the principle will not be applied. Finally, the small and middle-sized companies will benefit from the advantages of the loans that will be floated for them.

Of course, the plan also contains promises of an intensification of repression for fiscal fraud and decisions on taxation of conspicuous consumption, all of which will scarcely affect the most clever fortune holders. In all, the whole "anti-inequality" package amounts to a rather ridiculous totality when compared to Giscard and Barre's repeated affirmations at the time when the principle of "austerity in equality" was decided. And the character of the plan will not be changed by the price freeze which is supposed to be in effect until December 31, 1976 (and until April 1977 for public rates). This is a completely ineffective measure, the effect of which has already been preventive price increases in September, which will be continued with a probable price explosion when the freeze is lifted. Likewise, the reduction in the sales tax (VAT) on certain products from 20 to 17.6 percent will serve only to improve the price index at the beginning of next year in order to boost

of the unions of FO (Force Ouvrière — Workers Force, which constitutes the right wing of the trade-union movement in France) also participated in the strike.

But while unity was realized at the top, the same was not true at the rank-and-file level. The banners in the demonstration were rarely united ones and the hazy inter-union platform negotiated at the top did not include unifying slogans that would have permitted the axes of the fight against the Barre plan to be concretized.

This aspect of the balance-sheet is intensified by the lack of central political perspectives. The reformist leaderships of the CP and SP carefully refrained from using the mobilization to advance a political alternative to the regime, which according to all polls now has the support of only a minority of the population. (One of these polls revealed, significantly, that 73 percent of employers consider a leftist victory in the next elections "probable.") Rather than sending their militants out to march side by side with the trade-union organizations, the Communists and Socialists were content with delegations of parliament members and elected officials who simply "greeted" the demonstration from the sidewalk.

It is true that the Socialist party and its top leader, François Mitterrand, is now issuing statement after statement on its respect for the existing institutions and particularly for the electoral verdict of 1974, which means that Giscard should remain president until 1981, and on the maintenance of the market economy when the Common Program (the platform of the Union de la Gauche) is applied. The first secretary of the Socialist party, who was not in the streets on October 7, recently held a public dialogue with 500 employers during which he assured them that nationalizations under the Common Program would respect competition and profits and above all revealed that the nine nationalizations called for in the Common Program had been reduced to seven since two of the "nationalizable" companies had been bought out by foreign groups.

As for the CP, it is trying to make the workers believe that there is a subtle dialectic between the struggle in the factories and the parliamentary struggle. An editorial in the CP daily *l'Humanité*, for example, said: "Far from working at cross purposes with the activity of the public powers, the people's struggle is also a constituent part of the democratic totality." On several occasions CP chief Georges Marchais has reaffirmed that in the event of the victory of the left, Giscard should "submit or resign." Which amounts to a position that is not very different from that of the SP. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the CP carefully refrained from reacting to certain statements by Socialist leaders who, like Mitterrand, challenged what the Communist economists call the "keystone" of the Common Program (i.e., nationalizations). For the moment, the CP does not want to reopen a polemic that had proven not to be very profitable electorally. At the end of 1974, following resounding electoral defeats in some by-elections, the CP had opened up a very hard polemic against the SP.

The balance-sheet on this polemic was generally negative, including on the electoral level, even though it did enable the CP to remobilize its militants in the factories in a sectarian manner.

Dissolution of the National Assembly! Giscard and Barre out!

Given the fact that the workers parties are not offering any concrete perspectives except to wait for 1978 (the year of the next legislative elections), revolutionaries must structure their intervention around two axes during the present conjuncture. First, they must stress the need to develop an overall relationship of forces against the austerity plan. The fact that the very first level of response was set so high by the trade-union leaderships poses a problem for continuing the actions. "What do we do now?" the workers are asking. This is why the mobilization of October 7 was used as an occasion to again raise demands that had been left in suspension. Georges Séguy and Edmond Maire (heads of the CGT and CFTD respectively) were content to call for continuing demonstrations on October 23, a day of action against youth unemployment which had been called some time ago. They called for actions at the union federation level, without drawing up the slightest perspective for possible centralization. Nonetheless, this is the question that is now on the agenda for defining a clear platform of response and for systematically developing forms of active resistance to the austerity (such as refusal to pay the tax surcharge, organization of workers control over prices, etc.).

But the political situation in France nevertheless requires another dimension to the intervention. The cantonal elections of March 1976, which had already demonstrated that the present regime had the support of only a minority, opened a period favorable to the utilization of agitational slogans on central political perspectives. (See INPRECOR, No. 49, April 15, 1976.) The present crisis of confidence in the regime, the enormous decline in Giscard's popularity, even among his own supporters, and the power of the workers' response on October 7 have strengthened this tendency. In the eyes of the great mass of workers the austerity plan now appears as an imposition of a discredited government.

In addition, even from the standpoint of bourgeois democracy, it was a non-representative parliament that voted the austerity plan. Instead of denouncing it as such, the deputies of the workers parties participated in the parliamentary charade, introducing a motion of censure that had no chance of passing. It is now time to say to the CP and the SP: "Let us together demand the dissolution of this rump National Assembly! Let us together demand the ouster of Giscard-Barre, the austerity duo!"

Any hesitation on this point will only give a second wind to a regime that has already run out of breath.

October 14, 1976

GERMAN ELECTIONS:



Challenger Kohl confronts Chancellor Schmidt

SPD SQUEAKS BY

by **WERNER HÜLSBERG**

"A (too narrow) victory." That was the West German weekly *Der Spiegel's* comment on the results achieved by the coalition of the Social Democratic party (SPD) and Free Democratic party (FDP) in the legislative elections of October 3. The coalition won approval from 50.5 percent of the voters, while the Social Christian parties, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) won 48.6 percent, nearly the best result they have ever achieved since the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 (with one exception). The parties of the government coalition lost 3.2 percent (SPD) and 0.5 percent (FDP); their majority in the Bundestag (the federal parliament) was reduced from forty-six seats to eight.

This too narrow victory raises the threat of crises within the government coalition, given the number of unresolved problems around which there are contradictions between the SPD and the FDP: the 1 million unemployed, the rapid growth of the public debt, the problems of guaranteeing the financing of retirement pensions, the increased charges for health insurance. In the view of the most lucid representatives of the West German and foreign bourgeoisie, the electoral result entails a danger that the government of the Federal Republic of Germany will now take its place on the already long list of unstable Western governments that are capable only of managing current affairs rather than governing in the real sense of the term. This in turn could cast shadows over the possibility of German imperialism's taking ad-

vantage of the economic and political positions it now holds to serve as pillar of capitalist Europe.

October 3 marked the end of one of the most deceitful and substance lacking election campaigns in the history of the Federal Republic. The three parties represented in the Bundestag did not advance contradictory concrete proposals in any sphere. They limited themselves to a "war of slogans" empty of real content. The CDU-CSU raised the watchword "Choose between freedom and socialism," while the SPD trumpeted "Perfect the German model." No party clearly indicated the political orientation it was going to pursue.

The elections were not accompanied by any mobilization of the workers in the trade unions or factories. The leadership of the SPD even sought to prevent such mobilizations by all the means at its command, under the pretext of not fueling the reactionary demagoguery of the CDU-CSU. Unlike the elections of 1972, the 1976 elections had no class character whatever. They degenerated into a chase after the "individual voter." The inevitable result was a loss of votes for the Social Democracy.

The passive attitude of the working class during the election campaign may be explained by the repercussions of the economic crisis and the behavior of the Social Democracy in the course of this crisis. The SPD has again taken up its historic role as "physician at the sick-

bed of capitalism," to the applause of the national and international bourgeoisie. By virtue of its use of the trade-union bureaucracy it has been able to halt the new rise of workers struggles which had been under way since 1969. Through an economic policy in the avowed interests of the employers, the Social Democracy has demobilized and demoralized the working class, as well as the youth influenced by the SPD. Only the reactionary excesses of the CDU-CSU campaign enabled the SPD to get the bulk of its voters to the polls. But the capitulations of the Social Democratic leaders prevented the SPD from fully recapturing the votes won in 1972, especially among the youth and the recently proletarianized layers.

In this sense, the result of the 1976 elections is a faithful reflection of the ebb in activity of the working class and the absence of any class response to the capitalist crisis, features which have characterized the political situation in West Germany since 1974. The reforms the SPD promised during the 1972 elections have not at all been implemented. The few legislative measures the SPD-FDP coalition passed during the term of the Bundestag were totally watered down by the concessions made to the CDU-CSU. It is barely recalled today that the Social Democracy had waged the 1972 campaign under the slogan "Let us dare to be more democratic!" Far from keeping this promise, the Helmut Schmidt cabinet suppressed a series of democratic gains won by the workers movement and the youth radicalization of the 1960s. This cabinet enacted legislative measures on repression that would permit a future reactionary government to attack the entire workers movement in the event of a significant change in the relationship of forces. Some examples:

*The decree against employing "enemies of the Constitution" in the public services (known as the *Berufsverbot*) has created the legal basis for inquiries by the political police into the activities of hundreds of thousands of people and has also engendered a heavy atmosphere of intimidation in the country.

*The new Paragraph 88 of the penal code creates the legal basis for banning all socialist literature and Marxist propaganda.

*The limitations on the rights of defendants in political trials have undermined the possibilities of "fair trials" even from the bourgeois democratic standpoint.

*The militarization of the police and the transformation of the *Bundesgrenzschutz* (the federal border police) into a civil war army under the pretext of combatting terrorism has led to the accentuated use of repression against the workers movement. During the recent strike in the printing and publishing industry (which was, moreover, an "official" strike) the police intervened against strike pickets with an intensity not seen in Germany in decades.

Since the beginning of 1976 the SPD had systematically sought to organize an electoral campaign centered on the personality of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, an attempt to follow the model of the "Adenauer victories" won by the CDU in the 1950s. This meant a campaign



directed exclusively toward the middle classes. Helmut Schmidt himself expressed this rather cynically during a reception, when he told an industrialist: "I know that the SPD does not interest you, but you do want me to remain chancellor." The SPD used formulas like "We must continue the policy of Helmut Schmidt, which has increased German prestige in the world," "effectively defended democracy," and "brought about the economic upturn." The SPD's identity of views with the bourgeois FDP was stressed systematically. In order to make sure that this sort of campaign could be carried out, the left of the SPD was condemned to silence during the Mannheim party congress. The Young Socialists (*Jusos*) committed themselves to waging an electoral campaign "for Helmut Schmidt."

It was only at the last minute, on the eve of October 3, that a slight turn was made. In fact, as it turned out, even the members of the SPD, not to mention the broad masses of workers, were scarcely enthusiastic about election meetings centered on the "technical problems" of "transport and urban planning." When a meeting of Social Democratic campaign volunteers was convoked in the SPD stronghold of southern Hesse (which includes the city of Frankfurt), a total of eleven people showed up out of the 600 activists who had been invited. The initial SPD campaign meetings in the heavily industrialized Ruhr had been crushing failures. It was then that Schmidt agreed to launch a polemic against the CDU-CSU; the front lines of this offensive were occupied by party chairman Willy Brandt, Minister of Labor and former militant trade unionist Arendt, and Minister of Education Rohde, who is the leader of the "groups of wage workers within the SPD." Two weeks before the vote, they sought to recreate a bit of the 1972 atmosphere, raising the slogan "Vote for peace."

The failure of this election campaign and the responsibility that devolves on Helmut Schmidt, chancellor and party vice president, will most probably be at the center of internal discussion in the SPD. During the past few weeks the leadership of the party has "reestablished control" over the chancellor. Schmidt will lose a few feathers in his cap during the internal discussion in the Social Democracy.

The CDU-CSU toughens its structures

The CDU-CSU had been created at the time of the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany not on the basis of a clearly delimited political program but as an assembly of various bourgeois forces united only by their desire to govern. It was only after the CDU-CSU was thrown into the opposition in 1969 that the process of building a better structured party began, especially on the part of the CSU, the Bavarian affiliate of the CDU. The fact that the CDU-CSU had been deprived of the fringe benefits of political power provoked a series of internal crises beginning in 1969: the replacement of former chancellor Kurt Kiesinger by Rainer Barzel, followed by the replacement of Barzel by Helmut Kohl, this year's candidate for chancellor; the controversy around the possible extension of the Bavarian CSU, which is clearly further right than the CDU, throughout West Germany as a separate party; the threats of a breakup of the CDU-CSU Bundestag fraction, and so on. Because of these internal differences, the CDU-CSU was nearly paralyzed on the federal level until the middle of 1975. The nomination of Helmut Kohl as candidate for chancellor was contested up through the spring of 1976. In the end, Franz-Josef Strauss, leader of the CSU, is said to have approved this candidacy with the phrase: "It's all the same to me who is chancellor under my direction." Moreover, in its official declaration approving Kohl's candidacy, the CSU confirmed that it continued to consider Strauss, its own president, as the best candidate for the post.



The major goal the CDU-CSU sought to attain through the 1976 election campaign was to avoid a breakup of the Union into pro- and anti-Strauss groups. Obtaining the absolute majority of the vote was the only way to consolidate the bloc of the two factions in a lasting manner. The fact that the CDU-CSU narrowly failed to attain this goal enabled the outbreak of the controversy to be postponed three days.

The CDU-CSU had gone into the election campaign under a great handicap. It scarcely had any political line to counterpose to that of the Schmidt cabinet. This is clearly apparent when one considers that of the 515 laws passed by the previous Bundestag, 480 were adopted unanimously! Nor is the West German bourgeoisie in need of any alternative orientation. But since the opposition could not purely and simply recognize the bourgeois "technical" competence of the Helmut Schmidt cabinet, and since it could not attack the SPD "from the left" either (notably by waging a campaign against unemployment and inflation, as some of the Catholic demagogues in the CDU-CSU sought to do), there was no alternative but to rely on bourgeois resentment of the Social Democracy, which has generally been overcome. Thus was born the slogan "Choose between freedom and socialism."

The CDU-CSU nonetheless obtained a tactical advantage for the bourgeoisie: the political center of gravity of the election campaign was once again shifted to the right. Since the Social Democracy was not prepared to appeal to the interests of the workers in any way whatsoever (no more in its election campaign than in its government activity during the past four years), the SPD was clearly thrown onto the defensive. The result was that any mobilization of the Social Democratic workers was avoided, even during the campaign itself.

As for the bourgeoisie as a class, in its great majority it refrained from taking any open political position in favor of any of the parties, first of all because the bourgeoisie's excessively pro-CDU-CSU behavior had had negative consequences in 1972 and second because the policy of the Schmidt cabinet had in fact given the bourgeoisie every reason for satisfaction. This was clearly expressed in the press of big capital.

To openly approve of a Social Democratic chancellor would no doubt have been contrary to tradition. But care was taken not to visibly support the opposition (only the press owned by the Springer trust broke ranks on this point). The daily newspaper that most clearly represents the big bourgeoisie, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, summed up the view of the employers in its September 27 issue: "Each of the two camps possesses valid arguments. Each has competent talent. A democrat can vote for either of them."

Voter participation saves the coalition

Before the opening of the legislative election campaign the SPD had suffered partially catastrophic setbacks in a number of regional elections. In Hamburg its vote dropped 10 percent and it lost its absolute majority. In Lower Saxony and Hesse it had lost its position as the strongest party. In Bavaria it had declined 6 to 7 percent. In North Rhine-Westphalia (that is, in the Ruhr) it had lost 5 percent.

What was decisive in all these setbacks was the decline in voter turnout among the traditionally Social Democratic electorate. For example, in the elections in Baden-Württemberg the number of workers who did not bother to vote was estimated at 300,000!

The survival of the government coalition thus depended in large part on the possibility of getting layers of Social Democratic voters to show up at the polls, especially in the traditional Social Democratic strongholds, and this in spite of an "electoral struggle" waged not on the basis of workers mobilizations but instead on defense of the "practical achievements" of the Schmidt cabinet. Nevertheless, the SPD scored an incontestable success in turning out the vote. Voter participation was unusually high, 91 percent. (In 1972 the percentage was only slightly higher, 91.2.) What are the reasons for this?



It was above all a response to the reactionary campaign of the CDU-CSU, which was marked not only by anti-socialist demagoguery, but also (especially in the Ruhr) by attacks on the trade unions under the pretext of denouncing the ties between the trade-union bureaucracy and the Social Democrats. It was this reactionary campaign of the CDU-CSU more than the efforts of the SPD itself which succeeded in mobilizing the Social Democratic voters.

The conscious workers, who had abstained from voting during the regional elections as a protest against the policy of the SPD but who, in view of the general demobilization of the working class and the absence of any alternative leadership, were unable to break practically and politically with the SPD and the trade-union bureaucracy during a period of economic crisis, went to the polls this time, not to express approval of Helmut Schmidt's policy, which favors the employers, but rather to say "no" to the reactionary CDU-CSU. The hundreds of thousands of workers who had caused the defeat of the Social Democracy by abstaining in the regional elections this time inflicted a narrow defeat on the CDU-CSU by coming out to vote. In so doing they were not at all manifesting new illusions in the SPD. They

simply demonstrated that they were sensitive to the argument of the "lesser evil," given a level of class consciousness that is still quite low.

Nevertheless, the SPD did lose about 3.3 percent, which means that all the gains of 1972 were lost. On the whole, the SPD is back to its 1969 level. These losses occurred above all in the cities with a less working-class social composition and among the new middle layers. The CDU-CSU was able to win these layers back, layers the Social Democracy had won over for the first time in 1972. Social Democratic government policy also had negative effects on the youth vote. The hopes in the Social Democracy which had been awakened at the beginning of the 1970s have been disappointed. In 1968 only 7 percent of the youth questioned by the weekly Stern responded that they were not interested in politics; in 1976 this percentage rose to nearly 35. This poll is significant, although the reference to the year 1968 (a highpoint of the youth radicalization in West Germany) requires a bit of caution. For the first time, the CDU-CSU was able to make a "breakthrough" in this milieu. It won 45 percent of the votes of youth casting ballots for the first time, against 44 percent for the SPD, which had won more than 50 percent of these votes in 1972.

In general, the SPD lost 1.1 million votes to the CDU-CSU and gained only 130,000 votes from the Social Christians. But the CDU-CSU gains were not uniform throughout the country. The CDU-CSU gained more in the South than in the North, more in its own traditional strongholds than in those of the Social Democracy. It was only in Munich (where the SPD lost four of its five direct mandates) and in Frankfurt (where the Social Democrats lost more than 5 percent and one direct mandate) that there were significant shifts in SPD strongholds. Other cities with a voter structure in which white-collar workers and functionaries tend to predominate, such as Hamburg, Hanover, Düsseldorf, and Stuttgart, remained in the hands of the Social Democrats despite the fact that the CDU-CSU had already made substantial gains there in 1972. As for the more clearly working-class strongholds, such as those in the Ruhr, Social Democratic losses were less than the national average, oscillating between 2 and 2.8 percent, while voter turnout reached 95 percent.

The reasons why the CDU-CSU was able to obtain better results in southern Germany than in northern Germany are more difficult to determine. In this regard one must mention the fact that the CSU has created solid organizational structures in Bavaria and the CDU has done so in Württemberg and Hesse, and this probably played a role. (The CDU-CSU now has 1 million members, about the same as the SPD.) The CDU-CSU also took advantage of the public conflicts within the Social Democratic bureaucracy in Munich and Frankfurt. They probably regained a more than proportional number of Catholic voters because of the open commitment of the Catholic hierarchy against the government in the discussion around abortion.

Campaign of the revolutionary Marxists



The Gruppe Internationale Marxisten (GIM — International Marxist Group), German section of the Fourth International, participated in the legislative elections for the first time. Unlike the Maoist sects, the GIM did not try to pass itself off as an organization already capable of resolving all the problems of the working class and of "leading the popular masses." It presented only three regional lists (in Hamburg, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Baden-Württemberg) as well as twelve individual candidates in electoral districts. Getting on the ballot required gathering 10,000 signatures in support of these candidates before the end of September. Given the present political atmosphere in West Germany, the GIM's ability to amass these signatures may itself be considered a modest success.

The atmosphere of political intimidation that now reigns in this country was revealed during the signature campaign. Many students and public service employees refused to sign or did so with the greatest reluctance in spite of their political sympathy, openly mentioning their fear of the repressive measures that have been passed by the Schmidt cabinet. Expulsion proceedings have already been initiated within the Social Democracy against members who dared to sign the petitions of the far-left groups.

Our election propaganda was centered on the need to work out a class struggle alternative both to the pro-employer policy of the Schmidt cabinet and to the wage-freeze policy of the trade-union bureaucracy. This was concretized in the demand for a "bonus" wage increase in autumn 1976, for a sliding scale of wages, and for the institution of a thirty-five-hour workweek with no reduction in pay.

Contrary to the other left organizations, we fully integrated the struggle for the emancipation of women into our campaign (in some cities we were able to hold common meetings with the organizations of the women's liberation movement), as well as the struggle for complete equality of rights for immigrant workers (representatives of organizations of immigrant workers spoke at our meetings) and the international class struggle (a representative of the LCR/ETA-VI, a sympathizing organization

of the Fourth International in Spain, spoke at many of the meetings of the GIM). The struggle against state repression was also one of the centers of our election campaign.

The obstacles to electoral activity by the German left are indicative of the repressive atmosphere that reigns in West Germany today. On several occasions the radio and television censored or suppressed the broadcasts that the KBW, KPD, and GIM had been authorized to prepare as part of their election campaigns. For example, West German television refused to broadcast a two-and-a-half minute film made by the GIM consisting of a statement by Ernest Mandel, a leading victim of the "Berufsverbot" decreed by the SPD-FDP coalition. In the film, Mandel affirmed that the repressive measures now in force would permit a future reactionary government to ban all Marxist propaganda as Hitler did, as well as all trade-union activity against the capitalist mode of production. According to the authorities, this statement amounted to an "insult to the constitutional organs and to the Federal Republic."

The GIM obtained nearly 6,000 votes, which corresponded to our predictions. We consider it positive that in the electoral districts in which we presented individual candidates we nearly always obtained twice the number of votes as did the regional lists of the GIM. (For an explanation of the regional lists and individual candidacies and for a summary of the results, see tables.) This was not true for the other far-left formations, who nevertheless have a broader periphery than we do. This means that we succeeded in obtaining votes for our individual candidates from some Social Democratic workers and trade unionists who continued to accord their more important "list vote" to the SPD since they do not see the GIM as a credible alternative on the national political level.



Strauss



The prospects

The CDU-CSU will not easily absorb its "defeat in victory." It demanded the post of chancellor on the basis of the fact that it had become the largest political party. But this was only a grandstand stunt. The employers' press clearly advised the CDU-CSU to "stay in the wings." "It is difficult for the Union to remain excluded from the exercise of power for another four years, but it cannot avoid this fate," commented the October 5 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

Helmut Kohl is counting on overturning the present alliances before the end of the Bundestag's term, and this requires that the CDU take a tolerant attitude toward the FDP during coming months. But Franz-Josef Strauss has openly threatened to provoke a break between the CSU and the CDU if this tactic is applied. The CDU-CSU must now walk a tightrope between these two counterposed tactics. If it does not manage to conciliate its two wings, the SPD-FDP government coalition seems assured of four years' rule.

The government coalition's freedom of action is nonetheless very narrow as a result of the elections. The unresolved questions are still present. The compromises that will mark the attempts to solve these problems will not be of a nature as to generate new illusions in the Schmidt cabinet or to ward off discussion in the trade unions and the SPD. The bourgeoisie thus fears that the two "men of action" of the coalition may once again be subjected to the influence of their rank and file, from which they seemed to have cut loose during the election campaign. The bourgeoisie is uneasy about the fact that the SPD rank and file is "to the left" of Schmidt and the FDP rank and file is "more left" than FDP chairman and Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher. There

is fear that the activities of the parties may exert pressure on the government. Willy Brandt has demanded "clear programmatic affirmations" from the SPD in order to respond to the loss of Social Democratic votes. Even if this leads only to a moderate upturn for the Young Socialists, this is not something that will broaden the coalition's freedom of action.

The Social Democratic leadership will try to exploit this situation in an attempt to hold the coalition together, reacting very flexibly to the discussions that will unfold. The leadership will try to limit the discussion in the party to platonic exchanges, invoking the narrowness of the Schmidt cabinet's majority in the Bundestag in order to warn the rank and file against anything that could threaten the survival of the coalition. Given the problems that must be solved and the need to avoid any attack by the bourgeoisie that could provoke an overturn of the alliance with the FDP, Schmidt will be compelled to accentuate his rightist course. The argument of the narrowness of the Bundestag majority will be used offensively by the Social Democratic leadership against the working class. In order to mobilize the trade-union bureaucracy to support this orientation, the leadership of the SPD has decided to invite trade-union presidents to the party meeting that will draw a balance-sheet of the elections, which is an unusual step for the Social Democrats.



The SPD is facing a dilemma. If it wants to remain in the government it will more than ever have to govern against the working class. This implies the risk of losing support among the workers. With the aid of the trade-union bureaucracy it will try to continue the orientation that Helmut Schmidt has imposed during the economic crisis. There is no other choice. But sooner or later this orientation will lead to differentiations or even breaks within the unions in relation to the policy of "moderation" of demands, either in the wake of mobilizations in the factories or in the wake of the emergence of differences within the Social Democratic party itself. In the long run, "social peace" will not be able to be maintained on the basis of such an orientation. The wage negotiations of winter 1976-77 will indicate just how long the working class will continue to bend its knee before this policy.

October 7, 1976

TABLE I

Each voter casts two ballots in the West German legislative elections. The first vote goes to an individual candidate in each electoral district; the second vote goes to a regional party list. The table below indicates the total list vote obtained by each party.

Party	1976			1972		
	Votes	%	Seats	Votes	%	Seats
SPD	16,098,632	42.6	213	17,175,169	45.8	230
CDU-CSU	18,434,402	48.6	244	16,806,020	44.9	225
FDP	2,995,160	7.9	39	3,129,982	8.4	48
DKP	118,483	0.3	---	113,891	0.3	---
NDP	122,428	0.3	---	207,465	0.6	---
GIM	4,767					
KBW	19,970					
KPD	22,801					

Notes: The DKP (German Communist party) is the "official" Communist party. The NDP (New Democratic party) is neofascist. The GIM, German section of the Fourth International, presented a list in 3 regions out of 10. The KBW (Communist League of West Germany) presented a list in 8 of the 10 regions. It is the strongest organization of the West German far left, with some 2,000 members. Initially more flexible in regard to Chinese foreign policy than the KPD (see below), it has clearly "hardened" its line during past months. This has accentuated its internal crisis. Announcing a "rise of the revolutionary mass movement in West Germany," the KBW tried to make its election campaign a decisive step in its transformation into a party. It thus waged a maximalist campaign based around the slogan "Against imperialism and reaction, for the victory of the world proletarian revolution!" The KPD (Communist party of Germany), which presented lists in 9 of 10 regions, has lost many members and much of its influence during the past several years because of its adaptation to Chinese foreign policy, which has led it to preach defense of the fatherland in West Germany. Its election campaign was mainly directed against "social imperialism" as well as "Honecker, its satrap in the German Democratic Republic, and the German Communist party (DKP), its representative in the Federal Republic of Germany."

TABLE II
Results of the GIM

Total of votes for individual candidates (in 12 districts):
2,035

Total number of votes for regional lists (in the three regions contested):
4,767, of which 875 in districts where individual candidates were presented and 3,892 in districts in which individual candidates were not presented.

Comparative list votes in states in which the GIM presented regional lists

	GIM	KBW	KPD	DKP
Hamburg	938	942	1,148	9,006
North Rhine-Westphalia	1,778	3,889	6,175	38,166
Baden-Württemberg	2,051	3,814	2,904	12,510

Notes: The GIM achieved the best relative results in Hamburg and the worst in the Ruhr, where the organization still has an insufficient base. The result in Baden-Württemberg is surprising when compared to the vote of the KBW, which enjoys a rather broad base in the region (it is represented, for example, on the municipal council in Heidelberg). The results obtained by some of the individual candidates of the GIM should also be noted, for example Comrade Michael Latz, who won 0.3 percent of the vote in Tübingen (three times as many as the candidate of the KBW). The GIM's two individual candidates in Hamburg won twice as many votes as the candidates of the KBW.

GREEK MILITANTS ACQUITTED

The attack of the Caramanlis government on the Greek revolutionary left has been dealt a setback. An Athens court has been compelled to acquit the militants charged with bearing "moral responsibility" for the events of May 25. (See INPRECOR, No.53, June 10, 1976.) The government had begun to carefully prepare the trial immediately after the workers strikes and demonstrations of May 24 and 25. The targets were fourteen militants belonging to the OKDE (Organization of Internationalist Communists of Greece), Greek section of the Fourth International; the Maoist organization EKKE; the Proletarian Left group; and the communist organization Machitis.

The far left organizations responded to Caramanlis's attack with a solidarity campaign organized by an ad hoc committee. This committee succeeded in collecting tens of thousands of signatures and got solidarity motions adopted by trade-union and student organizations. This was achieved in spite of the reserved attitude of the two Communist parties, which limited themselves to taking very vague positions without openly expressing solidarity with the indicted militants and in spite of the silence of the PASOK, a large left socialist formation.

The committee also organized a series of meetings, of which the largest was held in Athens on September 27. Another meeting, organized on the initiative of the far left groups, was held at the Polytechnical Institution during the trial. The Polytechnic had been the scene of big workers and student struggles under the military dictatorship.

The trial was held in an atmosphere of tension. The presiding judge had selected a small room in order to limit the public character of the trial. All the witnesses for the prosecution were high-ranking policemen who had held posts of responsibility under the dictatorship. Both the defendants and their attorneys declared that some of the prosecution witnesses had persecuted them in various ways. One policeman in particular was accused by one of the defense attorneys of having refused his father a passport; the attorney's father later died in prison. Two of the defendants and one woman who was observing the trial were sentenced to four months imprisonment on charges of contempt because they called the police fascists.

In spite of all this and in spite of the government's desire to teach the far left a lesson, the testimony presented by the prosecution proved too ridiculous to justify a guilty verdict. The court had to acquit the militants, thus admitting that the government had attempted a frameup with no basis in fact.

Fourth International Holds Public Meeting in Spain

After public appearances by Comrades Ernest Mandel and Peter Camejo and after press conferences organized by the LCR/ETA-VI (Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-Sixth Assembly) and the LC (Communist League), the first public meeting held openly under the auspices of the Fourth International has taken place in Spain. It was held in Barcelona on October 2. Nearly 2,000 people assembled in the Engineering College of the University, in spite of the fact that the meeting could be announced only forty-eight hours in advance. Hundreds of people had to stand outside the door, for it was impossible to cram everyone into the room.

Comrade Mandel dealt with the theme "Self-management, workers democracy, and socialist revolution." He spoke at a podium under an enormous picture of Leon Trotsky and large banners of the two sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in the Spanish state. (The comrades of the Left Communist Organization (OIC) also hung up their own banner.) After an interesting discussion, the meeting concluded with a rousing singing of the Internationale. During his stay in Barcelona Comrade Mandel also spoke at several other meetings at the University, as well as at two meetings held in the workers suburbs of Sabadell and Hospitalet.

panama



MASSIVE REPRESSION

by GERARDO SOLORZANO

Students flee tear gas during protests in Panama City

The situation in Panama is becoming increasingly difficult. The problems of the present bourgeois Bonapartist regime are sharpening, while no way out of the growing economic crisis is in sight. Unemployment and the high cost of living are constant features and represent the basic problems faced by the Panamanian people today. The bourgeoisie is still attempting to resolve the crisis at the expense of the workers. To do this it relies on the military reformist regime, which defends bourgeois interests in all domains.

In the July issue of its monthly organ, the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria (LSR — Revolutionary Socialist League), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, reported: "The bourgeois Bonapartist regime has once again demonstrated its real objectives: curb the development of the independent organization of the workers, open the door wider to imperialist capital, maintain capitalist exploitation." The massive repression that was unleashed in Panama in September has confirmed the analyses of our fraternal organization, as has the struggle the Panamanian revolutionary left is waging against the military reformist regime and its antipopular policy.

Incapable of resolving the sharp economic crisis that has ruined working classes, the Panamanian regime decided at the beginning of September to order an increase in the price of rice and milk, basic staples of the diet of the Panamanian people. This increase came on top of an already long list of other increases in the prices of basic goods effected by the Torrijos regime, the aim being to make the exploited classes bear the costs of the crisis of capitalism. The LSR and the other organizations of the revolutionary left in Panama* decided to demonstrate against the high cost of living once again. The demonstrations, initiated by students, received broad popular support, resulting in the largest mobilizations seen in the country's capital in the past eight years.

*The role of the LSR in organizing the demonstrations was recognized by the bourgeois press itself. In fact, the New York Times of September 24 spoke of "the Trotskyist and ultraleftist groups . . . that ignored the radical rhetoric of the government, which they consider oligarchic and bourgeois."

The response of the military regime was not long in coming. The first of the demonstrations, held September 10, was attacked by shock troops of the Federación de Estudiantes de Panamá (FEP — Federation of Students of Panama), an organization whose leadership is directly controlled and financed by bourgeois Bonapartism. Not satisfied with the physical aggression against all those who demonstrated against the price increases, the government accused the organizations of the revolutionary left of being responsible for the plundering and destruction of some warehouses in the main commercial area of the city. These organizations were also accused of being "counterrevolutionary," "fifth columnist," and "agents of the CIA." At the same time, the regime tried to create the impression that the mobilizations had been organized as part of a "plot" against the "revolutionary process" aimed at overthrowing the regime and that this "plot" had been orchestrated by the CIA and the Panamanian bourgeoisie.

But the most important aspect of the events was the open willingness of the officers to repress the demonstrators when they marched toward the central headquarters of the Panamanian Guard. This attitude on the part of the present bourgeois regime is explained by the fact that the officers and the bourgeoisie of which they are a part know that the problem of the price increases is quite deeply felt by the masses and that the protest on this issue could generate conflicts leading to a sharpening of the class struggle.

Far from falling into the trap of the government's diversionary statements, the Panamanian popular masses continued to manifest their protest against the antipopular measures, unemployment, and the nationalist demagoguery that characterizes the military regime which has held power since the coup of October 11, 1968.

On Monday, September 13, the students of the Instituto Nacional (the largest secondary school of the capital) marched through the streets of the city to the presidential palace, accompanied by their fathers and teachers aides, to protest against the price increases and the attacks on the previous demonstrations by "elements led by a pseudo-student progovernment body," as was explained in the protest communiqué issued by the Parents and Teachers Aides Association of the Instituto Nacional. The communiqué also stated: "The acts of

vandalism were committed under the complacent eye of the authorities of the Ministry of Education, on the specific orders of the director of student affairs." It also demanded that the "national government promptly intervene to cut off all aid to the FEP, which was responsible for these acts."

While the voices of protest against the regime mounted, the regime itself intensified all its propagandistic, demagogic, and repressive energies in an effort to put across the idea that the whole thing was part of a "destabilization plan" and that it was the government that was the victim of aggression and not the large number of students, fathers, and housewives who were wounded in clashes instigated and commanded by elements supporting the regime and by members of the regime's own security and secret service apparatuses. They thus managed to create the image abroad that the Torrijos government was under attack by North American agencies, thereby obscuring the real cause of the problem: the high cost of living that is being imposed on the Panamanian people day by day.

Far from abandoning their protests, the LSR and the revolutionary left organizations, along with the Panamanian masses, continued their mobilization. The workers of the CATI (Genuine Federation of Independent Workers), which is not under government control, called for a demonstration on Friday, September 17. On the night of September 16 the headquarters of the federation were invaded by troops and thirteen leading workers and five students were arrested. According to all evidence, the intent of this operation by the repressive forces was to prevent the demonstration of the following day and thus to provoke a feeling among the masses that the struggle had been crushed.

The LSR and the other groups organized another demonstration for Monday, September 20. As the demonstration of more than a thousand students moved off the university campus, the regime's "antiriot" forces attacked brutally. Several dozen students were wounded, more than 150 were arrested, and the university was shut down after an intervention by troops who surrounded the campus and launched tear gas grenades against the students.*

Three days later, the military regime, which had lost all trust among the masses and had been discredited, was forced to release the arrested students and reopen the university. In the meantime, throughout this period the Stalinists of the Partido del Pueblo (People's party, the Panamanian Communist party) made every effort to continue their unconditional support of the regime, attempting to turn the anticommunist pronouncements of the officers and their press against the sectors influenced by the revolutionary left groups and standing alongside the FEP at the head of the denunciation of the alleged CIA plot.

*The September 22 issue of *El Excelsior* of Mexico wrote: "In regard to the nighttime disturbances, official sources reported that the majority of the direct participants were Trotskyists of the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria."

Initial lessons

The serious confrontations that have occurred in Panama indicate what an urgent necessity it is for revolutionary militants to carry out the task of giving a new impetus to the struggles and at the same time to fight for the democratization of mass participation, which will permit the partial retreat to be overcome and replaced by a much more organic rise of struggles.

The organizations under the leadership of the Stalinist opportunism of the Panamanian CP have been strongly shaken by the impact of the mobilizations, as have the student sectors under the influence of the capitulationism and servility of the FEP. At the same time, the centrist organizations have been able to see that the success of such actions depends not on an apparatus of control of the masses but rather on stimulating the creative mobilization of the masses themselves and on their coordination and centralization. The attempt of the government and its press to present the events as a conspiracy against the "revolution" has quickly collapsed because of a whole series of obscure events that have placed question marks over the regime's version of the events and because of the clear response of the popular sectors of the revolutionary left, which have shown that calling for defense of the regime amounts to defending the offensive against the workers.

The isolated sectors of the traditional bourgeoisie which tried to take advantage of the situation to criticize the regime found this difficult because of the clear class positions of the mobilizations and the slogans raised.

Given the contradictions among the factions that support the regime and the military apparatus and given the continuity of the mobilizations, the evolution of the class struggle may be posed in terms of the following probable alternatives:

1) A sharper political polarization of the fundamental classes, the bourgeoisie and the workers. In this case the options of each of the two class fronts will be manifested more openly.

2) A convergence between the moderate factions of the bourgeoisie and the reformist factions of the workers and people's movement aimed at maintaining the survival of Bonapartism at all costs.

Which of these two possibilities will actually occur will depend on the development of the world crisis of capitalism and the degree to which the revolutionary organizations consolidate themselves among the toiling classes. Neither the political and military strength of the regime nor the social base of Stalinism and the other reformist sectors should be underestimated, in spite of the fact that their margin for maneuver has been narrowing. The dangerous class collaborationist illusions that motivate Stalinism in Panama, combined with the nationalist demagoguery of the regime, will have enormous negative consequences unless there is a revolutionary Marxist alternative that succeeds in preparing the exploited classes for difficult battles against capitalism and its spearhead, Yankee imperialism.

September 27, 1976

Trotskyists Unify in Mexico

Following a decision of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International at the end of 1975, a unification process was set in motion by the two sympathizing organizations of the International in Mexico, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI — Internationalist Communist League) and the Liga Socialista (LS — Socialist League).

In May 1976 the Political Bureaus of the two groups decided to initiate a period of common work on all levels, from cells to leadership, and in June a new step was taken with the fusion of the two periodicals, *Bandera Roja* (LCI) and *El Socialista* (LS). A parity commission drafted documents proposed by the IEC as a programmatic and political basis for the unification, and these documents were submitted to discussion by the militants of the two organizations.

Finally, in September a conference of the LCI and a congress of the LS were held and ratified unification. This was immediately followed by a fusion congress, held September 17-19.

The congress took place in the "Miguel Enriquez" auditorium of the University of Mexico, with the participation of 200 delegates (about one-third from the LS and two-thirds from the LCI), 800 observers (militants and sympathizers of the two organizations), and fraternal delegations from the United States, France, Argentina, Colombia, and other countries. A delegation of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International attended the congress and greeted the unification of revolutionary Marxists as a historic step toward building the revolutionary party of the Mexican proletariat. By acclamation the comrades of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST — Socialist Workers party) imprisoned in Argentina (José Páez and others) and Comrade Mario Roberto Santucho, ex-militant of the Fourth International recently murdered by the Argentine gorillas, were named honorary presidents of the congress.

Four documents were submitted to the 200 delegates and were approved either unanimously or by strong majorities: a programmatic resolution containing the principled accords between the two groups; the statutes; a document on the Mexican revolution; and a political resolution on the present conjuncture. Future issues of INPRECOR will publish excerpts of these documents, which, on the basis of the theoretical arsenal of Trotskyism (permanent revolution, Leninist conception of the party, necessity of armed struggle, transitional program) formulate a coherent revolutionary strategy for the workers and peasants movements in Mexico while also analyzing the specific features of the country: the revolutionary tradition of 1910, the Bonapartist character of the bourgeois state, the weight of the trade-union bureaucracy organically linked to the state, the ambiguities of the "revolutionary nationalist" opposition represented by the electricians' union, etc. The delegates also held a debate on the workers movement in

Mexico and a discussion on international questions; there was no vote on these discussions.

The new, unified party will be called the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT — Revolutionary Workers party), Mexican section of the Fourth International, and its periodical will be called *Bandera Socialista*. The PRT is an organization present in most of the states of Mexico and now constitutes the major political force left of the Communist party. It has a base not only in the schools and universities (where the organization arose in 1968), but also in a growing number of factories and trade unions; in addition, its influence among the most radicalized sectors of the peasant movement is growing rapidly. It will soon be able to become the leading force among the broad vanguard of youth and workers and an alternative pole to the reformist currents within the workers and people's movement. From this standpoint, the unification represents much more than the sum of the forces of the two organizations: it constitutes a qualitative leap toward winning the masses to the revolutionary Marxist program.

The recent economic and political measures taken by the Mexican government (devaluation of the peso, repression against the trade-union opposition) are symptoms of the crisis of the bourgeois Bonapartist system represented by the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary party), which has held power for more than fifty years now. Under the conditions of aggravation of class contradictions during the period now opening, the unification of revolutionary Marxists will enable them to play a much more significant role within the struggles of the students, workers, and peasants, which are beginning to develop everywhere.

Moreover, at a time when military regimes are increasing in number and intensifying repression in Central America and in the southern cone of the continent, the Mexican PRT will develop and extend its work in support of the building of the Fourth International in Central America, which was begun by the LCI (which publishes the bulletin *Revolución Socialista*).

The fusion of the LCI and the LS shows that in spite of genuine political differences (especially on international questions), currents that locate themselves on the programmatic terrain of the revolutionary Marxism of the Fourth International can and must unite in a single organization and settle their debates in the framework of democratic centralism. The unification of the Mexican Trotskyists can thereby serve as a point of departure for a process of overcoming the splits that have occurred within the Fourth International in other countries.

The PRT is a young organization, most of whose members became politically active after 1968. But it sees itself as the heir to revolutionary Marxist and Bolshevik tradition (represented at the congress by the presence of Vlady, the son of Victor Serge, a well-known muralist who greeted the delegates in the name of the old Russian left opposition). ●

on the line of the PLO

The article "The Palestinian Resistance Faces Critical Choices," by Selim Accawi, which appeared in INPRECOR No. 58, September 23, 1976, has elicited the following letter from Naim Khader, official representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Brussels. We are publishing it for the information of our readers, along with a response from Comrade Accawi.

Dear Friends,

I read INPRECOR regularly and follow with great attention its articles dealing with the problems of the Middle East.

I must confess that these articles have always disappointed me, and it is with bitterness that I note that the positions adopted by the Fourth International on the Palestinian problem are becoming increasingly theoretical, abstract, and unrealistic, not to say erroneous.

The article "The Palestinian Resistance Faces Critical Choices," which appeared in No. 58, September 23, 1976, is no exception to this rule; quite the opposite.

I find it regrettable that the Fourth International is so negative, intolerant, and unfair in regard to the Palestinian revolution just at the moment when the Palestinian people are the victim of a new conspiracy and just at the moment when they need the total solidarity of the whole international left, above and beyond differences and criticisms.

For the author of the article in question, who signs with an Arab name but appears to live on the moon, all the Palestinian organizations are opportunist. Nevertheless, all the political tendencies of the left and center-left are inside the PLO. It is curious to note that none of these organizations seem to please the author. Could this be an index of the epicentrism of the Fourth International and a sign of intolerance? Are we to understand that any left organization that does not share the options and analyses of the Fourth International is necessarily opportunist?

As far as the Lebanese conflict is concerned, the author seems to believe that all is lost: the determination of

the Palestinians to defend themselves to the end would be useless in any event, for a victory of the Palestino-progressive forces over the Syrian army and the fascist forces is excluded.

From another angle, any compromise the PLO seems to seek is presented in advance as a betrayal and, for the author, constitutes a concession made by the leadership of the PLO against the Palestinian rank and file. Moreover, I wonder what the term "Palestinian rank and file" means to the author! Is he unaware of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Palestinians in Lebanon are part of the various organizations that are members of the PLO and are structured by them, that it is the Palestinian rank and file that is fighting in Lebanon, and that under the present conditions, whatever the pressures to which the leadership of the PLO is subject and whatever the policy followed by this leadership, it must inevitably take account of the view of the rank and file. Moreover, during the past several months all the initiatives and activities of the leaders of the PLO have been accepted by the rank and file, even if they have been the subject of lively discussions; unless by "Palestinian rank and file" the author means only a few minority and isolated elements each of which tailors a revolution to its own measure.

I do not want to make a complete analysis of the situation in Lebanon, but I place myself at the disposal of the friends of the Fourth International to undertake a discussion with them in order to be able to clarify the policy of the PLO. . . .

Hoping that you will make the present communication known in the next issue of your journal, I extend to you, dear friends, my militant greetings.

Naim Khader, Representative of the PLO in Brussels

IN REPLY

The author of this letter seems to place a question mark over the degree of support the organizations of the Fourth International have extended to the Palestinian resistance. Given the post held by the author of the letter, he cannot be unaware of the role the various sections of the Fourth International have played in supporting the Palestinian resistance ever since it arose, and in particular during 1970 and throughout the civil war in Lebanon. These positions have been expressed by the entire press of the International, as well as by statements of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Thus, when the author of the letter accuses the Fourth International of being "so negative, intolerant, and unfair in regard to the Palestinian revolution," the point is different. What the author of the letter means by "Palestinian revolution" is clearly not the Palestinian struggle but rather the political line of the Palestinian leaderships.

This is a necessary distinction, for while the Fourth International completely supports all the fighting Palestinian organizations in their struggle against the various henchmen of imperialism and against all forms of repression, it nonetheless does not support the political program or slogans of the PLO.

And although given the present situation prevailing in Lebanon, active support must now take priority over political critiques, this does not mean that all support must be expressed in the form of flattery of the forces being supported or through murky political positions. After eighteen months of civil war it is necessary to draw a balance-sheet, to explain our view of the reasons for the successive defeats of the Palestinian resistance and the Lebanese left, to present our analyses and perspectives.

Let us examine some of the basic criticism raised in the letter. First of all we may note that it is not the case that all political tendencies of the "left and center-left" are in the PLO. In any event, it is erroneous to characterize the Palestinian organizations in such terms, since all these organizations (leaving verbal differences aside, of course) reject placing the national struggle in the context of the class struggle, and since the only real cleavage among these organizations relates to acceptance or rejection of the Palestinian mini-state. What is rejected in the INPRECOR article is not this or that organization but rather the narrow and utopian conception of the liberation of Palestine, a conception which is common to all components of the Palestinian resistance today. This vision is not accidental but results essentially from the social origins and political references of the Palestinian resistance, as well as the milieu in which it acts.

As for the opportunism of the Palestinian leaderships, one need not occupy any particular geographical location to take note of this feature of the leaderships. Their close relations with the various Arab bourgeoisies

(which continue to exist even now) and their refusal to ally with the movements of social struggle in the various Arab countries, to mention only these two points, are the direct consequence of the Palestino-centrism of all the Palestinian organizations. All this was dealt with in the article and the author of the letter has not advanced a single element placing this analysis in question.

Allow us, however, to ask a few questions:

*How can one explain the fact that at the very moment when one leader of Fateh, Abu Iyad, declared that all the Arab regimes without exception had a negative attitude toward the Palestinian resistance, two members of the Central Committee of the same organization were holding a secret meeting with the leaders of the Christian right?

*Why is it that although the siege of the Palestinian camp Tel-el-Zaatar lasted for fifty-two days, no military operation was initiated to lift the siege? Especially since passage between the camp and the western section of Beirut was possible, as was stated by combatants who escaped from the camp and had fled through the hills of Mount Verde? (See, for example, the reports in the Lebanese dailies An-Nahar and As-Safir during that period.)

*How can one explain the sudden retreat of the Palestinian forces from the mountains, a retreat that seems to have been prepared long in advance, judging by its organization, and left the Palestinian resistance without any political trumps against an increasingly demanding Christian right and Syrian regime?

The Syrian regime has rejected the partial concessions that have been offered by the leadership of the PLO. The other Arab regimes have turned a deaf ear to Arafat's repeated appeals. But the lessons have not been drawn up to now and the same maneuverist policy is still being applied.

Let us note that what was criticized in the article was not the principle of concessions but the context in which these concessions are made. In our opinion the concessions made by the leadership of the PLO up to now do not enable it to safeguard its political independence but only to gain time. And now the Syrian regime has rejected even this. Additionally, to our knowledge no initiative of the leaderships has been either accepted or rejected by the rank and file, since in point of fact the rank and file has never had the opportunity to express itself and has never been asked to offer its opinion. The congresses of the Palestinian organizations are attended only by the category known as "cadres" (appointed by the leaderships and generally all full-timers) and have nothing at all to do with the "combatants," who are systematically kept in political ignorance. It is true that this apoliticism does not exist to the same degree everywhere; discussion and some criticism are allowed in certain organizations, and nuances must therefore be introduced. The principle, however, does not change from one organization to another.

Selim Accawi

SAVE THE MURRAYS!

MUST THEY HANG?



MARIE AND NOEL MURRAY, SENTENCED TO DIE BY HANGING, ON THE 9th JULY, IN THE SPECIAL CRIMINAL COURT, BY JUDGES PRINGLE, MARTIN AND CARROLL.

THEY WERE SENTENCED TO DEATH WITHOUT A JURY - THE ONLY EVIDENCE WAS STATEMENTS, EXTRACTED UNDER TORTURE BY THE POLICE.

THE ACCUSED WERE NEITHER PRESENT NOR LEGALLY REPRESENTED DURING TWO THIRDS OF THEIR 'TRIAL'.

POLICE PERJURY HAS CONDEMNED THEM TO DEATH.

Marie and Noel Murray, two Irish anti-imperialist fighters, are now under sentence of death by hanging. They were convicted of killing a policeman during a bank raid in Dublin, Ireland, last Easter. The appeals court has thrown out their appeal against conviction and the decision as to whether or not to go ahead with this legalized murder now rests in the hands of the president of the Supreme Court.

The fate of the Murrays will have major significance for the anti-imperialist struggle in the whole of Ireland. The Dublin government has been gradually intensifying its role as the main prop for British rule in Ireland. In pursuit of its fight against "terrorism," the Free State government has made itself one of the most repressive regimes in Europe. The Murrays are among the targets of recent repressive legislation.

The Murrays were found guilty by the new Special Criminal Courts. These courts have no jury and the normal rules of evidence do not apply. The only real "evidence" presented against the Murrays was a "confession" that was subsequently retracted, the Murrays declaring that the confession had been extracted under torture. The coalition government of Liam Cosgrave is so unsure of the strength of its case that the Irish liberal fortnightly *Hibernia* is facing contempt of court charges for publishing letters commenting on the trial.

As British imperialism and its watchdog in the twenty-six counties continue to be unable to impose their will on the Irish people, demands for intensified repressive actions have escalated on both sides of the border as well as in Britain itself. The government in southern Ireland has long been unable to carry out the type of repression demanded by British imperialism because of the strength of anti-imperialist sentiment there. The recent passing of the "anti-terrorist" laws, including the invoking of a state of emergency, are all part of a massive offensive aimed at intimidating the southern Irish working class. The goal is to prevent the workers in the South from extending any support to the struggle against the occupying British troops in the northern six counties. If the southern regime succeeds in going ahead with this hanging, British imperialism will be given a green light to adopt similar measures against "terrorism" in the North and even in Britain itself. The execution of the Murrays would also represent a victory for the government in the South against its own working class.

Given the hysteria around the Murray case that has been whipped up in the twenty-six counties, as well as the press blackout and the refusal of the reformist workers leaders in the South to put themselves in the position of defending "terrorists," the campaign to save the Murrays has remained isolated in the South. Under these conditions, only an international campaign of solidarity can stop the executions. In view of the dependence of the Irish economy on imperialist investment, the Irish government is very sensitive to international opinion and pressure. All steps outside Ireland are valuable weapons for the southern Irish campaign to break the isolation. Already an important step has been taken in this direction with the sending of a telegram from a German Irish Solidarity Campaign. Among the 15,000 signatures calling for the suspension of the death penalty are Heinrich Böll, Jean-Paul Sartre, Hans Magnus Enzensburger, and Ernst Bloch.