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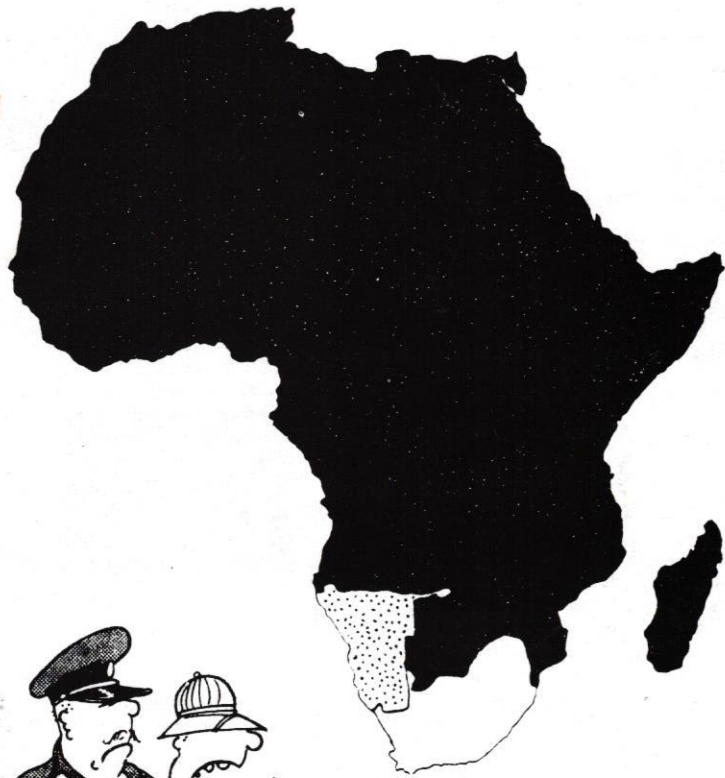
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too dark
to see where
we're going!

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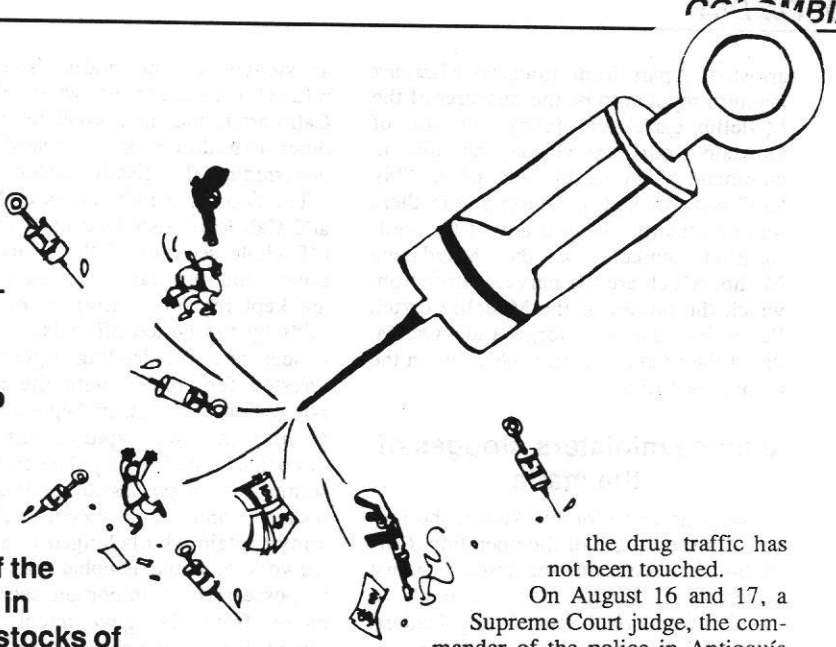
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Behind the drugs war



THE MURDER of Liberal senator Luis Carlos Galán on August 18 impelled the Colombian president Virgilio Barco Vargas to unleash "total war" against the drug traffickers, the *narcos*. This took the form of an impressive military and police mobilization, the arrest of nearly 11,000 people and the seizure of the property of the famous Medellín Cartel in various regions of the country. Whole stocks of arms and ammunition were found, several tons of drugs, as well as cars, planes and helicopters. The value of the equipment seized is estimated at \$200 million.

However, at least so far, this operation has not had the success expected. A series of bombings of banks, newspapers and political offices in Bogotá and Medellín shows that the cartels still have a considerable capacity for maneuver. The explanation of the government's impotence has to be sought in the way the mafia is interwoven into the Colombian social fabric and the extent of its infiltration of the state apparatus. And there is also the factor of the United States, which is also implicated in the drugs traffic, despite President Bush's sanctimonious declarations.

the drug traffic has not been touched. On August 16 and 17, a Supreme Court judge, the commander of the police in Antioquía and three left activists were murdered. But it was the ensuing murder of the Liberal senator Luis Carlos Galán that forced the government to react more energetically. According to all the polls, this 46-year-old politician was the most serious candidate for the presidency. This time, the mafia's hired killers went too far. Galán belonged to the moderate center of his party, having begun his political career at the age of 25, as minister of education.

Violent protests at Galán's murder

Although he was responsible for a split that cost the Liberal Party the presidential elections in 1981, Galán was reinstated in the party after a few months. He had won the support of the bosses that he criticized before. His intransigence against the drug traffic, which he fought since the early 1980s, and his positions in favor of reforming the political system gained him enormous popularity in the big urban centers.

This reputation enabled him to emerge as the charismatic leader of the only current in the Liberal Party able to negotiate peace with the guerrillas and offer a democratic opening. Galán's murder aroused violent protest among the population, which has long demanded the dismantling of the paramilitary groups. Virgilio Barco yielded to this pressure, unleashing his "total war" against the drug traffic.

However, the results of this operation did not match up to the fanfare of the government's campaign. Some 7,297 of the 10,797 arrests carried out after August 19 were of people suspected of being connected with the drugs' trade in one way or another. But by the start of September only about 3,500 of them were still being held, the rest having been released for "lack of evidence."

What is more, only people of secondary importance in the two cartels were

RODRIGO O'FARREL

THE "SINISTER WINDOW" was established in 1974 in the Banco de la Republica. Without any check, you could deposit dollars of dubious origin and get quite clean pesos back. In that year, the money that passed through that window was on the order of \$500 million. In 1987, the flood of "narcodollars" flowing through it reached \$1,200, the equivalent of 4% of the country's gross domestic product. In 1988, the Medellín Cartel's total profit was probably between 5 and 10 billion dollars, of which nearly 2 billion were injected into the Colombian economy. The rest remained in foreign banks and clandestine caches of currency.

Another mechanism for laundering dollars from the drug traffic are the presidential amnesties. On taking office, every new Colombian president decrees an amnesty. In this way, the big mafioso stocks of capital are given a clean bill of health by the fiscal authorities. Such money can also be channelled into buying "foreign debt bonds," which were authorized by the Congress when the World Bank refused to grant Colombia

new credits.

Thus, the Colombian ruling class has always devised means for taking advantage of the drug capital. It has tried itself to administer this money, fearing that the emerging new class could quickly come to control the country's economy. However, as the mafia's economic operations took on greater scope, their political activity became independent and violent.

Spectacular maneuvers by the authorities

In 1985, the mafia eliminated a minister of justice, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, who opposed their designs. The following year, it was Guillermo Cano, director of one of the country's major dailies, *El Espectador*. Murders of political personalities and uncorrupted judges and police have continued without letup over recent years. The authorities also responded with spectacular maneuvers. They have put the cities under martial law, restricted freedoms, caught some drug pushers, confiscated weapons and destroyed some laboratories. However, the backbone of

arrested. Apart from Eduardo Martinez Romero reputed to be the treasurer of the Medellín cartel and Fredy, the son of Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, the third in command of the cartel, none of the "big fish" were picked up. Furthermore there was no attempt to storm any of the well-fortified bunkers of the Magdalena Medio, which are the nerve centres from which the bosses of the Medellín cartel, Pablo Escobar and Jorge Luis Ochoa, direct their vast networks when life in the town gets difficult.

Justice ministers stooges of the mafia

Everyone in Colombia knows the reasons for the failure of the operation. Corruption and assassination threats against government officials were enough to "wilt" several of the state's top leaders. Two of Virgilio Barco's justice ministers, Edmundo López Gómez and José Manuel Arias Carrizosa, are remembered

as stooges of the mafia. The former refused to extradite the two chiefs of the Cali cartel, and the second revoked five other extradition orders issued by the government of Belisario Betancur.¹

The two super-rich cartels of Medellín and Cali have also succeeded in buying off whole sections of the armed forces, police and judiciary. The cartel bosses are kept regularly informed of planned raids by top police officials. It is by no means rare for leading figures to be arrested for contact with the mafia or possession of drugs. In September 1986, an army chief was captured with 80 kilos of cocaine; last May a police colonel was summoned for possession of 400 kilos of cocaine; and more recently a former army captain who belonged to a training network of Pablo Escobar was captured in possession of important secret documents from the government and the armed forces, which he was about to deliver to the mafiosi. Up until now, more than 1,700 military personnel have

been thrown out of the armed forces for similar reasons.

A few weeks ago, Miguel Maza Márquez, director of DAS [state security services] had a miraculous escape from an attempt on his life. Subsequently he came up with some important revelations on the infiltration of the army by drug-traffickers, drawing down the wrath of the Defence Minister, Jaime Guerrero Paz. The latter demanded the sacking of the uncorrupted director of DAS, who has also denounced the role of the army in numerous massacres of peasants carried out by extreme right groups in 1988. Barco was forced to intercede. He decided to stick with Maza and ask for Guerrero's resignation.

The alliance between the drug traffickers and the military is not only a matter of the corruption of a handful of officers. It also flows from the common interests of these two social groups. In its struggle against "Communism," the military has never had such a determined ally as the mafia. When they tried to extend their power over the vast areas of agricultural land that they had bought to launder their money, the drug traffickers came into conflict with the guerilla organizations.

At first, the mafia paid the "revolutionary tax" collected by the guerrillas. It was at this time that the US ambassador, Lewis Tambs coined the phrase "narco-guerrilla." But once they had dug in, they stopped doing this and made an alliance with the landowners, the cattle ranchers and the military. They set up "self-defense" groups (civilian gangs authorized by law and supported by the army in the "struggle against subversion") and plunged into a crusade to exterminate the guerrillas, the agricultural workers' unions and all popular resistance.

Over 1,200 left activists assassinated

The army tolerated the activity of the self-defense groups, and in some cases backed it up. In 1987-88 more than 1,200 activists of the left organizations — the Patriotic Union, the People's Front and A Luchar — were murdered by the paramilitaries, to say nothing of dozens of teachers, priests, journalists and judges. In those regions where the guerrillas have popular support, the mafia was also responsible for massacres of peasants.

It is quite possible that the CIA itself played a role in stabilizing the mafia cartels in Colombia. In July 1988, the *Washington Post* revealed that at the end of 1986, the bosses of the Medellín cartel

The Medellín Cartel

ACCORDING to the *Miami Herald*, 80% of the cocaine consumed in the United States is provided by the Medellín cartel. Some estimates claim that up to 300,000 people out of Colombia's total population of 32 million are directly or indirectly employed in the drug "sector", and that 1.2 million people are economically reliant on it.

The publicly known heads of the Medellín cartel — Pablo Escobar Gaviria, known as *el padrino* [the godfather] Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, known as *el mexicano* [the Mexican] and Jorge Luis Ochoa — are from the Antioquia region and are among the richest people on the planet. They are also at the top of the planet's wanted list. A fourth member of the cartel, Carlos Ledher, was captured in Colombia in February 1987 and immediately extradited to the USA, where he is now serving a life sentence.

The properties and investments of the Medellín cartel are spread across the whole territory of Colombia. The main laboratories for processing cocaine are in the eastern plains, in the forests of Guaviar and in the fertile region of Magdalena Medio, where the bosses own vast grazing lands guarded by private armies. It was there that this year Israeli, South African and British mercenaries trained an elite commando unit in terrorism for the cartel. Several secret cemeteries were also built there, in which some of the cartel's victims ended up.

In Medellín, capital of the prosperous department of Antioquia, the cartel controls a significant proportion of the town's buildings as well as numerous businesses. In the mid-1970s Medellín had a significant unemployment problem due to the crisis of the textile industry, but it is now an ultra-modern city where money flows readily. Building construction enterprises, credit and savings institutions as well as intermediate financial operations have developed spectacularly in the past few years thanks to the drugs money.

The mafia also invests in many other sectors such as foodstuffs, transport, stock rearing and tourism and owns banks, hotels, chemical laboratories, chains of drugstores, football teams and so on. From unassuming premises in Bogotá, Rodriguez Gacha controlled by himself 34 different enterprises throughout the country with a monthly revenue of some 80 million pesos. 1,000 families throughout the country make their living through such business.

The other side of this economic prosperity is insecurity and drugs. Colombia has one of the highest numbers of violent deaths in the world. In the last ten years, the number of murders have tripled, reaching 15,450 in 1987 and 21,129 in 1988 ("only" 1,637 of which were political murders). A big proportion of young people in Medellín, especially in the poorer quarters are affected by drugs, in particular by the spread of "crack". This is the element from which the "motorcycle killers", who will kill anybody for a modest fee, are drawn. ★

1. The first law on extradition procedures was issued by President Rafael Nuñez in 1888. In 1980, Colombia made an agreement with the US on the extradition of drug-traffickers. In 1984, some 20 drug traffickers were extradited. The agreement was annulled by Colombia's Supreme Court in 1987, but after a wave of assassinations of magistrates and judges, Virgilio Barco threatened to revive the treaty, a threat he has carried out, using martial law powers.

had sought to get in contact with the American administration. In exchange for a tacit amnesty, they proposed through a Miami lawyer to provide information on the Colombian guerrillas, the activities of the Cuban advisers, the delivery of arms by Qadhafi and the presence of Palestinian, Angolan, Argentinian and Ecuadorian fighters among the guerrillas.

Campaign to liquidate the Colombian left

According to the *Washington Post*, the US administration did not take this proposal seriously. It is hard to know what Washington really decided. But what is certain is that the date of this proposal coincided with the beginning of a campaign to liquidate the Colombian left in which an alliance between the army and the drug traffickers was an important factor!

What is more, there is a relationship between the Colombian drug traffickers and the CIA that goes back a long way. When the Irangate scandal was at its height, a CBS broadcast established that Colonel North was in contact with CIA agents who facilitated the entry into Florida of airplanes loaded with Colombian cocaine, after they had delivered arms and explosives to the Nicaraguan contras.

According to CBS, which based itself on testimonies from pilots jailed in the US, the CIA managed, thanks to cocaine money, "to buy more, better and still more sophisticated weapons for the contras." US senator John Kerry, a member of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, noted in a letter to the Justice Department (published in the October 30, 1986, issue of the *Miami News*) that he had been approached by an informer who had assured him that he had taken part in drug operations together with the Colombian mafioso Jorge Luis Ochoa and CIA personnel. The same source confirmed that the CIA had sent arms to Colombia, and that on their return trips the planes used for this carried cocaine sent by Ochoa, with the complicity of the local CIA agents.

Later, a Colombian magazine published a peculiar testimony. The ex-wife of a drug trafficker said that Eugene Hansefus² landed several times at the Barranquilla airport in Colombia to take on cocaine from the Medellín cartel before (or after) his trip to Costa Rica, where he delivered shipments of arms destined for the Nicaraguan contras.

Barco's "total war" against the drug traffic has also offered Washington a pretext for increasing its military interference in Colombia through \$65 million in "aid" and a proposal to send troops. Up until March 1989, the US had only allotted \$10 million for Colombia to fight the drug traffic. As for the campaigns in the US itself to reduce drug consumption, they can only promote the growth of the



illegal traffic and its disastrous consequences in Colombia. But everyone knows that what really worries the US — more than the drug traffic — is the existence of the guerrillas in Colombia. Any US military involvement, therefore, will serve to reinforce the army in its fight against the guerrillas.

Intensification of terrorist attacks

A few weeks before the assassination of Galán, far-right groups backed by the drug traffickers founded their own political movement — the Movement for National Restoration (Morena) — with the aim of establishing themselves in the electoral arena. It is well known that the drug traffickers are behind Santofimio Botero's campaign for the Liberal nomination and many candidates for Congress and mayoralities. They have already established important footholds in private enterprise, the court system, the armed forces, civil service and the Church.

The election campaign, which has already been disrupted by the murder of Luis Carlos Galán, is likely to be full of turmoil. Several candidates have already cancelled their public appearances and announced that they will limit their campaigns to TV appearances. The furthest right wing of the Liberal Party could emerge victorious from the present war atmosphere.

The "war against the drug traffic" may also go into a new stage with the entry onto the scene of US military "advisers" and the intensification of terrorist attacks against public establishments. The idea of "negotiating" with the drug cartels is beginning to be defended by the Conser-

vative mayor of Medellín. In the present state of affairs, no one knows what concretely would be negotiated with the drug traffickers. However, the people who have come up with this plan insist that it is the only solution to the present violence, since repression will solve nothing and will reinforce right-wing terrorism.

At the same time, the idea of re-introducing the death penalty is being voiced in conservative circles, along with a call for bringing in the US Green Berets. On August 22, an editorial in the daily *El Espectador* summed up the situation thus: "It is certain that the phenomenon of drug-trafficking is gaining in importance. From the assassination of leftist militants and the expulsion of the guerrillas from the areas they control, the drug traffickers have gone on to a new stage and they are now joining battle for power, alongside the extreme right."

A military coup is not excluded

Other observers do not rule out the possibility of a military coup if the measures announced by Virgilio Barco fail to produce a clear victory over the drug barons. There are plenty of objective factors pushing in this direction. Barco has not even been able to line up the traditional bipartisanship behind him. He seems to be fighting alone and with arms borrowed from others. But it is clear that he is trying to win the war. He knows that, if he fails, along with his ministers, he will be among the next targets of the mafia's killers. ★

2. Eugene Hansefus is the American mercenary whose plane was shot down in Nicaragua when he was carrying arms to the Contras.

Widespread opposition to racist elections

INTRODUCTION

THE ELECTIONS for the "Coloured" and "Indian" houses in 1984 were the occasion for the mobilization of vast protests and a boycott. Over the following years, the government has run up against unprecedented mobilizations by the Black population, organized essentially by the unions and the community associations. The repression has seriously weakened the mass movement, but it has not managed to stabilize a lasting relationship of forces favorable to the white regime. The latter has been confronted with three constraints — the persistent combativity of the oppressed populations, the economic crisis and US-Soviet pressure for a firm settlement of the "racial conflict."

This was the context in which the recent elections for the white, Coloured and Indian houses were held. The struggle in recent weeks has focused around the mobilization of the "African" population, which is still denied the right to vote; a very strong boycott by the Coloured and Indian communities of "their" respective houses; and the campaign for dismantling apartheid and for universal suffrage.

In the white elections, the National Party, in power since 1948, suffered a setback. It got 93 seats out of 178, 40 less than in the last election. On its right, the Conservative Party got 39 seats (17 more) and on its left, the Democratic Party got 33 (13 more). The narrow victory of the National Party (in fact only 6% of adult South Africans voted for it) testifies to the erosion of its credibility, as it faces a challenge both from a part of the whites who reject any reform of the system and by another part that sees no way out of the crisis other than negotiation with the ANC.

The National Party's new leader, F.W. de Klerk, who follows P.W. Botha, presents himself as a champion of reform. But these elections show that he will have to continue to make compromises alternately to the liberal and conservative wings.

Within the anti-apartheid movement, the central question under discussion now is "negotiations." Although no real negotiated settlement can be envisaged in the short term, there is no doubt that negotiations have begun between the regime and the ANC. The big march of September 13, which got precedent-breaking official authorization, was thus an occasion for a demonstration of strength in support of change.

Figures such as Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak, who have been somewhat pushed to the sidelines over these last three years, came again to the forefront of the democratic movement. And de Klerk said on the same day that he hoped that these events proved that a new spirit could arise in the country. The following article describes the situation on the eve of the elections.

MASS political activity has once again erupted in most of the major industrial centres of the country. Pushed forward under the mantle of the Defiance Campaign, the mass movement has managed to mobilize widespread opposition to the racist elections for the tricameral parliament and to the Labour Relations Amendment Act (LRA).¹ The mobilizations against apartheid in the hospitals and on the beaches have also kept international attention focussed on the apartheid policies of the regime.

All this comes at a particularly difficult time for F.W. de Klerk who, following on the National Party's election victory, wants to push ahead with his reform programme. Increased mass unrest makes it difficult for him to win the space for his reforms.

Possibility of a negotiated settlement

However, the real significance of the current mass activities must be viewed against the backdrop of the increased tempo of discussions around the idea of negotiations between the government and sections of the liberation movement, and the possibility of a negotiated settlement. Intensive pressure is being placed on the African National Congress (ANC) by its supporters, the USSR, the frontline states and by many Western governments to drop the armed struggle and reach an accommodation with Pretoria. The ANC for its part believes that the South African government can be pressurized into a negotiated settlement.

For this reason, it has welcomed and supported the current Defiance and anti-LRA campaigns. This is believed to be crucial to force the regime to the negotiating table. Also, insofar as the resistance is perceived to be ANC-inspired, it serves to increase the latter's leverage in any negotiations. At the same time, the current mobilizations are occurring in a period of unprecedented unity within the mass movement.

Following the imposition of the state of emergency and the bannings and restrictions placed on organizations and individuals, the mass movement suffered real setbacks. Under the onslaught of state repression many grassroots organizations collapsed, becoming shells in comparison to what they had been.

1. Labour Relation Amendment Act — new legislation that further restricts trade-union activity.

As soon as new organizations were established to replace those banned, they in turn were banned. In response an informal alliance was established that came to be known as the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM).

At the centre of this alliance was the core of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the trade-union federation, COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions). Statements would be issued in the name of the MDM by leaders of either COSATU or the UDF. Using the slight democratic space opened by the attempt of National Party leader de Klerk to show the world that he was committed to fundamental reform, and the space opened up by the election campaign, the MDM was able to put itself on the political map by spearheading the Defiance Campaign.

Whether the Mass Democratic Movement includes organizations that have different ideological positions to the Congress [pro-ANC] movement has not been clearly answered by the self-appointed leaders of the MDM. Some spokespeople claim that the MDM can include all organizations of the broad mass movement; others have stated that it only includes those organizations that support the Freedom Charter.

This raises important issues of democratic practice, mandates and accountability. This came up in a stark way recently over the question of the boycott of the elections.

While everyone was clear about supporting a boycott of elections to the Coloured and Indian parliaments, there was confusion over the white elections. Sidney Mafumadi, the assistant general secretary of COSATU, issued a statement declaring that the MDM would have nothing to do with the racist elections, which should be boycotted. This raised consternation among the UDF's white liberal supporters who thought it necessary to vote for the Democratic Party.

Problems of democracy and accountability

A few days later, UDF leader Murphy Morobe issued a statement in which he said that the official and final position of the MDM was that it was not calling for a boycott of the white elections, only of the "coloured" House of Representatives and the "Indian" House of Delegates. The question is, where did Morobe get the mandate and authority to say that his position was the final and official position of the MDM? Was COSATU consulted? Was the UDF consulted? What about other organizations?

These problems of democracy and

accountability, and who exactly constitutes the MDM, can be expected to become more acute as different positions within the Movement begin to emerge.

But one thing that is obvious is that the intensity of sectarianism, which reached a pinnacle at COSATU's Second Congress

tiatives must continue.

Thus, it has been in the context of the debate around negotiations and the increased confidence gained through the unity forged by the trade-union movement that heightened resistance has occurred. The Defiance Campaign got off to a relatively peaceful start, with the focus of the protest being segregated hospitals, beaches and buses. But as the campaign gathered momentum and the usual cycle of protest was met with police repression, schooling and work became disrupted. This is especially true in the Western Cape, where schools have been disrupted by boycotts and exams have had to be postponed.

Resistance more militant

As election day — September 6 — approached,

resistance became more militant, with protest marches, barricades and stoning becoming the order of the day. A two-day stay-away was called for September 5 and 6, which was extremely successful. Figures were recorded of 80% in Natal and the Eastern Cape, 70% on the Witwatersrand and 41% in the Cape. For Cape Town this was unusually high, and has to do with the heightened resistance. On the night of the election, 23 people in and around Cape Town were killed in police attacks.

Over the past few days there have been reports of more killings by the police, who seem set on brutally massacring protesters. Latest reports from Cape Town say that over 35 people have been killed, many shot at point-blank range. Clinics and hospitals have reported that many young children and women have been treated for shotgun pellet wounds. This scenario was repeated in many other parts of the country, with demonstrators opposing the elections being brutally beaten up by police contingents.

The way in which the police have responded seems to confirm that now that the elections are over, the mass movement can expect a harsh crackdown with increased detentions, bannings and so on. The regime is anxious to create a calm climate in which to release Nelson Mandela, and continue the process of co-opting sections of the majority into their reform programme.

2. NACTU is the second-largest union federation (COSATU being the largest) comprising independent unions.

3. The Workers' Summit was held in March 1989 — see *IV* 164, May 29, 1989.

4. AZAPO — Black political organization that developed out of the "Black Consciousness" current; CAL — Left political organization. Both AZAPO and CAL describe themselves as socialist.



in 1987, has markedly decreased. It seems that the joint campaign between COSATU and NACTU (National Congress of Trade Unions²) against the Labour Relations Act has played a significant part in easing tensions between the different organizations.

Congress for a Democratic Future

In particular, the unity forged through the Workers' Summit³ has already had important spin-offs. At the COSATU congress the left-orientated metalworkers' union, NUMSA, proposed and won a resolution calling for the rebuilding of the mass movement in a disciplined and accountable manner, crossing all ideological divisions within the liberation movement. At the same time, the banned anti-apartheid conference has been once again set in motion in the form of the Congress for a Democratic Future, which includes representatives from the UDF, COSATU, NACTU, AZAPO (Azanian Peoples' Organization) and the (CAL) Cape Action League on the organizing committee.⁴

Recently, at a rally to declare the lifting of the ban on proscribed organizations, UDF affiliates invited organizations from the fold of the Black Consciousness Movement to join them. However, this has not been all plain-sailing. At the joint rally held in Johannesburg on June 16, hostility erupted when UDF supporters jeered Muntu Myeza of AZAPO as he came up to speak.

But there is a widespread realization that, in this period of continued repression, unity is perceived as being crucial by many activists coming from different political movements, and that united ini-

For their part, the Mass Democratic Movement has pledged to step up its campaign of defiance. Many on the left at first took a distant approach to the Defiance Campaign. Many saw the campaign as "petty bourgeois", restricted to defying petty-apartheid. Clearly, this is the project of the forces around Bishop Desmond Tutu and Rev. Alan Boesak, who have sought to direct the Defiance Campaign in the direction of a civil rights movement, stressing non-violence and passive resistance. Many analogies have been drawn with Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement in the USA.

Campaign had little working-class content

But in the context of the political situation in South Africa, it was almost inevitable that a campaign that depended on extensive mobilization could not be contained in a civil rights framework. Given the defensive position of the liberation movement, the emphasis on the non-violent aspect of the campaign and passive resistance seems correct. In fact, at the start of the campaign, it was precisely this aspect that forced the authorities initially to act with restraint.

The authorities, for example, allowed black patients to be treated in the white sections of the hospitals. Marches were stopped short of their destinations, but selected leaders were allowed to pass on their petitions and demands to the targeted authorities. This gave the space for the campaign to gather greater momentum.

Yet, at the same time, it is true that the campaign had very little working-class content. In some ways the Defiance Campaign tended to deflect energy and focus away from the campaign against the Labour Relations Amendment Act. Some organizations on the left, like the Cape Action League, have focussed their involvement in the Defiance Campaign on the LRA. Pickets and placard demonstrations have been held, drawing attention to the Act. Marches undertaken by students were directed to the factories of striking workers, like National Panasonic, where workers of the Electrical and Allied Workers' Union are on strike. These attempts to link student and worker struggles are embryonic, but suggest ways in which the Defiance Campaign can be given greater working-class content.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has been taking the Defiance Campaign into the mines, with workers opposing segregated canteens and other practices. At Rustenberg, a stronghold of the Conservative Party, a white worker was so enraged by the actions of the workers that he shot a leading NUM steward and then shot himself.

8 Very few other unions have become involved as such in the Defiance Campaign. The majority are concentrating

their efforts at putting into practice the programme of action decided by the recent Workers' Summit around the LRA campaign. This limited programme included the 48-hour stay-away around the elections, a month-long consumer boycott and an overtime ban.

That there were problems in carrying out this programme is apparent from the last-minute postponement of the consumer boycott, which was to have started on September 13. To send a telex to the unions two days before the boycott was due to start was bound to create massive confusion, as there was little chance of communicating the decision to the mass of workers and their broader communities. This led to some areas going ahead with the boycott, and resulted in it being enforced by violence. This is already having the effect of turning communities on themselves, and creating disillusionment in some quarters.

Up to now, the objectives of the Defiance Campaign have not been spelt out, except for some MDM spokespersons saying that it will continue until there are negotiations with the government over scrapping apartheid. However, if the tremendous mobilization is not to be simply dissipated, the campaign must be linked to some short-term demands that can strengthen the movement as a whole.

Rebuilding the mass movement

Certainly, the first objective should be to link it to the scrapping of the LRA. Secondly, it could be directed to rebuilding the mass movement along the lines of the COSATU resolution. These would represent significant gains for the movement in the present repressive period.

However, the next few weeks should answer the question as to whether we can expect the level of struggle that has exploded in the Western Cape to spread to the other areas of the country. It seems unlikely at this stage that one can expect the country to be gripped in a generalized uprising, as occurred after the 1984 elections. For the time being the Eastern Cape, Soweto and the other East and West Rand townships are relatively quiet. ★



BULGARIA

Authorities preparing crackdown?

OVER the past months, tens of thousands of ethnic Turks have left Bulgaria to escape official repression of their national identity. Now, according to Kayana Trencheva, wife of arrested dissident Konstantin Trenchev, the Bulgarian authorities are "using the Turkish issue as a cover for a more general crackdown on human rights activists." (*Washington Post* July 21, 1989)

Trenchev is the founder of a small "independent trade union movement", and banners on officially organized demonstrations in support of the regime's line on the issue of the Turks have accused the "Trenchevites" of fomenting the unrest. Trenchev, along with five other dissidents, has been held since the end of May without trial on charges relating to subversion. Another of those arrested, Anton Zapryanov, made a public statement on May 21 in support of the democratic demands of the Turks. The delay in holding the trial suggests conflict in high places over whether to proceed in the campaign against human rights activists — and by implication in the campaign against the Turks.

A further sign of disquiet about the regime's strident chauvinism is a letter written in mid-June by 121 leading intellectuals blaming the Bulgarian authorities for the exodus of the Turks, calling for an end to attempts to suppress Turkish national identity and urging "fellow-citizens who feel themselves to be Turkish" to stay in the country. (*Radio Free Europe Bulgarian Situation Report* September 1, 1989) ★

EAST GERMANY

Co-ordination of opposition movements

REPRESENTATIVES of 500 opposition circles met in East Berlin on August 13 to launch a national movement. According to their spokesperson, Hans-Jürgen Fischbeck, "a democratic opening inside our society is the only way to begin to dismantle the Berlin Wall." (*Die Tageszeitung*, August 15, 1989) The initiative

originated among Christian groups, but is not formally tied to the Evangelical Church, which has served as the main focus for all kinds of opposition to the Stalinists for many years.

There are a number of currents in the opposition movement, which is divided on what should replace East Germany's bureaucratic system. A major difference is over the issue of German reunification, demanded by some groups and rejected by others. But all oppose the official policy of *Abgrenzung* (delimitation) from West Germany and want more political and cultural freedom. Generally speaking, East German dissidents — whether Christians or not — oppose the restoration of capitalism and support a "return to true socialism."

Some see Gorbachev's USSR as showing the way to "real socialism" in East Germany, whose current leadership opposes the reforms in the Soviet Union. According to Pastor Friedrich Schorlemmer, Gorbachev's policies mean "the end of dogmatic and bureaucratic socialism" and the start of a "an authentic and creative socialism". (*Frankfurter Rundschau* July 14, 1988). ★

SOVIET UNION

What will they tell the children?

THE present re-assessment of Soviet history has posed problems for history teachers. In early 1988, school graduation examinations in Soviet history were abolished for a period. In September 1988 a new secondary school history textbook was produced, but was already out of date by the time it appeared. Figures such as Bukharin, who had just been rehabilitated, were condemned in the book for right-wing deviationism, and Stalin was praised.

A new book is now out which "rehabilitates" many of those murdered by Stalin and his supporters, condemns forced collectivization and gives an estimate of 40 million people repressed under Stalin. The new book, however, is expected to be obsolete by 1990 and plans for a replacement are already under way.

The idea that children should be exposed to a number of points of view and encouraged to develop their own judgement does not yet seem to be reflected in the thinking of the

planners of Soviet education! ★

Soviet criticism of Gorbachev's foreign policy

IN AN article in *Les Nouvelles de Moscou* (August 3, 1989) two leading Soviet foreign policy specialists Aleksei Izyumov and Andrei Kortunov, call for a radical revision of Soviet foreign policy.

They want Soviet foreign policy to be more in line with Western public opinion. This would involve ending support to Panama's General Noriega, denouncing Iran over its death threats against author Salman Rushdie, and abandoning diplomatic silence over issues such as the situation of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria.

They criticize the Soviet media's "even-handed" reporting of the massacres in Beijing last June. At the same time they call for a "radical democratization of foreign policy decisions...[which could] begin with the publication of the complete figures of our economic and military assistance to other countries" as well as the opening of the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and regular reports on foreign policy to the Congress of People's Deputies. ★

Anti-Gorbachev forces organize

ON September 8 and 9, 1989, a constituent congress of a "United Council of Russia" took place in Sverdlovsk in the Urals. Some 20 "patriotic Russian" organizations were involved.

The aim of the council is to bring together "Russian formal and informal organizations who can make, on the basis of the constitution, a contribution to the reinforcement of Russia as the core of

the USSR [and to] the consolidation of the Soviet state, historically constituted as a single multinational, socialist country."

The report appeared in *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, a paper that reflects the views of the anti-*perestroika* sections of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Among the groups represented at the congress were the so-called "internationalist fronts" that have been trying to organize Russian workers in the Baltic countries against the national movements. ★

COMMUNIST PARTIES

Building the parties

MEMBERSHIP problems were at the centre of the discussions at this year's meeting of Secretaries of ruling Communist Parties in Havana, according to a report by three Soviet academics in *Pravda* (September 18, 1989). Some ruling parties are growing very slowly, while the Hungarian party fell from 880,000 members in September 1987 to 730,000 at the time of the meeting.

The authors estimate that the Hungarian party is losing about 2,000 workers each month. Ageing is also a problem: only 12% of the members of the Bulgarian CP are under 30, while the figures for Hungary and Poland are 8% and 6% respectively.

The authors believe that the problems stem from the fact that people have yet to feel tangible results from economic and political reforms. But the decline of the youth membership of the Polish and Hungarian parties suggests another reason: as soon as it is no longer absolutely necessary to join the party for career reasons, one of the main reasons for enrolling disappears. ★



'We look forward to your continued support.'



Miners' strike opens new act in *perestroika*

AS THE FIRST large-scale, independent labour action of *perestroika*, the miners' strike of July 1989 merits careful analysis for what it can reveal about the nature of the Soviet (especially Russian) working class and its aspirations. In the unanimous judgment of Soviet officials and media the strike was an expression of support from below for *perestroika*. But this claim is at odds with Gorbachev's own words before the Supreme Soviet:

"This was the most difficult trial for us in the entire four years of *perestroika*. We had Chernobyl. We had other difficult trials. Nevertheless, I would single out present events as the most serious, the most difficult."¹

DAVID SEPPO

“*Perestroika* has shaken people up, especially the youth,” commented A. Evsyukov, chairperson of the Kemerovo strike committee in the Kuzbass.

“Over the past few years, the development of people's political consciousness has moved ahead especially quickly.”²

Two important changes have occurred in the workers' relations with the political and economic bureaucracies. On the one hand, having tested the waters in small-scale strikes, workers have gradually shed their fear of repression. The barrage of criticism which the central authorities and the press have been directing at the economic administration has also had the effect of encouraging worker protest.

On the other hand, the effect of the wage reform and other changes in the enterprises has been to undermine the traditionally collusive relations between workers and management, but so far without replacing them with economically healthy co-operation. This unilateral termination of an implicit social contract, which has had such a corrupting influence on workers' consciousness, has finally

freed workers to protest collectively against miserable work and living conditions and managerial arbitrariness that they once grudgingly tolerated in return for management's “favours”.³

“This way of managing is inadmissible”

Something of the changing outlook of the miners was reflected in the following words of Yu. Boldyrev, a member of the Donetsk strike committee:

“In the coal industry an especially disrespectful attitude of managers to subordinates has flourished. Rudeness and the trampling of human dignity are widespread. Just yesterday people considered this the normal ‘business’ style in the branch. But today with the process of democratization, this way of managing is

totally inadmissible... and that is why we frequently express our lack of confidence in the managers.”⁴

With these changes, the miners have come to feel all the more acutely the absence of an organization to defend their interests. The unions are seen as representatives of

management, and enterprise democracy, formally established by the Law on the State Enterprise, has made little headway.

The miners' strike was fundamentally a protest against bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy and the system's inherent tendency to treat the population not as the goal of production, but as a residual factor whose needs can be ignored so long as social peace is not threatened. This has been particularly blatant in the coal industry since the 1958 decision to shift the energy balance from coal to oil and gas. This meant a decline in priority

1. *Trud*, July 25, 1989.

2. *Sobesdnik* 31, July 1989, p.10.

3. See D. Mandel, “‘Revolutionary Reform’ in Soviet Factories: Changing Relations between Workers and Managers,” *Socialist Register* 1989, London, Merlin Press, 1989.

4. *Trud*, August 2, 1989, p.2.

for investment in coal, which in turn translated into a low level of social spending in the coal regions, since most of the investment in housing and social infrastructure depends on the ministry.

At the same time coal enterprises, like those in other extracting industries, are less able to exploit the provisions of the economic reform to obtain additional income: they make essentially one product and so cannot change the profile of their production to concentrate on higher priced goods; they cannot jack up prices by claiming improvements in their product; nor could they, before the strike, exchange above-plan production for consumer goods or construction materials, since their entire output was covered by state contracts and they have no direct access to consumers.

"The region is drowning in industrial waste"

Industrial pollution is another problem. Life expectancy in Novokuznetsk and Kemerovo is ten years below the national average.⁵ The ecological situation is worst of all in the Kuzbass with its open-pit mines. "The region is drowning in industrial waste," said Evsyukov. "Its water resources and scarce arable land are drawing their last breaths. The thinning taiga is being reduced to nothing under the shovels of the giant excavators and the iron heels of new industrial monsters."⁶

Wages and pensions in coal mining are the highest in Soviet industry. But conditions are the worst and most dangerous. Even so, wages in coalmining have risen at only half the national rate during the current five-year plan (1986-90), for reasons mentioned above. As a result, the industry has lost 34,000 workers over the past three years.⁷ According to Boldyrev:

"The working conditions of the Donbass miners are not only not improving, they are getting worse....The occupational prestige of the miner has fallen to zero; the value of his labour has been cheapened. Wages in many mines are now lower than those on the surface and their miserly increase is eaten up almost at once by sharp jumps in the price of goods and services."⁸

The miners' official workday is six-hours, but they are often at the mines more than ten hours because of time spent in travel to and from the coal-face and in changing. This time is not paid.⁹ The miners were also not being paid the supplement for evening and night work provided for in a 1987 decree.¹⁰ In addition, the system's inability to assure a regular supply of materials for production causes periods of idleness and loss of wages that are especially painfully felt now with the new cost-accounting regime. Finally, the effect of the higher wages paid under the wage reform has been neutralized by inflation and the deteriorating supply of consumer goods in the state sector.

Another source of dissatisfaction was the sliding schedule of holidays introduced with the trade union's blessing — the workers were not asked. This typifies the ministry's approach. This is a measure that allowed an increase of output with minimal capital investment at the miners' expense, since they rarely had days off which they could spend with their families.

Another important factor in the outbreak of the strike is the arbitrary power and corruption of the local authorities. These are not new problems, but they have become intolerable under *perestroika*. Many of the workers' demands could have been met by the local authorities and even, in principle, by the workers' self-management councils. But there had been no democratization on the local level and the authorities continued to consider only the wishes of their bureaucratic superiors worthy of their attention. On the other hand, bureaucratic privilege remains intact. "Saunas, summer vacation trips, the chance to rest in the summer — that's only for the bosses," complained one miner. A Soviet journalist reported hearing such statements, "full of anger and bitterness, innumerable times at meetings and in ordinary conversations. It had been building up for a long time and demanded expression."¹¹ At the same time, the miners saw looming above them an inflated bureaucratic apparatus which they view as little better than an army of parasites. The wealth produced is appropriated by this bureaucracy only to seemingly disappear without a trace. When told that the strike was costing the country millions of roubles, workers angrily pointed to the huge stores of coal that could not be moved and that were catching fire because of the lack of railway cars.

Crest of an unprecedented strike-wave

The depth of the miners' dissatisfaction was no secret to the authorities. In January the trade-union paper *Trud* published a letter from three decorated workers of Mezhdurechensk who complained bitterly of "total neglect in the resolution of social problems" and of the ministry's "anti-*perestroika* attitude" of "taking where the pickings are easy." But the ministry responded to all criticism with empty promises. This time around it did not answer at all.

The miners' strike came on the crest of an unprecedented strike-wave in the Soviet era: two million working-days lost in the first half of 1989, an average of 15,000 workers on strike each day (although a significant part of these strikes involved national issues, themselves, of course, not devoid of social aspects).¹² The coal industry itself experienced twelve strikes in the first half of 1989 over many of the same issues as in July. But they yielded only partial conces-

sions and promises of more to come.

The miners of the Shevyakov mine in Mezhdurechensk finally forced the issue. At the start of July, they presented a list of demands to the central committee of the coalminers' union, the city party committee and the director of the mine, giving them until July 10 to satisfy the demands or face a strike. Negotiations with management on July 4 led nowhere. The strike began with the night shift of July 10-11. By midday the four other mines of the local trust, as well as other enterprises in the town, had joined in. Around 12,000 miners in their work clothes marched along the main street and sat on the asphalt in the city square next to the party committee's offices. They elected a city-wide strike committee which presented a list of 41 economic and ecological demands.¹³

Priority for social needs in investment

That day, *Trud* published an interview with the chair of the All-Union Trade-Union Council, Shelaev, who explained the miners' union's "ultimatum" to the minister. It included the following demands: the right of mine collectives to determine their own work and rest regimes; a common day off on Sundays; a 40% supplement for evening and night shifts; payment for time spent in travelling to and from the coal-face; priority to social needs in centralized capital investment. But not only did this "ultimatum" not cover all the workers' demands, it gave the ministry a year to act, and then only threatened symbolic protest.

On July 12, the minister arrived from Moscow. The meeting lasted all night and into the next day, while on the central square 5,000-20,000 workers held a continuous meeting. At 3pm on July 13, the strike committee announced that 36 of the 42 demands had been met and recommended a return to work. The miners rejected this.

That day the city strike committee sent an open letter to the Soviet government demanding improvement in the food supply to Siberia and the Far East, an end to official privileges and an immediate opening of a public discussion of a new draft constitution to be adopted by November 7, 1990.

The letter also demanded that the leaders of the party and government themselves come to the Kuzbass. And in order to expedite their arrival, it called for a general strike in the Kuzbass. Mezhdure-

5. *Moskovskie novosti* 30, 1989, p.3.

6. *Sobesednik* 31 1989, p.10.

7. *Ibid.*, August 11, 1989.

8. *Ibid.* August 2, 1989.

9. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1989.

10. *Ibid.*, July 11, 1989.

11. *Argumenty i fakty* 30, 1989, p.7.

12. *Trud*, 29 July, 1989.

13. *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, August 3, 1989; *Trud*, July 12, 1989.

chensk returned to work on July 14.¹⁴

Everywhere the picture was the same. The miners occupied central squares in permanent meetings. Worker detachments maintained order. On the demand of the strike committees the sale of alcohol was stopped, liquor stores sealed and drug inspection points set up on the main roads. With a few exceptions, the miners assured the operations necessary to maintain the mines.

Repeat of bargaining marathon

On July 15, in the hall of the Palace of Culture of Novokuznetsk that was overflowing with miners, the Minister and *oblast'* [district] first secretary repeated the volatile bargaining marathon of Mezhdurechensk. But this time they were dealing not with five mines and 12,000 workers, but 158 mines and 177,000 workers. And the bargaining was much tougher. The miners were demanding the presence of Gorbachev and Prime Minister Ryzhkov as the only guarantee they would not be deceived again.¹⁵

These two were not about to come, but on July 16 Gorbachev informed the miners by telegram that a top level delegation, including Politburo member and central committee secretary Silyun'kov was on its way, and in view of this the miners should return to work. But the workers wanted concrete results. On July 18, the regional strike committee, stating that the talks were going well and the basic demands were being met, recommended a return to work starting with the night shift. Many heeded this call, but the next day, 64,015 workers (from 91 mines) were still out. It was only on July 21 that all workers in the Kuzbass returned.¹⁶

The strike in the Donbass began on the evening of the July 15 in Makeevka. Despite government assurances that the Kuzbass agreement covered the entire industry, the miners insisted that top government officials talk directly to them. Indeed, the strike movement in the Donbass spread out of Makeevka only on July 18. It was almost as if the agreement and return to work in the Kuzbass spurred the others to action. A regional strike committee was formed in Donetsk. In all, 110 mines struck in the Donbass with up to 90,000 miners out on one day. Besides the large number of economic demands, the Donbass miners also put forth political demands. On July 20 the strike spread to the other mining centres of the Ukraine.

The government commission arrived in Donetsk on July 20, and the protocol was signed on the July 22. That day, Gorbachev and Ryzhkov called on the miners to return to work. By the morning of July 24, 73 mines in Donetsk *oblast'* had ended their strike, but 50 were still out, insisting on legislative guarantees. A delegation of Donetsk strike committee members and People's Deputies from the Donbass flew



out to Moscow and met with Ryzhkov on July 24 in the Kremlin. A concrete programme of action for whole industry was outlined. Ryzhkov again called on all miners to end the strike. On July 25 it was decided to return to work. A majority of those still out returned, but in Donetsk they held for two more days. The strike in the Ukraine and southern Russia did not completely end until July 27.¹⁷

In the Pechora basin in the far north, the strike began on the July 19 and was called off on July 24 only after People's Deputy V. Luzhnikov formally appraised the Supreme Soviet of the miners' demands. Even so, most miners did not return until the next day when they received a photocopy of the signed accord.¹⁸ The strike in the Karaganda basin in Kazakhstan, the country's third largest coalfield, began on the night of July 19-20. Explaining the strike, a representative of the strike committee stated that the mass media were not revealing all the demands of the Kuzbass miners. Work resumed with the night shift of July 22-23.¹⁹

With the end of the strike, the strike committees did not disband but transformed themselves into workers' committees to monitor the execution of the agreements.

More political demands given only fleeting mention

The full lists of the miners' demands were not published in the central press, and the more political demands that did not figure in the signed accords were given only a fleeting mention. The demands can roughly be divided into four categories: wages and benefits, work conditions and work regime, ecology and political power.

In the Donbass, the major demands in the first two categories, according to a list given to Western reporters by the Ukrainian Central Information Services, included: a wage supplement for evening and night shifts; full pay for travel to and from the coal-face; Sundays off; recognition of a series of diseases as work-related; retirement after twenty years of continuous underground work; additional pension

benefits; three years maternity leave at average wage; full pay for idle time that is management's fault; no loss of wages for changing jobs; prohibition of punitive job transfers; allocation of profits from all-union *subbotniki* [voluntary worked holidays without pay] to be decided by workers' assemblies.

Demand for enterprise autonomy

Other economic demands that went beyond the limits of the enterprise were resolution of problems of water, gas and electricity supply, a review of soap quotas, an apartment for all miners within ten years and food supplies in accordance with medical norms. Then there were the more "political" economic demands: reduction of managerial personnel; payment of wages during the strike from union funds; prohibition of the establishment of new cooperatives and the disbandment of existing medical and food co-cooperatives; and the introduction of regional economic self-financing.²⁰ The demand for enterprise autonomy did not appear on this list, nor does it figure among the demands presented by the central committee of the miners' union to the ministry published on June 11. At some point, however, it came to be presented officially — and possibly seen by the miners themselves — as the central demand.

Besides the general demand to repair ecological damage, some of the specific local environmental demands were the construction of a purification plant in Mezhdurechensk, and stopping the construction of the Krapivinskii hydro-

14. *Trud*, 15 July, 1989.

15. *Argumenty i fakty* 30, 1989, p.4; *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, August 3, 1989.

16. *Trud*, July 19, 1989; *Moskovskie novosti* 30, 1989, p.3; *Argumenty i fakty* 30, 1989.

17. *Argumenty i fakty* 30, p.7; *Vesty iz SSSR* 13/14, 1989, p.21; *Trud*, July 25 & August 2, 1989.

18. *Vesty iz SSSR* 13/14, 1989, p.21; *Trud*, July 22, 1989.

19. *Ibid.*; *Trud*, July 23, 1989.

20. *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, July 30, 1989, p.7.

21. *New York Times*, July 14, 1989, p.A-3; *Liberation* (Paris), July 15-16, 1989, p.18; *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, August 3, 1989; *Trud*, July 22 & August 5, 1989.

electric project on the Tom' River and atomic testing in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan.²¹

Other demands attacked bureaucratic power and privilege directly. Like the demand to ban cooperatives, which flies in the face of the economic reform's basic orientation, these were treated more gingerly by official spokespeople and the press — in fact, they received little mention at all.

The callous attitude of local officials was a major theme of meetings, where these officials were often met with remarks such as "Here comes the town mafia."²² There were widespread demands to replace enterprise and trust directors, labour-collective councils as well as local soviet, party and trade-union officials, and to hold new elections immediately, particularly to the soviets.²³ The miners wanted to replace them with their own leaders from the strike committees. In Chervonograd in the Western Ukraine, the workers also demanded the resignation of the first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, Shcherbitsky, as well as the city party first secretary, the police chief and the head of the KGB. In addition, they called for the creation of an independent trade union, to be named "Solidarity".²⁴

The miners also demanded basic changes at the central level. Some of these — especially the repeal of Article 6 of the constitution that enshrines the "party's leading role" (a euphemism for bureaucratic domination), and election of the Congress of Peoples Deputies by universal suffrage — were, in effect, calls to end bureaucratic power. The demand for direct elections of the chairperson of the Supreme Soviet implicitly called Gorbachev's own legitimacy into question. The Mezhdurechensk demand to end bureaucratic privilege was repeated by all the other miners. Some workers in Prokop'evsk took it upon themselves to inspect the apartments of local officials.²⁵

Specter of a chain reaction of strikes

The narrow social basis of Gorbachev's *perestroika* strictly limited his options. Repression would have totally discredited the economic reform in the workers' eyes and played directly into the hand of the anti-*perestroika* elements in the apparatus. On the other hand, the depth of the miners' skepticism towards the government and of their frustration ruled out buying them off the usual way with concessions and vague promises. Yet a serious response to the miners' demands raised the specter of a chain reaction of strikes across the country.

Gorbachev did not want this strike. But once it was there he was determined to make the best of a bad thing to strengthen his weak social base in the working class and further undermine his enemies in the

bureaucracy. The formula was simple but ingenious: he declared the strike a popular movement in support of the economic reform. At the same time, a concerted attempt was made to direct workers' anger at local officials and especially at the ministry, who were accused of holding back the reform. Hence the repeated affirmation that the "central" and "essential" demand was enterprise autonomy, even though there is no indication that this was prominent in workers' minds at the beginning of the strike.

The emphasis on enterprise autonomy made it possible to blame the ministry and local authorities for the miners' situation. Typical was the statement of the chair of the Donetsk regional trade-union council:

"In the breakneck development of the industrial might of the Donbass, the social sphere was neglected. This is the consequence of the dictatorial and arbitrary power of the ministries and central agencies, with the connivance of the local organs."²⁶

"Fall into line or risk losing your posts"

In reality, of course, the neglect of the social sphere is the consequence of the bureaucratic system itself, of the bureaucracy's arbitrary power over the Soviet people. This could never have occurred in a genuinely democratic system, regardless of the degree of central planning and regulation. If blame were to be honestly apportioned, certainly the topmost leaders, the party politburo and secretariat deserve the greatest part. They determine the overall structure of the economic system and set the basic policy for the ministries to carry out.

This same tactic allowed Gorbachev to exploit the strike to further weaken bureaucratic opposition to *perestroika*. On the background of the spreading strike, he reassured the party secretaries that the party (that is, its apparatus) was destined to remain the ruling party, though it would have to change its methods of domination. At the same time, by calling for a renewal of cadres from top to bottom, he sent out a warning: fall into line or risk losing your posts. He also called for special local party meetings with government and trade-union officials to consider workers' demands, including the ouster of unresponsive officials.²⁷ A move to forestall a national strike wave, it is also an attempt to use the workers to get rid of local officials nurturing anti-*perestroika* sentiments or lacking in initiative.

While the idea of enterprise autonomy was being promoted with the full force of the ideological apparatus, other demands that directly challenged the economic reform, in particular the closure of cooperatives, were hardly mentioned. Gorbachev did refer to it in one speech, only to dismiss it as "an easy way, but is it the

best?"²⁸

The official position was that the demands were justified but the strike was not a good way to win them, and the government tried to mobilize public opinion to pressure the miners to return. The local authorities adopted the same position, verbally supporting the demands while opposing the choice of means. In practice, however, with few exceptions, they remained passive during the strike. The trade-union organizations were also supportive of the movement, organizing free meals, transport and even legal advice. But only in extremely few cases did they lead the strike.

"Only prohibitions and threats demand that we sign"

While adopting a tolerant attitude to the miners' strike, the government took measures to dissuade other workers from following suit. One of these, as mentioned, was Gorbachev's instruction to local party committees to hold meetings with workers' representatives. The government also entered into direct negotiations with representatives of the railway workers who were threatening to strike on August 1. At the same time, it let them know that they could not expect the same indulgence as the miners. A rail worker from Chernigov *oblast'* wrote that he and his colleagues had been forced to sign commitments not to strike. This was after a meeting at which a government telegram about raising discipline and stopping strikes was read out. "Only prohibitions and threats demand that we sign. This sort of attitude towards us on the part of the leadership in no way fosters mutual understanding and the desire to work better. It only intensifies the existing confrontation."²⁹

This is the "firm hand" that many Soviet intellectuals assure is needed for the reform to succeed. But that is the dilemma: recent Polish experience shows that the market reform cannot be imposed from above. That is why Jaruzelski has turned to Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a "friend of the workers" from among Solidarnosc's intellectual advisers, to be prime minister.

The settlement was in two parts: the signed economic accord and the political accord, which, as such, was not published but was expressed in the different measures adopted by the authorities. The economic protocols in the different regions were similar in their basic elements, but

22. *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, July 15, 1989; *Liberation*, July 22-23, p.7.

23. *Globe and Mail*, July 26, 1989; *Trud*, July 16, 25 & 26, 1989; *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, August 3, 1989; *Argumenty i fakty* 30, 1989, p.8.

24. *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, July 30, 1989, p.7; *Vesty iz SSSR* 13/14, 1989, p.21.

25. *Ibid*; *Trud*, July 17, 1989.

26. *Ibid.*, August 2, 1989.

27. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1989.

28. *Sobesednik* 31, 1989, p.2.

29. *Argumenty i fakty* 32, 1989, p.1.

also responded to specific local demands.

The Kuzbass protocol published in *Trud* had seventeen points, though Gorbachev referred to an accord with 35 points.³⁰ Article 1 grants full economic and juridical autonomy to the mines, in accord with the Law on the State Enterprise. Enterprises can adopt different forms of property — state, cooperative, leasing, joint stock and others. Article 2 gives enterprises the right to sell production beyond that covered by state contracts at contractual prices at home and abroad. The extent of state orders is to be reviewed accordingly.

Some directors removed immediately after the strike

Article 3 calls for a rise in the price of coal in accordance with the real costs of its extraction, including the full cost of re-cultivation, and taking into account changing natural conditions. Enterprises are also given the right to apply certain correctives to performance indicators. Article 4 allows enterprises to set output norms and wage rates independently, the regional norms being only recommendations.

These four articles are the government's answer to the demands concerning wages and social investment. An increase in these is thus made dependent, to a degree at least, on increased productivity and effort on the miners' part. Under the old system, increased productivity tended to lead to a decline in wage rates and an increase in output norms and plan quotas, thus penalizing the more efficient enterprises.

Other articles meet the wage demands for night and evening work, payment for travel to and from the coal-face, Sundays off, pensions and retirement (a central demand), maternity leave, vacations, work-related diseases and the shedding of excess managerial staff.

The more political elements of the accord were not published in the central press, though it casually mentioned individual elements. These included increased supply of scarce consumer goods and a rise in the regional wage supplement for the Siberian workers. There was provision for new elections of trade-union committees and labour-collective councils. In some cases, mine and trust directors were removed immediately after the strike. Among the 48 points of the Donbass accord was the prohibition of medical, food and trade middle-men cooperatives.³¹ The complaint of the Karaganda miners that the media had not fully reported the demands of the other regions was indeed valid.

Gorbachev responded to the demands to remove local officials and hold new elections by proposing that the Supreme Soviet reverse an earlier decision to postpone local soviet elections from the fall of 1989 to the spring of 1990. This had been a concession to local bureaucrats who

feared they would be turned out or discredited if not given more time to prepare. In the meanwhile, local party plenums with representatives of workers could also take up the question of renewing cadres. Apparently no new decisions were made regarding the democratization of the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet, or on discussion of a new draft constitution.³²

The miners' strike challenged the widespread view among the Soviet intelligentsia of the workers as a brutish, alcoholic, declassé mass, a potentially fascist social basis for bureaucratic reaction. According to this view, workers are not capable of governing; parliament and government should be staffed by "competent" people, members of the "educated classes".³³

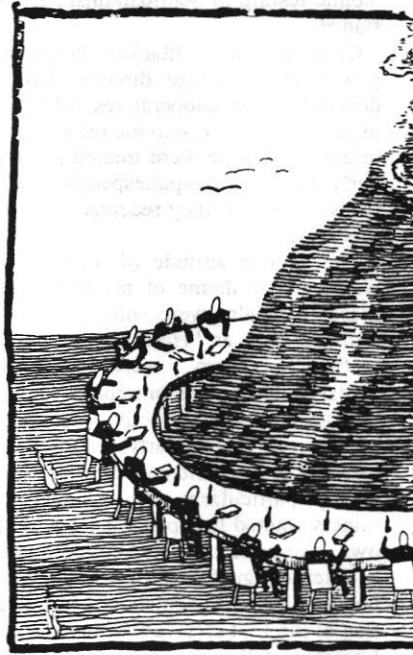
Although the movement arose and spread spontaneously — the strike committees were formed only after the strikes began — the miners displayed remarkable organization, discipline and restraint. There was virtually no violence. The strikers formed their own militias. Police reported a significant drop in crime. Everywhere the sale of alcohol was banned. In Donetsk two miners were dismissed for appearing drunk in the main square. The strike committees instructed enterprises serving essential needs not to join the strike. With few exceptions, the miners kept skeleton crews in the mines to maintain them in working order. At the Sibiringskii open-pit mine, the workers continued to ship the coal necessary to maintain the blast furnaces of the Western Siberia Metallurgical Complex.³⁴

High level of political consciousness

The strike also revealed a high level of political consciousness among the workers. They are certainly no bait for right-wing nationalist ideologies and bureaucratic law-and-order programmes. The strike began as a movement for economic demands, but the miners understood that the more basic issue was that of guarantees, and that the only real guarantee was power — that is, democracy.

Indeed, one cannot help but be struck by the depth of the mistrust toward bureaucratic power at all levels, including the highest. The miners brushed aside the local authorities and were not satisfied to negotiate with the minister. They ignored Gorbachev and Ryzhkov's appeals to return to work before the conclusion of negotiations. And once the agreement was reached, many still insisted that it receive legislative guarantees — the Supreme Soviet is at least a quasi-democratic body. Gorbachev had to make an embarrassing admission before the Supreme Soviet:

"In Donetsk the miners want the Supreme Soviet to be formally appraised of the documents worked out jointly with



the commission. Among the people there has arisen a lack of trust, so to speak[!]...It is the same in the other coal regions too."³⁵

The fact that Gorbachev had to recruit Boris Yeltsin — who appealed, not in the name of the Supreme Soviet, but of the parliamentary "radicals" for the workers to return — shows that the lack of confidence in the authorities is the most serious shortage of all in the Soviet Union. The strike would have been brief and limited to the Kuzbass had the miners in the other regions believed the assurances, repeated at the highest level, that the Kuzbass accord covered the whole industry.³⁶

Even when they decided to return to work, most miners were not convinced they had won anything real. Hence their decision not to disband the strike committees and their warning that the strike had merely been suspended, not terminated. "We are returning to work," declared the chair of the Pavlograd strike committee. "But we will wait one month. If it turns out that we have been deceived once again, then we will continue the struggle to a victorious conclusion."³⁷

Soviet journalists reported that, during the strike, they did not feel the presence of the party committees, ordinarily the real power in the towns, and that they were the object of many bitter words on the part of the workers. *Pravda* also criticized the

30. *Trud*, July 23 and 25, 1989; *Vesty iz SSSR* 12/13, 1989, p.22.

31. *Argumenty i fakty* 30, p.4; *Trud*, July 30 & August 2, 1989; *Vesty iz SSSR* 13/14, 1989, p.22.

32. *Le Monde*, July 26, 1989.

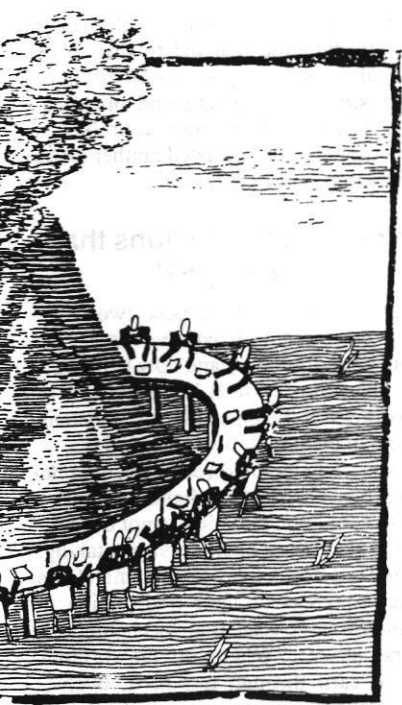
33. See "Rabochie vne politiki?" ("Workers Out of Politics?") *Agitator* 16, 1989, pp.4-5.

34. *Trud*, July 4, 1989; *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, August 3, 1989; *Moskovskie novosti* 30, 1989, p.14.

35. *Trud*, July 25, 1989.

36. *Ibid.*, August 8, 1989.

37. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1989.



various local authorities who seemed to have faded into the scenery.³⁸

The void was filled by the strike committees. "A peculiar situation arose," commented *Trud*. "The strike committees, in essence, became the authority in the towns. They were occupied with questions of trade, transport, maintaining order. From morning to night people who for a long time had been unable to get help or support from any other organization came to the committees. And their members looked into each problem, asked specialists, and helped where they could with medical treatment, repairs, job placement.... We saw how the working class closes ranks and organizes itself, how it boldly defends the interests of all toilers, demands resolution of the most important problems facing the country. We saw how the strike revealed extraordinary, independent, capable and bold people, ready to serve the common cause. We saw this and we wondered: why were they not noticed before, why are indifferent, faceless people put at the head of public organizations, people who are prepared to agree with any opinion of the higher-ups? Maybe that was easier, more convenient?"³⁹

The overwhelmingly predominant role of working-class leaders in the strike only puts into greater relief the virtual absence from the scene of representatives of the intelligentsia, which was clearly caught unawares. This is not surprising, when even on the left-wing of the "informal" movement one sometimes meets the view of Soviet workers as a declassé element. *Le Monde's* Moscow correspondent wrote on July 19, eight days into the strike, that "Moscow's intellectuals are beginning to discuss vigorously: Should we go there? Should we propose mediation? Should we support it? And in what form?"⁴⁰

The basis for this chasm between the

workers and the intelligentsia is real enough: the intelligentsia in its majority supports the government's reform project, while it perceives the mass of workers as opposing it. Hence the almost audible sigh of relief from journalists as they emphasized the demand for enterprise autonomy as proof that the strike was a pro-*perestroika* action. Since this was not a central issue until the strike, one can surmise that it was a solution offered to the miners by the government to the problem of financing their social and economic demands. They were told in effect: if you work more and more efficiently, we will henceforth let you use these extra fruits of their labour to meet your needs directly. The workers accepted the offer. But does this mean that they have been won over to Gorbachev's market reform? Only the future can definitively answer this. But there are already sufficient grounds for skepticism.

The strike was fundamentally about power. In essence, the workers were asking for control over production and over their surplus product. In accordance with the logic of the market reform, and the interests promoting it, the government tried to channel these aspirations into opposition to central control and planning as such, and toward the idea of decentralized group control on the enterprise level. This directs workers away from the struggle for collective control over the conditions within which the autonomous enterprises are to function.

Profits depend heavily on natural conditions

There was a report of a strike leader on Soviet television calling for a national congress of coal miners without senior industrial officials, but this was not taken up.⁴¹ Yet, logically, enterprise autonomy makes the least sense in a resource-extracting industry where profits depend heavily on natural conditions. The Donbass coalfields are deeper and have been mined out to a significant degree, and so costs there are higher than in the Kuzbass, where the coal lies near the surface. Everything that we know about the workers' sense of justice indicates that they would consider as unjust competition among autonomous mines in conditions where prices are set by the market. Even in Poland, where the leaders of Solidarnosc are strongly pro-market, according to a recent survey only four per cent of industrial workers agree to have wages tied to profitability, as determined by the market.⁴²

In any case, the agreement is not clear on this, since it calls for increasing coal prices in relation to the real costs of extraction and re-cultivation. Also, enterprises are given some latitude in adjusting performance indicators. Does this mean that the prices for coal will be based on local costs and not on competitive market

conditions? If so, this is more of the "levelling" that is being so vigorously condemned.

A major effort is underway to channel widespread feelings of exploitation — working hard yet seeing no improvement in one's life — along centrifugal, group-corporatist lines. According to the Kemerovo strike committee chair, "The residents of the Kuzbass have understood one thing: a colonial policy has been applied until now to the basin [region]: take out as much as possible, invest as little as possible."⁴³

Wasteful nature of bureaucratic management

But this is exactly what separatists in the national republics are arguing — Moscow is exploiting us! There is probably not a single region in the Soviet Union whose inhabitants do not feel this way. Yet, an economist recently wrote that "Muscovites not only do not live better, but in many ways are worse off than the inhabitants of other cities."⁴⁴

The problem is obviously not the unjust redistribution of income and wealth among regions, but the anti-popular, wasteful nature of bureaucratic management, not to mention that part of the national income that is eaten by bureaucratic privilege. But it does not necessarily follow from this that regional and enterprise autonomy are the magic solutions they are made out to be. Any application of market criteria to the Donbass coalfield would lead to the closure of a large number of mines, the displacement of tens of thousands of miners' families and the death of entire communities. Only a few years ago, British miners fought bitterly against the application of these criteria to their mines.

At a round-table discussion several months before the strike, a researcher at the Institute of the National Economy of the Council of Ministers explained the mounting strike wave in the following terms:

"With the shift to full self-financing the financial well-being of the collective shapes up in different ways. And it often depends not so much on the collective itself as on outside economic conditions and on the branch to which the enterprise belongs. The market mechanism is oriented toward money stimuli. Whoever can raise prices on his production lives in clover..."

"Workers see that their earnings do not grow in the same proportion as in branch-

38. *Argumenty i fakty* 30, 1989, p.4, *Pravda*, July 25, 1989.

39. *Trud*, August 3, 1989. See also *Moskovskie novosti* 31, 1989, p.8.

40. *Le Monde*, July 19, 1989.

41. *Gazette (Montreal)*, July 21, 1989.

42. *Zycie gospodarzce*, August 1989.

43. *Sobesednik* 31, p.10.

44. V.Kuvarin, "Dorogaya moya stolitsa...", *Nedelya* 34, 1989, p.12.

es with more favourable conditions. We observe these same processes in the coal and the ferrous metal industries. In some mines the workers stop work...until their demands are met. In this way, questions related to improvement of food and living conditions are decided...

"The rise in food prices and supply shortcomings are also contributing to the strike movement. The cooperatives cannot fill up all the holes. In fact, they ravage the state purse rather than improve the life of the population. Funds are pumped from one vessel to the other, from state to cooperative trade. Another cause is the unequal development of regions. Regions with highly developed heavy industry and weak agriculture find themselves in more difficult conditions. In conditions of self-financing a region is sometimes not capable of feeding itself. Before, specialization was demanded, that is, basically one-sided development. Priority was given to producing the means of production. Agriculture lagged behind seriously. Workers feel that they work harder and get less.

"The prognosis for the future is not good. The negative tendencies favouring strikes — and, mainly, the strengthening of market elements in the economy — remain. Strikes will therefore continue, and the situation of the working class will continue to decline."⁴⁵

"Threat of insufficient social protection"

This analysis was not challenged by the other participants. They countered instead by arguing that the old system was also unjust. Moreover, this analysis was recently confirmed by a group of prominent (and undoubtedly pro-market reform) social scientists in *Pravda*:

"The threat of insufficient social protection has made its appearance under the new conditions of economic management in cases of massive reduction of personnel, in the carrying out of structural changes and in the liquidation of enterprises. This has been the basis of an upsurge of social discontent, of an intensi-

fication of social, but weakening of labour, activity among the people. This situation is also pregnant with a slowdown in the tempo of change."⁴⁶

The pro-*perestroika* interpretation of the strike must also contend with the strong egalitarian sentiments of the working class. The following letter expresses some of the popular thinking about market criteria as a basis for social justice.

"Lately I have been doing a lot of thinking about the formula: 'From each according to his abilities; to each according to his labour.' [This is supposed to be a basic principle of the reform.] Does that mean that a young member of a cooperative, a football player or a rock musician should receive truckloads of money, while I, who have lived through war, cold and hunger and have worked for 44 years, should get crumbs?

A class of the rich and a class of the poor?

"But why talk about me and them? One factory grows rich under the new economic model by jacking up prices. A mechanic in this factory earns well, even excellently, since his wage depends upon the profits. The factory managed to have its state order lowered to cover only the more expensive goods, leaving the cheap goods to freely exchange for meat and building materials for housing. The other factory makes only inexpensive goods, though these are very much needed by the economy. The authorities won't let it change. And you can't exchange these goods for anything, since these are parts used only in industry. The factory is poor, and the mechanic, who does the repairs there, on exactly the same kind of machinery as his counterpart at the first factory, is also poor, without meat and housing. Equal work — different lives.

"I heard on the radio that we have 40 million poor. What will the figure be in the future? Will not our state be divided into a class of the rich and a class of the poor?"⁴⁷

The underlying issue of the strike —

power — has not been resolved. Sooner or later, the dynamic that led to this strike will lead workers to pose the question of an industry-wide meeting and organization to deal with their common problems, so that they will be entrusted neither to the ministry nor to market forces.

"Where do the millions that we earn go?"

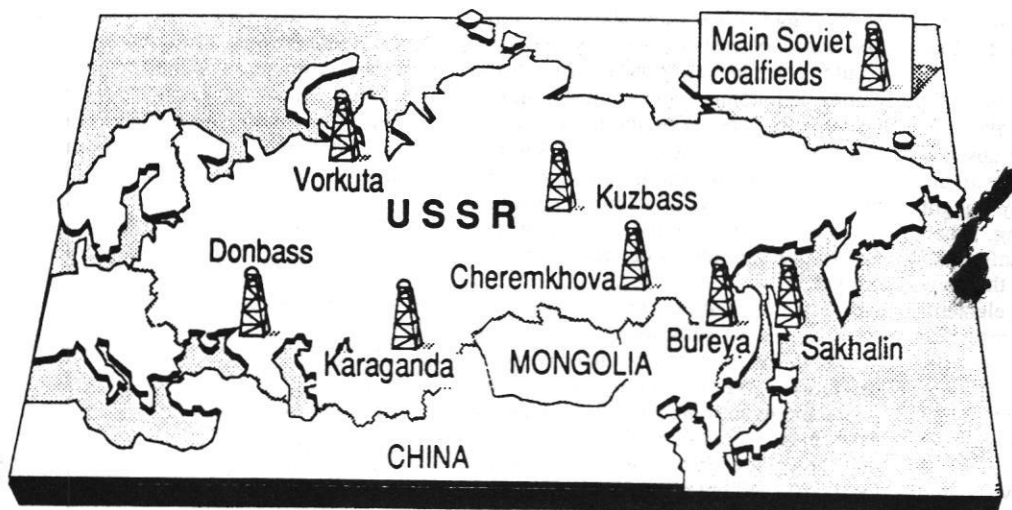
Such a meeting would pose two questions: what centralized functions the ministry should retain; and how to democratize the ministry so it is responsible to the workers of the enterprises that belong to it and to the population as a whole.

This is perhaps the direction that workers in the Far-Eastern fishing industry (whose economic situation is not dissimilar to that of the coalminers) are taking: hundreds of collectives have demanded a special congress of their trade union to discuss the same issue that was behind the miners' strike: "Where do the millions that we earn through our hard, twelve-hour workdays on the sea go? Why does the central committee of the union agree with this 'plundering' position of the centre?... The fishermen's millions go wherever you like, but not to the needs of the fishermen."⁴⁸

Such a meeting would also make clear the need for co-ordination with the workers of other sectors. The inherent logic of the movement leads to the demand to democratize national planning — not to eliminate it and to leave whatever regulation remains in bureaucratic hands. From the time that commodity production first became predominant in Europe, the popular classes have fought against the "free" market and for public economic regulation to ensure social security and justice. There is no reason to believe that an independent working-class movement in the Soviet Union will do otherwise.

The key word is surely "independent". The workers' committees contain within themselves the seeds of an independent workers' organization, one that already exists on the town and regional levels in the mining areas. The miners see the functions of these committees more broadly than merely monitoring the accords. According to the head of the Kemerovo committee:

"We have decided now to hold meetings in the mines in order to think about the role played by the public organizations in the strike, to see how the trade-union committees, the labour-collective councils (we



45. "Zabastovski v SSSR: novaya sotsial'naya real'nost'," *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya* 1, 1989, p.32.

46. *Pravda*, July 16, 1989.

47. *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, July 2, 1989.

48. *Trud*, June 27, 1989.

have also to think about their functions) behaved. In a word, to examine who is who and then maybe think about new elections. But the city strike committees are also not about to fully cede their authority. From August 1 they function as public organizations: monitoring the execution of the agreements and defending the economic and social rights of the worker collectives...⁴⁹

The strike has forced the issue for the trade unions: either they take sides fully with the workers or they face the creation of alternative trade unions. They are already scrambling to save themselves. The All-Union Trade-Union Council passed a resolution at the end of July calling on trade-union committees to take the side of the workers in strikes...once the strike has become inevitable. The Kemerovo regional trade-union council has proposed the elimination of special benefits for officials.⁵⁰

It remains to be seen what, if any, contacts the intelligentsia will establish with the committees. The challenge is now squarely before the socialist wing of the "informals" and the established intelligentsia.

Strike has opened a new act in perestroika

At least as important are the coming elections to the local soviets. After the experience of this strike, and in the presence of militant workers' committees, it will be much harder in the mining towns — and in other industrial centres — to get away with the undemocratic election procedure used to choose the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet. There is here a direct threat that genuine soviet power (that is, totally independent of the party bureaucracy) will be re-established in the localities. It is anyone's guess how long it would be before these soviets took on the regional party bureaucracies.

In the Kuzbass town of Berezovskoe, the workers' committee has already expressed non-confidence in the local soviet, and in particular in the chairperson of its executive committee. The Mezhdurechensk committee called on the population to demand reports from their soviet deputies and recall those who do not enjoy authority. The people's deputies of the Kuzbass recently met in Prokop'evsk and resolved: "Considering the demands of the strike committee, to examine the question of elections to local soviets in October." The *oblast'* party committee, however, would not hear of this.⁵¹

The miners' strike has opened a new act in *perestroika*: the working class now makes its appearance on the stage as an independent political actor. ★

49. *Trud*, August 3, 1989.

50. *Ibid.*, August 2.

51. *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, August 3, 1989.



LCR fuses with Democrazia Proletaria

THE ITALIAN SECTION of the Fourth International, the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), held a special congress at the end of July to make the final decision on the collective entry of its members into Democrazia Proletaria (DP). Discussions had been going on for several months both in the LCR and DP (see *IV* 163 and 164). Collective entry was approved by the National Leadership of DP, and an agreement was achieved on the organizational conditions for unification.

On July 22-23, 1989, a special congress of the LCR was called to assess whether the conditions envisaged by the February congress had been met and to decide on the dissolution of the organization.

LIVIO MAITAN

BY A UNANIMOUS vote, the delegates to the July congress declared in favor of entry into DP. The LCR was thus dissolved, and its members became members of Democrazia Proletaria. Eight LCR comrades became members of the leadership of this organization. They are Sergio D'Amia, Elettra Deiana, Roberto Firenze, Franco Grisolia, Franco Turigliatto, Fabrizio Burattini, Lidia Cirillo and Livio Maitan. The last three have consultative status. Comrade Elettra Deiana has a standing invitation to attend meetings of the Secretariat.

According to the terms of the accord with DP, the LCR comrades will remain collectively members of the Fourth International. They will be organized in a political-cultural organization called the Fourth International. The founding assembly of this association took place immediately after the end of the July conference. Statutes were adopted, and a National Council was elected. It in turn elected a Presiding Bureau.

The tasks of the association were defined as follows by the resolution of the July congress — the organization of debates and participation in the life of the International, publishing a magazine, publishing books, organizing political and cultural initiatives, organizing educational conferences and maintaining

archives concerning the Fourth International and the workers' movement. The magazine will be monthly, and will retain the title of the LCR's organ, *Bandiera Rossa*. Finally, there will be two categories of members of the association — those who have an individual and collective relationship with the Fourth International and those who, while not taking on such a commitment, want to participate in the activity of the association.

The youth organization in solidarity with the LCR, the OGR, also decided on the entry of its members into Democrazia Proletaria. One of its members will have a major task in coordinating the DP's youth work (it has no youth organization).

In July, the DP leadership decided to call a congress for November that would determine the organization's orientation after the crisis caused by the split of the right wing. This split took a definite form on the occasion of the European elections, when a wing of DP refused to support the organization's slate, which had been decided on by a very broad majority, and participated instead in the Rainbow slates.

This split does not seem to have led to the departure of many members. On the other hand, it has had very serious consequences for DP's elected representatives. The organization has lost four of its eight deputies and its only senator, as well as a large number of local councillors. ★

DOCUMENT

LCR resolution

BELOW are excerpts from the resolution on the collective entry of LCR members into the DP, which was adopted by the July LCR congress. This congress also adopted a manifesto entitled "Crisis of the Left and Building the Revolutionary Party."

THE NEW COURSE of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) clarifies definitely the ground on which the leading group wants to stand, as well as its strategic perspectives. The PCI now presents itself as a party that accepts the fundamental values of Western culture, and which takes its inspiration from the European social democratic parties in determining the social content and political perspectives of its activity.

The propagandist activism pushed by PCI secretary Occhetto after the last congress may, in the medium term, fire up sections of the party membership by giving them the impression that the difficulties have been overcome. But the contradictions remain very sharp on many levels. The conflict is especially acute between the social needs of various sectors of society linked to the party and the concrete political choices made by the party leadership. There is also a contradiction between the traditional options and references of not unimportant sectors of the party and Occhetto's new course, which aims at dumping all these options and references as soon as possible so that the PCI can play the role of a "modern European party."

A revolutionary, anti-capitalist alternative

Those who want to fight to create a revolutionary, anti-capitalist alternative, must continue to seize on these contradictions. They must try to be seen as people worth discussing with by those PCI members who are not lulled by the narcotic effects of the "new course" and who seek a left-wing solution to their party's crisis rather than the liquidation of its class identity

undertaken by its leadership.

Over the last two years, the difficulties experienced by the workers movement, the decline of class consciousness, the crisis of the traditional left and the political success of the Greens have generated a crisis in DP. This crisis threatens to disperse DP's cadres and dissolve the political experience and links with the working class accumulated by DP over a decade, which still represent the most important gain of the great struggles in the 1970s.

A reference point for many sections of society

DP developed as a party in which different political experiences and orientations co-existed. The DP comrades themselves used the term "container party." The different political experiences and cultures that could have contributed to enriching and broadening its project have not, however, led to a political and programmatic synthesis, which there was, in any case, no attempt to achieve. Therefore, the divergences progressively increased, until the different sensibilities in the organization became irreconcilable.

DP has thus found itself in a very difficult situation with regard to the big questions that have accumulated within it over years. It has not managed to emerge as a credible alternative either with respect to the crisis and differentiations inside the PCI or to the rise of the Greens.

By comparison with the unquestionable success of the Rainbow slates, DP suffered a definite setback. But at the same time, it held a major part of its voters, who represent a possible, although not automatically assured, basis for reinforcing the party and relaunching it as a reference point for substantial sections of society.

The essential discussion is on the party, the kind of party we want to build, on the aims of a class-struggle alternative party. But at the same time concrete strategic options have to be discussed, as well as the day to day steps necessary along this road.

It is necessary to discuss the problems of redefining DP politically and the means for the organizational relaunching we want. In fact, despite all the difficulties, we have recently seen a new ferment in sections of the working class and other social strata, a new potential for struggle and for fighting back against the policy of the ruling classes that offers the possibility of breaking out of the social and political impasse in which the traditional leading groups of the workers' movement have ended up.

New forms of anti-bureaucratic rank-and-file organization have been tried

out. New, more effective, objectives have been sketched out to counteract the attacks against living standards and on-the-job conditions. The need for direction and concrete forms of struggle has been recognized.

DP has to take account of this, if it wants to be able to relaunch itself and grow. DP's membership has to build a party able to accomplish these tasks.

The entry by the members of the LCR and OGR into DP is a positive first step in the fight to recompose the forces that still identify with Marxism and class-struggle conceptions and who retain the perspective of an anti-capitalist alternative. Despite all their limits and weaknesses, these forces represent the best of what remains, both politically and organizationally, from the great wave of the 1970s.

The focus of this recomposition has to be a fundamental clarification on the sort of party we need today, where it has to position itself, how it should be characterized essentially. Despite the ruling class's ideological campaign about the crisis of Marxism and the end of a society divided into antagonistic classes, and despite the attempt of the Greens to present the problem of the environment as the only contradiction on which an alternative project can be based, the struggle to overthrow capitalist relations of production and establish a qualitatively different social system capable also of attacking the problems of ecology at their root flows from objective factors that no ideological campaign can eliminate.

International links and an international dimension

This is why it is necessary to work to build a class-struggle, anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic communist party sensitive to the problems of the environment, rooted in basic sectors of the proletariat and other exploited and oppressed strata of society. It will thus become their political representative and defend their day-to-day and historic interests in the perspective of a struggle for a government of the working class, of all working people, for socialism.

The party that has to be built cannot fail to have international links and an international dimension. In fact, as everyone has to recognize for objective reasons, it is at this level that the problems of an alternative to the present political and social system are posed....

On all these questions, the members of the LCR think that they can make a contribution to the programmatic and strategic discussion that has begun in DP, which has to focus first on saving, relaunching and redefining the accumulated cadres and political and organizational experience. ★

"Working class exhaustion is a danger for the revolution"

ON ITS TENTH anniversary the Nicaraguan revolution faces a catastrophic economic situation (see IV 169). Attempts by the Sandinista government to control inflation have resulted in a rise in unemployment, a decline in living standards for many of the poorer sections of the population, and a retreat from some of the gains of the revolution in social policy such as literacy and infant mortality.

The problem of how to respond to the economic crisis without undermining the social conquests of the revolution is now being debated in Nicaragua. Here we publish two interviews with leading Sandinistas on this subject. The first is with Luis Carrión, the Minister of Economy, Industry and Trade and a member of the National Leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation front (FSLN).

The second is with Edgardo García, General Secretary of the Association of Rural Workers (ATC), a Sandinista deputy in the National Assembly and a member of the Sandinista Assembly. The interviews were conducted by Eric Toussaint on July 30 and August 1 respectively.



THE EMERGENCY economic measures applied since 1988 have led to a reduction in inflation since January 1989, but at the price of a very strong recession. Would it be correct to say that the measures taken since June 1988 have primarily hit two sectors; firstly, wage-earners who have suffered a real decline in income, and, secondly, small and medium private producers who, like the state sector, have suffered from the restrictions applied to credit?

Yes, in general, although it's necessary to have a different analysis for each sector. I would say that the impact of the economic measures has varied in the different sectors of economic activity. At the level of wage-earners, one must distinguish between three sectors.

The export sector (in particular, coffee, crayfish, gold, whose prices on the world market have evolved positively in 1988) hasn't been affected negatively by the measures: the workers in these areas have been able to maintain their purchasing power. However, the sector which produces for the internal market has been hit hard by the measures taken for economic stabilization; the workers in this sector in particular have suffered a decline in real wages.

Finally, those who have experienced the sharpest fall in their purchasing power

have been state employees (in government ministries, education, health...).

Small producers have also been hard hit, above all in the urban areas, where the fall in effective demand has been accelerated by the raising of interest rates. However, the small agricultural producers have suffered to a lesser extent because their access to credit has been protected (by the maintenance of preferential rates of interest).

■ Have these preferential rates of interest been applied since the beginning of the emergency measures?

Yes, they have been applied to small producers of basic grains, such as maize or beans. However, coffee producers have had a higher rate applied to them. Recently the government has decided to extend the preferential rates to the small urban producers, but this has not yet been put into effect.

■ Isn't it true that stockbreeders in general, including the wealthy sectors, have been allowed access to credit at the old rate of interest, which is below the level of inflation?

Briefly. The government allowed this in March 1988, just after the application of the emergency measures, so as to allow the stockbreeders to realize the transactions which are normal at the time of their

annual fair. On this occasion, the motivation of the government was more political than economic.

■ The measures applied from June 1988 resemble those of the IMF-type, and yet they do not seem to have led to any reopening of lines of credit, either with the IMF or any other international organizations.

There are clearly similarities between the measures we have taken and those which have been applied in other Latin American countries under the recommendations of the IMF. Nonetheless, there are also differences in the manner we have applied them, such as the maintenance of the preferential credit rates I mentioned earlier, the maintenance of interest-free loans from the Central Bank to the state... amongst the differences, it's also important to note the monthly grant to each public employee and also to pensioners, of 5kg each of rice and beans and 2.5kg of sugar.

But it's true that we've been forced to apply these emergency measures without recourse to significant sources of external finance which might have allowed us to reduce the social cost and find a more rapid path to some kind of economic recovery. Following Daniel Ortega's visit to 11 Western European capitals in April 1989, we obtained only \$20 million US in cash and \$30 million in the form of credits.

The veto which the US has in the major international finance organizations has worked against our efforts to stabilize the economy and soften the social cost. We hope that, having demonstrated our capacity to put our national economy in order, we will see the opening of new sources of international financial support after the elections of February 1990.

■ **To defeat the evil of inflation, you have had to face another evil, recession, which has imposed heavy sacrifices on the masses and is pushing the industrial enterprises to the brink of the abyss.**

It's correct to say that the recession is creating great difficulties for the industrial sector and we aren't of the opinion that enterprises in difficulty must close their doors and make way for others which are more profitable...to close enterprises without having the means to create others, this would be incorrect.

Having said that, the crisis has proved to be a stimulus for the improvement of the quality of products, and also the reduction of the costs of production. We have been accustomed in the past few years to putting the accent on the quantity of production, to the detriment of the maintenance and renewal of equipment. Thus, we use the foreign aid sent for the productive sector essentially to buy raw materials and other elements of working capital.

The heroic efforts of workers who made themselves spare parts formerly bought from the USA could not counteract the aging of their equipment. We were approaching the abyss, so we judged that, to stabilize the economy, we were obliged to intervene, particularly in the state sector of production, in order to utilize the resources of the enterprises in least difficulty to reduce the threat facing those in the greatest difficulty. We cannot allow recession to wipe out enterprises.

■ **Has the slimming-down in the public services and in the enterprises been accompanied by compensatory measures such as the redeployment of workers in other productive sectors, particularly agriculture?**

There have been efforts to redeploy workers, particularly in agriculture. For example, there are projects to renew the exploitation of coffee plantations which have been left fallow because of the war. But we have to recognize that such projects have only been implemented in a limited fashion.

In general, it's very difficult to convince workers who are used to urban life to start anew in a rural setting. Some workers have made the effort voluntarily but their number hasn't been significant and we have to recognize that conditions of life in the countryside aren't attractive, even for poor workers in the towns, because they are accustomed to services which can't be found in the countryside.

■ **What have been your priorities for investment over the last few years?**

We have concentrated on internal con-



sumption. For example, we have increased spending in education (organizing classes, building schools etc.), in health (building of health centres) to a lesser extent, and in communications (new roads, paving of old ones, building of bridges). So far as investment in the industrial sector is concerned, here also priority has been given to production for the satisfaction of internal consumption; for example, the big dairy projects at Chiltepeque.

The manufacturing sector which has received the most investment is that producing for the internal market. There hasn't been any investment in the new export industries, even if at the level of intentions we say that we wish to develop this sector. The global dynamic of our political economy turns us towards the internal market, mainly because effective demand in this area continues to grow; for

example, demand for basic foodstuffs, or clothes. Moreover, our exchange rates favour internal consumption over export production.

■ **But in the context of an industrial sector geared towards the internal market, there hasn't been much development of light industry, such as the production of semi-mechanized agricultural tools. In other words, while it's true that the great bulk of industrial production is destined for the internal market, it's also true that the production of goods for agriculture remains marginal and represents only 2.8% of total industrial production.**

It would seem that a proper concern for satisfying internal demand hasn't been combined with a longer term vision of modernizing this area of industry and satisfying the need for agricultural equipment amongst the small and medium producers (for example, those who can't afford imported tractors, and who would be satisfied with less sophisticated equipment).

It's true that the level of investment in industry has been relatively low in comparison with investment in agroindustry (for example, there has been important investment in the construction of large silos) and in the social sector. As a consequence the internal structure of the industrial sector today has largely remained as it was before the revolution. Initially, we had set the objective of creating a certain complementarity between industry and agriculture.

For example, we wanted to develop and modernize the textile industry to export our cotton, with a larger proportion of value added, and we had also planned to develop our mechanical industry to meet the basic needs of agriculture. Certain things have been done in this area, such as the setting up of workshops for producing basic agricultural machinery like the IMEP (People's Metallurgic Industry), but we have suffered from a shortage of both investment and sufficiently skilled workers, and thus the impact has been less significant than we had hoped.

The challenge we still face is how best to develop the vertical relationship between industry and agriculture in two complementary directions, upstream, transforming agricultural production, and, downstream, delivering or satisfying the basic needs of the agrarian sector through the development of our national industry.

■ **Turning now to the situation of the Nicaraguan working class; numerically weak at the beginning of the revolutionary process, it has been weakened still more by the economic crisis, the development of the informal sector, the rapid turnover of workers from one enterprise to another and so on.**

First, could one say that it has become "declassed", to use an expression employed by Lenin to characterize the state of the Soviet working class in 1920-21, at the end of the civil war?

Secondly, what are the consequences of the weakening of the working class for the revolutionary state and for its leadership, the FSLN?

I won't venture a comparison between the situation of the Nicaraguan proletariat and that of the Soviet working class as described by Lenin in 1920-21. Nonetheless, I wouldn't say that the Nicaraguan revolution has experienced a situation as tragic as that of the Russian revolution in its early years. We haven't experienced the profound isolation that the Soviet government encountered. We haven't had to send brigades of workers into the countryside to take grain from the peasants by force.

The defence of the revolution hasn't cost us as much as was the case with the Soviets. What's more, it seems to me that at that time the Bolsheviks could only count on the support of the workers. The working class was the sole defender of soviet power. We, on the other hand, have been able to count on the firm support of the poor peasants and the urban proletariat and semi-proletarian population.

Turning to the concrete situation that we face, I think that the weakening of the agricultural proletariat has been much greater than that of the industrial working class, for different reasons. Firstly, across large areas, the agricultural proletariat has suffered terribly from the war both in terms of loss of human life and in terms of the destruction of infrastructure, an example being the zones where coffee is produced; secondly, there has been a drastic reduction in land devoted to the growing of cotton (the area of cultivation has dropped from around 220,000 manzanas to 50,000). [1 manzana = 0.7 hectares]. The industrial proletariat hasn't experienced such a situation. It's true nonetheless that it has been very much affected.

Today I think that the situation has improved a little. Despite the increase in unemployment, due to the measures taken for economic stabilization, the turnover of the workforce has diminished. A part of the skilled workers who had been in the informal sector have returned to industry, because the informal sector no longer offers the same possibilities for making money as before.

The weakening of the proletariat has had a negative effect from the point of view of the revolution. It's obvious that the agrarian and industrial proletariat constitute the most revolutionary class. We have never doubted that. It's the only class which has shown itself to be ready, at certain moments, to put aside its immediate interests, in order to defend more lofty objectives. It's the class which, above all others, has both an objective and a subjective interest in the development of socialization.

The exhaustion of the agrarian and industrial working class weakens one of the fundamental pillars of the revolution. I would say that no other class in the Nicaraguan social formation has shown such revolutionary virtue. In contrast, the attitude of the peasantry is very much more linked to what it does or does not get. The same goes for the tradespersons and the small industrial producers. Their political attitudes are more dependent on the economic situation.

This means that in the medium term the revolution must reinforce and develop the proletariat, in agriculture as much as industry. If, on the other hand, the exhaustion of the proletariat were to continue, this could constitute a danger for the strategic interests of the revolution.

The sacrifices suffered by the workers as a consequence of the measures taken to regain control of the economic situation can be justified temporarily - it's a risk that we run - but there can be no question of prolonging them indefinitely.

■ **Why have the FSLN and/or the government not appealed to the workers to exercise workers' control so as to render production more efficient (avoiding waste at the productive and administrative levels) and to promote their collective leading role. Workers' control has been mentioned in some documents such as "Participatory Democracy in Nicaragua".**

But if one reads the Sandinista journals and listens to the speeches of the commandants, such references aren't made. Why?

It must be said that, in the countryside and in the town, the Nicaraguan working class maintains an attitude of active and belligerent criticism. But effectively, in the speeches and the appeals, very much less reference is made to the need for workers' vigilance in the enterprises (and I think that this goes back to the time when the stabilization measures were taken). But recently we can see a new rise of trade union combativity, particularly in the private enterprises.

It's especially clear in the countryside where the ATC [Association of Rural Workers] has led some very militant actions. In industry, it's less advanced.

■ **What is your opinion on the work-**

ers' management bill, or the statements of Edgardo García, secretary of the ATC, calling for a readjustment of the historic programme of the FSLN?

The trade union federations like the ATC and the CST have demanded a law on workers' management which in any case is mentioned in the constitution. They have themselves drawn up a bill. This was too crude, too elementary. It comprised only twelve articles with some very general references to what they considered to be workers' management. We have proposed that the discussion continue. We don't think that the bill is viable in its current form. It needs elaboration, and it needs to take account of the mixed character of the economy.

In the public sector, there already exist a series of mechanisms and it's enough to perfect these. This is not the case at all in the private sector. One of the secondary weaknesses of the bill is that it doesn't provide for improving the existing mechanisms in the public sector. Besides, the project confuses workers' participation in the enterprises and the participation of workers in a ministerial institution. For us then, it's an open question, and I don't think we can come to a solution before the elections.

■ **Your attitude concurs with your political project of social partnership with the private capitalist sector?**

Yes, to a certain extent. This has to do with the attitude of the industrial entrepreneurs and above all of the landowners. The latter, for the most part, don't behave like businessmen but like pre-revolutionary "planters". They have no accountants, no real organized management.

The reactions of the bourgeoisie remain very primitive, very elementary; and even if there has been a certain progress since the revolution, it's well worth bearing in mind that before this they were virtually "savages". They did not tolerate trade unions in their enterprises. As a first stage, one must make a distinction between participation in the state sector and participation in the private sector. One must advance in the private sector, but without wishing to immediately achieve that which has been gained in the public.

■ **According to a study carried out with the support of *Envío*, wage differentials have increased very sharply in recent years. How do you explain this? Does it not damage the revolution?**

Really, these figures are amazing. I would ask you where they got them from. I think that, above all from July 1988, there was a period of transition during which we lost control of our wages policy because we had given the enterprises freedom to fix wages. Thus we abandoned the

system of work norms [the fixing of all wage categories on the model of the Cuban system].

Nonetheless, in the state industrial sector we still apply a work norm according to which the wages of the highest paid can only be twelve times higher than the wages of the lowest paid. I can tell you that this wage differential is applied in all the economic sectors. The strongest wage differential is between the public sector (that is, the sector dependent on the state budget) and the wages paid in the enterprises. So if one compares the minimum salary of a public functionary with the highest wages in the productive sector, it's possible you would see a very large gap.

■ **Last Saturday I was at a public meeting of the health sector. It was said that a woman ancillary worker only earned 200,000 cordobas which is in no way sufficient to meet the needs of a family.**

Indeed, the sector that is being hardest is government employees. I had a meeting with the workers at the engineers' college and I found that the salaries of the teachers are so low that some third and fourth year students who are working part-time are earning three or four times as much as their teachers.

The problem is very complicated, since the only way to raise wages in the public sector is to shed more jobs. In my ministry, that of business and trade, the wage levels are somewhat higher than in other parts of the public sector.

The reason is that in March 1988 the ministries of industry, internal trade and foreign trade were amalgamated, and the total staff cut from 1,400 to 400, so that the same amount of money could be distributed among far fewer workers. But this is not possible in sectors like national education and health.

In this specific case we had changed the whole economic logic by changing the tasks assigned to the internal trade ministry, which had previously been responsible for distributing ration coupons and controlling prices. This function was abolished and so we could work with less staff. But this is not possible in other sectors since this would affect not only the quality but also the quantity of services delivered to the public.

It is also necessary to take the war into account. If it could be ended, we could massively reduce the number of military personnel who use up vast resources. And lastly, we have decided to reduce the growth in the state budget to control inflation and this also reduces the possibilities for raising wages in the public sector.

■ **Yes, but what I am trying to say is that inequality has grown. I can see that a worker can understand that an engineer or an administrator might earn more than him or her so long as this person, who is in some cases a**

member of the FLSN, is efficient. The worker will make sacrifices if there is real workers' control and if the wage range is kept within certain limits. These two things seem to me to be connected, and do not seem to have received enough attention.

I must repeat that the most glaring wage differential is that between public employment and other sectors. There could be an excessive difference in the productive sector, but we have tried to limit it.

Over the past year we have been under very strong pressure from the unions but now this pressure has diminished, and we feel that wages have recovered somewhat. The main problem is that a skilled worker in the public sector may earn less than an unskilled worker in the private sector. Now the public sector has more than 100,000 workers while the sector of industrial workers amounts to 35,000 at most.

■ **What is your balance sheet after several months of the dialogue, in the course of which some bosses have taken the credits from the state-owned Central Bank and converted them into dollars on the black market?**

The social partnership is a difficult operation in which we are trying to reach an agreement with the leaders of the entrepreneurial sectors, regardless of the fact that the majority of the private producers, that is the middle and small producers, have behaved quite correctly. But, in the case of the groups of big entrepreneurs things have been complicated, since COSEP has taken the attitude of rejecting every sort of agreement, even those that correspond to their interests. They have gone so far as to forbid some of their members to take part in the Stockholm conference, and this kind of thing has made it all the more difficult to apply the re-adjustment measures.

While we had the support of the workers, we have, on the other hand, been confronted with sabotage on the part of the big private entrepreneurs, especially in the agricultural sector.

In the private industrial sector we have not come up against such opposition. Some industrialists have even made investments. It is not very much in terms of quantity, but it is a significant trend. I believe that a certain collaboration on economic issues is possible even with the majority of the private sector but it will be very hard to achieve before the elections, all the more so if the Contras continue to be supported by the USA.

The demobilization of the Contras, linked to a slight change in American policy, would create the conditions for the big private entrepreneurs to come to accept that the revolutionary regime is here to stay. ★

"The criteria is efficiency"

WHAT is your assessment of the social partnership?

There was collaboration before, in 1985-86, over workers' productivity. The dialogue this year represents a continuation of the agreements that were reached in the socialist sector of production. The savings made then allowed us to improve public services. On the other hand, private sector productivity is comparable to that in the socialist sector. The idea is not to allow the capitalist private sector to use the surplus value as it wishes, but to direct it towards the effort for national reconstruction. I think that the time is ripe, both from the point of view of the government and that of the workers to strike against private enterprises involved in the flight of capital.

The fact is, for example, that if, in the recent period, the capitalists have not been able to export capital it is because the finance provided to them by the Central Bank which they had been converting into dollars on the black market has had, as a result of measures taken by the government, to be re-converted into the national currency. Real interest rates were also raised, increasing the deposits of the Central Bank. Thus these capitalists had to act as agents of a policy of national survival and abandon their policy of taking capital out of the country.

I am not saying that these people have suddenly turned into solid supporters of the revolution, but what I am prepared to state, is that the government was strong enough to prevent dollars acquired on the black market from being exported. It was necessary to confiscate the land of three leaders of COSEP [the employers' federation] to achieve this. The proof of the success of the government's policy is that the price of the dollar on the black market is now lower than the official price.

■ **In the framework of the social partnership there has been talk of returning land in the state sector to efficient private capitalist producers. Has that been done or not? What is your opinion of this idea?**

The agrarian reform was intended as a way of overcoming the backwardness of agriculture, reflected by the latifundia and share-cropping systems. It has largely succeeded in this. Our current policy is to set in motion a social pact based on the

consolidation of the different forms of property that now exist. After ten years of transition, the basis is efficiency. In this framework there is a competition between the three forms of property (cooperative, private and state). This allows the more efficient sector to expand its land holdings at the expense of the other two sectors.

But this is not a one-way process. The state sector, just as the private and cooperative sectors, can acquire new land. Political calculations to the effect that land should be given to capitalists in order to ensure their good relations with the regime plays no part in this policy.

■ **The recession seems to be affecting the agricultural sector as well as industry...**

Yes. First of all there is a structural recession, particularly serious in cotton production, which provides not only fibre but also oil. The area under cultivation has diminished and significant unemployment has appeared. Some of this land has been converted to the production of vegetable oils, but this does not give sufficient yield for the labour expended. Rice production has also declined because of the war.

■ **But is it not the case that the 1988 measures of economic readjustment contributed to the recession?**

Yes, they have also affected rice production through the removal of subsidies on, notably, energy needs that are very important for irrigation.

■ **On the other hand, the grain producing sector seems to have made some steps forward, but this involves small-holders not the agricultural workers.**

Insofar as large-scale production, for example that of rice, has declined, the smallholders have used the opening for grain production.

■ **What is your view on the idea of giving dollar incentives to the big landowners?**

This policy was used at the height of the war. Today, incentives are given in cordobas. The use of dollar incentives could be relinquished firstly because, thanks to the rise in interest rates, depositing money in the bank has become more attractive, and secondly, because it is possible to change cordobas into dollars...

■ **It is said that while the ATC fights to defend the state sector, another Sandinista organization, the UNAG, is fighting to extend the private and cooperative sectors. Does this**

enrich or affect the worker-peasant alliance?

It enriches the alliance, because of the criterion that we have adopted, that of productive efficiency. There is, naturally, competition between them to obtain more finance from the state. Of course, at the moment, individual small producers and the cooperative sector are especially deserving of help, since these two sectors have been especially hard hit by the recession which has been aggravated in agriculture this year by a severe drought. It is also justified because these sectors have fewer means of production.

But this does not mean that the government is favouring the private sector against the state sector. We are defenders of the state sector because it has been the best for the workers.

■ **How are the members of the ATC divided up between the private and state sector?**

Some 42% of the members of the ATC work in the state sector. There are 720 union branches organized into 103 unions, 59 of which are in the private sector. The APP [nationalized sector] represents 15% of the land under cultivation and 21% of production. The private sector of big landowners represents 38% of the land and 29% of production. The respective figures for the cooperative sector are 28% and 21%, and for smallholders, 19% and 29%. In order of productivity, the smallholders come out at the top of the list, followed by the APP, the cooperative sector and finally the big private landowners.

■ **There was talk of finding workers rendered unemployed by the slimming down of the public sector in 1988-89 work in agriculture. What has actually happened?**

This is a complicated question. We tried to find a structural solution to the problem of unemployment by bringing back into cultivation land abandoned at the hottest moments of the war. But people do not move easily. Even if they are offered houses, food, medical services and some start-up money they find it very difficult to leave their usual surroundings. To leave Chinandega, which is hot, for Matagalpa, which is (relatively) "cold", is not easy. We must add that, in the regions to which we are trying to get people to move, there are not really the resources to ensure medical services or to offer means of production. The migration was a symbolic thing. Finally, the work that was being offered to these workers had no relation to their work experience.

Thus, quite a few of them took off for capitalist and socialist countries. Now, we try to find agricultural workers who have lost their jobs fallow land in their home region. We are trying to negotiate the creation of a land fund with the government and the capitalists, but have not yet achieved this. ★



52 days on hunger strike

■ **Late June.** Discovery of two tunnels dug in an escape attempt. This serves as a pretext for re-applying ultra-repressive measures.

■ **June 29.** Eighty political prisoners belonging to far left or Kurdish nationalist groups decide to go on hunger strike to protest against these measures.

■ **Mid-July.** The number of hunger strikers reaches 280.

■ **July 18.** Parents of prisoners also begin a hunger strike.

■ **Late July.** About 30 hunger strikers are hospitalized.

■ **August 1.** The movement spreads to other prisons. The number of hunger strikers reaches 500.

■ **August 2.** On the thirty-fifth day of the hunger strike, the prison authorities decide to transfer a part of the prisoners to Aydin prison. The transfer is carried out under inhuman conditions. Two strikers, Mehmet Yalçinkaya and Hüseyin Hüsnü, die, officially because of "dehydration." The autopsy shows traces of blows on their bodies. Several other prisoners have broken ribs. The resistance in the prisons widens.

■ **August 6.** The minister of justice announces that "the August 1 circular will be modified."

■ **August 7.** After a meeting with SHP deputies, the minister announces that 58 out of the prisoners' 61 demands will be accepted.

■ **August 11.** Four hunger strikers are in a coma; about 50 are hospitalized.

■ **Mid-August.** The new warden of Aydin prison takes office. The city is practically in a state of siege. Parents of prisoners (including an 86-year-old woman) and IHD members are beaten up and arrested.

■ **August 16.** After 50 days, 156 prisoners are still continuing the strike. Seventy-six of them are paralyzed.

■ **August 17.** The deputy general secretary of the SHP talks to the prisoners and convinces them to stop their action. The government declares that it made no concessions to the strikers. ★

Turkish prisoners' hunger strike exposes inhuman repression

THE REAPPLICATION of the "August 1 circular"¹ recently provoked a new wave of hunger strikes in Turkish prisons. Two of the participants, Mehmet Yalçinkaya and Hüseyin Hüsnü, died on the 35th day of their protest, in suspicious circumstances. General Evren, the main leader of the coup d'état of September 12, 1980, is supposed to go into retirement after the presidential elections scheduled for November. But these actions in the prisons show that nine years after the coup, democracy is still an issue in Turkey.

In August, an *International Viewpoint* correspondent in Ankara met Nevzat Helvacı, chair of the Human Rights League, which has been in the forefront of solidarity with the hunger strikers and which is one of the few associations where left militants can meet and work together.

A T A TIME when the Özal government is taking more and more initiatives to build up a democratic façade, what is the human rights' situation nine years after the coup d'état of September 12, 1980?

We have a proverb that says, "You don't need a guide to reach a village that you can see from far away." I don't think that anyone is fooled about the real situation in Turkey today.

The problems can be grouped under two headings. First of all, there are all the undemocratic restrictions included in the constitution fabricated by the military and the laws that go along with it. Secondly, there are the standard practices that violate even the existing legislation. For example, torture is still commonly used as a method of interrogation, which the constitution strictly forbids; moreover, Turkey has signed the international conventions banning torture. Another example is the conditions of life in the prisons. They are in total contradiction with basic international norms, and have been made even worse by the adoption of the August 1 circular.

The government and the prison administration are directly responsible for the deaths of two hunger strikers in Aydin. When the protest was in its 35th day, they decided to transfer 259 inmates to another prison. The prisoners were packed into two closed prison vehicles without ventilation, at 34 degrees centigrade in the shade and handcuffed. They had to travel for 17 hours in those conditions! They

were not even given water.

As if this were not enough, according to eye-witnesses, on arrival the prisoners were beaten with rifle butts and clubs. This led to the deaths of two hunger strikers. At present, two other prisoners are on the verge of death, 34 are in the infirmary, and three have been hospitalized. There can be no legal justification for this.

The government's reaction has been totally political and inhumane. It calls the prisoners "murders and terrorists," implicitly justifying the treatment reserved for them. The actions in the prison have succeeded in exposing the regime's mentality. It is this mentality that we have to condemn.

■ **The Özal government, although it is politically very much weakened, has chosen once again to alienate public opinion, as on May 1.² To what do you attribute this stubbornness?**

I think that partly what is involved is an attempt to justify a continuation of the

1. The August 1, 1988, circular from Minister of Justice Topaç reintroduced the ultra-repressive methods of the military period into the prisons. Its application touched off a wave of hunger strikes in November 1988, forcing the government to retreat. See *IV* 153, December 12, 1988.

2. On May 1, 1989, in the midst of social agitation and at the time of a strike wave in the public sector, the Özal government dug its heels in and refused to authorize celebration of May Day by the workers' movement, although public opinion and even some sections of the bourgeoisie and the right opposition were favorable. An 18-year-old worker was killed by the police during an illegal demonstration that took place despite the government's ban. See *IV* 166.

repressive measures dating from the military period by constantly rattling the bones of the "terrorist threat." Also involved is a tactic to divert attention from the economic and social problems. In fact, Özal is pursuing the same tactic by constantly feeding speculation and rumor that he may run for the presidency of the republic.

■ **What do you think the reason is for the weak reaction to the deaths in the prisons?**³

We cannot say by any means that the population was indifferent. But their means of expressing themselves are limited by legal restrictions. For example, a small left party tried to organize a protest rally.⁴ The prefecture did not authorize it. Several persons have been arrested in Izmir and Ankara in the course of various actions.

However, the problem is not just repression. There is also a political dimension. The main opposition parties⁵ are not putting these questions forward in their daily propaganda, and are doing nothing to open up a space for popular protest. Mass actions can only be held today with the support and active involvement of these parties. But they are not doing anything.

■ **Erdal İnönü, chair of the SHP, has even condemned the hunger strikes, calling them "acts of violence"!**

That's his view. He could also consider them as political acts and not approve of them. But whatever the subjective motivations of the hunger strikers, the state cannot have the right to let people die in the prisons, and still less to kill them! We have a right to expect a reaction at least on that level.

■ **The press, even the progressive press, gives little space to the hunger strikes. Why?**

Indeed. Two persons had to die for the big dailies to publish articles on the situation in the prisons or on a hunger strike that lasted more than a month! Even after two deaths, some organs of the press persist in not finding the news worthy of interest. This is also an indication of the hold over the press of the government and some trusts.

■ **Can you explain the context in which the IHD was founded?**

The IHD was founded in July 1986. At first, the Ministry of the Interior did not want to register us as a legal association, and did everything to drag out the formalities. Today, we are organized in 32 departments [out of 71] and we have nearly 10,000 members.

Our first activity was to draw up a list of persons who have died and were tortured in prison, because this reached grave proportions with the coup. This work led to the publication of a detailed report. According to it, 149 persons died under



"I'm not saying anything until I see my lawyer!"



"Here I am!"

torture. Today, the number has risen to 171. But in fact, this figure is far below the real one, because we only included cases that were fully proved. Many other cases were pointed out to us, for which we did not have enough "proper" evidence.

A second job we did was to carry out an enquiry into the conditions of detention and life in the prisons, comparing them with the norms accepted by the United Nations. In a report that we published subsequently we established irrefutably that the conditions of life in the prisons in Turkey are well below those norms.

In 1987, we organized a campaign against the death penalty and for a general amnesty. In a short time, we gathered about 150,000 signatures, which is a record for Turkey. Also in 1987, we held a congress on human rights, which was also a first.

In 1988, on the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we organized a campaign on three themes — first, the right to a job and an improvement in working conditions; secondly, freedom to think and organize; and finally the problems of political exiles, their rights to citizenship⁶ and to return to the country with acceptable assurance of security.

A sub-commission also studied the case of workers (essentially functionaries, university or secondary school teachers) who were fired by the military authorities on the basis of the notorious Article 1,402 of

the martial-law code. At the end of the year, we held the second human-rights congress.

This year, while continuing the previous campaigns, we have also devoted ourselves to cultural rights, the problem of censorship, and the issue of repression of cultural and intellectual activities.

■ **Violations of human rights in Turkey did not start under the military regime. Why was there so much delay in founding an organization such as the IHD?**

Our organization represents the third attempt to found a human-rights league in Turkey. The two preceding ones in 1946 and 1962 lasted only a few months before being banned. For the moment, we are holding up better than our predecessors!

Clearly, undemocratic repression has been almost constant. But the degree it reached in particular periods, as under the military regime, was of quite another dimension. For example, between 1980 and 1986, more than 650,000 persons were arrested, and most of them tortured. In such a country and in such a period, the need for setting up a human-rights league is more than evident. It is true that this should have been done much earlier, but this delay can be explained easily by the repression itself, which blocked the functioning of any sort of association. We had to wait for the lifting of martial law.

■ **One of the bad traditions of the left in Turkey is the extreme sectarianism of the political groups, their inability to act together. How have you overcome this problem in the IHD?**

In the past the various political currents did not even to talk to each other. Since the coup, some progress has been made. However, we cannot yet say that the lessons of these past errors have been properly drawn. Our philosophy in founding the IHD was to say that, while previously we had always stressed our differences, henceforward we would try to base ourselves on what we agreed about, and ask ourselves whether or not there were things we had to do in common.

For the moment, we have not had serious problems in this respect. On the con-

3. Aside from a permanent vigil in front of the Aydin prison by the IHD and the mothers of prisoners, there have only been some symbolic protest actions — an illegal demonstration of 300 persons in Istanbul called by the far left group Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left), actions by feminist groups and a symbolic hunger strike by well-known left intellectuals.

4. This refers to the Socialist Party (SP), heir of the Turkish Workers' and Farmers' Party (TIKP), of Maoist origin. It is at present the only legal formation that claims to be socialist.

5. The main parliamentary opposition formations are the Social Democratic People's Party (SHP, recently accepted as a member of the Socialist International), which got 28% of the vote in the March 26, 1989, municipal elections; and the Party of the Just Way (DYP, right-wing), which got 26% in those elections. See IV, 166, June 26, 1989.

6. Hundreds of political exiles have been stripped of their Turkish nationality by the government.

trary, currents that have had difficulty in coming together in other circumstances manage to coexist within the IHD.

■ **Has the IHD also considered the question of the repression against the Kurdish people, to the extent of course that the Turkish laws permit this?**

For us, human rights apply to everyone, regardless of their ethnic group, language, religion, convictions, sex and so on. In eastern and southeastern Anatolia, grave infractions of human rights are taking place. Among others, there is the problem of the right to speak your mother language. The Kurdish language has been banned, and people have been imprisoned for speaking it. Kurdish prisoners have found themselves forbidden to speak any other language than Turkish with their visitors.

I think, however, that these problems will soon be overcome. Here, of course, I am only concerned with the humanitarian aspect of the question. Political demands are not our province. We reject any discrimination and mistreatment of anyone, regardless of their views or political demands.

■ **Do you have links with other humanitarian organizations abroad?**

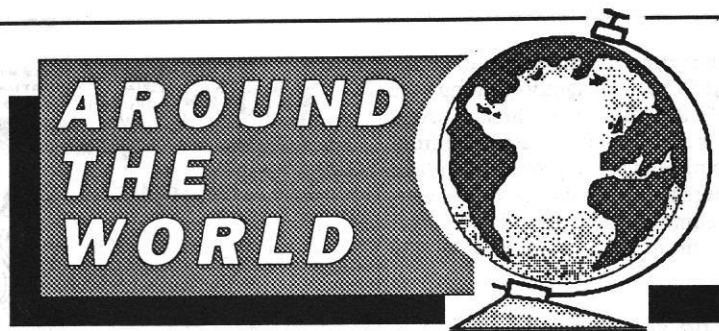
We are not affiliated to any international organization. Any affiliation to an international body requires prior authorization from the government. Nonetheless, we are in contact with Amnesty International, the World Human Rights Federation and so on. Clearly, the defense of human rights requires broad international solidarity, and we of course have no intention of confining our activity within national or regional bounds.

■ **The repression in Turkey has had little impact in West Europe, and it would be hard to say that international solidarity is adequate. How do you explain this?**

European public opinion is not really aware of the problems in Turkey. It has also to be recognized that the repression in Latin America and South Africa is still worse than in Turkey, and that the people's organizations in those countries have managed to get their message across better. Clearly, in Turkey we have problems of communication.

I also think that the economic and political ties that the European governments have with the Turkish regime play a negative role, in the sense that these governments have no interest in getting involved in quarrels with their NATO ally and economic partner.

It is therefore important that humanitarian, democratic, political and trade-union organizations become more aware of the problems of human rights in Turkey and start to put pressure on their governments. ★



SRI LANKA

Sinhala chauvinists murder internationalist

ON MAY 31 M.K. Mettananda, a Sri Lankan trade unionist and a member of the United Socialists, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Sri Lanka, was murdered by the Sinhala chauvinist organization, the JVP (People's Liberation Front). According to a statement signed by Gunasena Mahanama, Secretary of the United Socialists, comrade Mettananda "was not only a working class leader, but also a genuine revolutionary internationalist.

"He was a deadly foe in the fight against racism. As a true Marxist, he believed in the uninterrupted struggle of the working class in its historical role to overthrow capitalism and for its own emancipation. With this end in view he organized the working class movement away from such narrow tendencies like caste, religion and racism.

"This was a potential danger to those fanatical tendencies carrying the mantle of majority Sinhala chauvinism and directing their operations at the Tamil minority. Though he served at Tangalle, noted for JVP terrorism, he never retreated from his political positions. By murdering such an indefatigable warrior of the workers' movement, the JVP has rendered an immortal service to the capitalist class.

"The murderers entered comrade Mettananda's home from both the front and rear entrances on the night of May 31.... He was shot many times and his body stabbed in five places".

The JVP buried him, but "his comrades proposed to dig up the grave and remove the body to the headquarters of the GCSU [the trade union for which Mettananda worked]. His revolutionary colleagues paid their last respects to this great son of the working class movement, sang the 'Internationale' and saluted him with full revolutionary honours....

"While condemning this dastardly murder...the most important task now is for a full mobilization of the oppressed masses under the leadership of the working class to defeat the pseudo-socialist tendencies that are being fostered to perpetuate capitalist rule. It is necessary to direct the people's struggle on a true

class basis and wipe out this racist monster.

"We salute the memory of comrade Mettananda." ★

THIRD WORLD DEBT

Campaign launched

ON JULY 8 a massive demonstration and concert in Paris called for the cancellation of the debts of the third world countries, a boycott of the apartheid regime in South Africa, and the independence of the remaining colonies.

Launched on the initiative of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR — French section of the Fourth International), the demonstration, concert and meeting on the following day gained widespread support from working class organizations and their members in France. Many cultural and political personalities both from France and worldwide gave their support to these events (see IV 166 and 168 for details).

The success of July 8 in France confirmed the message of the demonstrations against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) meeting in Berlin in autumn 1988. In the advanced capitalist countries many people, especially young people, are ready to express their feelings of international solidarity when they can do so in a way which brings together egalitarian, democratic and anti-imperialist demands.

The same sentiment that found expression in the "Third World Aid" concerts or anti-apartheid solidarity, took on a more directly political form on July 8, taking up slogans aimed directly at the heads of state of the seven richest countries who were to assemble in Paris the following weekend.

July 8 also showed that sections of the workers' movement are ready to get involved. Although trade unionists were not present in large numbers on the march, they gave political support to the initiative, while the articles that have appeared in the trade union press and the echo in the workplaces show that it is possible to get the workers' movement to take up the debt issue.

Third Worldist, Christian and Green currents organized a "counter-summit of the poorest countries" on July 15 at the same time as the seven were meeting. Some of these forces were also on the

July 8 demonstration, and a link was established between the two initiatives. There is no contradiction between demanding the immediate cancellation of the debt and discussing the way to resolve the economic and political problems that would remain after the cancellation of the debt.

But it is the demand for the immediate cancellation of the politically, economically and morally unpayable debt that can form the backbone of a broad campaign.

This is the idea behind the "Bastille Appeal" issued by the united collective coming out of July 8. The appeal aims to bring together everybody throughout the world who agrees with the demand for the immediate cancellation of the debt. It is hoped to get several million signatures, organize mobilizations at every meeting of the IMF, the Group of Seven and the Club of Paris, and react to every popular revolt against IMF-imposed austerity. Next year, the summit of the seven will take place in June in the United States.

Why not simultaneous demonstrations in the USA, and in several capital cities in Europe, Latin America and Africa? No quiet life for those responsible for world hunger! This is what the collective that has come out of the July events proposes to every organization that is prepared to unite for a massive mobilization against the debt. ★

SWEDEN

Socialist Party paper fined

THE WEEKLY of the Socialist Party (SP, Socialistiska Partiet, Swedish section of the Fourth International), *Internationalen*, was sentenced for libel on July 6 in Stockholm.

The case arose out of two *Internationalen* articles dealing with the lack of investigation of possible involvement of police officers in the murder of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, who was shot in a street in central Stockholm on February 28, 1986 (see IV 165).

The Attorney-General prosecuted *Internationalen* for aggravated libel, accusing the paper of describing the policemen as accomplices in the murder. *Internationalen* strongly denied that the paper had any such purpose. In late July a 48 year old vagrant and drug-addict, Christer Petersson, was sentenced for the murder. Before Petersson's sentence many Swedes were convinced that he was innocent, and doubts remain even after the verdict against him.

The wide-spread doubts about the drug-addict's guilt helped make the news media interested in the trial against *Internationalen*.

The two big Stockholm morning papers, *Dagens Nyheter* and *Svenska*

Dagbladet both printed articles by *Internationalen* editor Håkan Blomqvist, and *Svenska Dagbladet* published an editorial criticizing the prosecution argument that police officers should be treated in a less critical fashion than other citizens.

The day before the trial a support meeting for *Internationalen* was held in Stockholm. Among the speakers was well-known Swedish author Jan Myrdal, noted documentary filmmaker Maj Wechselmann and Lars Isaksson, radical chairperson of the printers' union at *Svenska Dagbladet*. Håkan Blomqvist himself and representatives of two other papers which were prosecuted for writing about the Palme murder also

spoke.

The prosecution wanted a jail sentence for Blomqvist. According to the prosecutor, material in both articles should be characterized as aggravated libel. In the trial four policemen were heard. They were effectively cross-examined by *Internationalen's* defence attorney, Lars Viklund. He showed that the paper had reason to report information on their strange conduct and that the policemen had probably not suffered the psychological damage they tried to convince the court about.

The prosecution called Jörgen Almbad, prosecutor in the Palme murder investigation, as a witness. The intention was that he should describe how thoroughly all information concerning possible police involvement had been checked. The feeling amongst the audience was that his vague and contradictory statements gave the opposite impression.

The jury found the information in one of the articles to be legally justified. Passages in the other article were considered to be libellous, but did not amount to aggravated libel. The court and jury agreed that *Internationalen* should pay the policemen a tenth of what they had demanded. Both sides had to pay their own costs, and a small fine was imposed on Blomqvist. In all, *Internationalen* will have to pay 50,000 Swedish crowns (about 50,000 French francs or £5,000).

Internationalen considers the judgement unjust, but far less dangerous to freedom of speech than if the line of the Attorney-General had won support from the court. The Socialist Party and Håkan Blomqvist are considering an appeal. ★

Gunnar Wall

NICARAGUA

Lesbian and gay collective

A SMALL lesbian and gay contingent took part in the massive rally marking the 10th anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution (see IV 169 for full report). "For a first experience and without much prior organization, I'd say this has gone well," commented Rita Arauz, a Nicaraguan lesbian activist.

Rita is one of the leaders of a Nicaraguan lesbian and gay collective currently working with the Health Ministry on a sex education project aimed at promoting safer sex practises and avoiding the spread of AIDS. The Health Ministry supports this crucial work, but has no funds to carry it out.

This Nicaraguan and gay collective needs supporters abroad to show practical solidarity with their work. For further information contact ¡PRESENTE! c/o Unit W55 TEC 506, High Road Tottenham, London N17 9TA, Britain. ★

[From *The Pink Paper* 85, published in London.]



Bureaucracy finds allies against national movements

THE SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS has been quick to enlist Western allies in its campaign to warn the national-democratic movements in the USSR against going "too far." For example, a TASS dispatch published on the front page of the September 9 *Pravda* featured the following quotation from a leading voice of English right-wing Toryism, a publication used to decrying the difficulties that stiff-necked small nations can cause for "great powers":

"The leaders of the nationalist movements in the Baltic republics,' the *Daily Telegraph* wrote unambiguously, 'should not exaggerate the importance of their problems for the entire world.'"

GERRY FOLEY

IT IS HARD to imagine anything more illustrative of the regression of the Stalinist bureaucracy on the question of national rights than the official press service of the Soviet Union turning to one of the most rabid war dogs of British imperialism to try to intimidate peoples robbed of their national rights by Moscow.

The Russian revolution became a beacon for oppressed nations, and this was no small factor in its victory. Now, those who claim the mantle of Lenin to justify their rule cite a reactionary capitalist paper as the voice of reason about the limits of national independence for the Baltic peoples.

The *Daily Telegraph* has specialized in setting the limits of Irish national claims and howling for the blood of Irish fighters for national rights who "go too far." The response of Irish patriots to such warnings since the days of Parnell has been that no one can set a limit to the march of a nation.

It seems clear that the response of the fighters for national rights in the Baltic is the same. TASS does them a service in reminding them that the Western big powers have no interest in their aspirations, and that the fundamental attitude of the Gorbachev regime is still great-power chauvinism.

The latest heirs of "socialism in one country" still think in terms of established state boundaries. For example, in the September 2 *Pravda*, Yuri Zhukov accuses *Die Welt*, a West German daily owned by the anti-Communist Springer chain, of

favoring the "breakup of the USSR." Zhukov went on to say, "someone dreamed of this a long time ago. Could the editors of *Die Welt* have forgotten how that ended?" This is an obvious reference to the Second World War, meaning: Hitler tried to break up the USSR and was defeated, and that settled it.

Sinister forces in the West

This article, entitled "Instigators," was devoted to sinister forces in the West that were said to be encouraging "separatism." But it opened with a paragraph praising "many [Western] papers — even some that normally take an unfriendly attitude to the socialist countries [like the *Daily Telegraph*, presumably] — which, especially after the statement of the CC of the CPSU on the situation in the Soviet Baltic, have changed their tone. They have started to talk about the abyss into which the nationalists were pushing the peoples and to call for a reduction of tension."

Exactly what "abyss" were these papers warning about? Presumably, it was a crackdown from Moscow. This puts the Soviet publicist in the peculiar position of using the bogeyman of neo-Stalinist repression raised by capitalist papers "that normally take an unfriendly attitude to the socialist countries" in an attempt to intimidate those in the USSR itself who might be tempted to go "too far" in demanding their national rights.

Zhukov's article also illustrates a problem facing Soviet propagandists today. They need to continue to link the move-

ment for national rights with "foreign intervention," usually of the Western "special services." Zhukov says in his next to last paragraph:

"The statement of the CC of the CPSU, states with stern directness what serious results a further strengthening of the negative processes in the Baltic, which are aggravated and supported by foreign instigators, could have. This affair could go as far as direct intervention in the life of the Baltic republics, as was already undertaken by the Western special services in the postwar years."

At the same time, because they themselves lack credibility with the oppressed peoples of the Soviet Union and because of Gorbachev's opening to the West, the Soviet propagandists make more and more systematic use of statements by Western publications and politicians that assert a common great power interest in keeping international politics free from the "complication" of the self-determination of peoples.

Capitalist powers blowing hot and cold

There is a certain basis for the Soviet press talking about both voices of "responsibility" in the West and "instigators." The capitalist big powers, especially the US, are quite capable of blowing hot and cold about the rights of small nations. And a minority wing of the national movements in the USSR seems to have been taken in by right-wing big mouths, such as Jeane Kirkpatrick, who have an interest in encouraging hard anti-Communist rhetoric for domestic consumption.¹ But there is no capitalist government or political force anywhere that supports a democratic solution guaranteeing self-determination of the peoples either in the East or the West.

The Baltic peoples have already had some experience of this. In the revolutionary period, even the bourgeois nationalist movements found that the big capitalist powers allied themselves with forces that sought to restore capitalism in the Russian empire as a whole at the expense of claims to national independence. At least one widely used Latvian exile history text (quite anti-Communist) makes a special point of this.²

A new generation of fighters for national rights are getting an education in the hypocrisy of the capitalist powers as regards their aspirations. This is being helped along as well by the contradictions of Moscow's propagandists. ★

1. See the report on a meeting of representatives of "national and democratic movements," mostly involving independence parties, in Paris in May, at which *L'Est-Européen* (September 1989) noted that Kirkpatrick spoke and was well received.

2. Gemmanis, Uldis, *Latviesu Tautas Piedzīvovumi*, Greenwood Printers, Canada, 1987 (first edition 1959).