

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

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June 26, 1964

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An Interview with Comandante Elias Manuitt

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guerrilla forces are operating. It was held under arrangements made by members of the Second Section (information) of the FALN. Because of its exceptional interest, we have decided to print most of the interview, continuing it from issue to issue of World Outlook until it is completed.]

* * *

Q: Comandante Manuitt, how would you summarize the present political situation in Venezuela, and what do you think are the perspectives of the Venezuelan people's struggle for liberation?

A: Well, I consider that the present Venezuelan situation hasn't altered at all. The change which a sector of the people tried to obtain by means of the ballot was not attained, nor will it ever be attained that way, because such a change here in Venezuela will not be achieved until the people directly control the political power; in short, until the power of the state is in the hands of the people. If this isn't sufficient, we have as examples: the jails remain full, the assassinations continue, the revolutionary press is shut down, homes are broken into and searched without a warrant, there is repression in the popular districts, the flagrant handing over of our riches, the devaluation of the bolivar -- because the unification of the exchange rates is nothing but barefaced devaluation of the bolivar for the sole and exclusive benefit of imperialism and the importing bourgeoisie of this country.

Many of these bourgeois appear as philanthropists. For example, we have Eugenio Mendoza. As it turns out, they are simply clever imperialists that exploit with skill. We don't deny that there are sectors of the people that see in Eugenio Mendoza -- and this is only an example, one of the importing bourgeoisie -- a philanthropist, a good guy. But naturally all that he does is for his personal benefit and the benefit of his real masters, the Yankee imperialists. It's necessary to unmask these individuals because they have been fooling the people for too long. We have, up to a certain point, been allowing false idols to appear because of the fear of defining the enemy, which is imperialism. It is not the policeman; it is the importing bourgeoisie, that is, imperialism and the importing bourgeoisie.

Perhaps, on certain occasions, some have thought that the importing bourgeoisie, this bourgeoisie, will accompany us in the struggle, and that we should not direct our offensive against them, because they will help us. In my opinion, these elements have not helped us, do not help us, and will never help us; nor will they ever take a single step with us, alongside our struggle, because they know very well that our struggle is against them. . . .

Exploitation now will be more refined. They are utilizing a whole series of methods such as, well, the Alliance for Progress, co-operativism, committees for the development of the community.

Before, there were tea-canastas, now there are coffee-canastas. They are using a popular vocabulary. The ladies of the Country Club are suddenly remembering that misery exists in this country, that hunger exists, and that, naturally, is supported -- the whole series of campaigns is supported -- by this government which gets its instructions from its owner, their owner, not the owner of the people of Venezuela. The people of Venezuela have never had, do not have, and never will have an owner. . . .

Naturally, this gentry is trembling, and this series of campaigns, this immense worry over the humble, has surged up precisely because of the presence of our forces in the mountains and all over the country. Because they can already see that this people is marching towards its liberation. Then, of course, they try to utilize all kinds of tricks to delay the triumph of this movement, because to prevent it is totally impossible. . . .

The past elections served to unmask many individuals such as, for example, Jovito Villalbas and company. . . . All those individuals that dreamed about elections should realize by now that in this country nothing is solved with elections, because any individual who is not a revolutionary and who obtains political power will not at all change the political, economic and social situation of the country. Yes. Because this can't be solved by a change of individuals but, simply and clearly, only by a change of systems. And a change of systems cannot be obtained in this country except arms in hand.

Our people have suffered too many years of exploitation, misery, humiliation, slavery; they cannot wait any longer. Of course, dialectics itself tells us that in an evolutionary way, a moment will come in which capitalism will pass over into socialism. But this would be witnessed by our great-great-grandchildren. And it seems to me to reveal a lack of responsibility and a lack of human sensitivity towards a people to know that the only solution to all the anguish and torment of the people is to take political power and that the only way to obtain it is to fight for it -- and then to do nothing. The imperialists are not going to hand over our riches to us, they aren't going to let them go easily. The only way to seize them is with our own hands, fighting.

This doesn't mean that the only way to fight is to carry a gun. No. You can fight with a pen. You can fight in the University. You can fight pasting up a sign, "Vivan las FALN" in the street, placing a bomb, carrying out an assault against the North American interests, painting slogans, guarding a hide-out. I consider, in reality, that the important thing is to center on armed struggle. That we all work for armed struggle. In this sense, then, I am not sectarian. We are fighting because we are all contributing our bit in this revolution in which we have embarked, and which we will not cease until we have obtained the economic, political and social liberation of our people.

Q: Why have guerrilla forces appeared in Venezuela?

A: The guerrilla forces have appeared for the following reasons: First, any people that want to liberate themselves, must have their armed guard. They must have a vanguard that arms itself to attain liberation. The presence of men in the mountains signifies that in this country, revolutionaries have become convinced that the only way to achieve political power for the oppressed, for the humble people, for the people who suffer and go hungry, is by means of armed struggle.

Here, then, for a long time, we have had repressions and torture. They have tried every means to impute a cheap political motive to our struggle and they have failed. They have failed because this is not a Venezuelan phenomenon. It is a world-wide phenomenon -- Latin-American and world-wide -- that imperialism will never permit, of its own free will, that peoples liberate themselves. If imperialism has the means available, it will fight to prevent it.

The people, confronted by the repression, the misery in which they lived, found a way of escape. The people dispatched their vanguard to the mountains so that they could form the embryo of the future Army of National Liberation.

Naturally, when a people struggle for their liberation, they utilize all the means available. We had congressmen, until the imperialists prohibited it. But right to the end we utilized all the means of which we could avail ourselves. Now there are no congressmen. So they exchanged their congressional desks, those that aren't in jail, for a rifle in the mountains. So they left Congress, where with speeches, with the pen, they were fighting for the people; they took to the mountains to continue fighting for the people with words and with the pen, but with a special additive, a little more convincing: a weapon in their hands.

[To be continued.]

A LETTER FROM COMANDANTE MANUITT TO POLAND'S UN REPRESENTATIVE

[During his interview with a representative of the Fourth International (see article above), Comandante Elias Manuitt released the text of a letter which he had addressed to Bohan Lewandowsky, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland before the United Nations, which apparently had never reached its destination. "Concretely," Comandante told the representative of the Fourth International, "I wrote him a letter that, unfortunately, never got to his hands. I would like to take advantage of your presence here to read you that letter so that it reaches him personally or publicly, either way, but I would like this letter to reach him." The text of this letter

follows.]

Sierra of Falcon in Arms
March 9, 1964

Mr. Bohan Lewandowsky
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland
before the United Nations

The writer of this letter is just another combatant against the "exemplary democracy" that you so warmly praise and admire so emotionally, blatantly identifying it as worthy of being supported by all Venezuelans and imitated by the rest of the oppressed peoples of the world, according to your own statements, appearing today in El Nacional, the daily newspaper with the largest circulation in the country.

Mr. Ambassador, the writer of this letter has not yet had the immense honor of inscribing his name as a member of the glorious and combative Communist party of Venezuela. He has not suffered personally the least torture which the "exemplary democracy" has inflicted in the most criminal and savage manner on the thousands of Venezuelans who have had the bad luck of falling into its clutches. He has not passed a micro-second in the filthy jails and concentration camps of this "exemplary democracy" now filled with worthy and valiant revolutionists of both sexes.

Until barely two years ago he lacked the least concept of the fine and incomparable Marxist-Leninist doctrines. None of his relatives have been massacred with criminal fervor by the repressive Armed Forces and police of this admired and "exemplary democracy," stained with proletarian blood. None of the Communist, Mirista [member of the MIR, Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria], Urredista [member of the URD, Unión Republicana Democrática] parliamentarians, elected by the people in the free elections of 1958 or in the fraud of December 1, 1963, and today jailed by this admired and "exemplary democracy" are party companions or relatives of his.

The author of this letter has never been an editor or writer or commentator on the various organs of the press and radio, today closed down by this admirable and "exemplary democracy." He has never felt the immense hunger and unemployment that creeps like a filthy monster among the humble sons of this people today governed by this admired and "exemplary democracy." He has never lived in those flimsy cardboard houses that you can see, like a horrible clawing belt of anguish along the hills that surround the architectural jewel of Latin America's first petroleum capital, from the cushioned and luxurious official vehicle that this admired and "exemplary democracy" will provide for you. I will not continue enumerating these things because I confidently assume that as soon as you enter your country's embassy, you will be informed of everything.

Mr. Ambassador, the undersigned could not feel on his own body all the atrocities I have pointed out, since he lived the comfortable and privileged life of the officers of the army of the country of Simón Bolívar.

By the way, when you were a Communist and struggled for the liberation of your people -- if you struggled -- did you ever read anything about the life of this man? If not, then I recommend that you read the authentic history of Venezuela, not the distorted history that often circulates under the auspices of North American imperialism.

Anguished by so much disgrace, oppression, persecution, aggression, exploitation and robbery of our nation's riches, and inspired by patriotism, solidarity and fraternity, the whole series of concepts that beautify and enrich the sacred principles of proletarian internationalism, already beat within me although I had not read them in the texts of Marxism-Leninism which you must know by heart, and the hammer and sickle was deeply engraved in my mind as a living symbol of the most beautiful, realistic, just and ardent philosophical concept of the world, for which you today are doing absolutely nothing.

Mr. Pseudo-Ambassador of the heroic and admired people of Poland, I threw all the comforts and privileges of the army into that pit of corruption where I had been asphyxiated for fifteen years, and where they had tried, without succeeding, to deform my conscience as an authentic Venezuelan and my sentiments of solidarity toward the suffering of others. And with the weapons that the people had given me, I came to these mountains to fight to the death shoulder to shoulder with your heroic comrades and with many men and women belonging to no parties against the admired and "exemplary democracy" which you, delegate of a worthy and combative people, praise so emotionally.

Mr. Lewandowsky, we do not ask or need solidarity of any kind from you for the revolution which we initiated and which we will continue to the end, whatever the cost may be, but what I do insist on energetically from you is that if there is anything left in you of the sacred principles you keep in the drawer of your desk at the United Nations, when you sit in the comfortable sofas of the Tamanaco [Hotel], Macuto Sheraton, Miraflores [Presidential Palace], Salón Elíptico, etc., do not praise the unpraisable. I ask it of you in the absolute certainty that I speak in the name of more than 1,500 political prisoners, of the one million unemployed out of a population of seven million, of the millions of hungry Venezuelans, of the thousands of tortured citizens, of the widows, the mothers, the sons of the unburied but immortal dead murdered by this regime, in the name of my country, subjugated and suffering, and in the name of the people of Poland and the rest of the free nations of the world.

Mr. Lewandowsky, you have spoken as a representative of the

State Department of Yankee imperialism. When you return to Washington, stay there, and don't ever return to your country, because I am sure that the people will slap you down; they will throw your infamy, your servility, your viciousness and your desertion from the ranks of proletarian internationalism in your face.

Mr. Lewandowsky, to barter with the crafty bosses of this despotic dictatorship it was not necessary to barter also with the sacred principles of the revolution of all the oppressed peoples anxious for liberation. Such lowness was not necessary. I hope, Mr. Lewandowsky, that your statements to the press have been distorted, so that for that reason, and for that reason only, I will some day have to retract all that I have said.

Sincerely,

Comandante Elias Manuitt

SOCIALISTS ARRESTED IN SPAIN

A June 18 Agence France Presse dispatch from Madrid reports that about one hundred persons have been arrested in nation-wide raids by the police in the past few weeks. The news was released by Franco's ministry of information.

The arrests, which took place in Barcelona, Sevilla, Valencia, Alicante, Albacete, Murcia and Castellón, were claimed to have affected three distinct "Marxist" groupings.

The fascist ministry claimed that in Barcelona the United Socialist Party of Catalonia had been broken up by the arrests. Among the prisoners listed by the police were Javier Martin Malo, a student of architecture and secretary general of the party; José Maris Sanahuja Bofill, secretary of propaganda; Emmanuel Justin Castera Conde, a Haitien; Oscar Segó, a Peruvian; and Pario Perez Diaz, a Nicaraguan.

Nonofficial sources said that about forty arrests had been made in Barcelona. At Sevilla the police said they had broken up the regional committee of the "Revolutionary Trotskyist Workers Party" and arrested its leader as well as several members of the political bureau. Two French girls arrested in Barcelona were alleged by the police to belong to the organization. They were listed as Mmes Nicole Boyer and Marie Gabrielle Hildembrant. [See World Outlook June 19 for a conflicting report.]

Finally, the regional committee of the "Spanish Communist Party of the Levant" was likewise broken up, according to the police.

DEMAND RELEASE OF ISMAEL FRIAS

Ismael Frias, a well-known Peruvian Trotskyist leader, was arrested by the political police May 29 together with two leaders of the metal workers union, Oswaldo Walderramane and Alejandro Vento.

The arrests were among those following the suspension of constitutional guarantees decreed by the Belaúnde government on the excuse that this was required by the tense situation in Lima after police fired on spectators at the national sports stadium. [See World Outlook May 29.]

The immediate reason for the arrest of Frias, Walderramane and Vento appears to be their connection with a successful strike conducted by the metal workers and with a strike of bank employes which was still under way at the end of May.

Révolution Africaine, the Algiers weekly to which Ismael Frias contributed during a stay of some months in Algeria, has protested the arrests and demanded the immediate release of all the political prisoners in Peru, including Hugo Blanco, the outstanding Trotskyist peasant leader who is still in prison at Arequipa.

RUMANIA TURNS AWAY FROM THE COMECON

By E. Germain

The British liberal bourgeois daily The Guardian published extensive excerpts June 16 from an article in the authoritative Rumanian economic weekly Viata Economica [Economic Life] that openly accuses the Soviet bureaucracy of trying to "dismember Rumania" through "supra-national economic plans" of the COMECON [Council for Mutual Economic Aid, the body designed to co-ordinate economic relations and economic planning among the European workers states]. Through this article the conflict between the Soviet and Rumanian bureaucracies has been publicly acknowledged in a way that leaves no doubt that the Bucharest leaders intend to take their case against Khrushchev to the Rumanian people.

Formally, the Viata Economica article is only a polemic against an article by the Soviet economist Professor Y.B. Valev that appeared in an obscure Soviet academic journal, the Moscow University Herald. Professor Valev proposed the establishment of a "Lower Danube economic complex" in a sector cutting across the frontiers of Bulgaria, the USSR and the most important economic regions of Rumania. This would include the Ploesti oil center, the steel plants of Galat, the most fertile agricultural parts of the Dobrudja, and the capital city of Bucharest.

While acknowledging the "academic freedom" of Professor Valev to set forth his views, the Viata Economica article expresses astonishment at their "endorsement" by a university journal, particularly since they "disregard Rumania's sovereignty and propose the dismemberment of her territory and national economy." In other words, the Bucharest leaders accuse Khrushchev of endorsing Valev's opinions and of plotting the dismemberment of Rumania with the help of "groups of men, divorced from the people, with no patriotic sentiments and no loyalty to Marxism-Leninism and to the real interests of the Socialist camp."

At first sight it might appear that this dispute is only a case of the Rumanian bureaucracy espousing narrow economic nationalism and opposing progressive international planning as proposed by the COMECON and the Soviet Union. Marxists, of course, know that the world's productive forces have long since outgrown the restrictive borders of the national state. One of the many crimes of Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy after World War II was to transfer the theory of "socialism in one country" to each of the East European states, where capitalism had been overthrown by bureaucratic-military means, and to set up "national" bureaucracies, strictly controlled by the Kremlin and committed to the absurd enterprise of building a self-sufficient "socialist" economy in each country. Today the chickens seem to have come home to roost, if we are to believe appearances, and Moscow faces the consequences of the economic nationalism which it was guilty of fostering in Rumania in the first place.

There is, of course, a grain of truth in this interpretation of the conflict between Rumania and the Kremlin. But it leaves out of account two essential features of the situation.

If Marxists are in favor of international planning and a division of labor among workers states, it is only on condition that it meets with the approval of the peoples involved. Marxists reject all attempts to impose such measures by bureaucratic, administrative means. A "Lower Danube economic complex" -- if it is economically advisable -- would have to be democratically conducted by the inhabitants of the region itself and not by technocrats in Moscow or Warsaw. Restructuration of the Balkans along lines of "economic regions" makes sense only within the framework of a Socialist Balkan Federation that safeguards the rights of all the nationalities involved and does not strengthen some states at the expense of others.

All attempts to impose "supra-national planning" by bureaucratic-administrative means can only provoke strong opposition, not only among the bureaucracies but also among the peoples involved; it can only strengthen political and economic nationalism and give it a powerful popular base.

This holds all the more so inasmuch as international economic collaboration and planning among workers states, in order to be acceptable to the workers and peoples concerned, must not only be

based upon popular consent and self-administration, but also upon the strictest equality. As Lenin so often pointed out: precisely in multinational institutions or structures, the slightest suspicion of inequality, the slightest indication that a "big" nation intends to continue exploiting a "small" one, means inevitable ruin and collapse for the enterprise and justifies any reaction of the "small" nation to break loose from the bonds imposed upon it.

It is self-evident that in the case of Rumania we are confronted with precisely such a case of unequal economic relations between workers states, imposed by the Soviet bureaucracy. The article in Viata Economica points out among other things that the "Lower Danube economic complex" would receive 72% of its electrical power from Rumania, 21% from Bulgaria and only 7% from the Soviet Union, while expenditures would not at all be in proportion to these contributions.

The "Lower Danube economic complex" plan is only part of a more general attempt by the Soviet bureaucracy to impose forms of an international division of labor on Rumania which would freeze that country in its agricultural status as an exporter of foodstuffs and raw materials. The vice-premier of the Rumanian government, Alexandru Birladeanu made clear in an interview granted to the German AP correspondent in Bucharest on June 14 that fundamental differences exist between the Kremlin-dictated COMECON line and the Rumanian government.

Marxists are aware that international trade based upon world market prices implies unequal exchanges, i.e., the exploitation of economically backward countries by the advanced ones. More labor of the former is exchanged against less labor of the latter. Trade between COMECON countries happens to be based on world market prices. Any attempt to freeze a country in its status as a producer of primary products thereby implies an attempt to submit it to long-term exploitation by its more advanced trade partners. The Yugoslavs rightly rebelled against such plans when Stalin attempted it; the Rumanians are reacting in similar fashion in face of a comparable venture under Khrushchev.

The Rumanian government is most certainly a bureaucratic one, retaining many features of Stalin's period. But faced with the formidable task of resisting economic and political pressure from the Kremlin -- including an attempt by Khrushchev to foster a pro-Russian faction in the Rumanian Communist party! -- it has no choice but to turn to its own people for popular support. This explains why the Rumanian CP's April "declaration of economic independence" was distributed throughout the country -- 1,500,000 copies. This also explains why Vice-Premier Birladeanu declared in his interview that by August 23 [the twentieth anniversary of Rumania's liberation], all political prisoners in the country will be freed.

Khrushchev, for his part, is up against the no less formidable

problem of whether to "discipline" or "appease" the Rumanian bureaucracy without driving it directly into the arms of Peking. The Sino-Soviet conflict has made it immensely difficult for the Kremlin to impose its line on any Communist party by administrative means. On the other hand, Khrushchev may well fear that if the Rumanians succeed in getting away with their rebellion, the whole COMECON might disintegrate. The Hungarians and the Poles are as eager as the Rumanians to increase trade with capitalist countries, and Khrushchev is in the worst possible position to reproach the Rumanians for seeking "capitalist credits," since that is exactly what he is doing himself.

To reduce in the least way the economic integration achieved under the COMECON is certainly no step forward. But history doesn't advance along a straight line. The road from Stalin's bureaucratic supercentralism to the creation of a truly democratic international federation of workers states passes through the breakdown of the bureaucracy's power and privileges.

The Rumanian conflict is symptomatic of the widening challenge to the power of the Soviet bureaucracy both within the USSR and its sphere of influence.

FREEDOM WON FOR FRANCISCO ABARCA

The vigorous campaign mounted since last January by various Belgian socialist and trade-union groups in behalf of the Spanish anarchist, Francisco Abarca, came to a successful conclusion when the Belgian courts decided that it would be illegal to grant the demand of Swiss authorities for his extradition. Abarca was released from St-Gilles prison on June 12 and on June 18 the Belgian government granted him the right of political asylum.

The case won international attention when Belgian authorities arrested him at the request of the Swiss police. They accused him of participation in a publicity action undertaken by the Iberian Council of Liberation [ICL] to which he belongs. This consisted of planting a device in the baggage room of a Spanish airline which set the place on fire. The ICL called on the telephone to warn airport officials so that there would be no loss of life. The publicity action was part of a campaign undertaken by the ICL to discourage tourists from going to Spain in response to luring advertisements placed by the fascist government about cheap vacations there.

Abarca, as one of the outstanding figures in the ICL, upheld the moral right of the organization to engage in such actions and argued that he came under the category of a political refugee. He did not actually participate in the given incident.

The danger was great that the Belgian government would bow to the demand of the Swiss authorities. However, the case was taken up by the Comité d'Action Contre le Néo-Colonialisme et le Fascisme. Socialist-minded workers brought the matter up in their unions and a campaign got under way that included big rallies and demonstrations. [See World Outlook April 24, June 5.] The radical press in other countries gave the case wide publicity, and in this way both domestic and international pressure mounted against the Belgian government.

The decision to release Abarca and to grant him political asylum constitutes a big victory not only for the young militant anarchist but for the principle of democratic rights. It is a significant precedent for future cases like this one which may occur in Belgium.

CALL FOR POPULAR MILITIA IN ALGERIA

On June 15, the last combat units of the French Army sailed from Algiers. It was a historic date, marking the end of the imperialist conquest that began 134 years ago, but the French kept it as quiet as possible. They did not care to celebrate the defeat their mighty forces had suffered at the hands of an insurgent people.

The Algerians, on the other hand, did not attempt to convert the occasion into a day of special jubilation although they had won an additional triumph in seeing the 600,000 troops withdrawn a year ahead of the schedule provided in the accords signed at Evian in 1962. The Algerians still face immense tasks in repairing the destruction inflicted on their land in seven and a half years of one of the most bitter and bloody colonial wars in history. They face the even greater task of continuing down the road toward socialism in face of extraordinary obstacles.

While the French Army was assembling to go back home, counter-revolutionary forces inside Algeria were moving against the Ben Bella regime. In the Kabylie, scattered groups under the command of Ait Ahmed engaged in forays and ambushes, murdering local supporters of independent Algeria's government. In Algiers, a bomb, planted in the parcel department of the post office, killed a postal worker, gravely wounded several others and set the building on fire.

These and similar acts, touched raw memories. Was the Secret Army Organization [OAS] again at work?

The mood among the socialist vanguard in Algeria was expressed in an editorial in the June 13 Révolution Africaine entitled "The Guns of Wrath" [Les Fusils de la Colère]. The subtitle reads, "Those who support the government want arms."

The editorial is as follows:

* * *

After two years, the port of Algiers has witnessed a repetition of the same methods: blind murders committed by the OAS followed by similar ones committed by the counterrevolution.

The OAS assassins retreated in face of a people in arms. It will be the same with the counterrevolution. The reply of the people to collusion with enemies abroad will be quick and decisive.

Let the counterrevolution understand that compelled to decide between the revolution and the peaceful ways we would have liked to maintain, we are choosing armed revolution, if that is what must be done.

The counterrevolution, in resorting to certain methods, seeks to shake the attachment of the masses to their regime, to their leadership. They seek also to shake the will of the revolutionary power to go forward.

As Révolution Africaine wrote last week: "the only effective way to meet these plots is to set up without delay a POPULAR MILITIA, as was advocated by the Congress. The arming of the people is one of the main acts by which the revolutionary will of the leaders can be recognized. It is the only way that will make it possible to galvanize the energy of the people."

Last week the arming of the people appeared to us to be a preventive measure. Today the arming of the people is an urgent countermove.

In face of the test affecting the people as a whole, the Central Committee of the FLN [Front de Libération Nationale] decided at its current session to proceed to democratize the party and to purge the state apparatus.

To reinforce the capacity for revolutionary struggle, the party will be democratized through elections at all levels, after its revolutionary base is widened.

A permanent commission will go after those who participated in either a movement or a body of repression against the population, the militants or the djounouds [fighters during the war for liberation]: those who collaborated with the OAS, the information services or the psychological services; those who participated in the May 13 events and the Committees of Public Health; those who either by writing or speaking propagandized for a French Algeria.

The purge of the state apparatus will be accelerated. This apparatus has picked up at times even gangrenous functionaries from

the colonial administration. By the nature of things it is open to elements who have been privileged by birth and wealth. It automatically engenders bureaucratism, careerism and the hatred of the masses if measures are not taken.

Within it the counterrevolution also finds its natural allies.

That is why the Central Committee has decided that from now on the approval of the party will be required for all nominations in the ministerial cabinets, all the key positions in the state, and all the upper magistrates.

The essential aim of these measures is to shape the state in accordance with the popular will and to make it represent exclusively the interests of the workers.

In the confrontation ahead of us it is advisable to seek all the ways and all the means that will permit the people to express themselves and to defend their interests.

To the purge and the formation of a popular militia it is advisable to add their natural complement: POPULAR JUSTICE.

It is necessary to physically associate the workers with the trials of counterrevolutionaries. It is necessary to judge them outside the tribunal and its rituals which are incomprehensible to the workers. It is necessary to give the floor directly to the victims and those who have been robbed. It is necessary to organize immediately a wide publicity campaign with regard to the struggle against the enemy, from arrests to the execution of the sentences pronounced by the popular tribunes.

The people constitute the final guarantee because they are the sole beneficiaries of the revolution.

It is incumbent on the leadership of the party to guide it in accordance with the interests of the people and to give the people their say and the means to act in all domains.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

"If possible war with China is what the President means by his San Francisco remarks about opening an 'offensive in the pursuit of peace,' he should let Congress and the people know in explicit terms." -- From an editorial entitled "War Against China?" in the June 22 New York Times.

THE "BOMB" OF GRAMSCI'S LETTER

By Livio Maitan

Two journals of international reputation have given sensational prominence to a "revelation" made by the official weekly of the Italian Communist party. A daily as sober as the Paris Le Monde [June 20] even went so far as to entitle an article by K.S. Karol: "Mr. Togliatti launches a bomb dealing with the crisis in the Bolshevik party after the death of Lenin." (The article appeared simultaneously in the British publication New Statesman and Nation.)

What is it really about?

Two weeks ago, the Italian Communist weekly Rinascita published the complete text of a letter which Antonio Gramsci, one of the founders of the party and without doubt one of the leaders of greatest stature in the history of the Italian workers movement, sent to the leaders of the Soviet Communist party in the name of the Political Bureau of the Italian party in 1926. This letter shows clearly enough that Gramsci did not grasp the fundamental reasons for the struggle conducted by the Left Opposition, a fact that is shown, incidentally, in many things he wrote. What is interesting is that while not sharing the political orientation of the Opposition, Gramsci in no way associated himself with the campaign of denigration then under way and even recalled the revolutionary merits of leaders like Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev. He took a stand against any measures that might lead to a split, stating among other things the following: "For nine years you have been the organizers of the world Bolshevik movement. You have carried out a historic mission without precedent. But today, by forgetting the international repercussions of your polemics you are in process of destroying your own work and you risk degrading the leading function which you acquired under the influence of Lenin. But you must never lose sight of the fact that your duty as militants must be carried out in the framework of the interests of the international proletariat."

Rinascita, after recalling that upon receiving this letter the International center had decided to send its representative Jules Humbert Droz to Italy, also published Togliatti's reply to Gramsci, a reply which showed that Togliatti was already on the side of the Russian majority and that he sharply condemned the hesitations of Gramsci and other members of the Italian leadership. Gramsci replied with another letter that rejected the arguments of Togliatti. But, according to Togliatti, this second letter has been lost.

K.S. Karol, commenting on the publication of Gramsci's letter, states that its text was not previously known and that "some of Gramsci's companions. . . becoming Trotskyists. . . solemnly testified that this missive. . . had most certainly been sent to Palmiro Togliatti. . . But none of them having a copy of the document, they could not consequently furnish irrefutable proof of its existence

or reveal its contents." Referring to the silence with which Togliatti had met questions on this subject pressed by Trotsky's biographer, Isaac Deutscher, for instance, Karol adds: "Everyone came to the conclusion that he would take the explosive secret of this correspondence with him to the other world."

Completely unexpectedly, to believe Karol, Togliatti decided to reveal the secret. This caused an immense sensation when it was learned at a meeting in Rome of some twenty philosophers headed by Jean-Paul Sartre. Karol believes it can set off "a chain reaction" that can have considerable consequences among Communists throughout the world, "including those of Moscow and Peking." Karol speculates over the reasons that might have led Togliatti to take such an action. Was it a way of reminding Moscow and Peking of the grave possible consequences of a split today?

Unfortunately Karol's information turns out to be quite faulty. It is true, of course, that this 1926 letter remained under wraps for a long time and that you could learn about it only in opposition circles, especially the Trotskyists. But Karol does not seem to know that the text of the letter was in reality brought to light by Tasca, a former leader of the Communist party and member of the Communist International, who broke to the right even before 1930. After a later political evolution that was altogether lamentable, Tasca, who was never a Trotskyist, published the letter in France by 1938. After the end of the war he circulated copies of it in restricted circles in Italy around 1950. In January 1956, the complete text was published by the Italian Trotskyist newspaper Bandiera Rossa and was then reprinted by other opposition publications.

It should be added that after Tasca's death, his archives, including the famous letter, were opened to anyone interested in the history of the workers movement. In fact, an Italian publisher has just brought out a thick book of Gramsci's writings, including the letter. It was precisely on the occasion of the publication of this book that Rinascita published Gramsci's letter a few days in advance, explicitly thanking the publishers for granting permission. Karol ignores this detail, which is nevertheless decisive. It is because of this that his deductions are ill-founded.

The truth is first of all that Togliatti could not take the secret with him to the other world. The letter was already published and available to anyone interested. Secondly, he could not even hope that its circulation would remain limited to narrow circles because it was included in a book that would have wide circulation. He was thus faced with the choice of continuing to remain silent, in this way testifying to his embarrassment, or of seeking to draw at least some advantage from a situation he could not avoid. He chose the second alternative.

In reality it was not Gramsci's letter but Togliatti's reply that had not yet been published. The question posed then is rather:

why did Togliatti publish his own letter, which shows him to have supported the hard Stalinist core in the struggle against the Opposition? In seeking the reasons, it must not be forgotten first of all that if Togliatti was not entirely on the line this was because he was a Bukharinist. (At the time Bukharin was with Stalin.) In the second place, Togliatti is desirous today of playing the role in Italy of someone who is concerned about historic truth and it would have been risky for him to hide his own letter. To reconstruct the career and the evolution of the head of the Italian Communist party, the letter he has just made public is **really important** and it cannot be excluded that this consideration carried a certain weight with him. Of course it would be highly desirable to know more about the contents of Gramsci's second letter. Has it really disappeared? If so, what were the circumstances? This is a question to which a reply must be sought sooner or later.

As for the objective consequences of publishing Gramsci's letter, aside from the specific things that might have motivated Togliatti, there is no doubt that this again corresponds to the "de-Stalinized" climate of the Italian workers movement which is no longer surprised at such moves. (In fact it was much more sensational abroad than in Italy.) In certain circles of the international Communist movement, it will be considered encouraging, coming as it does from one of the biggest Communist parties. In particular it will increase the number of those who believe that the official Soviet attitude toward not only Trotsky but also Zinoviev and Kamenev is becoming more and more untenable. It is possible that Togliatti's move will inspire analogous steps in other sectors of the Communist movement.

UNDER SOUTH AFRICA'S 90-DAY LAW

Lionel Bernstein, the one major defendant in the Rivonia trial in South Africa to be released by the judge -- only to be immediately arrested by the police again [see World Outlook June 19] -- testified that the police threatened he would be detained for periods of 90 days indefinitely unless he gave information.

"Every statement made by a person who gives his evidence under duress, in circumstances which I regard as torture, is very much open to question," he said.

The mental torture consisted of solitary confinement, with nothing to do, no one to speak to, nothing to read. He became so affected by this that his memory was impaired, he suffered excruciating anxiety attacks, his hands began to shake violently. It became so bad that he even welcomed the sight of the police who came to torture him further.

SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE AFFECTS JAPANESE LABOR MOVEMENT

By S. Okatani

TOKYO -- As a direct consequence of the Sino-Soviet conflict, the Japanese Communist party [JCP] in particular and the workers and peace movements as a whole have reached a turning point. Taking a clear stand in favor of Peking's line, the JCP, which, since the last national conference at Hiroshima, has organized its own rallies in the name of the Japanese Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, expelled its top representatives in the two houses of parliament. The recent course of the JCP testifies to the strong background of Stalinism in both the JCP and the Chinese Communist party [CCP].

Defeat of the Pro-Moscow Tendency

When the House of Representatives voted in favor of the partial nuclear test-ban treaty on May 15, the only dissenters were four of the five Communist members. This was not surprising in view of the opposition of the JCP to the treaty. But what was surprising was the vote of the fifth Communist representative, Yoshio Shiga, a member of the Central Committee. He cast a "white ballot," meaning approval of the 1963 Moscow Treaty.

What then happened would seem to indicate that the JCP is committed more than ever to Peking as against Moscow. On May 17, Akahata [Red Flag], the JCP organ, carried a front-page official statement on Shiga by the Central Committee. Shiga's conduct, said the statement, was "antiparty" because he had not consulted any of the party bodies beforehand and because he held a press interview (after the vote) in which he expressed views that ran counter to the interests of the people and in violation of the decisions and policies of the party leadership.

Shiga's action, however, was not entirely unexpected in view of his previous deeds and words. Last September he submitted a memorial to the leadership, criticizing its pro-Peking position. A few other members of the Central Committee concurred.

In October at its Seventh General Meeting, the Central Committee considered a resolution not to support the partial test-ban treaty. Shiga and a few others such as Shigeo Kamiyama and Shigebaru Nakano indicated support for the test-ban pact and abstained from voting. As a result, the Central Committee's disapproval of the treaty was not a unanimous decision but a majority one -- a rare event indeed in the history of the JCP.

At a press conference on May 21, the JCP announced that Yoshio Shiga and Ichizo Suzuki had been expelled from the party on grounds they had engaged in actions contrary to party policies. This was after the Eighth General Meeting of the Central Committee where the

expulsion of the two party leaders was decided on. Out of 60 Central Committee members, 57 were present, including Shiga and Suzuki. Of these, 53 reportedly voted for the expulsions. Three (Shiga, Suzuki and Shigeharu Nakano) were opposed and one (Shigeo Kamiyama) abstained.

Ichiro Suzuki is a member of the Upper House and a prominent leader of the National Railway Workers' Union. He was expelled on the ground that he had dissented against the attitude of the JCP toward the April 17 nation-wide strike.

Anti-Nuclear Weapons Movement

The Sino-Soviet dispute registered its first consequences in the mass movement in Japan in the antinuclear weapons sector.

At the Hiroshima conference last August, the JCP came out with Peking's line and the members of the Japanese Socialist party [JSP], who favor Moscow's attitude toward peace movements and the partial nuclear test-ban treaty, walked out, holding a separate meeting. The rift between the JCP and the JSP has worsened since then. It reached its lowest point at the tenth anniversary of the Bikini incident, commemorated at Yaizu on March 1. Socialists and Communists held separate rallies, the Socialists and members of Sohyo [the General Council of Japanese Trade Unions] at Yaizu and the Communists at Shizuoka.

The trouble developed when the Communists accused the Socialists of not permitting them to attend memorial services conducted by the widow of Aikichi Kuboyama who died from exposure to radioactivity. The JCP repeatedly charged in Akahata that the Socialists had forcibly kept Mrs. Kuboyama in seclusion so that she would not be able to contact the Communists.

In the columns of Shakai Shinpo [Social News], the Socialists and members of Sohyo countered that it was the JCP that blocked the JSP plan to hold joint JSP-JCP memorial services for the late Kuboyama.

After the separate rallies on March 1, the Socialist party and Sohyo decided at their liaison meeting that the national conference of the Japanese Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs had already disintegrated and that a new national movement should be organized.

The animosity has led the two parties to schedule separate rallies in August. The Socialists will hold meetings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Communists at Kyoto.

Communist Attitude in the April 17 Strike

Ichizo Suzuki was expelled from the JCP allegedly because he refused to follow party directives in the April 17 strike. The

spring labor offensive was severely blunted by cancellation of the half-day strike of 800,000 workers which had been scheduled for April 17 by the National Council of the Government Enterprise Workers Union (Korokyo). [The Korokyo is composed of employes of the national railways, telephone and telegraph, postal services, the government monopoly in tobacco, the mint, government printing offices and two other public services.]

The Private Railway Workers Union and most other unions in private industry which were scheduled to stage a mass walkout in concert with the Korokyo strike, also called off their action.

Thus what the Sohyo had called "the biggest postwar action resorting to force" failed to materialize.

It was a betrayal by the Communists that was decisive in bringing about cancellation of the strike.

The major goals of the "spring labor offensive" were a 25 per cent pay hike aimed at "catching up with European wage standards, establishment of a minimum wage rate, and improved safety measures. Tied in with these economic and labor demands were such political issues as opposition to the talks between Japan and Korea, insistence on immediate ratification of ILO [International Labor Organization] Convention No. 87 and similar slogans.

The Joint Spring Labor Offensive Committee, with 150 unions under Sohyo and the Federation of Independent Unions participating, had notified member unions not to compromise with management by accepting a meager wage increase. But the JCP feared that a futile strike at this time might open the way for management to take pot shots at Communist elements within Korokyo. The party opposed the strike.

Almost all the leaders of the unions are Socialists. But the Communists exercise strong influence among rank and file unionists. For example, about one-sixth of the National Railway Workers Union are believed to be members or sympathizers of the JCP.

When the JCP announced through the columns of Akahata that the party would not co-operate with the strike, some members simply refused to follow the party line. Ichizo Suzuki, a leader of the National Railway Workers Union and a member of the Central Committee and therefore conspicuously in the limelight as a labor spokesman for the party, showed by his actions that he did not agree with the party line. Most Communists, however, obeyed the party and this ruined the possibility for the union to open strike action.

Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda met with the chairman and the general secretary of the Sohyo and promised to study a six-point demand which they submitted. The 12-hour strike was averted. The six points seek higher wages, accident prevention measures, a

national minimum wage scale and government acceptance of a mediation ruling by the Labor Relations Commission.

A big debate over cancellation of the strike was touched off. The JSP criticizes the attitude of the JCP as a betrayal and some unions, such as the National Railway Workers and the National Telephone and Telegraph Workers, have punished Communist members who refused to back strike action.

Interview with Pierre Frank

SPECTRE OF TROTSKYISM IN SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT

[As official representative of the Fourth International, Pierre Frank attended the June 6-7 conference of the Lanka Sama Samaja party, where he supported the left wing in its struggle against the proposal of opportunist right-wing leaders to enter a bourgeois coalition government. During his stay in Ceylon, the press sought his views on various topics. The following interview was carried by the June 14 Sunday Observer which has one of the largest circulations in Ceylon. The interview appeared under the title, "The spectres that are haunting Mr. Khrushchev. . ."]

* * *

Question: Mr. Frank, an aspect of the current Sino-Soviet ideological debate is of very special interest to us in Ceylon as it is, I am sure, to you, as a Trotskyist. I refer of course to the mutual charge of Trotskyism. Both sides accuse each other of Trotskyism, of Trotskyist ideas and even of collaboration with Trotskyists.

You are no doubt aware that there have been frequent references to Ceylon in these angry exchanges. While this gives us in Ceylon a sense of "involvement" in this debate, what is really intriguing is the use of Trotskyism as a big stick to beat each other.

It is almost as if a spectre were haunting the Communist movement, the spectre of Trotskyism. . . .

Would you agree?

Answer: Yes, it does puzzle many people. But first, about Ceylon.

You see, here in Ceylon, you reversed the normal process. Trotskyism was first a faction in the Communist movement and then an independent movement. But here the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the first Marxist Party was Trotskyist and the Communists were a break-

away group from them.

But, about the debate. I agree that it is intriguing to find two huge powers, one of 600-700 million people and the other the second biggest industrial nation in the world, charging each other of being corrupted by this "little fellow," Trotskyism, which the Soviet Union thought it had buried long ago when they buried Leon Trotsky and anybody known to have Trotskyist ideas in Russia.

However, first of all, I must say something about the debate itself. It is not as some think, an argument for its own sake. These are not dilettantes, mere intellectuals engaged in argument. These are serious and responsible leaders of powerful states, involved in world politics and with global interests.

So it is a very serious dispute.

Q: Yes, but how does Trotskyism enter the picture?

A: You see, both sides see in each other's argument ideas which are Trotskyist or tendencies which are Trotskyist and they are frightened, truly scared. The ghost of Trotsky is haunting both the Soviet Union and China.

The Soviet Union sees such ideas implicit in the Chinese position on an uninterrupted colonial revolution which is not the same as Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution, but close to it.

Similarly they suspect Trotskyist influence in Chinese criticism of the pacific, parliamentary way to socialism and of peaceful co-existence as a method of disarming the class struggle.

On the other hand, the Chinese are nervous about Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin which fully vindicated Trotskyist exposures of the repressive nature of the Stalin regime.

Q: But why this fear, this extraordinary nervousness?

A: The entire bureaucratic system of the Soviet Union (in China, it is a little paternalistic) is based on authority and a strict hierarchic order.

The very notion that the ideas of Khrushchev or Mao are not sacred but can be questioned and challenged, that a communist, that a communist party, a marxist movement or even a country can think for himself or itself and that they can be as right as what Moscow or Peking says is a concept which cuts deep into the foundations of the system.

They cannot allow such ideas to grow and spread.

Q: In this sense would you not say that it is the fear of heretical ideas natural to any dogma or "Church"?

A: Yes, but it is the challenge to the system that is feared. . . .

Q: But wasn't it Khrushchev who began this whole process with his 20th Congress speech denouncing Stalin?

A: True. But we have a paradox here. Khrushchev denounced Stalin but he inherited and operates the same system though he has dismantled the more repressive apparatus. His methods may be different, but the system is the same in its basic nature.

Like Napoleon the Third, who liberalised to preserve the empire and not to destroy it, Khrushchev has liberalised but in order to protect the system.

Q: Protect it from what challenges?

A: That is really an interesting question. You see there are sweeping changes going on in Soviet society. To put it very simply, the great advance in material standards, in living standards has meant a higher educational and cultural level and people, especially young, thinking people and the intelligentsia are beginning to think freely, to ask questions.

That is one change.

Another is the gradual disappearance of the "fear complex" which gripped the first generation of revolutionary Russia when the young nation was surrounded by enemies and threatened by all sides. This fear complex, especially after the war, when the balance of forces changed in the world, is fast disappearing and ideas are moving freely to and from the Soviet Union.

Yet another change is the shift from heavy industry to consumer articles in the Soviet economy. In the first phase, bureaucracy and technocracy determined everything but in the economic sphere, with the accent now on production of consumer articles, the ordinary people have to be given a more decisive role.

Q: How would you describe the character of these changes?

A: I would say that Soviet society is in intellectual ferment but I want to stress one thing.

Nobody is challenging the economic structure. Nobody is prescribing capitalist ideas as it happened sometime ago in Poland and East Germany.

But everybody, writers, scientists, artists, economists, students, they are demanding the right to think freely. We in the Fourth International, we hear of these things -- of clandestine groups and illegal meetings, of leaflets and literature.

Q: Can you cite any specific instances?

A: Well, you know of course about the new writers. But there are many others.

There is a very well-known film director who has addressed a meeting and one of his remarks was: "I want the right to think before the party Central Committee meeting -- not after it!"

We know of a certain "school" of young philosophers in one of Russia's leading universities who are producing ideas which are "new."

Their concern is with the concept of freedom.

At the moment, they are critical of the prevailing ideas only by implication. But that's a beginning, you see, and that's the paradox which confronts Khrushchev.

You can't start to liberalise and yet halt it when the process develops so far that it becomes dangerous. You can't turn on and turn off ideas, like a tap. Khrushchev whose speech about Stalin encouraged the writers to write more freely is now criticising them for writing too freely. That's the dilemma.

Q: How does all this strike you as a Trotskyist?

A: Well, we are very happy about the development of this debate which is really on fundamental questions like war and peace, the colonial revolution, etc.

As for the changes in the Soviet Union, one of the slogans of the new intelligentsia is "back to Lenin," and one of their demands is that the minutes of the Russian Communist Party Congresses from 1920-1925 be published. If that happens, Trotsky whose role has been distorted and villified by the Soviet bureaucracy will be fully vindicated before the world.

Q: But isn't this debate a revival of an old debate, the debate initiated by the Left Opposition?

A: Yes, but there's an important difference. Here, states are involved and state power, mass propaganda, and communications have encompassed the whole communist movement. Don't underestimate state power. The first real threat to Stalin came from Yugoslavia which was a state and had all the powers of a state including the ability to propagate its ideas freely and internationally.

Q: You don't think that the Sino-Soviet dispute is nationalist in origin? I mean, rooted in conflicting national interests?

A: It may have started that way, but it is now truly international.

The Soviet Union thinks internationally; so do the Chinese who are beginning to assume a greater role in international affairs.

I admit that China may believe that the Soviet Union wants to make a deal with the USA and that China herself may be part of that deal.

But the debate has gone beyond all that.

Q: One last question. The Russians have accused the Chinese of exploiting colour and race. Would you say that is fair?

A: Utterly unfair. It is a Soviet slander, and we Trotskyists are quite accustomed to these methods. . . !

Q: Wouldn't you agree, however, that in Asia and Africa, the Chinese view has greater appeal?

A: Yes, but not on grounds of race. Among the radical and the militant, Chinese ideas have far greater impact because the Chinese position accords with these national revolutionary movements which want quick decisive action against imperialism.

The Russians whose foreign policy has always been conservative, in the sense of trying to maintain the status quo through bargain with imperialism, are seen by Asian-African militants as trying to hold back these anti-imperialist movements. . . .

STATEMENT BY THE REVOLUTIONARY SECTION OF THE LSSP

[The following statement by Edmund Samarakkody, a member of the Ceylonese parliament and one of the leaders of the Revolutionary Section of the Lanka Sama Samaja party, was issued June 7.]

* * *

The decision of the reformist majority of the LSSP to enter into a coalition with the capitalist SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom party] government and thereby to become an instrument of the capitalist class in Ceylon, constitutes a complete violation of the basic principles of Trotskyism on which the revolutionary program of the party is based.

This degeneration is the logical outcome of the parliamentary reformist line which the majority of the leadership of the party has followed for several years and the substitution of parliamentary and reformist struggle in place of class struggle and revolutionary perspectives, and the systematic recruitment of nonrevolutionary elements into the party on that basis.

The revolutionaries of the LSSP have, in this situation, decided to organise themselves on the basis of the party program. They therefore withdrew from the conference and will hereafter function as a separate organisation under the name of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary Section).

In order to carry forward the revolutionary struggle for power, the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) calls upon all the adherents and supporters of the LSSP in the country to rally round the revolutionary banner which it refuses to surrender to the SLFP Government and the capitalist class.

(Signed) Edmund Samarkkody, Secretary,
Provisional Committee of the LSSP
(Revolutionary Section).

ON THE SITUATION FACING THE LANKA SAMA SAMAJA PARTY

[The following resolution was passed unanimously by the United Secretariat, the executive body of the Fourth International, and released to the press June 22.]

* * *

The United Secretariat takes the following stand on the deal negotiated by N.M.Perera with the Prime Minister of the Ceylon government in which, in return for his betraying the program of the Lanka Sama Samaja party and the basic principles on which the world Trotskyist movement is founded, he and two others whom he designated were added to the cabinet:

(1) We condemn the secret personal negotiations with the head of a bourgeois government which N.M.Perera engaged in behind the back of his party, without the authorisation of the party's Central Committee, without the knowledge of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and in defiance of the express opposition voiced by the United Secretariat to any course except one leading to the establishment of a workers and peasants government. The fact that N.M. Perera later submitted the results of these back-room negotiations -- in part or in whole -- to the Central Committee and to a summarily called party conference that had no time to adequately study or debate the life-and-death issue involved, in no wise mitigates his monstrous violation of Leninist organisational procedures.

In logical continuation with these shady manoeuvres, which were part of his preparations to split the party, Perera acceded to the demand of the Prime Minister that she be given personal authority to decide on the list of candidates which the group he heads will run in the next election. By this act he transferred his lead-

ership to the head of the Sri Lanka Freedom party and publicly displayed his role as an agent of a bourgeois party.

(2) We condemn N.M.Perera's crossing of class lines. His acceptance of a post in Mrs. Bandaranaike's bourgeois government on a strictly reformist platform belongs to the long series of opportunist capitulations to the class enemy committed in the past by Social Democratic and Stalinist parliamentarians with such bitter consequences for the working class and its socialist aspirations. The same condemnation applies to Perera's disciples, Anil Moonesinghe and Cholmondeley Goonewardene, who joined him in capitulating to the Prime Minister. These three former Trotskyists, by giving up their revolutionary aims and joining in Mrs. Bandaranaike's frantic efforts to bolster her crisis-ridden government and to save capitalism in Ceylon, have betrayed the most elementary principles of revolutionary socialism.

(3) Through their own actions, these three placed themselves outside the ranks of the Fourth International. The United Secretariat recognises this fact and in view of the gravity of the crime expels them forthwith. In addition the United Secretariat suspends all members of the Lanka Sama Samaja who voted at the June 6-7 conference for Perera's proposal to enter a bourgeois coalition government, referring further action to the next meeting of the International Executive Committee.

(4) We urge those members of the Lanka Sama Samaja party who supported Perera in the mistaken hope that his proposal to enter a bourgeois coalition might signify a step forward, to reconsider their position. We urge all those who continue to collaborate with Perera, in the mistaken hope that this will save the unity of the LSSP, to break at once and to rally to the side of the comrades who are upholding the program of Trotskyism on which the party was founded.

Perera's course invites a major disaster for the Ceylonese workers and peasants. As the government crisis deepens, this will become glaringly apparent. Mrs. Bandaranaike wanted Trotskyists in her cabinet in order to gain time and temporarily relieve the crisis, but above all to compromise the Trotskyists, since they offer the main possibility for a workers and peasants government to come to power. Her scheme is to manoeuvre the Trotskyists into sharing the nationwide disapproval and unpopularity of which her bourgeois regime has already become the target. She hopes to achieve this by associating the Trotskyists with measures against the working class and the minorities, especially by crippling industrial action. Through this she counts on making it more difficult for a government based on the program of revolutionary socialism to move into office and open a genuinely new alternative for Ceylon. However, if such a government -- now on the order of the day in Ceylon -- does not come to power, then the ultrareactionary right wing will eventually install a brutally repressive regime. Perera's capitulation helps

pave the way for such a catastrophe.

While a bourgeois coalition government may offer minor, temporary reforms, the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples can solve their basic problems only by breaking out of the framework of capitalism the way the Russians did in 1917, the way the Yugoslavs did in the aftermath of World War II, the Chinese in 1949-52, the Cubans in 1959-60, and as the Algerians are now in process of doing.

(5) We commend all the leaders and members of the Lanka Sama Samaja party who launched an internal struggle against Perera's opportunism, who fought his capitulationist course without concessions, who have done their utmost to maintain the honor and integrity of Trotskyism in Ceylon, and who have continued to battle for establishment of a workers and peasants government as the only realistic road for the Ceylonese masses.

We urge all members of the Fourth International and groups and parties sympathetic to its aims throughout the world to do everything in their power to help the Revolutionary Section of the Lanka Sama Samaja party to maintain and to advance the program of revolutionary socialism in Ceylon. The capitulation of Perera will prove to be only a passing episode in the class struggle in Ceylon. The loyal and far-seeing leaders and members who grasped the implications of Perera's opportunist parliamentarism some time ago and who organized a struggle against it have already passed a difficult test. Through their firmness these comrades kept together the precious basic cadres needed to repair the damage in the shortest possible time.

With the help of the international Trotskyist movement they will proceed with all the more self-confidence in the task of building a revolutionary-socialist party capable of guiding Ceylon onto the road of socialism.

June 22, 1964

CEYLON GOVERNMENT LOCKS OUT WORKERS

One of the first acts of Ceylon's new "Centre-Left" coalition government was to lock out 3,000 workers at the central workshop of the nationalized transport board, which comes under Minister of Communications Anil Moonesinghe, a former Trotskyist. Before the coalition, a slow-down was in progress at the shop as part of a protest against unfair pay differentials. When the unrest culminated "in acts of indiscipline" such as the throwing of nuts and bolts, the government cracked down June 17. The move, said the Colombo correspondent of the London Times, indicated that the "coalition Government intends to be firm in labour disputes."

ANALYSIS OF THE SLFP-LSSP COALITION

By V. Karalasingham

[The efforts of Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike to alleviate the crisis which her government faces by bringing "Trotskyists" into her cabinet created a political sensation in Ceylon, occupying the headlines and many columns in the press day by day. The public interest extended to the intense struggle led by the left wing of the Lanka Sama Samaja against the proposal of the opportunist right-wing leaders to concede to the maneuvers of the government party. The June 5 Times of Ceylon, for instance, published an extensive summary of an analysis of the situation by V. Karalasingham, a member of the Central Committee of the LSSP and one of the leaders of the left wing. Written before the projected coalition was consummated, and circulated in the LSSP during the internal discussion, it indicates the views of the left wing who now constitute the Revolutionary Section of the LSSP. The following has been extracted from this summary.]

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Since the prorogation of parliament the heat of the controversy over the question of socialist participation in a coalition government under Mrs. Bandaranaike has generated so much heat as to lead to the virtual reduction to cinders of the much vaunted United Left Front. The present overtures of Mrs. Bandaranaike to the Left and the discreet feelers by the official leaders of the Left represent the first serious attempt to form a Centre-Left Coalition in Ceylon. Two capitalist parties having ruled the country alternatively since 1947, that the invitation to the Left should raise hopes in the broad masses that support it is not surprising. This first attempt to draw the main working-class party into governmental responsibility also leads to widespread illusions and in false hopes within and outside the Party.

The first need now is to understand the nature of coalitions. In his "Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution," Lenin has emphasized the two distinct methods of rule of the bourgeoisie. The first method is violence. The second method, best developed by the English and French bourgeoisie, is that of "deception, flattery, fine phrases, promises by the million, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential."

The method is what is described as Democracy. But this holds good only as long as the division of forces is in favour of the bourgeoisie. To maintain this balance there is on the opposing side, those leading the workers who "threaten, exhort, beseech, demand, and proclaim," similar to what the leadership of the LSSP has been doing when not trailing behind the masses.

When the class struggle develops, posing a threat to the bour-

geoisie, they resort to the tried and tested method of coalition government, i.e., a joint cabinet formed of members of the bourgeoisie and renegades from socialism. The real purpose of this offer of a coalition to the Left, in the words of Lenin, is to "FOOL, DIVIDE, AND WEAKEN THE WORKERS." There can be no bigger crime against the working class and the socialist movement than this, and Lenin brands those accomplices of the bourgeoisie who agree as renegades from Socialism.

The role of the Socialist participants in a coalition is simple -- that of whitewashing the bourgeois cabinet. They invariably prove to be "figureheads, puppets, screens for the capitalists, and an instrument for deceiving the workers."

This is the future that is in store for those who abandon the revolutionary movement for portfolios in the bourgeois government. The public utterances already made by the ministerial aspirants in the ranks of the Left are an ominous warning that even in Dhamma Deepa the propositions of Lenin hold good and true.

The first coalition government in Russia came when the bourgeois government was threatened by the workers during what is referred to in history as the "April Days." The bourgeois reply to the threat was to include six socialists in the cabinet. In Ceylon the genius of Mrs. Bandaranaike consists in her intelligent anticipation of impending events and the skill with which she is moving to forestall any possible mass movement hostile to her class and government. In the events since prorogation she has emerged as a true leader of her class -- displaying both foresight and breadth of vision, the essential attributes of leadership.

She is clearly not waiting for a Ceylon violation of the "April Days." She realises the benefit to her class in reaching agreements before the storm breaks. Her government has lost the mass support it enjoyed in July 1960. It shows a congenital incapacity to tackle pressing problems. Isolated but sustained working-class action has in different sectors (CTB, Port, Banks, Wellawatte Mills, etc.) been tackled in a "piecemeal" manner. The extra-parliamentary action of the masses in the North and East and working-class action has compelled the Government to resort to Emergency rule.

The success of the Government in handling the isolated working-class struggles had led the urban workers to respond to the idea of unified action. For the first time the organisations of the plantation workers, too, have joined in and the 21 demands have been drafted. The birth of the Joint Committee of Trade Unions has roused the working class from that earlier mood of dejection. The successful CMU strike of January this year has dealt a crushing blow to the Government. It is in this context that Mrs. Bandaranaike has made her moves for a coalition with the Left.

Her moves have a two-fold purpose. The main object is to

bring in the official leaders of the left into her government on her terms, to perform those duties they are especially hired to discharge; namely, "to fool, divide and weaken the workers."

Her other aim is to "discipline" the workers. Her public statements are frank on this point, despite the double talk of others. In her speech to the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom party] Executive Committee she said: "Disruptions, especially strikes and go-slows must be eliminated and the development of the country must proceed." Her answer to this was to dismiss the suggestions of dictatorship, bayonet rule, and national government made by her ministerial colleagues and to initiate talks with the leaders of the working class -- Mr. Philip Gunawardena and Dr. N.M. Perera.

However brimful may be the illusions of the "learned" leaders of the left, the housewife with a modest secondary school education who is now the Prime Minister is coldly and brutally realistic in her approach.

Whatever the academic limitations, a fifth generation Kandyan aristocrat must necessarily show a subtler and finer estimation of the measures necessary for the defence of property than upstart ministers, lobbyists of special capitalist interests and editorial hacks of the Lake House and Times.

There is no doubt that in the event of a coalition with the left being realised, in the initial period at any rate, mass sentiment would be with the new government. No less certain is the fact that even if the present negotiations prove abortive, the mass movement would be put back several stages. In either event, Mrs. Bandaranaike has the last laugh in the current negotiations.

What of the arguments being brought in support of a coalition with the SLFP? The first is the familiar theme that the coalition is an answer to the threat of the UNP [United National party, right-wing bourgeois party formerly in power]. There is no bigger lie than this. The certain way of guaranteeing the later triumph of the UNP or a more rightist formation is by coalescing with the SLFP. When the inevitable disillusionment with the Centre-Left coalition sets in, the very masses that enthusiastically supported it will turn away and look in the direction of those parties who had more consistently opposed it. If the revolutionary party of the Left is compromised by collaboration with the Centre government, the masses, not prone to fine distinctions, will tend to identify the hopelessness of their worsening economic conditions as much with the Left as with the SLFP.

What of an agreed programme? It is sought to safeguard the left by means of an agreed programme. When the development of the class struggle forces the bourgeoisie to seek understanding with the working class, it will agree to even the programme of the Socialist revolution. But such agreement will be just a scrap of paper. The

purpose of the bourgeoisie seeking agreement with the Left in the words of Trotsky is "in order to thus transform us into guarantors before the working class." In July 1960 the SLFP needed no guarantors. That is why the laboured courtship of it by the right wing of the LSSP produced nothing. In the final year of its bankrupt parliamentary life, the SLFP is in urgent need of guarantors -- hence the seeking of help from the Left.

Some seek power through more portfolios for the Left. In reality, more portfolios for the Left means more errand boys and menials for the bourgeoisie and nothing more. Wielding of power requires control of the police and Armed Forces -- the one ministry that Mrs. Bandaranaike will keep for herself.

Still others seek to bring about an "impure" revolution through coalition. To them the Russian Revolution is the pure ideal. That is not possible. Hence the need for an "impure" revolution. They forget that a revolution creates new organs of power vested in the working class. All that happens in a coalition is that certain new faces replace others in "Government" while the old machinery of "State" with its standing army, police and Bureaucracy continue as of old.

There are those who recall the setting up of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe in the post-war period through coalitions. They forget or ignore that the real power in those instances was the Red Army of the Soviet Union that occupied those countries. The military arm of the workers' state succeeded in altering the balance of class forces in favour of the working class. In Ceylon the state power remains with the bourgeoisie and the socialist ministers will be prisoners.

The question now emerges as to how the leadership of the LSSP, which voluntarily set itself the aim of leading the working class to power and overturning present society, suddenly finds itself on the verge of abject prostration before the very classes it sought to overthrow.

The first serious proposal of seeking a coalition with the bourgeoisie was mooted prior to the July 1960 general election. Thereafter held in abeyance, it is now being shamelessly flaunted publicly. This position was long implicit in the policies of the LSSP, particularly since the formation of the first Bandaranaike government in 1956. The LSSP's current bid to join the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike directly flows from the decision of the Party in 1956 to give "responsive co-operation" to the then SLFP government.

The official leadership of the Party, which was capable of fighting foreign imperialism and the UNP, was simply unequal to the task of standing up to a "democratic" capitalist government enjoying popular support. In fighting the imperialists and the UNP, wide

layers of the petty bourgeoisie gave the leadership tacit support, as they were themselves oppressed by the UNP and imperialism. The leadership saw no isolation from the masses of their social milieu. Hence this period saw the full flowering of their revolutionary activity, to which a socialist hue was given.

The official leadership of the Left stepped into the vacuum created by the desertion of the working class leadership by Mr. Goonesinghe in the thirties. Along with their anti-imperialism, their vague socialism made the leaderless working class hold them captive. In that captivity they even embraced Trotskyism, though it was only the conversion of a prisoner. But they were throughout struggling to break loose from the class that held them captive. This struggle became more desperate after 1948 with the emergence of the Nehrus, Aung Sans, Nkrumahs and Kenyattas. That is why under the test of the events of 1956, the LSSP leadership, as a revolutionary proletarian leadership, collapsed so ignobly. That was the grand opportunity for "freedom" from the working class that held them captive. They achieved this freedom under the formula of "responsive co-operation" to the first Bandaranaike. What has happened thereafter is their progressive assimilation into the politics of the SLFP. Now at last the "socialism" of the London School of Economics finds its proper resting place in the Cabinet of the "liberal" bourgeoisie.

AS BLINDLY AS A FORCE OF NATURE

On the eve of World War II, Leon Trotsky predicted that if the United States emerged victorious, as seemed likely, the resulting "peace" would prove to be highly unstable. The world's mightiest capitalist power would pour over the planet like an erupting volcano.

How accurate was Trotsky's prognosis! The facts leap daily from the pages of the press. A truly impressive example occurred in the past week in the New York Times.

The opening sentences of the lead editorial in the June 16 issue read: "The United States is coming to act more and more like Nature; it abhors a vacuum. When the British had to pull out of Greece in 1947, the United States moved in, and bolstered Turkey to boot. When the Communists conquered the mainland of China in 1949, it was the United States fleet and American arms that held Taiwan and saved the remnant of Nationalist China. When the French were driven out of Indochina in 1954, the United States filled the vacuum.

"And when the United Nations and NATO seemed unable to handle Cyprus, it was the United States again, in the last week, which moved in to fill the gap."

The title of this editorial was, appropriately enough, "Policeman to the World."

The very next day, on June 17, the State Department had to confess that American forces were involved in still another theater. "Civilian pilots" had flown combat missions in behalf of the Congolese government against the rebellious people in the eastern province of Kivu.

On June 19, the New York Times again came out with a lead editorial about this situation. The "civilians" operating in the Congo "are Cuban exiles," it said. "The connection between Cuban exiles and the Central Intelligence Agency has been uninterrupted since long before the Bay of Pigs invasion."

This editorial, which is entitled "Whose War in the Congo?" ended up by expressing concern over the withdrawal of UN troops from the Congo on June 27. "What happens afterward is something to worry about, but the cause for worry will be greater still if the United States should find itself blundering into an unsought role as policeman to fill still another vacuum, this time in Africa."

An "unsought role"? Or one assigned by "Nature"? -- the nature of imperialism, that is. . .

NEXT WEEK

A discussion on a difficult point in history -- and materialist dialectics -- by William F. Warde: "How Important Is the Individual in Making History?" With particular reference to the roles of Lenin and Trotsky.