

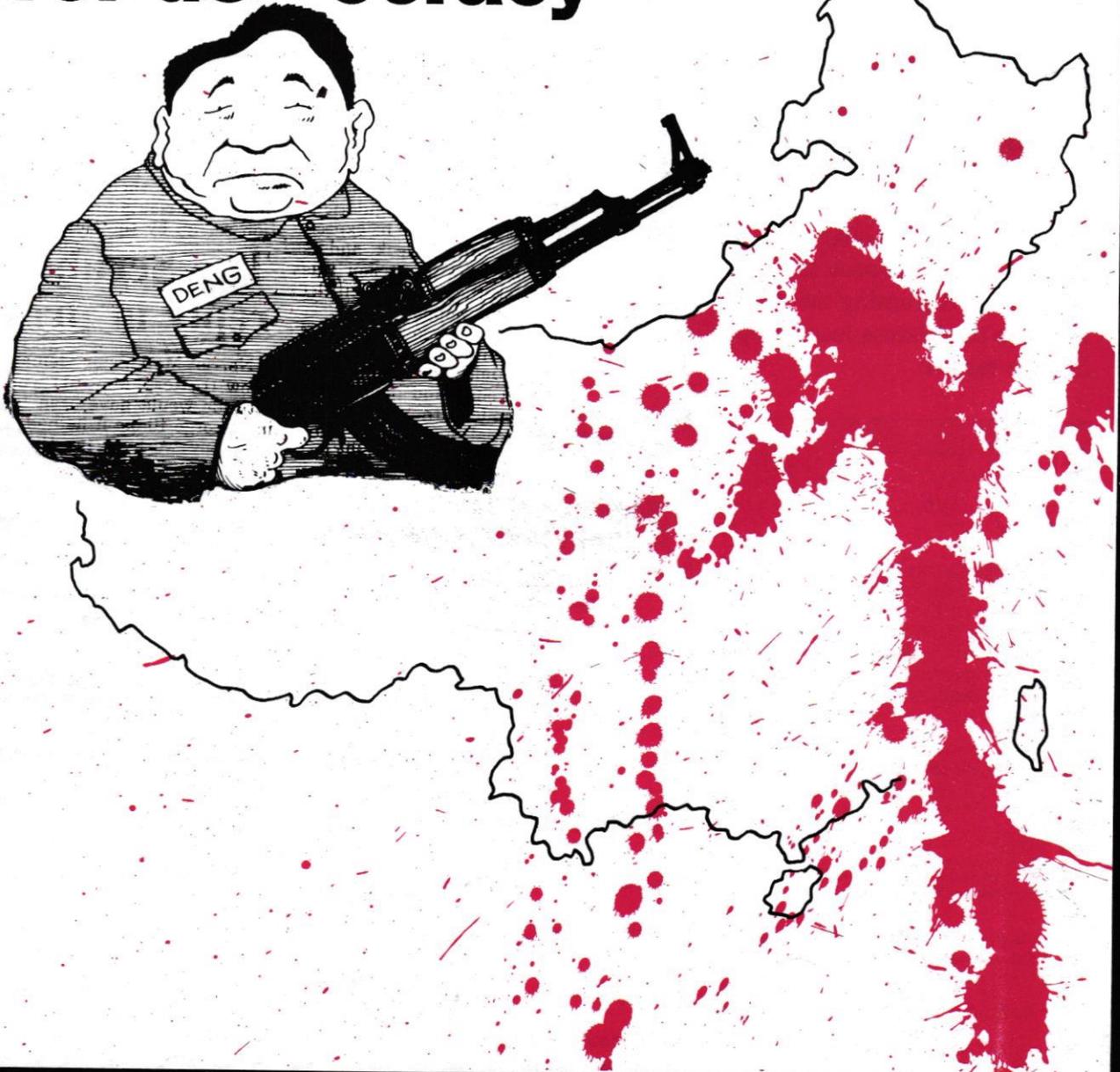
# International VIEWPOINT

Issue 165

June 12, 1989

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## Bloody baptism of workers' struggle for democracy



# Contents:

**CHINA 3**

THE CAUSES of the mass uprising and what is necessary for carry it forward. An article by Sinologist *Gregor Benton*, based on discussions with veteran Chinese Trotskyist *Wang Fanxi*

**PLUS: 5**

THE Chinese-Soviet reconciliation — *Livio Maitan* draws a balance sheet of 30 years of quarrels

● *Documents:*  
Key passages from the Sino-Soviet polemics

**POLAND 9**

AN UNHOLY alliance of the Church and the bureaucracy against women's right to choose.

*Zbigniew Kowalewski* describes how the protests of women are disrupting the deal between the Walesa leadership and the regime

**USSR 12**

WHAT has *perestroika* done for women? Interview with Soviet feminist sociologist *Olga Voronina*

**PERU 16**

*HUGO BLANCO* was freed from prison by widespread protests. In this interview he describes the growth of the mass movement and the regime's training of savage repressive forces

**SWEDEN 19**

IN MORE than three years the Swedish police have failed to come up with a credible suspect for the murder of premier Olof Palme. *Michael Jensen* follows the twisted trail of the official investigation

**PLUS: 21**  
THE government tries to punish Fourth Internationalist paper for discussing the possibility of police involvement in the murder — interview with *Gunnar Wall*

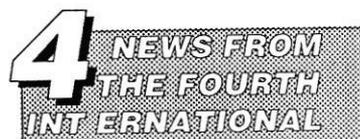
**SOUTH AFRICA 23**

IS the Pan Africanist Congress reemerging on the political scene? Interview with a PAC leader



**Around the World 26**

- South Africa ● Mexico
- Ireland ● USSR



**F I News 27**

IMPORTANT debate on the national question at congress of the Spanish-state section of the Fourth International — *Daniel Bensaid*

**CHINA 28**

Bureaucracy at bay bares its claws — *Gerry Foley*

## International VIEWPOINT

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## The Beijing Spring

- **April 17-20:** First student demonstrations commemorating Hu Yaobang: over 100,000 people in Tiananmen Square on April 19. First repression takes place.
- **April 21:** Students attempt to invade the Great Hall of the People.
- **April 22:** Hu Yaobang's funeral. In spite of a ban on demonstrations, students occupy Tiananmen Square. The movement takes off in other cities.
- **April 24:** Students boycott courses.
- **April 27:** 500,000 demonstrate in Beijing, with workers beginning to join the movement.
- **May 4:** 70th anniversary of the 1919 student demonstration; 300,000 demand a dialogue with the government and press freedom, with support from journalists (see IV 164). First big demonstrations in the rest of China.
- **May 5:** Zhao Ziyang comes out in favour of talks. Students start going back to their courses.
- **May 13:** Beginning of the hunger strike by 1,000 students in Tiananmen Square.
- **May 15:** Gorbachev arrives in Beijing. Tens of thousands of students occupy Tiananmen Square.
- **May 16:** Deng Xiaoping/Gorbachev talks. Gorbachev's itinerary changed because of demonstrations, now with a strong workers' presence.
- **May 17:** A million people march in Beijing demanding Premier Li Peng's resignation.
- **May 18:** Another million demonstrate.
- **May 19:** Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng meet with protestors. Hunger strike suspended. Li Peng calls on the army to restore order. Martial law proclaimed.
- **May 20/21:** Hundreds of thousands of inhabitants come out into Beijing's streets to stop any army intervention. Discussions between students and soldiers. 100,000 demonstrate in Shanghai, 300,000 in Nanking, 200,000 in Shenzhen.
- **May 21:** In the biggest march of its history, a million people in Hong Kong demonstrate in solidarity.
- **May 22:** Beijing still paralyzed with a million people still demonstrating. Solidarity demonstration in Macao.
- **May 25:** Army chiefs pledge allegiance to Li Peng. The struggle inside the CCP seems to be going in his favour. First signs of the movement flagging.
- **May 26:** Rumours that Zhao Ziyang is under house arrest.
- **May 27:** Student leaders announce that the movement will end on May 30, a decision that is not unanimous.
- **May 28:** 100,000 demonstrators in Beijing against threats of repression. Again, a million march in Hong Kong.
- **May 29:** A million people in Beijing erect a Statue of Democracy.
- **May 30:** Deng charges Zhao Ziyang with alleged "political crimes". First arrests of worker and student leaders.
- **May 31:** Press clampdown. Around 10,000 students pledge to continue occupation until June 20 National Peoples' Congress.
- **June 2-3:** People's Army moves in: thousands dead and wounded. ★

# China in revolution

**CHINA TODAY is in the throes of revolution. The crisis has even manifested some classic features of dual power. Protesters have taken over the centre of**

**Beijing, forcing Gorbachev and the Chinese party leaders to enter the Great Hall of the People by the back door, and they have usurped the functions of the police in large parts of the capital. The uprising has spread to all social classes, unlike past upsurges of dissent against the regime, which never succeeded in bringing large numbers of industrial workers out onto the streets.**

**This article by Gregor Benton was written after discussions with veteran Chinese Trotskyist Wang Fanxi, before the army clampdown and massacres. (See also article on page 28.)**

**E**VEN SO, the most likely outcome of the present turmoil is the continuation of the regime. Either through repression, in which case [premier] Li Peng and [supreme leader] Deng Xiaoping will stay in power. Or through negotiation with the protest movement, in which case a "reforming" section of the leadership will take power, grouped around party leaders Zhao Ziyang and Wan Li. The main reason why the revolution cannot yet overthrow bureaucratic rule in its entirety is because it lacks a strong leadership and a comprehensive political programme that could provide the basis for an alternative government.

George Bush in Washington, Lee Teng-hui in Taiwan and Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow have welcomed the protest movement for different reasons — Bush and Lee because they can paint it as a movement for capitalist restoration, and Gorbachev because he can present it as an expression of support for *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

But, at the same time, all three men are afraid of the crowds on the streets in China, for they cannot be sure what sort of power the turmoil will produce if it is allowed to run its full course. Gorbachev is worried that a similar movement might engulf Red Square if his own reforms begin to fail. Bush and Lee proclaim in public that the May events are a movement for "free enterprise", but they and their advisors must know that this may turn out to be wishful thinking.

There are three main causes of the present crisis, none of which can be construed as just a wish for capitalism. One is the great tide of corruption that has swept China since Deng started his reforms, and the increasingly intolerable burden that ordinary Chinese must shoulder as the corruption spreads and the reforms falter.

Deng's intention in the late 1970s, when he took power after the fall of the Maoist

"Gang of Four", was to create a class of prosperous businessmen as a cushion for his government. By "letting some people get rich first", he hoped to spur on the spirit of free enterprise as a way of accumulating wealth. But instead he has created a class of speculators and parasites who get rich not by honest business but by "hegemonizing the market" through the manipulation of party ties.

## Corruption, bribery and nepotism

China today has an economy that is midway between state control and the market. Two sorts of prices operate: fixed state prices, which are low, and high market prices. Party and government profiteers take advantage of the difference by buying goods cheap in the state sector and reselling them dear on the market.

Not all party members are in on this fraud, and not all government functionaries get the chance to milk the system. The corruption grows in proportion to the opportunity. It is greatest among relatives of leaders at the very top, such as the children of Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang, who are inheriting wealth and power in China like in an imperial dynasty. This is why most party members and officials, following the lead from below, back the protest against nepotism, bribery, corruption, and the outright theft of public goods. According to a recent survey, even before the present protests, 42% of Chinese saw corruption as the number one problem in Chinese society. Today, this view has spread to the overwhelming majority of people.

Popular anger and indignation run wide and deep in the country. Some leading intellectuals believe that the solution to the problem of corruption is to abolish the two-track system and introduce unqualified cap-

italism to China, in order to cut away the breeding ground for fraud. But there is no sign that the majority of younger protesters have completely lost faith in the socialist future. On the contrary, many young dissenters see capitalism and "complete Westernization" not as the way out but as the way in for greed and immorality. This is why they responded so warmly to Gorbachev, who seems to them to represent the possibility of reform and renewal within socialism.

## Democracy and national sovereignty

The second main cause of the ferment is the thirst for democracy. This is particularly great among students and intellectuals, but aspects of the struggle for democracy — in particular the demands for freedom of expression, press, assembly and strike — are also relevant to the wider movement, and are closely connected to the fight against privilege and corruption.

The third main cause of popular resentment is the evident growing indifference of the present regime to issues of national sovereignty. When Deng began his reforms, he said that by opening doors to the West, China could learn new methods of management and production, and sorely needed funds would flow in to help build and modernize China's industry. Seventy years ago, on May 4, 1919, a movement of radical students grew up to protest at Japan's claim to a part of Shandong province. Today, it seems to many Chinese that China's rulers are prepared to give away whole chunks of the country, especially on Hainan (an island-province nearly the size of Taiwan), parts of which are being leased to Japan for 80 years.

"What a loss of sovereignty," students told the *Guardian's* John Gittings, "when we used to make such a fuss about little scraps along our borders." So patriotic contempt for what is widely viewed as "slavish subordination" to Japan and the West is a second plank in the platform of the uprising. The open door is seen by party officials as a main chance to get rich by acting as modern-day compradors for the foreigners, especially the Japanese, who are past masters in the art of corrupting governments.

Today it is clear that Deng Xiaoping's reforms have failed. Already the government has instituted an economic freeze in an attempt — probably vain — to put a stop to inflation, now running at nearly 30%. Farmers unable to afford fertilizer and feed-grain at present inflated prices are producing less grain and slaughtering their pigs. Eighty million Chinese face severe food-shortages; 20 million face starvation. Fifty million people squeezed out of agriculture by the earlier rapid growth in rural productivity now constitute a new "floating class" that grabs what work it can in the cities: jobs to which urban workers are no longer prepared to stoop, mainly in building, transport and sanitation.

But now, with Deng's new freeze, these declassed farmers are being chased back to the villages, where they will find it hard to make ends meet. China under Mao knew starvation too, but in his day the gap between the great mass of people and the tiny handful of privileged was far less conspicuous than it is now.

If Zhao Ziyang emerges as the new strongman, there is no evidence that he can provide a fresh direction for the Chinese economy and society. He is not seen as a Gorbachev, charismatic and competent, and he is China's best-known nepotist. He has even been criticized in the Politburo for allowing his relatives to engage in profiteering. He pioneered the reforms that have now turned sour.

## Neither self-reliance nor the open door policy

For a time, Deng and Zhao's policies worked, and were popular. China's national income doubled in the decade of the reforms. People enjoyed more personal freedoms than ever before. But Deng and Zhao's problem was the opposite of Mao's. Mao created a China that was poor but largely equal (except at the very top, where people lived in fabulous luxury). Deng and Zhao have created a China that is less poor, and a littler freer, but outrageously unequal. Both strategies produce strains and tensions in Chinese society that can be contained for a few years, but will eventually explode in revolutions. (Mao was right when he said that China will need a new revolution once every few years.)

### The students' demands

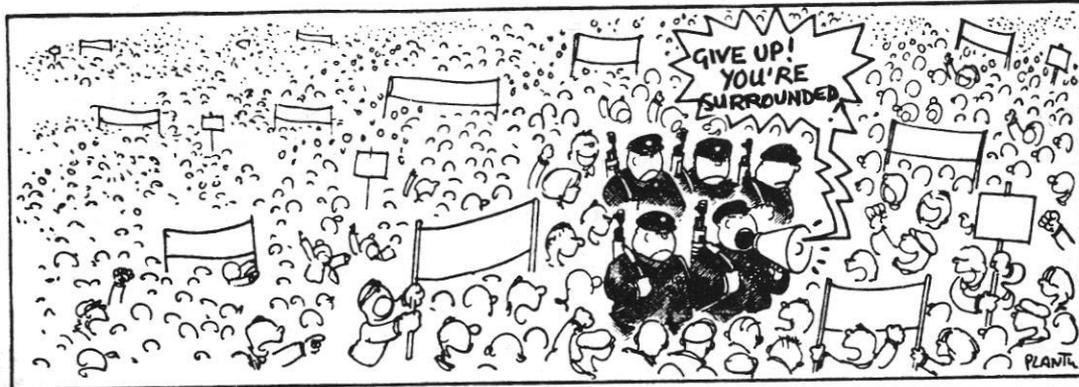
- 1 To reevaluate Hu Yaobang's contribution and approve his appreciation of the great harmony existing between democracy and freedom.
  - 2 To severely punish the thugs who attacked the students and the masses. Those responsible to present their apologies and compensation to the victims.
  - 3 To speed up the publication of the Law on the Press, authorize newspapers written by citizens and guarantee freedom of the press.
  - 4 State leaders must make public their incomes and inheritance, including those of their family, to the people and to the country as a whole. An inquiry to be held into corruption, with all the details published.
  - 5 State leaders implicated in policy errors concerning education should make an official self-criticism in front of the whole people. The education budget must be substantially increased, alongside teachers' wages.
  - 6 The campaign against "bourgeois liberalization" to be reevaluated, with total rehabilitation for those citizens who have suffered unwarranted injustices.
  - 7 We strongly demand that there is an impartial and truthful assessment of this democratic and patriotic movement. ★
- Students' Organizing Committee, Beijing University, April 21.  
(From *October Review*.)

Without a change in the international environment, the Chinese revolution is doomed to pass at regular intervals into crisis. When Mao took power, he told the world that China would create socialism on its own terms, and after the split with Moscow he repeated Stalin's dictum that socialism is possible in one country. Today, with China beginning to throw itself open to the world like India or the Philippines, many people look back nostalgically on Mao's era of self-reliance (though they also remember the crushing poverty, the terror, and the atrocities of the Cultural Revolution). But China's revolutionary socialists believe that neither self-reliance nor the open door can solve China's basic dilemma, which is that socialism can only prosper on a world scale.

The strategy of revolutionary socialists in China consists of four main thrusts. First, to fight alongside the workers and students against all top bureaucrats, and to discourage illusions in any of the present leaders. Second, to fight for socialist democracy. Third, to fight against any attempt to

restore capitalism in China. And fourthly, to fight for independent organizations of the students, workers and soldiers, with a view to uniting them in one body.

As the struggle against bureaucratic rule develops, this body would form the basis for a new, independent National People's Congress, democratically accountable to the Chinese people. ★



# Sino-Soviet relations: A new entente after thirty years of quarrels

THE REVOLUTIONARY mobilization of the Chinese students overshadowed another historic event — the meeting between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and the leaders of the

Chinese People's Republic, which marked the end of the conflict that started at the end of the 1950s. In view of the very serious economic and political problems confronting both regimes, an agreement is in the interests of both Moscow and Beijing.

Furthermore, this reconciliation is certain to have important international repercussions. But at a time when the "victorious march towards socialism" and the "intransigent struggle against the paper tiger of imperialism" has given way to "liberal reforms", *perestroika* and "market economy", it is interesting to review the roots of this conflict and look again at the basic themes in the Sino-Soviet polemics of the 1960s and 1970s, which led to a deep split in the world communist movement.

LIVIO MAITAN

THE DIFFERENCES between the Chinese and Soviet leaderships first emerged in 1957, at the time of the Conference of Communist Parties in Moscow. They sharpened in the following years, culminating in a total break in relations in 1963-64. After that, the polemics continued unabated, but the criticisms raised by the Chinese leadership, even before Mao's death, began to develop in a new direction.

At the beginning the Chinese criticized the Soviets on four main points — the conception of peaceful coexistence, the consequences of a future war, the attitude towards the anti-colonial revolution and the



conception of the peaceful and parliamentary road to socialism. Starting from its 20th congress in 1956 the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) put forward the idea of the "non-inevitability" of war. Subsequently, more and more stress was put on peaceful coexistence, and Khrushchev in particular theorized the possibility of a compromise with American imperialism. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), while not rejecting the coexistence, insisted on the idea that war is inherent in capitalism and that imperialism had not changed, and could not change, its nature.

In fact American imperialism had not

## Disagreement over "peaceful road"

Thirdly, the Chinese accused the Soviets of sacrificing active support for the colonial revolution on the altar of detente. This divergence expressed itself, for example, in their respective attitudes towards the Algerian revolution. While China recognized the provisional government, the USSR did not, and expressed its support for the policy pursued by General de Gaulle. What is more, the Chinese, unlike the Soviets, made criticisms of certain leaders of the national bourgeoisie and, on the theoretical level, defended the idea of the uninterrupted revolution, referring to Lenin.

It is true that they sometimes they combined the "uninterrupted revolution" and revolution by stages. Nonetheless, they most often put the emphasis on the action of the working class and peasant masses, independent of bourgeois leaderships, and, in some cases, even against them.

The fourth difference was that the Chinese expressed their disagreement with the idea adopted by the CPSU after 1956 of the possibility of a peaceful and parliamentary road to socialism. The most systematic presentation of this critique appeared in December 1962 in an article attacking the

opportunist policies of Palmiro Togliatti, the leader of the Italian Communist Party at that time.

As the polemic developed and became increasingly bitter, despite some periods of temporary calm, the Chinese came to put forward new themes, and the conflict became increasingly one between two states in areas of major importance. From the summer of 1960 the Soviet Union began pulling out its experts, and moved towards breaking off economic relations, which could only be extremely harmful to China. This went hand in hand with polemics on different economic alternatives. The Soviet Union criticized the idea of the Maoist leadership that China could rely on its own forces, and extolled the international division of labour in the "socialist camp".

### A "nuclear shield" for the whole "socialist camp"

In fact, while the Chinese were by no means free from autarchic errors, it is also true that Moscow demanded that the development of other "socialist" countries, including China, be subordinated to its own needs. In 1963 a polemic broke out concerning the signing of the Moscow Treaty on the halting of nuclear testing in the atmosphere, at sea and in space, with China refusing to sign. It should be added that an unwritten clause of this treaty involved an undertaking by the Soviet Union not to deliver nuclear arms and secrets to China. This was a violation of the agreement between China and the USSR made in 1957.

Moscow's argument, which was repeated by its partisans throughout the world, was that the USSR was the nuclear shield for the whole of the "socialist camp". The Chinese rejected this "theory," which implied recognition of the hegemony of Moscow over all workers states and thus the power of the Soviet bureaucracy to take all the major decisions by itself.

From here on, things escalated, even involving the relations between the two states. The culminating point came in March 1969, when border incidents on the Ossuri river led to armed confrontations between these two erstwhile "brother" countries.

Quite quickly, thanks as much to the prestige of a recent revolution as to growing doubts about Moscow's policies, the Chinese positions won a very broad audience in the ranks of certain Communist parties and anti-imperialist movements.

In the first period of the conflict, the Chinese Communist Party was supported by the most important Asian Communist parties (in Vietnam, North Korea, Indonesia, Japan, and by the left CP in India, where a split took place). In Eastern Europe, the Albanian CP took the Beijing line for a period, before adopting an independent position, condemning both Soviet

and Chinese "revisionism".

The other Eastern European parties, with the obvious exception of Yugoslavia, took the Moscow line, along with the overwhelming majority of the other Communist parties in capitalist Europe and Latin America (the Cuban CP has always been a distinct current). Splits took place in some countries — the most important in capitalist Europe was in Belgium. Aside from this small groups adhering to Maoism were formed, but they did not gain any real influence.

Maoist movements and organization — usually without official ties with Beijing — were formed, above all at the end of the 1960s, under the influence of the "cultural revolution" (in Italy, the Spanish state, Portugal, West Germany, Peru, Colombia, Morocco, Turkey and so on). For years, Maoism had a direct and considerable influence on other Asian CPs apart from those already mentioned, such as the Thai CP and the Philippine CP. Even today, Maoism retains an influence, even if much reduced, on certain currents.

At the time, our movement expressed its agreement with a series of criticisms made by the Chinese, without toning down our fundamental differences with them, as we tried to get to grips with the real reasons behind the conflict. The conflict was never one between bureaucrats and revolutionaries. It was a conflict between two bureaucratic leaderships, with different origins and which found themselves in different situations.

### Finding a *modus vivendi* with imperialism

On the Soviet side the bureaucratic layer had had decades to consolidate its position, it enjoyed great power status and had achieved an economic level incomparably higher than China. Its main interests were to find a *modus vivendi* with imperialism that would enable it to avoid dangerous explosions at the international level, somewhat reduce military costs and make economic concessions to the masses at home.

It directed its foreign aid efforts towards the national bourgeoisies of the Third World, even at the expense of China. It envisaged competition with the capitalist countries as an economic competition. In those optimistic times it talked of catching up and overtaking the most industrialized countries in 15 or 20 years. This perspective was the core of Khrushchevism.

The Chinese leaders, whose power was the product of a very recent revolution, stood at the head of an economically very backward state. They were subject to many threats, attacks and forms of pressure from imperialism, which had not yet resigned itself to accepting the historic fact of the Chinese revolution. There was no way they could reasonably put their money on victory in economic competition in the short term.

They decided therefore that their best defence would be the eruption of other revolutionary struggles, above all in the countries under imperialist domination. Furthermore, China, however backward, was too powerful to accept Moscow's hegemony without baulking, just as, at crucial moments during their revolution, they did not follow Stalin's advice when he suggested to Mao that he hold back from launching the struggle for power and look for a compromise with the Kuomintang.

### USSR characterized as "social-imperialist"

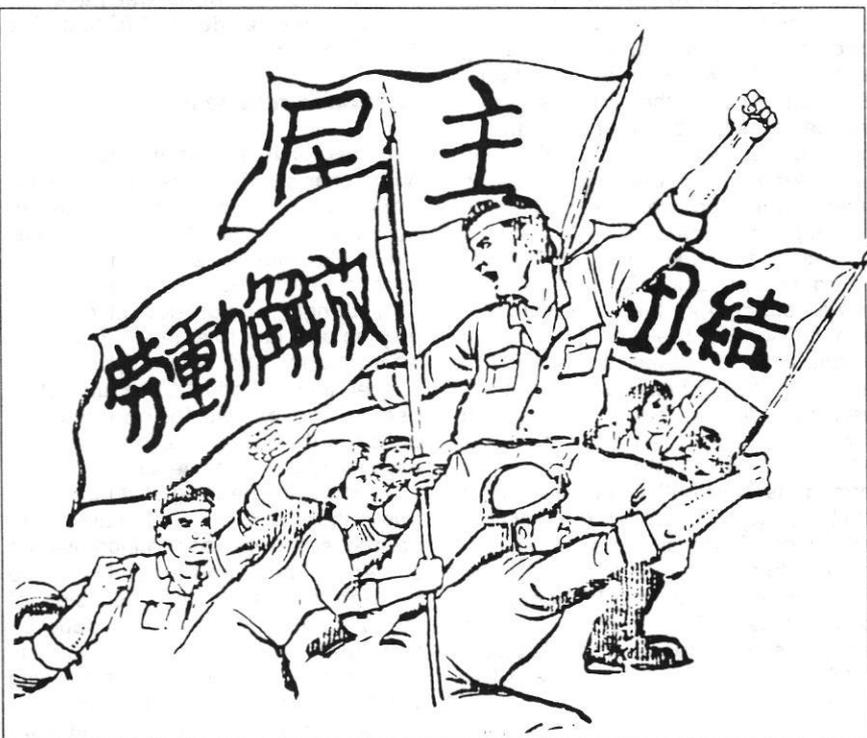
Throughout the "cultural revolution" (1966-69), the CCP intensified its attacks on the CPSU. From then on, the leitmotif was not only that of the revisionism of Moscow's ideology and political orientation. Now, the Soviet leaders were accused of having restored capitalism in the USSR, which was henceforth characterized as a "social-imperialist" country.

The start of the 1970s saw a turn in the direction of Chinese foreign policy. Under the pressure of its efforts to crush the struggle of the Vietnamese people by a barbarous war, the imperialist leadership of the United States made a wrenching turn in its Asia policy. An essential aspect of that revision was the recognition of the accomplished fact of the Chinese revolution and thus the establishment of normal relations with Beijing, hoping, among other things, to make the most of the Sino-Soviet conflict. President Nixon's visit to China was the most spectacular expression of this "new course".

Even before that visit, the Chinese leaders openly supported the Pakistani dictators, Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan, who suppressed every popular movement, and they refused any solidarity to the independence struggle of the people of Bangladesh. They also supported the government of Sri Lanka, at a time when it was massacring thousands of young rebels. At the same time they had praised the bourgeois governments of Western Europe on the grounds that the Common Market was an instrument of opposition to American imperialism. The turnaround in Washington pushed them further in the same direction.

The ideological outcome of this evolution was the adoption of the "three worlds" theory. This theory was first sketched out by Mao himself in 1974 and was given a more systematic form in 1977. According to this theory, it was no longer useful to counterpose the category of the "socialist camp" to that of the capitalist camp. It had become necessary to recognize the new global reality, that of the emergence of three worlds — the "imperialist superpowers", the USSR and the United States; the socialist countries and the nations oppressed by imperialism (the camp in which China belonged); and those under-

# CCP vs CPSU: Polemic and counter-polemic



developed countries which found themselves between the two.

It was also necessary to make a distinction between the two superpowers. It was the Soviet Union that was "the most ferocious imperialism and the most dangerous source of world war." This justified all the overtures made by Beijing towards the United States and the capitalist countries of Western Europe, which were also threatened in the first place by "Soviet social imperialism". It followed that the struggle against war was to be conducted by a united front of the "socialist countries", of the world proletariat, the "third world" countries, and those of the "second world", while rejecting any "appeasement" of Moscow's "social-imperialism".

## Political twists and turns of the bureaucracy

This Chinese turnaround gave rise to a series of positions that were completely counter to the interests of the workers' and anti-imperialist movement in various regions of the world. Let us recall some examples:

● After General Pinochet's coup d'état in Chile in September 1973, the Chinese leaders, rather than joining in the interna-

tional protests, hurried to exploit the margins for manoeuvre that they thought the fall of Salvador Allende offered for weakening the position of the principal enemy, the USSR.

● They did not hesitate to support General Numeiri when he massacred trade unionists and Communists in Sudan.

● They maintained friendly relations with the Shah of Iran.

● They flirted with conservative, not to say reactionary, bourgeois politicians of the "second world" such as the Italian Fanfani, Sá Carneiro in Portugal or Strauss in West Germany.

What is more, the Chinese leadership were extremely cautious with regard to big mass struggles in countries such as Italy or the Spanish state. In 1975, when the revolutionary wave was at its highest point in Portugal, it was busy denouncing the supposed manoeuvres of Soviet social imperialism in that country!

Only a decade later all these "theories" of the 1970s were explicitly abandoned and the Soviet Union was once more a "socialist" country. This confirmed that the sole function of the "theories" put forward successively by the bureaucratic leaderships was to justify, after the fact, the political twists and turns of the ruling bureaucracy. ★

IT WOULD BE tedious to reproduce in full the thousands of pages of polemics, letters and invective between the two "fraternal" parties in the three decades of the Sino-Soviet dispute. Below we are republishing just some of the quotations summarizing the positions of the two Communist parties on the principal points of disagreement.

## DOCUMENTS

### Peaceful coexistence

"THE SOVIET UNION and all the socialist countries have opened up for humanity the road for a social development without war on the basis of peaceful collaboration. The conflict between the two systems must and can be resolved by peaceful means.... Coexistence is something real, flowing from the existing world situation of human society.... Several well-known personalities, and in the first place President Eisenhower, want to find ways of reinforcing peace." (*USSR: N. Khrushchev, speech to the Supreme Soviet, October 31, 1959.*)

★★★

"LENIN taught us that in the imperialist epoch, the source of war is the imperialist system. Imperialist war is the continuation of its policies of aggression and enslavement. In times of peace, the exploitation and oppression by the imperialists of their own peoples, and their domination and pillage of the colonies and semi-colonies and the rivalry between the monopoly capitalists of different countries lead to new wars. For the imperialists peace is no more than an interval between two wars. They make use of the interval to build up their armaments and prepare for the next war. Recently, certain representative figures in the leading group in the United States have been making noises about peace and are posing as pacifists. But numerous facts show that, while juggling with peace, Eisenhower and his group have been making active preparations for war. They have never renounced their policy of war.

"The peace desired by American imperialism is a peaceful domination of the globe by the United States. Neither

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Eisenhower today nor Dulles [Eisenhower's secretary of state] in the past made any attempt to hide the real meaning of their so-called 'peace with justice'. The object of this peace is to eliminate socialism, to prevent revolution, and to force the peoples of the world to submit to oppression and exploitation by the American monopoly capitalists." (*China: The Red Flag, April 1, 1960.*)

### The "uninterrupted revolution"

"LENIN brilliantly applied and developed the Marxist idea of an uninterrupted revolution, considering it a fundamental guiding principle of the proletarian revolution. Lenin explained that the proletariat must win leadership of the bourgeois democratic revolution and without interruption transform the bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. Lenin later specified that the socialist revolution is not the final goal, and that it was necessary to continue to advance in order to accomplish the transition to the higher stage of communism." (*China: Lu Ting-Yi, Hsinhua News Agency, April 23, 1960.*)

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"THE PROLETARIAT must unite with the bourgeoisie in its support to national movements, but must firmly oppose its compromises, capitulations and opposition to the revolution and to the people. Measures must be taken to prevent the national bourgeoisie from monopolizing the results of revolution and establishing a bourgeois dictatorship. The national struggle and the class struggle are reciprocally connected in the oppressed nations. It is only when the national struggle ends in victory that it is possible to speak of liberation for the oppressed classes, and it is only when the struggle of the oppressed classes is a reality that a thoroughgoing national liberation is possible.

"That is why the proletariat of the oppressed nationalities must not only play an active role in the national liberation movement, but also stand in the front line in the struggle and seek to become the leading force. The proletariat must oppose the installation of a bourgeois dictatorship, exert itself to form a democratic popular dictatorship, lead the revolution in a way that leads to socialism and completely suppresses national and class inequality." (*China: The People's Daily, July 25, 1963.*)

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8 "IN THEIR discussions with the delegations of the Communist parties in the liberated countries, and in their

speeches and comments at international conferences, the Chinese representatives speak only of the need to launch the armed struggle in these countries.... The Marxist-Leninists have always supported armed uprisings against the colonialist overlords and against tyrannies. They have always supported the wars of liberation of the oppressed peoples and will continue to do so. But they are always opposed to a schematic tactic based on the use of one form of struggle, without taking account of the concrete conditions. Such a tactic is all the more disastrous in the present situation in that in numerous countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America national governments have come to power that pursue an anti-imperialist line.

"In such a situation, it is doubly damaging to put forward the slogan of armed struggle as the universal solution. It disorients the national liberation forces and holds them back from the struggle against imperialism. Is it not senseless to say that the task facing the workers of Algeria, of Ghana, of Mali and certain other countries is armed insurrection? The final result of such a policy is to support the reactionaries who wish to overturn the governments that exist in these countries. Furthermore the attempt to realize this objective can only do harm in countries such as Indonesia and Ceylon." (*USSR: Suslov in Pravda, April 3, 1964.*)

### The peaceful road

"WE MUST participate in parliamentary struggles, but without any illusions in the bourgeois parliamentary system. Why? Because as long as the state machine of the bourgeois warlords and bureaucrats remains in place, parliament will always be a mere decoration on the bourgeois dictatorship, even if the party of the working class has a parliamentary majority or becomes the strongest party in parliament.

"While the bourgeois state machine exists, the bourgeoisie is able at any moment, according to its interests, to dissolve parliament if necessary, or to use various open or hidden means to put a workers' party which is the majority in parliament into a minority, or to ensure that it has fewer seats even when it has won more votes than ever before.

"This is why it is difficult to imagine that in a bourgeois dictatorship real

changes can result from votes in parliament and it is equally difficult for the proletariat to get measures adopted in parliament which will permit the peaceful transition to socialism, simply by obtaining a certain number of votes. Experiences in several capitalist countries over a long period have proved this completely, and experiences of various countries in Europe and Asia after the second world war have furnished further evidence." (*China: The Red Flag, 1960.*)

### Economic relations

"EVERYONE knows that to rely on one's own strength does not mean a closed-door policy, nor a refusal to accept outside aid. Nevertheless, during its revolution and construction, each country must rely chiefly on its own strength, and outside aid can only play an auxiliary role. In any case, the international division of labour and cooperation in production should not be used as an excuse for opposing the principle of self-reliance. This is not the essence of the controversy.

"Those who speak against us are not true adherents of internationalism, nor do they sincerely hope to increase the power of the whole socialist camp through an international division of labour and cooperation in production that meets the needs of each country to their mutual advantage. This is being used as a cover for what they are doing, which is to seek their own advantage to the detriment of others. It is a characteristic way of organizing the relations between socialist states in order to impede the efforts made by economically under-developed socialist countries to develop an independent national economy and render these countries economically dependent on them and place them under their political control." (*China: Hsinhua News Agency, September 18, 1963.*)

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"THE VICTORY of the USSR in economic competition with the United States and the complete victory of the socialist system over the capitalist system will mark a turning point in history, which will exercise an ever more revolutionary influence on the workers' movement of the whole world.

"It will then be clear even to the most indecisive, that only socialism can ensure everything that is necessary to man for a happy life and they will make their choice in favour of socialism. To gain time in the economic competition with capitalism — that is the important thing today." (*USSR: Khrushchev's report to the Conference of 81 Communist Parties, Problems of Peace and Socialism, January 1961.*) ★



# “Will the monks adopt abandoned babies?”

“ABORTION TIME-BOMB ticks away in Poland”. This was the title of a report from Warsaw by Christopher Bobinski which recently appeared in the *Financial Times*. According to Bobinski, “Poland’s liberal abortion laws and attempts to overturn them are emerging as potentially one of the most divisive issues in the country’s unprecedented parliamentary election campaign, in which Solidarnosc will be seeking to demonstrate its hold on the nation’s loyalties....[This] could conceivably provide a trigger for a women’s rights movement extending beyond its traditional constituency of the intelligentsia to the shopfloor.

“The politicians now at the head of Solidarnosc become tense and they lower their voices when the subject is mentioned. The government, too, is keeping its head down on the issue....Both sides of the political establishment know that, were the issue to be allowed to get out of control, it could even threaten the present political alignment in which Solidarnosc, backed by the Church, faces the authorities in an uneasy balance.”<sup>1</sup>

ZBIGNIEW KOWALEWSKI

**T**HE LEADERS of the Polish Socialist Party-Democratic Revolution (PPS-RD) have compared the recent round-table to the negotiations between Lassalle and Bismarck or the Moncloa Pact in Spain. The people around Lech Walesa state quite openly that what is involved will play a role similar to that of the Spanish pact. The character of this “national understanding” becomes clearer when we remember that the Catholic hierarchy considers it as an historic opportunity to “make Christian morality the basis of the social order”, and specifically to bring the “divine law” to bear on their old enemy, the abortion law of April 1956, which guarantees women the right to free abortion on demand.

First, a group of experts on the family from the Episcopate worked out a draft for a law “for the legal protection of the rights of the unborn child”. Then this draft was brought before the Sejm [Polish parliament] on the initiative of the parliamentary group of the Polish Catholic Social Union (PZKS) with the support of 76 deputies (six of whom were women) from every part of the “governmental coalition”: the Polish United Workers’ Party (PZPR — the Communist Party); its two satellite parties (Peasant and Democratic Parties); and the three Catholic groups. All had the support of Jan Dobraczynski, the discredited pro-Stalinist veteran of the Catholic extreme

right and president of the Patriotic Movement for National Renewal (PRON), a puppet institution of the Jaruzelski regime.

The Polish press agency, PAP, was in no hurry to publicize this project. It was not announced until the end of February 1989 in a very general and discreet manner, with the comment, “This is a fundamental question for the national entente”.<sup>2</sup> It passed over in silence the fact that the draft proposes that “a person who causes the death of an unborn child” — that is, the woman who decides to terminate her pregnancy and the doctor who performs the operation — “will be liable to a punishment of up to three years imprisonment”.<sup>3</sup>

## “It is a question of divine law”

On March 9 the Episcopal conference declared that it had “taken note of the efforts of various social circles to preserve the right to life of every human being from the moment of conception” and stipulated that this “guarantee must have a constitutional status”.<sup>4</sup> In a subsequent communiqué, dated May 2, the Episcopate stated: “It is a question of divine law, expressed in the commandment ‘thou shalt not kill’, and inscribed in the juridical conscience of each human being. The divine law cannot be abrogated, nor is it possible to establish



norms which contradict it....The bishops note with sadness that opinions contrary not only to the divine law, but to the national interest, properly understood, are being heard in Poland”.<sup>5</sup>

## Ideological terrorism of Church institutions

The official women’s weekly, *Kobieta i Zycie*, only took up this issue after its office was literally inundated with letters from its readers five weeks after the PAP communiqué and three weeks after the journal of the PAX association — Dobraczynski’s political group — divulged the details of the project. Surprising slowness! Meanwhile, the propaganda campaign was in full swing in the churches. During mass the priests called on the faithful to sign the petitions against the 1956 law, and various agitators did not hesitate to proclaim that those who refused to sign were “bad Christians, bad Poles and enemies of human rights”.

The social institutions attached to the Church that work among women, the working class and in other social circles employed ideological terrorism, demanding the “replacement of the phrase ‘termination of pregnancy’ — used by the mass media, the health service and in everyday language up until now — by ‘the murder of the unborn child’”.<sup>6</sup>

The model of bureaucratic rule in Poland is at present undergoing a fundamental change. All the previous metamorphoses have been accompanied by attacks on the rights of women acquired during the first period of the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy, in the years of anti-capitalist transformations and industrialization.

In the 1960s under Gomulka, full employment became in fact a privilege of the male workforce, with the female labour force serving as a reserve. Chronic unemployment among women reappeared and and job discrimination was reintroduced. In the 1970s, in Gierek’s time, flexible work-

1. *Financial Times*, May 11, 1989.
2. *Zycie Warszawy*, February 28, 1989.
3. *Slowo Powszechne*, March 10-12, 1989.
4. *Tygodnik Powszechny*, March 19, 1989.
5. *Tygodnik Powszechny*, May 14, 1989.
6. *Kobieta i Zycie*, April 5, 1989.

ing was imposed for women and ideological campaigns in favour of a very conservative model of the "socialist family", along with a conception of the role of women close to that of the Church, were introduced.<sup>7</sup>

### Tyrannizing large areas of social life

Women comprise 43% of wage earners and 37% of the industrial labour force. The double oppression that they face, and the weight of the crisis that falls first on their shoulders makes women a potentially explosive force, escaping the control not only of the bureaucracy, but also of Walesa and the Solidarnosc apparatus that he controls. The basis of the "national entente" is the desire of the two partners to suppress such a potential from whichever direction it may come. The criminalization of abortion would be a powerful means for disciplining a large part of the working class and youth. It would make possible "the tyrannizing of large areas of social life" as it was expressed by peace activist Grzegorz Francuz in an article entitled "The Inquisition", which appeared in a PPS-RD journal.<sup>8</sup>

In Poland abortion is a mass phenomenon. There are 700,000 abortions every year, according to the official press.<sup>9</sup> According to the Church it could be even more than a million. It is estimated that one in five married women have had an abortion at some time in their lives. Some 62% of terminations are performed on women under 25. Why? At the last congress of the Polish Association of Gynaecologists, the results of a survey of women in the Wrocław and Lublin regions were presented. It seems that only one woman in 101 uses the pill and only one in 114 an IUD, but that one in every ten has had an abortion.<sup>10</sup> It is the Catholic Church that bears the primary responsibility for this massive recourse to abortion. The Church uses its considerable ideological influence to make systematic propaganda against contraception in a situation where there is no ideological institution, organization or force able to counter the ecclesiastical apparatuses' "sexual education" of the masses, and especially of women.

In September 1987, for the first time in the history of Poland a textbook on "preparation for family life" dealing with sexual life was introduced in secondary schools. The school students snatched it up. The career of this textbook lasted for two months. Philistines of every hue, inspired by the Church, launched a hysterical campaign, accusing the authors of depraving Polish youth by "inciting them to make love". Apparently, "a sexually excited Polish youth cannot be a hope of the fatherland"! The journal of Dobraczynski's group described the book as "a manual of masturbation and defloration", and thundered against this "irresponsible publishing

blunder". Dobraczynski himself demanded that those responsible for authorizing such a publication should be denounced and measures taken against them by the state authorities.<sup>11</sup> The affair ended with the shameful capitulation of the education minister. A commission of experts, named by the minister decided that the book should not be used in schools.

The ruling bureaucracy also carries a big responsibility for the massive resort to abortion in Poland. The editors of *Kobieta i Zycie* write: "It is easier to learn from another woman at work that the pill makes you fat or makes hair grow all over your body than to find a serious leaflet or booklet. It is not only that contraception is not promoted on a mass scale. We do not even have the means of contraception themselves. Good ones that is! The Yugoslav pill, Patentex-Oval, the contraceptive most sought after by both teenage and adult women because it is the least harmful and is sold without prescription, appears occasionally in our pharmacies, although many doctors think that it should be available in every kiosk and drugstore. Instead of this, it goes up in price continually — a little while ago it cost 400 zlotys, now it costs more than 1,000."

### "What is the point of condoms that split?"

It is true that there are IUDs to be found in the cupboards of the pharmacies, but not many women buy them, for there is no information about them. The manufacturer does not have the money for publicity and the Ministry of Health claims that it does not have the paper to print booklets and leaflets promoting IUDs or other forms of contraception. Diaphragms can no longer be found because in 1983 the Ministry of Health decided that Poles had no need of them. As for condoms, they were recently tested by the Association for Family Development: "It appears that things are much better today than they were ten years ago, since only one sample in three failed the tests. What is the point of producing condoms that split? They are no use even as balloons!"<sup>12</sup>

So much for contraception Polish-style. Under the ideological domination of the Church and the economic management of the bureaucracy, abortion remains the main means of contraception.

The partners at the round-table claim to represent all the forces and milieus of Polish society. Among the 58 participants at the round-table there were...two women. Edmund Osmanczyk, candidate for Senate, considers that the victory of the "constructive opposition" (in the framework of the 35% democracy) depends above all in mobilizing the women's vote. "In the street, in the shops, on public transport, women — tired, care-worn, the most deeply affected by the collapse of civilization in their own country and household — catch

the eye. That is why they will be the decisive factor in the elections."<sup>13</sup>

Only 8% of the candidates on the list drawn up by the National Civic Committee of Solidarnosc are women. There are no women workers at all, which is no surprise, since only 4% of the Committee's candidates are workers, although formally the Committee is based on the Solidarnosc trade union! In the outgoing Sejm, chosen by the bureaucracy, women make up 20% of the deputies.

The people around Lech Walesa have taken to identifying themselves with something they vaguely describe as the "best traditions of Polish democracy". Looked at objectively, one of the best of these traditions is certainly that of the struggle waged in the 1930s by the renowned liberal intellectual Tadeusz Boy-Zelenski, against laws that made a mockery of a woman's right to choose. He did not hesitate to call this "the greatest crime perpetrated by the penal code". What attitude does the Civic Committee take on the new attack on women's rights prepared by the Sejm? After a long silence, the spokesperson of the Committee, Janusz Onyszkiewicz replied on May 10: "This question is not a part of our electoral programme. Candidates can put forward their own positions or say nothing".<sup>14</sup>

This is no surprise. A number of the Committee members are known for their conservative positions in general, and towards relations between the sexes and the status of women in particular. These include open opponents of the right to abortion, among them Father Jacek Salij, the standard-bearer of the ecclesiastical campaign against the 1956 law.

### A strange idea of the secular state

The picture is the same among the Civic Committee's parliamentary candidates. For example, the Catholic intellectual Jozefa Hannelowa, a candidate for the Sejm, is an active supporter of the proposed law. She washes her hands of the issue of the imprisonment of women who have abortions. "It is not the job of the Church or of believers to obtain respect for the divine commandments through penalties inflicted by the secular arm. It is the job of the secular authorities themselves to decide at this level".<sup>15</sup> In a few days, Hannelowa herself might be in parliament and therefore part of the "secular arm", whose function is supposed to be to make such decisions.

7. See also the article by Jacqueline Heinen in Alisa Del Re (ed), *Stato e rapporti sociali di sesso*, Franco Angeli Libri, Milano 1989.

8. *Nasz Przegląd*, May 14, 1989.

9. *Zycie Warszawy*, April 22-23, 1989.

10. *Kobieta i Zycie*, December 14, 1988.

11. *Polityka*, November 7, 1987.

12. *Kobieta i Zycie*, December 14, 1988 and April 26, 1989.

13. *Tygodnik Powszechny*, April 9, 1989.

14. *Zycie Warszawy*, May 11, 1989.

15. *Tygodnik Powszechny*, April 30, 1989.

Episcopal councillors and members of various pastoral councils, committees and institutions make up 7% of the Civic Committee electoral list. At their head is Władysław Findeisen, president of the Social Council of the Primate of Poland. Some 13% of the other candidates are activists in the Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs. The list also includes candidates representing the "national democratic" right.<sup>16</sup> It is thus possible to predict that deputies and senators elected under the banner of Solidarnosc will significantly reinforce the anti-abortion faction in the new parliament. It is important to note that during the 1980-81 revolution, there was no significant challenge to the 1956 law either from the base or the leadership of Solidarnosc, although the majority of its members were Catholic workers.

The ruling bureaucracy has meanwhile been fishing in the troubled waters of the anti-abortion campaign. On the one hand it is looking for a "compromise" with the Church that will be profitable to both sides. On the other, it is giving the go-ahead to certain of its structures — a section of the press, the official student organization and so on — to take up the defence of

women who face imprisonment as a consequence of having an abortion. In this way the bureaucracy hopes to regain a social base.

The vast majority of Polish women are Catholics, and therefore so are most women who have abortions. A sizeable number of them are refusing to passively follow the anti-abortion campaign and are defending the 1956 law. "I am a Catholic, but in this area, I do not agree with the Church....It is my responsibility, a matter for my conscience and not for the Church! You should consider this letter not as a lone voice, but as the voice of many women who are saying: we want the sole right to decide how many children we have, and we want to be able to legally terminate our pregnancies!" These Catholic women are also in revolt against the fact that the ecclesiastical apparatus — whose functionaries are not only all male, but also know nothing about sexual life, and who have no family responsibilities — are proposing to decide the fate of women.<sup>17</sup>

The term "feminist" is "almost insulting" in today's Poland. The feminist movement had not existed before this. An initiative taken during the revolution of 1980-81 by

women students at Warsaw university failed to get an echo. Today however, the attack on women's right to choose has immediately catalyzed such a movement. This is an important political lesson. Feminist groups that nobody had previously heard of have been speaking out in the press. One of them, from Upper Silesia, wrote in March to the editors of *Kobieta i Zycie* that there was a real danger that "Poland will gradually become a second Ireland", despite the fact that "this is happening in a socialist country, in the heart of Europe, at the end of the twentieth centu-



ry.... The Vatican and the Church are losing their big influence in Spain and Italy (where the right to abortion was won in a referendum), and are trying to regain it in our country".<sup>18</sup>

In May the first feminist groups set the precedent by coming out into the streets and struggling openly for women's abortion rights and for the free expression of feminist ideas. The most combative feminist action was that undertaken by a group of women students in the central market in Cracow, a city with very conservative traditions, where Henneslowa is standing and where the principal leader of the Independent Students' Association (NZS) has been involved in the anti-abortion campaign. But in spite of all this, the feminists have not been isolated. They got immediate support from the socialists of the PPS-RD, but also, for example, from young radical militants of the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), although such an attitude has nothing in common with the ideology and policies of the leadership of that party.

The first street demonstration took place on May 6 in Warsaw, with about a thousand participants, some of whom had come from towns far away from the capital.

Some were already able to report on the progress of petition campaigns in the workplaces. The demonstration was organized on the initiative of independent groups. The banners proclaimed: "Freedom of conscience means three years in prison", "We do not want new prisoners of conscience", "No to the inquisition", "When Patentex are everywhere, there will be no more D&Cs", and "Will abandoned babies be adopted by the monks?" They put to the fore women's right to control their bodies and their wombs, and the principle that it is the woman who must decide. These are the

same principles as those put forward by the women's movement in the capitalist countries, brought together in the appeal of the International Campaign for Abortion Rights in 1979.<sup>19</sup>

There were also radical anti-clerical slogans warning against the danger of a joint dictatorship of the "red" and "black" bureaucracies. The extremely official Women's League, as well as the leadership of Solidarnosc, were put on the spot for their passivity. Christopher Bobinski quotes a group of women from Bydgoszcz:

"We were in Solidarnosc and active in the underground too,"

said Joanna Buszkowska from the group, "but on this they are too much in the hands of the Church". They boasted that in two hours they had collected 200 signatures from women in the local Telfa electronics factory.<sup>20</sup>

The demonstrators marched through the streets of Warsaw in front of the palace of Primate Glemp and went to the Ministry of Health, but the minister did not receive them. In a few days tens of thousands of signatures were collected in the university, the streets and factories, on petitions addressed to the Sejm and to the official civil rights' ombudsman. A second demonstration organized by students was held on May 10 in front of the Sejm. Men, often carrying children, were there alongside the women. Women workers were also present. They told a journalist: "Write that women have taken time off from work, if only briefly, to make it clear that we want to pro-

16. Carrying on the tradition of the right wing pre-war bourgeois nationalist movement, which favored an alliance with Russia.

17. *Kobieta i Zycie*, January 25, 1989.

18. *Kobieta i Zycie*, April 5, 1989.

19. See also *Le Droit de choisir*, La Brèche, Paris 1979.

20. *Financial Times*, May 11, 1989.

test".<sup>21</sup> The independent groups were taken aback by the presence of members of the official student organization aiming to establish their dominance and control over the movement.

A year ago, young workers and students made a combative and spectacular entrance onto the Polish political scene. Now the first signs of a women's movement are apparent. It has a militant dynamic and has won its first support among young people and women workers. It could become a very important factor in the recomposition of the mass movement in Poland after the round-table, including in the recomposition of Solidarnosc, which is and will remain the main framework of this movement.

At the beginning of May, as he came out of the Polish Primate's palace, Lech Walesa was asked about his attitude to the new draft law: "Something has to be done to stop us from killing each other", he said. On May 11, after the Warsaw demonstrations, he took a different position.

### "A matter of conscience, not of the law"

While reaffirming his fidelity to the doctrine of the Catholic Church in this area, he said: "It is nevertheless necessary to take account of the fact that there are people in Poland with different conceptions of the world. Each person must resolve this problem according to his own conscience and morality, and it is not a matter of the law".<sup>22</sup>

The aim of this conciliatory statement by Walesa is obviously to prevent the outbreak of a new conflict within the mass movement, this time around with women conscious of their elementary rights. At the same conference the president of Solidarnosc repeated with redoubled vigour his condemnation of the youth radicalization, which, in his opinion, was leading the political life of the country in the direction of "anarchy". He also condemned the workers' strikes, including that of 20,000 copper miners in Lower Silesia.

Walesa reaffirmed Solidarnosc's intention to take the necessary measures to put an end to all the strikes in the factories and "illegal demonstrations" in the streets. "Pluralism and democracy in their Polish form cannot be taken to mean anarchy. During the period in which the reforms are put into operation, we must refrain from irresponsible actions.... We will only get help from the capitalists when peace and order reign in Poland. They must be convinced that the dollars they invest in Poland are not going to be burnt up".<sup>23</sup>

Three great social forces will decide if the social peace concocted at the round-table will become a reality: workers, young people and women. ★

21. *Zycie Warszawy*, May 11, 1989.

22. *Zycie Warszawy*, May 12, 1989.

23. *Zycie Warszawy*, May 16, 1989.

## "Nobody sees perestroika from a woman's point of view"

IN THE multitude of analyses of the Soviet Union of *perestroika*, the situation of women is rarely discussed. Olga Alexandrovna Voronina, a philosopher at the Soviet Academy of Sciences, is the author of the only contemporary study of women in the USSR. The following interview with Olga Voronina was originally published in *Il Bimestrial*, an Italian journal whose editors also contribute to the left-wing magazine, *Il Manifesto*.

**O**LGA Alexandrovna, for a long time you, the women of Russia, have been the most liberated in the world! You have equal rights, egalitarian laws, protection of maternity, free abortion and work for all. As women, you are a majority of workers in whole sectors, from health to education. Everywhere, women are more visible than men. What does the hyper-emancipated Soviet citizen think about her situation?

Say to one of us, "but you are liberated", and see if she doesn't tear her hair out! If I tell my friends that people in the West are interested in us, they retort: "Help me to get a visa for abroad. I have a lecture all ready around the theme 'My day, minute by minute'."

In practice, daily life of Soviet women is

as follows: Eight hours work outside and eight hours inside the home. According to the few rare serious studies about our conditions, it emerges that today, 40 hours a week are spent on domestic labour and 41 hours working "outside". And domestic labour is extremely tiring, given the disastrous shortages, the endless queues, the lack of social infrastructures and their malfunctioning.

Seventy years ago, we were the vanguard in many areas. The "new", the "modern", that was us. Now, on the same questions, we are relatively behind other countries. A few days ago, I reread Kollontai's writings.<sup>1</sup>

1. Alexandra Kollontai (1872-1952) was Commissar for Social Welfare and the only woman in Lenin's first government. In 1921, she became secretary of the Comintern's International Women's Secretariat. Her writing's cover many areas of politics, including feminism.



For her, discrimination towards women should have been resolved by her economic independence and equal rights. Lenin thought the same thing. Even today, people still think it. But this is has reduced the woman question essentially to one aspect of the problem: that of work. It is a gigantic oversimplification, which has prevented a real debate on the man/woman conflict.

■ **Are you saying that the feminist question has not really been tackled?**

I want to say the following: the big problem is that no-one — neither men nor women — realized that alongside the revolution inter-personal relationships had to change as well and that it was necessary to develop a new approach, above all concerning the relations between men and women in a society that passed from a form of concrete and real slavery to [personal] independence.

In the years immediately following the revolution men felt free, but none of them asked themselves what had to be changed so that women could feel really independent and liberated. Women had the same status as men at work, but — and I insist on this — only at work. So, for women, the weight of domestic labour remained undiminished, and on top of this they had the right to another job, but that also became a social obligation.

■ **Everything is the same 70 years later?**

Yes. At the beginning women entered the work sphere as a sort of member of a reserve army of labour. Nobody paid attention to developing women's professional training, and this "lack of attention" was no accident. It expressed the belief that, in any event, it was obvious women's real priority work remained in the family. I think that women were aware of this contradiction from the beginning.

■ **So when Gorbachev talks about women going back to the home, isn't he expressing a demand, a need?**

No, I think this proposal avoids the question of the legitimate demands of working women. When I met with one of them, she said to me: "Look at the life I lead. I get up at dawn, make breakfast for the kids and my husband, and then I rush to take the kids to school, then I run to catch the tube or the bus for a 40-minute or 1-hour journey to work, then I queue at the shops, then I go to pick up the kids, then I make dinner, then I put the children to bed, then I do the darning and ironing... This sort of life I can do without"

I would add that the majority of working women do jobs that are physically extremely tiring. It is obvious that if you offer to let them return to the home, initially they will be tempted by this proposition!

But you have to look a bit closer: "What has changed if, instead of doing the ironing

at night, you do it in the afternoon; if, rather than queueing for potatoes at six in the evening, you queue up at ten in the morning; if you have to look after the kids all afternoon at home? Of course, you get a few more hours sleep, but your life won't change.

"What's more, you'll be dependent on your husband for money. If he comes home drunk, you'll have to keep quiet, he'll think he's the boss. And if he leaves you or you live on your own, what will you have left? A couple of kids and no income." Then this woman replied: "It's true that this is not a solution".

Personally, I think that the only way out is a radical change in social organization. But this is not what's behind the state's thinking when they propose that women go back to the home.

■ **Do you think they are doing this to shift onto women some of the services that draw heavily on the public purse and on the budget?**

It's difficult to answer that. In truth, I don't think that any of those today, men or women, who are talking about women returning to the home really believe in it. Women make up 51% of our labour force — if they pull out, what's going to happen? A disaster for the economy. In addition, women do unskilled and tiring work. Would men be ready to replace them?

Statistics show that half of women workers do jobs that require strength in their legs or arms, with little thinking involved. These are women who make up most of the personnel on the railways, in light industry and in agriculture all over the Soviet Union. In the Baltic countries, they have jobs that are a bit more skilled. These are women who grow cotton, potatoes, wheat; who sow and harvest. On building sites, it's the women who carry the mortar on their shoulders. In restaurants, they do the washing-up. In the services, they have the lowest levels of skill. Imagine what would happen if they were taken out of all these jobs and sent back to the home! It is simply a slogan to try to get a bit of instant support.

■ **But with the industrial reform, there will be a big reduction in labour, partly made up by the use of new technologies. Won't it be the female part of the workforce that will be "freed"?**

I think it's more complicated than that, less linear. Concerning work, first of all. There are two assertions that are currently emphasized: the first contends that today we are in the process of building a basis to allow women to pursue careers, and the second is to say that women's natural role is in the home. What do they mean? The real reasoning behind them, although it's not explicit, is as follows: if women have to work, they should take the jobs offered them, which are still necessary for development, and they should keep quiet.

The same goes for social services. They aren't being improved because there is a tacit understanding that women will always be around, on call, to bring up the children, look after the elderly and take the responsibility for these jobs in society. This story of sending women back to the home leads to an impasse. It won't resolve either the economic crisis or the crisis of the family.

■ **But what would women prefer, in general?**

The majority don't want to return to the home. A few months ago, in a poll of 100 women, 80% wanted a job and social infrastructures; only 20% preferred to be simply housewives. Personally, I agree with the majority. Let's develop the social infrastructures, solve the social problems that have been shelved — it is symptomatic that in our country they are referred to as "women's problems". I suppose this is why they are incessantly pushed to the bottom of the agenda.

■ **Does the slogan "women back to the home" represent a resurgence of the patriarchy?**

In fact, Russia has always been marked by the patriarchy. Before the revolution, peasants made up 80% of the country with the culture and stereotypes that go along with that. The revolution swept down like a storm on this collective consciousness. In the 1920s therefore, a real and effective feminist dynamic did not exist, but feminist values were promoted and there was a retreat of some of the most archaic stereotypes.

During these years, women workers involved in building the new society were exalted by everyone — even motherhood was demoted to second place. An example was in Fyodor Gladkov's novel, *The Cement* [one of the main "five-year plan novels"]. Hardly had she given birth when the woman put her baby into the care of an institution, and the child hardly reappears in the story. But it could be said that this was presented in a positive way. The institution substituted for the old family, the new generation lived communally, and society took charge of caring for and educating children. The family as a consumer unit no longer served a function. Women wrapped red scarves around their heads and went off to build communism!

In this situation, the strong, virile male image was weakened. Even in imagery, men and women appeared as equals. They worked hard and worked well; they worked for the future. They appeared not to have any other pressing needs, such as love or personal problems. Then the war came, which was terrible and turned many things upside down in the rest of the world.

■ **What did the war change in terms of the preceding imagery?**

Along with the war, the stereotype of the "real man" came back. It was perhaps not so dominant as in the USA in the 1950s, but



it was widespread. Although women were also comrades in arms, the glory of defending the homeland was totally monopolized by men. Once again they became the heroes, with the all the ensuing honours and recognition. Nobody talked about the women who were keeping the economy going, it was men who were — and are — “the” active element.

When peace came, however, all the frustrations did too. The economy went badly and that cut the ground from under the feet of the heroes and undermined their confidence. Earnings were not enough to feed the family, finding a second job was not easy, and having a career depended on the wishes of others (on the decisions of the Party).

What's more, there is one factor that no-one has analyzed but which I think has had a great influence on the psychology of men. During the war, women realized that they were capable of sorting out the most difficult situations on their own. Having a man around was not indispensable. Certainly, they missed men at a sentimental level, but how could women indulge such feelings without being accused of bourgeois deviations? And, in addition, when the men returned home they wanted to become the heads of the family again. Conflicts and frustrations ensued.

I think that this was one of the causes of the growing alcoholism among men and women's apathy in society and the family. Submission, one could say, rather than apathy, an inclination to leave things to society — a society that is male. Virility reached its peak. Today, it is normal to hear both men and women say that it is the man who must take charge.

**■ But in the tremendous debate that has been opened up, have women begun to speak out? Do they participate in elections? Are they putting forward demands and elaborating programmes?**

As women, as subjects, no. The accent is not put on the men/women conflict, even in

a small way. If women are involved in things, it is as interested people, as individuals who want change.

And besides, what are the concerns of the candidates, the press and the meetings? Politics, the economy, price reform, cooperatives and agricultural reform. Some are for, and some are against, *perestroika*. But not a soul sees the process from a woman's point of view, candidates for the elections included. Of course, there is a difference between conservatives and reformers, in the sense that the latter take into account more often problems with social services and women's living conditions, while the conservatives want women in the home.

An amazing article was published in *Pravda* at the end of February. First of all, it struck me as an anti-woman article — women were egoists, only interested in themselves, without feelings, and the cause of the breakdown of the family and problems of young people. How dare they say this, I fumed to myself, revolted, when it is our shoulders that bear the burden of all the



social shortcomings?

But I continued to read: “Society is too feminized”, women must return home and keep their noses out of other things, schools must have a military-style discipline by taking women out of teaching, and so on. It was a militarist, fascist and feudal vision. It was full of nostalgia for a “strong” leader, an energetic state, a male power. After I had read it all, this article struck me as being more frightening than a simple attack on women's dignity. It frightened me that they had given it so much space in *Pravda*, just as the diffuse “women back to the home” movement had sent shivers up my spine. I know that this will be impossible for many years, but I don't want to head towards a “reformed society” where women's submission, exploitation and oppression still exist.

**■ You are very insistent about social services. What do you think the priority should be?**

Perhaps it seems strange to you that I put so much emphasis on our living conditions. I don't want to overestimate this problem, but I am absolutely sure that if we don't succeed in changing them, there will be nothing new for women. I don't know how to explain it to you. I want women to be able to work, to study, to develop themselves in society, but I also want them to be able to leave work during certain periods of their lives, for example when they have several children. Today, they can't do this, either because family benefits aren't available at all, or only for a year. And the benefits are a derisory 35 roubles a month.

Listen, I come from Central Asia, where I saw women with 10 children forced to work between pregnancies. What's more, they must have guarantees at the workplace. These exist on paper, but who applies them? For example, if a woman worker demands a day off because her child is ill, she knows that she has the right to take it, but she doesn't have the means to exercise that right. In most cases the boss replies: “No, and if you make trouble, I'll fire you”. So you see, these problems have to be sorted out.

**■ But doesn't that amount to the same thing as the slogan “women in the home, motherhood is their destiny”?**

No, it is one of their rights, and the problem isn't that women “must” stay at home. The reasoning has to be turned on its head: “Women have the right to be full-time mothers”, and not in addition to be their husbands' servant, stair cleaners, providers of deficient social services.

These rights have to be developed in a very concrete way, starting from serious research on the situation of women in our country. Until now, no sociologist has done it. I'm trying to do it. We are an informal group of young social science researchers. But we will need a network across the country that will allow us to increase the number of interviews, establish statistics and make analyses. Women's problems are



not the same in Moscow, Leningrad, Minsk, Novosibirsk, Tashkent, Alma Ata and so on. They also demand different solutions. But we are so few and have so little means that we have decided to begin with a provocation.

#### ■ What provocation?

First, I spoke about the right to be a full-time parent. We say that this right must be given either to the man or to the woman. They decide together who will leave work (maternity or paternity leave) to bring up the children after birth or in other circumstances. Given that in our country the idea that men could put themselves out, do the washing or bathe the children is scandalous, if not utopian, we publicly announced that we demanded the right "to be a full-time father"! At the beginning, that caused a number of smiles and leg-pulling. Then, they started to listen to us.

The most urgent task is actually changing people's habits and the culture. In a country where the term "individual" has a negative connotation, what connotation do you think "woman" can have?

#### ■ When you said provocation, I thought you were referring to sexuality, a theme that until now has been taboo. Does your group take up this problem?

Sexuality remains a closed subject, a secret. Our tradition has always smothered sexuality, and we don't even talk about it today. It is considered as "unproper", and it is not talked about in the schools. You know that when there was a televised discussion between Soviet and American women, somebody asked the question: "And in terms of sexual relations, what is happening?" and the Soviet woman replied: "Here, sex doesn't exist". But the translator said in English: "Here, problems relating to sexuality don't exist". But that wasn't what was actually said.

#### ■ But I recently read an article by Igor Kon on sex education and I saw



#### a group of sexologists, psychologists and doctors talking about the problems faced by couples on the television...

That's true. But only the specialists talk about it, with the discussion being kept to a strictly scientific level. This is not a cultural problem, it is not something innate. Sexologists can be counted on the fingers of one hand — there is Svyadosh in Leningrad and Vasilyenko in Moscow.

The only person who talks concretely about all aspects of sexuality is Igor Kon. But you can ask him how much time it took to publish his *Introduction to Sexology*, and how many copies were printed. There are some copies in the libraries, but most doctors have never been able to get hold of it.

#### ■ But you talk about it among women?

I repeat, consciousness of sexuality as an important individual question is still taboo. Such a culture doesn't exist. You can see that when you try to talk about it. It is diffi-



cult for me to talk about it with my friends or my husband. It hurts to talk about it. I know that it is necessary to talk about sex, but it bothers me. I am myself inhibited, and I would find it unthinkable to talk about sex before an audience.

#### ■ On prostitution, I've read a number of unbelievable reports...

In fact, they are very repressive, but above all they are misogynist. Some people demand prison for prostitutes. There is no serious study on prostitution that looks at women from all social milieus.

We can maybe have an intuitive idea on the origins of prostitution. For example, a young girl sees her mother's daily life, thinks that that is what is in store for her and rejects it, hoping to get money more easily by going becoming a prostitute. There are others who quite simply don't earn enough money. We should also make the distinction between what we could call internal prostitutes and those who cater for



foreigners. We call them the "hard currency girls", and people think they're linked to the KGB or the police, but I don't really know enough about all that.

#### ■ According to *Ogonyok*, six-and-a-half million women have abortions each year in the USSR. Is this true?

I don't know. There are no official statistics on abortion. The figure you give is very likely close to reality, but finding serious information on this question is very difficult. This is one of the reasons why we insist such a lot on setting up sociological research groups on women's conditions.

#### ■ But why are there so many abortions. What forms of contraception do you use?

First of all, it's because there is no sex education. Then, contraception is rare. The only contraceptives sometimes available are diaphragms, and there are only very few couples who have good enough accommodation to have a decent sex life. In addition, people are having sex earlier. The numbers of young girls of 12 to 14 who get pregnant is increasing, and most of them resort to clandestine abortion because otherwise they have to get their parent's permission to go through the normal channels.

#### ■ I'm sorry to have bothered you with all these questions about a subject that is very delicate for you. I want to conclude with one question: Do you consider yourself a feminist?

I would like to be able to define myself as a feminist, but to really do so I would need to have another culture. I think that feminism needs more developed conditions than those we have.

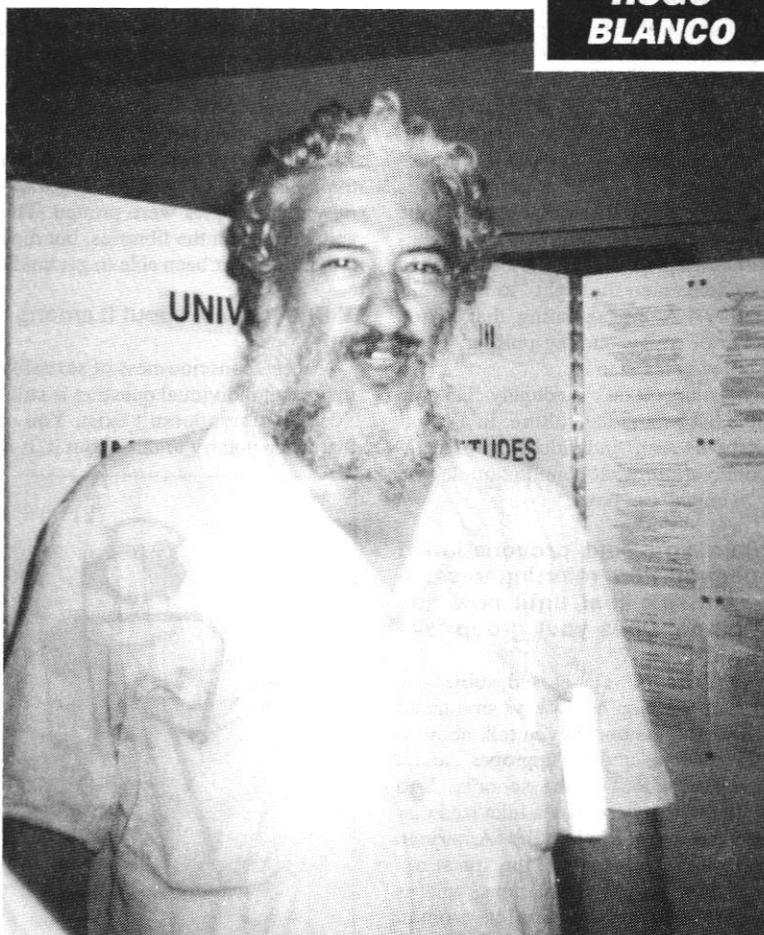
I'm conscious of my identity as a woman, and I experience very strongly the conflicts between men and women. But I am a primitive feminist, a feminist who is still asking for increased social services, like you in the 1950s. We need feminism, but there are still very few feminists... ★

# “People would rather die from bullets than die of hunger”

**INTERVIEW  
WITH  
HUGO  
BLANCO**

**THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST** Peruvian peasant leader, Hugo Blanco, was jailed in February in Pucallpa, a town in the eastern central part of the country. He was attending a rally of striking peasants, along with other leaders of the Peruvian Peasants' Confederation (CCP). The police opened fire on the crowd, killing at least 18 people, and arrested Blanco along with a number of other leaders.<sup>1</sup> After a two-week storm of national and international protest, he was released.

Blanco is also a prominent member of the Partido Unificado Mariateguista, a far left party, which belongs to the broad left coalition, Izquierda Unida [IU — United Left]. In April, he began a tour of Western Europe. The following interview was given to Gerry Foley in Paris in late May.



banks in an attempt to force the Peruvian capitalists to invest in the country, but the right and the ultra-right, as well as the right wing inside APRA itself, blocked this.

In view of this failure, the government had to knuckle under to the dictates of the IMF, and this is leading to economic disaster. This situation is being exploited by the ultra-right to put the blame on APRA for ruining country by carrying out the program of the Izquierda Unida [IU — United Left]. With that line, it is killing two birds with one stone and at the same time appearing to keep its hands clean.

■ **From what point do you date the government's surrender?**

From September. To give you an idea, a liter of insecticide that cost a peasant 20 kilos of potatoes in September, cost 200 kilos of potatoes in October. Abroad, a completely false image is being given of this regime. It is presented as if it were simply a social-democratic government under attack from terrorist guerrillas. This is well calculated propaganda by the imperialists and by the Peruvian government. Every person killed is supposed to have died in

the defense of democracy or been killed by Sendero Luminoso.

The day before yesterday, I was reading in *Le Monde* that as a result of the violence in Peru two deputies were killed, and that it was believed that Sendero Luminoso killed them. In fact, it was a wing of the government that killed these left deputies, the wing represented by the Rodrigo Franco Comandos and led by the present minister of the interior, Agustín Mantilla. This figure has a totally sinister background. He entered the government as a deputy secretary of the interior. Really he was the grey eminence of the Ministry of the Interior.

Mantilla was the one who directed the massacre of political prisoners in El Frontón. He is the organizer of the Comando Rodrigo Franco, a paramilitary organization. Later he was appointed minister for administration in the next to last change in government. As minister of administration, he had under his authority the so-called Development Commissions, which are local bodies that have served as the cover

**H**OW MUCH credibility does the García government have left?

The economic crisis is tremendous — the worst in the history of Peru. When the APRA government took office, it put some reins on the IMF, unlike the previous government, which was completely under its thumb. But it finally had to surrender. It pushed the nationalization of the

1. See *International Viewpoint* 157, February 20, 1989, March 6 and 162, May 1, 1989.

for providing arms and training to the arms for the paramilitaries. And I learned yesterday [May 23] that he had been appointed minister of the interior.

### ■ Is APRA dividing in this situation?

No. There are more democratic currents in APRA. But they don't count. What counts is the decision made the regime itself. The premier, Luis Alberto Sánchez, is a conservative, one of the conservative eminences in APRA.

What is being hidden from the world is the existence in Peru of the best organized independent mass movement in Latin America outside Cuba and Nicaragua. The peasants are organized, the shanty-town dwellers, the people of the neglected regions that are fighting against centralism, the public employees, the students, even the police. And all these organizations are grouped in the People's Assembly. It is true that the National People's Assembly does not yet have the force that all of us would like it to have. But its existence demonstrates that there is a big development. And all of these are organizations formed for the struggle.

Even the police are not just demanding higher wages but the right to elect their officers and the right to disobey orders if they violate human rights. Now, precisely because of this high level of consciousness in the police in general, special repressive units are being formed. They are being trained by Israelis, because the Israelis are well-acquainted with desert terrain, and in Peru there are large desert areas. There are also being trained by South Africans, because Peru also has jungles. And they are being trained by Yankees.

These special repressive units train by killing dogs, cutting off the heads of dogs and smearing their faces with the blood of the dogs, putting the intestines of the dogs around their necks. It is such special units that were used in Ayacucho and most recently in Pucallpa. It was they who did the killing in Pucallpa, and after opening fire, when people fell, they finished them off with bayonets, and then in front of the masses they bathed their faces with the blood of their victims.

### ■ Are these units part of the National Police?

Yes. But they are special units. They are much better paid in general. One of the things hidden from world public opinion, as I said, is the high level of mass organization, militant mass organization, that exists. The masses are organized to fight, they are all fighting. This is seen in the peasant strikes that there have been, the miners' strikes, the public employees' strikes, and then the paralysis of zones of the country led by the Fronts to Defend the Interests of the People.

The other thing that is being hidden from the outside world is that the leading political force in the country is Izquierda Unida. When APRA was elected, IU came in sec-

ond. But now that APRA has been totally discredited because of the economic policy that it has been following, IU has become the main force in the country.

The popularity of Vargas Llosa [the presidential candidate of the right] is also being exaggerated. He is portrayed as a liberal, when in reality he is a representative of the most primitive right, the ultra-right.

### ■ But who is the right winning? Does it have support among the poor layers or not? Is this rightist propaganda having any impact on the poor masses?

Yes. You have to remember that the right controls the means of communication. Some people are convinced that APRA is ruining the country by applying the program of IU, and that therefore what should have been done was to pay the principal [of the loans] to the IMF, and that would have solved the crisis in the country. There are people who believe that.

### ■ But are they able to mobilize this fringe that they influence?

There were rightist mobilizations when the government tried to nationalize the banks, but they were not very big. In any case, they were not large by comparison with the mobilizations led by the left as such or those staged by the mass organizations fighting for their demands. We don't know who will be the winner of the next elections, which are scheduled for April 1990. But we know who is going to be the loser. APRA, of course, is going to lose. The ultra-right may win, or the left.

The ultra-right could win through the campaign that it is waging, plus fraud. In that case, the future of Peru will be tragic. The starvation policy of hunger will be pursued more vigorously than at present, alongside the repression. And all this will be presented as defense of a legitimately constituted regime.

### ■ What is the situation on the left?

The IU held its congress a few months ago. A program was approved and a leadership was elected. The form of choosing candidates was also approved. What has happened is that the candidate of the right wing of IU, Barrantes and his people, are disregarding some of the agreements made at the congress. And fundamentally, it is the PSR that is the axis of the Barrantes movement. This is the old Valasquista party [the populist military dictatorship of General Velasco Alvarado from 1968 to 1975].

They call themselves the Revolutionary Socialist Party, but that doesn't mean anything. They are the right wing around which other people are also gathered. They are trying to disregard the authority of the leadership and the agreements that came out of the congress. Internal elections took place a while ago and some are being held now. I heard was that they were going to withdraw their candidate, Barrantes,

because they know that among the ranks of IU they don't enjoy any popularity.

At an IU rally after the congress, when the current chair of the IU for six months, Jorge del Prado — who is also the top leader of the Communist Party — referred to Barrantes, there were whistles all over the square. And after this Barrantes held a meeting in a bull-ring, and he got far less people than the IU had. There is a threat that centrist sectors such as the CP will capitulate to Barrantes' pretensions and drop the program voted at the congress, which is not a very radical program. There is also a danger that they will capitulate on the question of the candidate.

### ■ Does the left wing have a candidate, someone it agrees on?

No. But since we understand that the IU is a coalition of various forces, we think that the indicated candidate is Henry Peace, simply because he accepts the agreements at the congress. He was a deputy mayor under Barrantes.

### ■ In Western Europe the press refers to the left wing of the IU as the "vanguardist-militarist faction." Is that term also used in Peru?

Yes. They call us vanguardists-militarists. But this is out of line with our acceptance of the IU congress. There is nothing militarist about us.

### ■ What is the relation of Sendero Luminoso to the rest of the left in Peru?

This group does not have the prominence that it is given in Europe. It is of course significant. It operates in nearly all of the country. But it has no influence in the organized mass movement. It is hostile to the mass movement, and it has nothing to do with IU. It is a marginal force. But what happens is that when Sendero Luminoso kills two cops, the news goes around the world. When 60,000 peasants go on strike, and no one is killed, nobody hears about this.

Sendero Luminoso is a very sectarian movement. We don't call them Maoists. We call them Pol-Potists. Not only do they kill rightists, they also kill leftists. They kill political leaders of the left, or they kill left mass leaders, and they also kill a lot of innocent people accusing them of being informers.

But the government approves of Sendero Luminoso killing leftists because that enables it to put the blame for murders of leftists on Sendero Luminoso. For example, it put the blame on them for the murder of Saul Cantoral, the miners' leader. He was killed while I was in prison [in February] by the Comando Rodrigo Franco. It also put the blame on them for the murder of a left deputy who was killed a few weeks ago. He was also killed by the Comando Rodrigo Franco. And since Sendero hasn't said anything, the accusation tends to be accepted.

Moreover, when I was in prison, the body of a thief appeared in the Plaza de Armas de Pucallpa, and next to the body was a sign saying "So will die the traitor to the peasants, Hugo Blanco." It was signed "Sendero Luminoso." And this news was broadcast over TV. But we know Sendero Luminoso did not do it. Because they do not sign "Sendero Luminoso." They sign "Communist Party of Peru." And besides they don't have robbers at their disposal the way the police do. Furthermore, the journalist who reported this story is one who always works with the police.

■ **Does Sendero Luminoso claim responsibility systematically for the actions it carries out?**

No. They don't say anything. They don't say whether they did it or didn't. Sometimes they do say that they have done something. But they never deny it when a killing is attributed to them. And the regime takes advantage of this. And they also have a very anti-democratic procedure. When they go into a peasant community, they appoint the chiefs, threatening to kill anyone who disobeys them, disregarding the people chosen by the community.

■ **Do they have real support at least in some parts of the highlands?**

Not in the highlands now. In Puno, they were reduced to insignificance, and precisely because of that they reacted against us, killing a peasant leader of the area. And they lost out still more because of that. After I was jailed in Pucallpa, there was a peasant strike in Puno.

They do have members who are peasants, but they are a minority. They are mainly students, teachers, professors, and so on.

■ **What explains its development?**

Well, I think that the great hunger that there has been and the incapacity of the left to organize the masses. Where there were not mass organizations is where Sendero Luminoso grew. And where mass organizations developed, it was totally smashed. Because Sendero Luminoso goes into a community, kills the rich people there, kills the police, and then they leave. The repressive forces come to find out who the leaders of this community are. They are killed, they disappear, or are put in prison. They find out what families support Sendero Luminoso and then kill them. Then they leave. Sendero comes back and asks who informed on the people who were killed, and then they kill those who denounced them, they kill those who provided lodging for the soldiers, and then they leave. In these conditions, there is no room for a leader of the CCP, for example, for a third force. They have to choose between the army or Sendero Luminoso.

We also have to understand that since the left paid a lot of attention to elections, it abandoned the people. It did not lead peasant struggles, struggles among the students. In the absence of protests, Sendero Lumi-

noso seemed to be the only protest. Finally, we can explain that Sendero appeared because people want to eat every day. And if you belong to Sendero, you are guaranteed food every day, and sometimes meat. And if you don't belong, you can die of hunger. People would rather die from bullets than die of hunger.

■ **How are they able to provide food?**

Because they carry out robberies. They steal cattle, and so on. They can't give everybody food, just their members. They cannot accept the existence of the other guerrilla group, the MRTA [Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement]. Sendero characterizes everybody as servants of the regime, including the MRTA. It has had armed clashes with them. The MRTA is more coherent. They respect the rest of the left; they work with the rest of the left. In the CCP, there are people who belong to a political group linked to them, the UDP, Unión Democratica Popular. They work in the mass movement. They are involved in the leadership of the miners.

The MRTA also come largely from the Velasquista movement, and some of them also come from APRA. They have people from the left, as well, because some people think that the time has come to take up arms.

■ **How widespread is the repression today?**

Today it is selective, since the appearance of the Comando Rodrigo Franco. It appeared first with the murder of a lawyer. Then it killed Saul Cantoral. A little before Oscar Delgado disappeared. The main leader of the teachers got a death threat. They killed an important peasant leader on the coast. Also they killed a left deputy. And they have also threatened me.

Recently also, Comrade Cecilia Olea has received a threat. She is a feminist leader who has worked with women workers, fundamentally around the struggles of women workers — in Nisan, for example, which is an assembly plant, and also in textiles. Recently a compañera who was also a leader of the women's movement was murdered.

■ **What is the state of the peasant movement today?**

I think that today the CCP is the strongest that it has ever been. It has existed for 42 years and is the oldest peasant union confederation in Peru. It is also very militant. It has held consecutive peasant strikes, first in three departments of the jungle area and then Cuzco and Puno and so on, not long ago. Now it is building a national peasant strike.

■ **What role do specifically Indian demands play today?**

The demand to regain the land for farm communities is an specifically Indian demand. Also, there is the aspect of

defending the soil. The Indians grow a variety of crops. But the people who come in, the capitalist farmers, cultivate single crops that exhaust the soil. If the European Greens are consistent, they should support the demands of the CCP.

■ **Do you think that the historic division between the working class and the peasantry has now been overcome? Have there been joint struggles between the workers and peasants?**

Yes, we now feel that we are brothers. There is unity not just with the working class but with the other mass organizations. For example, in Pucallpa, after the massacre of the peasants, the entire town went on strike for 48 hours.

■ **Is the People's Assembly really able to coordinate all this?**

Unfortunately, it does not have the strength to do that, but the organizations in it do. ★

**PUM executive statement**

**THE SICK and provocative sectarianism of Sendero Luminoso has claimed another victim from the ranks of the miners' movement, the Izquierda Unida and the PUM.**

**In its vain attempt to subject the working people to a reign of terror and frustrate the efforts to build a national miners' congress for June and win the national list of miners' demands, the Senderistas directed their bullets this time against the life of Compañero Antonio Cajachagua Leyva, general secretary of the Workers' Union of Morococha, one of the most important local organizations in the central region.**

**The Partido Unificado Mariateguista expresses its repudiation and sorrow at this vile and cowardly attack by six armed individuals, who did not hesitate to shoot to kill a leader who had no means of defending himself, and who had an impeccable record as a fighter, who could have no enemies except among the exploiters of the working class. The PUM expresses its deepest felt condolences to Compañero Cajachagua's relatives, his workmates and his companions in struggle.**

**In memory of this comrade, our party pledges to continue the fight, alongside the workers, alongside the entire people, who will not let themselves be defeated by terror or by repression. Our homage will be one of unity, organization and struggle.**

**— Long live the preparations for the new national miners' strike!**

**— Long live the Second National Miners' Congress! ★**

# Palme murder investigation weaves a tangled web

**THE MURDER OF Swedish premier Olof Palme on February 28, 1986, was a trauma for a nation whose people believed themselves safe from the political violence afflicting other countries. The mystery that continues to shroud the assassination and the scandals that have developed around the investigation have added to a series of scandals in recent years that have been shaking the credibility of the state administration.**

**This has a particular political importance in Sweden, a country that never experienced a democratic revolution. The policy of the state was liberalized under the pressure of the mass movement and international events, but fundamentally the administration has retained considerable arbitrary power.**

**All these contradictions are now coming to a head with the start, on May 30, of the trial of a suspect that most Swedes find it hard to believe could be guilty.**

**MICHAEL JENSEN**

**W**HEN OLOF PALME was murdered in 1986, the police response was the greatest non-investigation in the country's history. It started with the failure to block roads inside and outside the city, to put a guard on the airports, docks and railroad stations and to issue a national alarm immediately, despite the fact that the identity of the victim became known minutes after the murder. In fact, in general nothing was done on the national level in the first hours after the murder.

It is possible that police were not authorized to take such drastic measures, but this gave an unfortunate impression of indifference. Many people certainly expected that vigorous measures would be taken, if for nothing else than to demonstrate the nation's anger and the effectiveness of the police force. But the police took no immediate steps other than those that would be carried out for an "ordinary" murder.

Others, outside the police forces, did take drastic measures. That is evident from the fact that the top military command met on the night of the murder to assess whether there was a military threat.

After this unimpressive beginning, it seems odd that it was a bureaucrat, the county police chief in Stockholm, Hans Holmér, a jurist without police training, who took operational charge of the murder investigation. His activity has been

described in a white paper prepared by journalists at the weekly *Proletären* entitled "The murder of Olof Palme and the police trail."

Holmér disregarded the national police chief, the national police command, the assassination commission and all the professional police authorities on murder cases. He assigned the best qualified murder investigators that could be brought into the case to sorting out tip offs that he later assessed personally.

## Repression against Kurdish community

Hans Holmér has good connections at the top, and he got a representative of the government in his investigation group, a person who was subsequently described as a passive observer but who helped to give the impression that Holmér had the government's consent for everything he did. It was important for the government to maintain that the contact man was an observer, since direct control would conflict with Swedish basic law.

However, all this was discussed only a long time afterward. In the first period, everyone believed that the murderer would quickly be caught. And Hans Holmér, who had already started out on what would be the main trail for him, lost no time. Two

weeks after the murder, a Kurdish bookshop/café in Stockholm was raided, and ten people were arrested simply for being on the premises.

When the prosecutors later started to question the legality of Hans Holmér's methods, his close contacts with the government were a factor that delayed his removal as the head of the investigation. Instead, one after the other, the prosecutors went off the case, because Holmér was clearly disregarding democratic rights and liberties. In several instances, a legal authority, the Swedish justice ombudsman, has established that Holmér broke the law. He is now being prosecuted for certain such violations, and further prosecutions are possible.

## Evidence pointing to police involvement

While the campaign against the Kurds was going on, on March 13, 1986, a man with right-wing sympathies and a certain connection to the reactionary European Workers Party was arrested. The evidence was so weak that the prosecutor released him on March 19. Then, harassment of the Kurds in Sweden got underway in earnest. If this witch-hunt had led to the expulsion of some Kurds, the chief of the investigation could have said "We know who murdered Olof Palme. There was not enough evidence to convict him, but it was more than enough to deport him." Then later, Holmér might have been able to say, "he died in a Turkish prison." Instead, the witch-hunt against the Kurds led to Holmér's downfall. The attack was too crude, and no evidence was ever offered.

There is a long series of circumstances that point to the involvement of policemen. One of them is the absolutely unbelievable disregard of witnesses who offered unwelcome testimonies (that is, those who did not point out Kurds). The following are the salient points in the "police trail."

There are accounts by at least 20 witnesses about a man present at the time and place of the murder. All of these accounts cited a tall, often blond, man and, in at least eight accounts, he was supposed to have had a walkie-talkie (or other radio communications equipment). These are witnesses that were found by journalists without help from the police. The real number could be much larger. There is no such testimony about Kurds or even people of a foreign appearance.

One witness, called "Lars" in the mass media, followed the murderer and encour-

tered a police car that slowly passed him, and somewhat later turned back. "Lars" asked the commanding officer in the car, "are you chasing the one who fired in Sveaväg?" "Yes," the police answered. But this conversation took place five minutes before the alarm went out, if we are to believe the commissioner who arrived first at the scene of the murder and left a minute after the alarm was given, at 11:30pm. The alarm is supposed to have been sent out at 11:29pm, but policemen had turned up already at 11:23 and said that they were after the murderer, and no-one in the leadership of the investigation thought it worthwhile to look into this any further.

Other witnesses say that they can identify a certain policeman who was at the site of the murder but who claims to have been at home. One witness reported about a tall blond man, but got the answer "No tall blond men are in question" from a policeman. Another witness says that he saw a certain policeman get in a bus five minutes after the murder. He had difficulty making his deposition and was finally threatened by a policeman... "If you go on like this, you are going to be prosecuted." The bus driver gave a similar testimony, and was subjected to aggressive treatment by the police. Another witnesses had to wait for up to a year before they could give testimony that seems quite central. Some were not heard at all.

The investigation has not systematically studied the police trail. Moreover, since the leadership of the investigation was never ready to consider such a hypothesis, the data is lacking for such a study. The police car mentioned above that appeared on the fleeing murderer's path does not appear in the police force's own reconstruction of the events.

## Links between police and extreme right

A large number of the policemen on duty on the night of the murder belonged to the notorious group in the Stockholm police, the so-called Baseball League, who appear in civilian clothes, often sports outfits, from which they got their name. The group was set up to deal with street violence, but with hundreds of complaints about its involvement in violence it quickly came to be seen itself as a threat in the street scene, even by the police. Although the group was formally dissolved, it seems to have persisted as a tightly knit social group.

A part of this group have outspoken fascist sympathies, and even before the murder the Stockholm police were obliged to investigate the existence of right-extremist groups in the force. Among other things, a South African police magazine published a statement by a visiting Swedish policeman who expressed his approval of the South African police riot gear intended for use against the Black majority.

Hans Holmér left the leadership of the

investigation on March 5, 1987, after a flood of criticism from the prosecutors for his illegal actions, especially against the Kurds in Sweden. In a certain sense, it can be said that the legal system functioned, but that goes only for the part that the prosecutors are directly responsible for. It does not apply, for example, to the assessment of tip offs, which really determines who comes under suspicion.

The new leadership of the investigation, made up of three prosecutors, in fact adopted the old starting point, which excludes the police from suspicion. The commission's spokesperson, Jörgen Almlad, has moreover made statements several times in the media that seemed to clear the police of suspicion, but which have later proved to be incorrect.

At the end of 1988, a 41-year-old man was arrested for the murder. His trial is to begin at the end of May, and is expected to last for a month. He is an alcoholic and a drug addict, and has been portrayed by the investigating commission as a crazy loner, the perfect solution for the Palme assassination.

## Mass media kept silent about "police trail"

But it is hard to believe that the perpetrator of this murder was a man previously arrested and convicted for 63 crimes, including an unsuccessful attempt to steal a pack of sausages worth 11 kronor [a little more than \$2, a pathetic sum in view of high Swedish prices]. His latest brush with the law was over urinating against a shop window in central Stockholm.

All the serious crimes he has committed have been related to outbursts of rage, and he has been arrested in connection with every case. He is hardly the sort of man to manipulate shells so that the shooting would make less noise, as is believed to have been done in the case of the Palme murder, and to have eluded the police for three years.

The evidence has remained weak, and the mass media give the impression that people are being prepared for an acquittal. A well-known lawyer made statements several times in the media that there is not sufficient evidence for a conviction, that the suspect should never have been prosecuted, and so on. And the evening paper *Aftonbladet* did a poll showing that less than 20% of the population believe that he is guilty.

With the exception of some articles in the social-democratic magazine *Arbetet*, which is published in Malmö [a port city just across the strait from Copenhagen] and not read in Stockholm, the mass media have kept silent about the police trail. The contributions that have come forward have focused on details, often odd ones, making it totally impossible for the general public to comprehend what is involved.

The biggest daily, the liberal *Dagens Nyheter*, has offered mainly disinforma-

tion. From the outset, it had regular meetings with Holmér. After the anti-climax represented by Holmér's departure, the paper has continued to back the new leadership of the investigation, and in the recent trial against *Proletären* [for libeling police officers] it came to light that the information in an interview in *Dagens Nyheter* that seemed to exonerate the police was probably fabricated by the staff.

## One scandal leads to another

In every case, it was denied by the spokesperson for the new leadership of the investigation when he was called on testify under oath about his interview. Another alternative is that the new spokesperson, Jörgen Almlad, was a bit careless with the truth. He has been caught out on previous occasions.

It is often crime reporters who have covered the murder of Olof Palme, and their jobs depend on cooperation from the police. When, in addition, the official leadership of the investigation refused to discuss the slightest suggestion that police might be involved, they did not have any nerve to raise the question.

In the spring of 1988, the police arrested a policeman at a Swedish customs post with a banned listening device. He turned out to be a private bodyguard for publishing company director Ebbe Carlsson, former press secretary of a previous social democrat minister of justice. The mystery of a private individual who got a bodyguard from the police and proved to have a letter of recommendation from the minister of justice led finally to the resignation of the minister, along with others. Ebbe Carlsson's trail proved to be a variation of the Kurdish hypothesis, this time even more clearly backed by government representatives.

So, one scandal opened up another, but while they have been peeling away like an onion, we are not getting closer to the truth. Rather, the path to the murderer is being blocked by one scandal after another, which all have to be investigated both by the prosecutors and the parliament's constitutional committee.

Now, all sections of the bourgeoisie and the top echelons of the social democracy are clearly hoping that the murderer will not be found, or at least not turn out to be a policeman. The police and judiciary have so committed themselves to defending their own people that a non-partisan investigation would find the entire legal system a solid brick wall.

There is no freedom of speech when it comes to the murder of Olof Palme. A witness reported seeing a policeman just before the murder. Neither the police nor the mass media reacted. Then, the witness wrote a book, naming the policeman, and three left-wing papers published the information — the Workers' Communist Party paper *Norrskensflaman*; the Communist



Olof Palme (DR)

## State sues Socialist Party paper

**THE NEWSPAPER of the Swedish section of the Fourth International, *Internationalen*, has come under attack from the state for what it has written about the investigation of the Palme assassination. As we go to press, it is about to be taken to court on charges of aggravated libel of policemen.**

**The following interview about this case was given to Gerry Foley in Stockholm May 12 by Gunnar Wall, a member of the staff of *Internationalen*.**

### **W**HAT IS the charge against *Internationalen*?

*Internationalen* is being sued by the chancellor of justice, who is the highest state prosecutor in cases relating to the freedom of speech. He is accusing *Internationalen* of the graver variety of libel, which is called aggravated libel. This means that the publisher responsible for the paper could be sent to jail if we are convicted.

That has not happened in Sweden in a number of years, and it is rather unlikely. But in the related libel cases against two other left-wing papers, the prosecutor has argued that the publishers should be sent to jail.

### ■ For how long?

He never specified. The maximum is two years. No-one has been sentenced on such charges in Sweden for 25 years. In the 1970s, two journalists were sent to jail because they had exposed an illegal intelligence operation. Then, the publisher of the paper was not taken to court. Instead they sued the two journalists, who got sentenc-

es of a year. In fact, our publisher is facing the threat of a jail sentence because of what *Internationalen* has written.

### ■ Is the real threat jail or high fines?

There is also a danger of fines. Fines will not be any substantial amount [in the chancellor for justice's suit]. The more serious problem is that the four cops that have sued us are asking for compensation [and whose suits have been taken under the chancellor's case]. Together, they are asking for 400,000 crowns [about \$80,000]. *Internationalen* also faces the threat of having to pay the cops' court costs.

There is not a big risk of any jail sentence, or that we will have to pay the full amount that the cops have asked, because they have asked for a much higher amount of money than is ever paid out in libel cases. By way of example, the weekly newspaper of the KPML-r, *Proletären*, got its sentence yesterday. The cops asked them for a million and a half crowns. They got 165,000.

One of the articles in *Proletären* was declared aggravated libel. Some others were ruled libel, and more than half were exonerated. So, even if our two articles are ruled to be aggravated libel, such a sum is absolutely unrealistic. But still there is a threat, because even if we had to pay a smaller amount of money, that would effect our possibilities to publish a paper of the quality that we have now.

### ■ What exactly did you publish that is supposed to amount to aggravated libel?

We are supposed to have described four cops as accomplices in the Palme murder. We have written a number of articles on the Palme case, and two of these articles (in issue 49, 1987 and issue 2, 1988) have been sued. We have asked a number of questions about the authorities' investigation of the Palme case.

There are a number of things that seem more and more scandalous. One of these is the possible implication of members of the Stockholm police force in the murder, or in a cover-up, or helping the murderer get away. A number of witnesses' stories point to the possibility of some sort of police involvement.

All this has to be seen in relation to the background of the case — the scapegoating of a Kurdish organization and other scandalous things which give the impression that the authorities are not really interested in getting the true facts about what happened.

### ■ So you wrote about the bizarre aspects of the assassination and the investigation, not that these four cops were implicated?

Yes. Then the question about the cops began to come up during 1987, when more and more people were starting to have serious doubts about what was really going on in the investigation. That was after the res-

League-Marxist Leninist paper *Proletären*; and *Internationalen*, the paper of the Socialist Party, Swedish section of the Fourth International. The witness was sued by the two policeman, along with *Norrskensflamman*. Then, the chancellor for justice initiated a case against the other two papers for aggravated libel, taking over individual suits against them by the policemen.

The case against *Proletären* has just concluded, and the others will soon be heard. In the *Proletären* case, where the defendants were allowed to call witnesses under oath, several points were revealed that cast even more suspicion on the police. In connection with these prosecutions, a campaign for press freedom is being conducted in Sweden, along with collections for the papers under attack.

Olof Palme's murder has given rise to conflicts on a scale never seen before in Sweden. A significant minority of independent journalists and others are convinced that the judicial system is covering up for the murderer, while the mass media are keeping a tight lid on it all. And the state prosecutors have the support of less than 20% of the population in believing that the person who is to be tried for the murder is guilty.

In the coming weeks, the trials will be held against the left papers *Internationalen* and *Norrskensflamman*, as well as against the suspect. The authorities will do everything to cover up the facts concerning the police trail, and if the judgments are handed down in July at a time when the workers are on vacation, that may make it more difficult to mobilize people in defence of the right of free speech.

At the same time, pressure is growing for consideration of the police trail. In the summer, a report is expected from an independent committee headed by journalist Herbert Söderström, who has investigated a long series of circumstances and observations since the time of the murder. ★

ignation of Holmér, who was the chief of the investigation for the first year. He was the highest bureaucrat in the police in Stockholm at the time of the murder, and he took personal charge of the investigation. That was a rather an odd thing to do for a person who is not a professional investigator. He has a background as a chief of the security police and as an attorney.

Holmér has never been a cop with investigative experience and so on. In Swedish law, it is the state attorneys who should lead major investigations, and the police should be their helpers, so to speak. But in fact, Holmér succeeded in taking the leadership over the heads of the attorneys. He handled the investigation totally for a whole year, and devoted most of the police forces to an effort to pin the murder on the Kurdish organization, the PKK.

This whole case went to pieces after a big raid in January 1987. After that, it was obvious that he had no evidence. It had only been a lot of very loose speculation. So, he had to resign, and from then on a lot of newspapers started to be critical of the whole investigation. A lot of indices that pointed to something being wrong were raised in the newspapers and on the radio. So, over 1987, more and more papers started to write about things happening in the investigation and also about witnesses who had seen cops doing things that did not look right.

One of the witnesses wrote a book which came out at the end of 1987. And when it became known what he was writing, and that he was publishing the names of two of cops (who were later to sue us), the attorneys for the cops talked about trying to get the book withdrawn. His name was Lars Krantz. He was a TV producer, and he had been a witness to an episode during the night of the murder. Also some pictures of the cops were published in two other left-wing papers.

At *Internationalen*, we came to the conclusion that there was going to be an attempt to gag the press, and so we also published basic facts about what was called the "police trail." That was to help to make it impossible for the authorities to suppress information about this. We did not know if we would be sued, but we formulated the things we wrote in a very exact way, and we were careful not to say that these cops were involved or anything like that.

We only pointed to a number of facts, and the lack of investigation of these facts. And that was in the first article that was sued later. The other article, ironically, was part of an interview with a member of parliament. In December 1987, after we had published the first article, a statement was published by a parliamentary commission charged with investigating the authorities' handling of the Palme case, the Eden Man Commission.

The Commission submitted a substantial report at the end of spring 1988. But

already, in December 1987, it issued a smaller statement concerning the police hypothesis. They said that they had looked into that, and they had found no reason to believe that any policemen should be treated as suspects.

On the other hand, they said that they had no basis for excluding the police or anyone else who could be involved. But our hypothesis was that this statement from the commission was a political attempt to counter the debate in the press about the police hypothesis.

So, we interviewed one of the members of the commission, a member of the Swedish Communist Party, the VpK, Göran Svensson. He is no longer in parliament. He is a rather famous CP theoretician, and he had also signed this statement.

The interview was rather long, and we published it in two parts. We asked him why the Commission came to the conclusion that it did. In the interview, he gave more detailed arguments than any other paper has published. But still, ironically, this article was sued because we had mentioned the names of the policemen in it. That is the basis of the suit, so to speak.

**■ But now you consider that this is a question of freedom of the press. You are running a defence campaign that is not purely a legal one. What kind of support have you had?**

Ourselves and the other two papers who have been sued agreed on a statement, and we asked people to sign it. We have got signatures from 500 well-known people — for example, the chief editor of the social democratic daily *Arbetet* in Malmö, Lars Enquist, the very famous Swedish actor and director, Hans Alfredsson, and a number of authors, such as Werner Aspenström.

**■ What about support from journalists' organizations?**

Not from the central journalists' union. But we have been supported by the former editor of *Dagens Nyheter*, Olof Lagercranz, who is also a well-known author and has a very high standing.

**■ He is the one who wrote an acclaimed biography of Strindberg?**

Yes. And a number of other journalists signed. But most of them were not journalists in the daily press. I think this may be because most of the big media have been cautious on this for a number of reasons, and it is not easy for journalists to sign. So, most of the people who have signed are so-called free professionals, like artists, authors, actors and so on.

But also we have statements from the journalists' clubs on a number of papers, and from the executive board of one of the two big unions on the Swedish radio corporation, the SIF, which represents part of the journalists and all of the technical

staff. It organizes white-collar workers in industry, everyone from typists to the bosses. Many of the TV journalists, on the other hand, are in the journalists' union.

**■ Do you link the three cases?**

The statement is a common one on the basis of defending freedom of speech and of the press. We thought that, even if we have differences with the other papers, the basis of the attacks was the same. It was an attempt to stop a free debate about this issue. We have no reason to dissociate ourselves from the other papers, even if we say that we wouldn't have handled the story the way they did.

**■ But your legal case is different?**

Yes. There are three trials, and not one. We don't have any responsibility for the others.

**■ They did different things? They accused specific policemen of being implicated?**

*Norrskensflamman's* case is rather similar to ours. *Proletären*, on the other hand, had a much more aggressive campaign, including describing the four cops as suspects — not as accomplices, but as suspects. They also had their pictures on the front page week after week. And they distributed hundreds of thousands of copies of a leaflet with the names and pictures of the policemen. They ran a headline on the front page of their magazine saying "Sue us or indict us if we are guilty, or if we are wrong." They were more or less asking for a suit against them, and to achieve that, they were openly provocative.

There were both good and bad sides to doing that. On the one hand, they succeeded in getting a lot of publicity; on the other, they took bigger risks. I am not necessarily saying that what they did was wrong. But we only take responsibility for the things that we have done.

It was only us and *Proletären* who were sued by the chancellor of justice. *Norrskensflamman* was sued by the cops as individuals. The chancellor for justice's position in our case and that of *Proletären* was that we should not be allowed to call any witnesses. He argued that we should not be allowed to demonstrate that the things that we were writing were true, because it was illegal from the start to say things like that, since an investigation of the crime was going on. He was defeated in the *Proletären* case, because they were permitted to call a number of witnesses, including Holmér himself.

**■ Does that mean that you will also be able to call witnesses?**

Well, we have not yet come to the point where that will be decided. The *Proletären* case was heard in Göteborg, and we are in Stockholm. We have indications that in Stockholm the court is more severe. They will allow us to have witnesses, but they may be more restrictive about it. ★

# The fall and rise of the Pan Africanist Congress

**HAS THE Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) become a substantial force on the South African political scene? At least, this is what its leaders are saying. On several occasions the media has made the point that over the last two years there have been an increasing number of actions led by this movement.**

**Born from a split with the ANC in the 1950s, the PAC was profoundly weakened from the middle 1960s on. Its adherence to a socialism tinged with references to "African socialism" severely hampered its ability to grasp the new social situation in South Africa. But, since then, the growth of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) seems to have given the PAC possibilities for a low-profile activity in the ranks of the BCM to accumulate new forces.**

**In addition, at the 1988 congress of the country's second union federation (NACTU) there was an unexpected confrontation between the traditional supporters of "Black consciousness" and a current more or less supporting the PAC's positions.**

**The following interview with a leader of the PAC took place in March this year in South Africa. It has been abridged for space reasons.**

**WHAT IS your opinion of the new political situation, with the developments of the Afrikaanist position, and developments inside the Pan Africanist Congress [PAC]? Many people in the early 1980s, for instance, claimed that the PAC was disappearing.**

It is very difficult to explain the development of the PAC inside the country, because there are many factors that have led to its growth. The first one was that, when we were arrested in the 1960s, the PAC was still a very young organization. It was only nine months old, and at this time we were not an organization that was prepared for such a shock. The result was that most of the PAC's leaders were put in jail for a long time. This deprived the organization of its roots.

So, all our leaders were taken in. Some of them were deported and sent to the Transkei, some of them were released into the bantustans. The real leadership of the PAC was taken away from the urban areas and scattered all over. With the coming of the

1980s a new revival has taken place, because some of the leaders who were banned have now infiltrated back and returned to the urban areas.

Another factor is that, for some time, the PAC's activities were overshadowed by those of the Black Consciousness Movement [BCM]. This movement was very closely related to the PAC's way of thinking. As a result, many members of the PAC saw the BCM as the vehicle, as a bridge we could ride over. Organizations like the UDF [United Democratic Front] openly pronounced themselves to be working for the Freedom Charter, which is the ANC's ideology. Similarly, there was a feeling among many of our members that the BCM was the vehicle on which the ideology of pan-Africanism could be carried forward. It is not actually the case that the PAC and the BCM are the same things, although they are related. This led to many of our members, who should have been working for the PAC to work instead for the BCM, and later AZAPO [Azanian Peoples Organization]. It was the BCM who eventually put out some press statements saying that

they didn't work with us and that we were not the same organizations.

What I'm trying to explain is that the revival of the PAC's activities, of pan-Africanism, was hindered first by the banings and the punishments, and secondly by following BCM ideology, thinking that it was a PAC ideology. It was only when we took account of all these factors that we could revive the organization.

**■ What are the differences now between you and those who claim to be BCM sympathizers — AZAPO people and so on?**

There are some differences. For example, AZAPO does not believe in pan-Africanism: they see this as a dream that can never be fulfilled. There is also the question of ideology concerning the greater participation of whites in the struggle. Admittedly, in previous years when we were still very young, there was a tendency on our part to misinterpret the documents. And I can openly admit that I was one of those people in the early 1960s who thought that the PAC was exclusively a Black organization. But after further study of the documents and further discussion with the old guard, we discovered that we were actually misinterpreting our own documents.

Some today, like those in the BCM, view the question of colour as central, but we no longer view it as central. We see racism as an attitude of mind. You can be Black and still be racist and behave in the same manner as a white person behaves. The argument that white is the problem and black the solution no longer holds nowadays.

**■ And you think that this is the main difference between yourselves and people in AZAPO? Do you think that your approach to the national question is more radical, more correct, than AZAPO's approach?**

Yes, I think so. Of course, whenever we talk amongst ourselves there is a tendency to think that what we are saying is correct, and that the other person's point of view is inferior. I don't approach the discussion in that way at all. But if somebody can come and convince me that I'm wrong, I'm open to discussion on this question.

**■ From this pan-Africanist ideology, how do you approach the question of Southern Africa as a whole and what is happening today in Zimbabwe or Mozambique?**

The coming to power of Robert Mugabe, the leader of ZANU [Zimbabwe African National Union], has strengthened the ideology of pan-Africanism very much. Not that Mugabe was the only pan-Africanist in the continent. But the difference lies in the fact of the closer relationship between us, the PAC, and ZANU. Because they, the greatest of our friends, have taken over power, and from that moment things have never been the same.

Before the liberation of Zimbabwe we were somehow left on the periphery. But with the coming to power of ZANU we are now in the position of saying that we have a friend who is a neighbour of the South African state.

**■ But there are currently some problems in Zimbabwe, in the ruling party, in the government. Isn't it a problem for these ideas, given that there is still high unemployment in Zimbabwe, that the land question is still not resolved and there is the beginnings of a governmental crisis?**

Yes, that's correct, and it must affect us in the long run. But, having said that, in any society, in any government, in any party, there will always be contradictions. Sometimes the positive side of these contradictions may be overcome by the negative forces. But there is a constant struggle between these two, as Marx put it — it's a question of dialectics. In the long run, I do hope — and I have the greatest hope — that the positive forces will eventually emerge victorious.

The positions of the government nowadays, with all the economic problems that they are facing, are just temporary as far as I am concerned. In the past, I said the same about countries that have not been successful. I used to think that whenever a problem arose, it would be solved by such and such a thing. But I know the problems that are facing these people. Firstly, the economy of Zimbabwe has been tied to the South African economy. Secondly, the economy of the country has been highly capitalized.

Of course, there was a difference between the economy of Zimbabwe and that of other African states, in that there was some form of internal capitalism that was developing from within. There were some people who owned the means of production although previously they had been workers themselves, but because they were white, they were elevated into a position where they became the owners of the means of production. When these people left, then Black people crept in and they occupied the position that was left over by their masters. This is now a real problem, because capitalism is so sweet that once you taste it, it's not going to be easy then to say that you will take it over. This is now the problem that is facing them.

**■ There is a debate now in South Africa about the nature of the revolution, the question of stages, its social nature, the form of the state and so on. What is the position of your organization on these discussions?**

A simple Marxist approach. The revolution is socialistic in presentation; it must be revolutionary in content. Of course, there will be differences in this country, because the position of the classes here differs radically from the position of classes elsewhere

in that we have the lumpen proletariat — people who possess nothing. You find such people in any society. But here, because of the colonial nature of the country, because this white group has established colonies all over the country, we have statelets like the Ciskei and the Transkei, which has generated some form of internal colonialism.

In turn this has become a problem, whereby the rural people find themselves coming into the urban areas. If you look at these people, they are the people of "two worlds". When they come into Cape Town or Johannesburg they become part of the proletariat, the working class proletariat. But when they go back they become peasants. So they are the people of the two worlds.

Then the ruling class also is problem, because the term "ruling class" can be very confusing. In terms of the classic explanation of the ruling class, we can say that they are those who own the means of production — the landowners, mine-owners and all these people. However, here in South Africa, it's a different situation. There are some people belonging to the working class who, because they have been bribed over the years, over decades, don't see themselves as part of society as it is. So they now constitute a class of their own.

**■ But do you think that in South Africa what you call a socialistic revolution will be the same as in Zimbabwe or different?**

I can't say it will be different. I'm sorry to say this — I don't want to sound defeatist. In this country it's going to be worse. There's no doubt about that. People like me, who are already placed in the position where you supervise a group of people, are going to be bribed and become a class of its own. They are going to be bribed and put in charge of Woolworth, in charge of OK Bazaar. And this group is going to acquire different interests — they will be provided with beautiful homes.

They will then see themselves as quite different from others, and will constitute part of the new capitalism that is rising up now, and take over from the state of the whites. In the future, we may find that instead of a racial characterization in this country, there will be a class characterization.

**■ The overwhelming majority of people are working class, and they have started raising demands that go beyond just ending apartheid, to the ending of capitalism.**

**Do you foresee a situation that no matter how much the big bourgeoisie, the ruling class, wants to elevate the so-called leadership into Bishops Court [a luxurious residential neighbourhood in Cape Town], that the workers will go beyond that and push the revolution to completion, to the taking over of the means of production and the state? That**

**this could be a big difference between what will happen here and what took place in Zimbabwe?**

Yes, but that will also take a long time to come. Because the situation of capital for the regime will become so fluid that both socialist and capitalist forces will be competing for the same group of people, those I have just mentioned. But then this group of people will know much more about the benefit they will be getting from the capitalist than the benefits they will get from the socialists. People trust what they know, rather than what they don't know. What is going to happen here in this country, I'm afraid, is not going to give us enough time to embark on such programmes. In the long term, yes. But in the short term, these people are going to be bribing large numbers of workers. My fear is that things will happen before we realize what's going on. There may be a negotiated settlement in this country that will exclude you and me in the long run.

I just want to remind you of what happened in Zimbabwe. Nkomo and Smith, through the good offices of South Africa, were working for a solution that was going to exclude ZANU. It just didn't succeed because ZANU was very powerful at that time. But here in South Africa the ruling class, the middle class, the white academics and all such may work very, very hard to see to it that there is a negotiated settlement that only includes the ANC and those who believe in the Freedom Charter, and exclude all others. You can see this with the string of visitors going over to the ANC offices abroad. What I'm afraid of is that [in the future] we may not have the chance to put to the people the type of programme we are proposing now.

**■ What is the PAC's attitude to a negotiated settlement?**

The solution that we want is a socialist revolution, with all that that implies: where the means of production will be in the hands of the people; where the people will govern in terms of democracy — the government of the people, by the people and for the people; the ending of exploitation of man by man; and the centralization of power in the hands of the working class. This is my ideal type of revolution, and this is what all of us in the PAC believe in.

On the question of a negotiated settlement. When you go for negotiations, there is one thing that you must know. You must look in terms of the balance of forces. Only when we have forces that are equal to those of the ruling class can we go for a negotiated settlement in this country. If we were to go for negotiations at present, it would be just a matter of surrendering to the *herrenvolk* [master-race] forces, which is something that a PAC member could never think of doing.

**■ This question of a negotiated settlement is also linked to the international situation and the "new**

deal" between the US and Soviet Union of Mikhail Gorbachev. The PAC was invited to Moscow and sent a delegation. What was the purpose of this visit, and what do you think about the Soviet position now on Southern Africa?

I've not really studied it. But the first thing that springs to my mind is that all along the Soviet Union has particularly singled out the ANC as the only authentic party. There was the MPLA, the ANC, Frelimo and ZAPU. These used to go and they used to be called authentic. But all this was shattered by the coming to power of Mugabe. It changed everything. Mozambique, which was a country that was sheltering Mugabe, came to support him and not ZAPU.

The Soviet Union must have learnt a lot of lessons from what happened in Zimbabwe. The newspapers were making a chorus that the Soviet Union had backed the wrong horse. I think that now the Soviet Union are beginning to look at Southern Africa in a very different way from the way they approached it in the 1970s.

I don't know the reason why the Soviet Union approached the PAC. But for the PAC to visit the USSR is something that I commend very much, because if you keep yourself in isolation you end up being a pessimist deprived of knowledge and everything. There is no point in going to someone to discuss and agreeing to disagree.

■ **Coming back to the internal situation in South Africa. What do you think about the social situation after four or five years of massive mobilizations? Do you think there is the beginning of a downturn, and what are the short-term perspectives of the struggle?**

It's not a short-term business. But if we look at it purely in the short term, one can see that there has been a great deal of economic improvement of the Black people in this country. But having said this, this is going to be a very dangerous phenomena, as I pointed out. The capitalists are going all out to build a new middle class, there is no doubt about that. A Black middle class. They are trying to do this because they know that a Black middle class will be in a position to defend the interests of the white middle class.

In the short term, they are going to pump a lot of money into the Black areas. We are going to see many Black people rising up to become middle class, eventually becoming capitalists themselves. But in the long term this is just delaying the start. I really can't see how every Black person or every white person can be bribed any more. There comes a time when you become exhausted and even the means for bribery will become exhausted. They can pump a lot of money in, but that cannot go on indefinitely. The mining industry is a wasting industry and it has a limited life-span. After a certain peri-

od — after the year 2020, for example, or 2050 — there will be no more coal in this country to be exploited, there will be no more gold. The capitalists are beginning to think about this. They think that they can bribe people before this happens. It will mean that, even if in a period of twenty years from now, the revolutionary spirit will not be dead by any means.

■ **What is your opinion on the union struggle and the divisions between COSATU and NACTU?**

The working class in this country is still in its infancy. The divisions between the various groups, for example NACTU and COSATU, will still continue for a long time, because they are still controlled by the political organizations and by different ideologies. One trade union will come out and say "Viva Freedom Charter" or "Viva Mandela", for example, and the other one will say "Viva Sobukwe" [historic PAC leader], because of the different ideologies of these groups. NACTU has a pan-Africanist orientation and COSATU believes in the ideals of the Freedom Charter. Obviously they can never agree, because the solution cannot be found in the workplaces, but on the political level.

If these differences between the various organizations continue, they will be reflected in the working class community. The solution that can be found on the question of NACTU and COSATU can only be found when these political organizations — the PAC and the ANC — come together to discuss resolving the political stalemate that we have arrived at.

Also there is a problem of the workerist groups. They believe that the workers are the real people who should be doing everything, and therefore anyone who is not a worker is not a revolutionary. This is very serious. Unfortunately, these ideas have influenced many people. A worker, in my opinion, must cooperate with the political. Otherwise, if a worker goes into struggle without taking into account the political situation and the political organizations then they are bound to deviate from the correct path.

Going back to the general political situation, there is a great deal of mobilization, some rise in the forces supporting pan-Africanist ideology. People are no longer blinded by their previous conceptions. For example, they no longer tie themselves the Black Consciousness Movement. Now they think in terms of the activities of their true organization.

Another issue that has emerged here is that, whereas in the past we were an exclusive organization that worked by itself and for itself, we have now learnt to have friends. We have learnt that this struggle cannot be fought and won without having allies. We have come out of our mood of isolation and now we think about who our friends are. Remember the old saying that my enemy's enemy is my friend. This is now the position we are adopting. Our

position is not opportunistic. It is based on discussion and assessment of things here in this country. There are many things that I and my friends have done together, and these are the things that have led us to become one and more.

The situation in this country with the fall of the UDF means that there is a strong vacuum that has been created — not that it was the only organization that was working. But there is a big vacuum that has been created because nowadays, people who used to be members of political organizations have tended to become against us.... Now they are standing on the street corners as lumpen proletariat, completely deprived of anything, stepping on and dropping people. This is now the position that we are in today.

■ **Finally, what do you think about the situation in Pietermaritzburg in northern Natal and the problem of Inkatha [Chief Buthelezi's reactionary Zulu movement]?**

This is really a very big problem. It also stems from the initial political opportunism of the leadership. It is not a question of blaming any particular political organizations, but it demonstrates their immaturity of leadership, which must be condemned. People are dying there. The leadership of both factions could have come together and tried to solve this problem, because it is a terrible loss of life. Also, the people themselves should realize that they are being used as cannon-fodder by their leaders....

The conflict will continue, because Inkatha is very provocative, and it wants everybody to become members of Inkatha. They have destroyed many organizations. But I think that today they realize that there are areas like Pietermaritzburg that cannot be bullied into that sort of thing. Without taking sides, the violence that is continuing in Pietermaritzburg is a great tragedy for all of us. ★



AROUND  
THE  
WORLD



SOUTH AFRICA

**Save the Upington 27!**

THE NEW US undersecretary of state for African affairs, Herman Cohen, has judged that there are signs of hope for a "democratic solution" in South Africa. According to him, there is a growing understanding on the part of the Pretoria regime that no new governmental system can be set up that is not negotiated with the active involvement of the Black majority. With the comfort of this expression of confidence, the South African government is going to be able to go on tranquilly with its repressive policy.

Thus, the trial of the Upington 26 has just concluded with 14 people sentenced to death, including a young man of 20 and a woman of 60. As in the case of the Sharpeville Six, the tribunal ruled that there was collective responsibility in the case of a murder that occurred in the context of a demonstration (see IV 158, March 6, 1989). Lacking evidence but considering that all the demonstrators had a "common purpose," the white judges condemned 14 Black people to death by hanging and 11 to prison terms.

The Upington defendants who have been condemned have to be saved! As in the case of the Sharpeville Six, international pressure can prevent Pretoria from pursuing this repression to the end. This scandalous trial illustrates strikingly the hypocrisy now prevailing about South Africa, where a "process of democratization" is supposed to be underway. ★

STOP PRESS: MEXICO

**Campaign continues**

ON JUNE 3, the Mexican PRT announced that they would end the hunger strike by national and regional leaders that started on May 10 (see IV 163). This announcement followed promises by the government to release Eladio Torres in the current amnesty programme, and to reconvoke the commission investigating the disappearance of José Ramon Garcia Gomez.

A demonstration to the Ministry of the Interior on Monday June 5 to depose the 20,000-signature petition calling for the reappearance of Garcia Gomez and the freeing of Eladio Torres marked the end of this phase of the campaign, while announcing that it would continue with equal vigour in other forms. ★

USSR

**Pravda denounces Baltic Assembly**

FOR THE FIRST TIME since the elections for the Congress of People's Deputies, in which the Baltic national democratic movements demonstrated their majority support, the organ of the Soviet Communist Party published an attack on them in its May 22 issue in the form of a comment on the Baltic Assembly, a conference of the national democratic movements of the Baltic republics held in Tallin on May 13-14. It was signed by a jurist, Mein Miullerson, who is also a Soviet representative on the UN Human Rights Commission.

"Assuming the pretension to express 'the reason and will' literally of all citizens of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the organizers of the Assembly declared: 'We are convinced that...the democratic mass movements are the only guarantee of the continuation and irreversibility of a radical restructuring of the society'." Miullerson commented: "So the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has no role to play, as if it were not the CPSU that set in motion the mechanism for renewing the country in April 1985."

However, argument became more subtle as the article went on: "in fact, *perestroika* is advancing with difficulty, in struggle. But this is not a struggle of republic with republic, of nation with nation, or even of the periphery with the center, although the representatives of the administrative-command system are really trying, through quiet undermining and even going on the offensive, to maintain their former positions. And we see this not only in Moscow and sometimes in other places more than Moscow. We see it also in the Baltic, in Ukraine and in the Caucasus. And nationalist ideas and expressions, and still more actions based on them, are only strengthening the positions of the enemies of *perestroika*. Extremes always objectively converge, however far apart they may be subjectively."

In other words, if you want *perestroika*, leave the problem of reforms to the established authorities.

He went on... "Not long ago in the UN Commission on Human rights...in discussing the internal problems of the Soviet Union as a whole and the Baltic ones in particular, one of my Western colleagues

expressed what seems to me to be to be precisely the hope of many people in various countries in the success of *perestroika* in the USSR:

'I hope you will be able to solve all your problems successfully in the framework of your Union, and that they will not have any negative effect on the foreign policy of your government'." Miullerson commented: "Such concern has been expressed by other representatives of business and public circles in the West, who are concerned about the stability of the Soviet Union." ★

IRELAND

**United left forum**

A PROJECT of building a framework of left unity was initiated in February, sponsored principally by Sinn Féin. (See IV 160, April 3, 1989). These efforts led to the launching on May 3 of a united left forum called the "Forum for a Democratic Alternative," or FADA. The initials spell the Gaelic word meaning "long." This was apparently intentional, to indicate that the organization had a long-term perspective.

The invited speakers included Senator Brendan Ryan and Bernadette McAliskey, as well as the famous musician Christy Moore. The press release stated that FADA "aims to provide a forum for discussion of the major issues confronting Irish society today, particularly in this year which marks the 70th anniversary of the Democratic Programme of the First Dail [the formal political leadership of the War of Independence] and the 20th anniversary of the deployment of British troops on Derry streets."

The statement went on to say: "Over the coming months, FADA will host a series of conferences on the themes of Culture, Communications and Censorship; Poverty; Trade Unions; and Women."

In the Dublin Community Workers Co-op newsletter, John Meehan, a leader of the Irish section of the Fourth International, made the following comment about the implications of the launching of FADA:

"We should seek British military withdrawal from the North, but there is no real chance of achieving this unless an all-Ireland mass movement starts to be built.

"This is the big unresolved question lurking behind the FADA debates. As a beginning there could be discussion of forms of electoral unity, elaborating a platform which tackles both the economic and social issues and the issues of repression both North and South.

"If the right can unite on essential issues...surely the left can do the same and give some hope to the many impoverished victims of partition, including the millions who had no choice but the boat and the plane [emigration]."

Further information can be obtained from FADA, PO Box 2537, Dublin 7, Ireland. ★

## Spanish state: Eighth congress of the LCR

# Enthusiasm, militancy and self-confidence

**THE CONGRESS** of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR, section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state), was held in Santander from May 19-21. It was attended by more than 200 delegates, as well as about a hundred guests, coming mainly from Euskadi, Catalonia and Galicia.

**DANIEL BENSARD**

IT WAS striking that at the congress the numbers of men and women were nearly equal. Nearly half the delegates were women. Another notable feature was the unity of the generations. Although a few had fallen by the wayside, the "young veterans" of the struggle against Francoism were much evidence. They have been welded together by 25 years of common battles and trials. Now they have been joined by the young guard of more recent mobilizations. About 20 per cent of the delegates were under 23 years of age.

Many guests from sections of the Fourth International (Italy, Belgium, France, Portugal), as well as friendly organizations (the Communist Movement [MC] and Herri Batasuna) followed all the debates of the congress.

The statutes of the LCR require the calling of congresses every four years. Unlike

the congresses of other sections, those of the LCR give priority to a few big questions and leave most matters of tactics and ongoing work to the Central Committee (even participation in elections).

Besides electing the leadership and voting on amendments to the statutes, this congress had four major points on the agenda — the state of relations with the MC, feminism and the women's liberation struggle, the national question and the political situation and tasks.

So the second major point on the agenda was around feminism and the women's liberation struggle. The high-quality debate that followed the reports reflected the experience accumulated over 15 years and the decisive role played by LCR and MC members in maintaining an active feminist movement, the contribution made by their close relationships with the women's movements in Latin America and the collective thinking in the framework of the Fourth International.

The presentation of this question and the documents were prepared by a meeting of women in the LCR about a year ago. The report and the theses, as well as a corresponding change in the statutes, were approved unanimously by the congress.

The national question was undoubtedly the thorniest point at the congress. The LCR has been long committed to defending the rights of the oppressed nations. It has never failed to offer solidarity to revolutionary nationalists who have been victims of repression. In the 1986 European elections, the LCR (as well as the MC) called for a vote for Herri Batasuna's slate at the Spanish state level.

Traditionally, the LCR has defended the right of self-determination of oppressed nationalities and the perspective of a socialist federation of Iberian republics. But, in view of the political situation and

the uneven development of the class struggle, this approach has left open the question of the concrete response by Basques and Catalans to the right of self-determination at specific times.

Since 1986, the national congresses of the LKI and the Lliga [Fourth Internationalist organizations in the Basque country and in Catalonia respectively] have adopted the demand for independence. The congress therefore had to deal with this question. And without challenging the sovereignty of the national bodies on questions concerning them, it had to lay out the general lines of a programmatic approach for the Spanish state as a whole.

In so doing, the congress had to steer clear of two dangers. One was looking at things exclusively from the standpoint of the class struggle in the Spanish state. In the policies of the reformist parties, this has meant in practice opposing the democratic demands of the oppressed nationalities. The other was adopting the outlook of the nationalist currents who are waging a liberation struggle on their own turf without any regard for (and sometimes to the detriment of) the common class struggle against the Spanish state.

The report and theses defined the Spanish state as a belated and uncompleted nation-state. They adopted the demand of independence for Catalonia and Euskadi (the parts in both the Spanish and French states). But this raised a problem: On the basis of what criteria could this demand be extended to Galicia, the Canary Islands and Andalusia?

The documents established a distinction between the historic nations, defined not by formal criteria but by history, and mobilizations around the national question. This was one of the most animated points in the discussion.

The documents, along with their organizational implications, were finally adopted virtually unanimously. There are now three sovereign Fourth Internationalist organizations in the Spanish state — the LCR, the Lliga in Catalonia and the LKI in Euskadi, which together form the section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state. In a common congress, they elected a Central Committee made up in part of members elected by the entire congress and in part of members delegated by the Lliga and the LKI.

Finally, the political resolution, which dealt mainly with the Single European Act (SEA) and the social situation following the successful general strike of December 14, 1988, was adopted unanimously. It explained why the LCR rejects the SEA, at the same time as not getting entangled in one or a number of chauvinisms by turning its back on Europe. Moreover, the LCR, the LKI and the Lliga are calling for a vote for Herri Batasuna in the coming European elections.

Overall, this Eighth Congress reflected the recovery of enthusiasm, militancy and self-confidence after the traumas of the post-Franco period. ★

**4** NEWS FROM THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

# Chinese bureaucrats resort to bloody repression

**N**O GOVERNMENT can maintain its control over society for long by violence alone, however ruthless. Even the regime of the Polish bureaucracy, which for a period forced workers to work at gunpoint, had to finally recognize this and try to survive through a deal with a section of the leadership of the anti-bureaucratic masses. That was reflected by the elections that took place in Poland at almost the same time as the massacre in Peking. The leadership of the Soviet bureaucracy has also recognized this, and is trying by various means to regain some sort of democratic legitimacy.

The bureaucratic rulers in the so-called socialist states find themselves in a more and more impossible situation. They did not gain their power and the privileges that derive from it from organizing economic development, as the capitalists did. They gained it as a result of the struggles and sacrifices of the masses in whose name they rule. But they robbed them of their political rights.

These bureaucracies cannot organize a collective economy efficiently without democracy. But that would quickly sweep them away, as a long series of anti-bureaucratic uprisings — from East Berlin in 1953 to Hungary in 1956, from Czechoslovakia to Poland, and finally the vast mobilizations in Peking — have shown. They would like to be accepted as partners by capitalists at home and abroad, and legitimize and perpetuate their privileges in the form of private property.

But their attempts to reintroduce capitalist market mechanisms undermine their political authority, increase inequality and thereby build explosive social resentments, as well as further disorganizing the economy. This was seen in the 1970s in Poland, where it fueled the explosive development of Solidarnosc in 1980. It is now being seen in China on vast scale.

The Western authorities that are today loudly condemning the bloodbath in Peking and declaiming "the evils of Communism" only yesterday were praising the Chinese bureaucrats for their economic policies. Deng Xiaoping's China was supposed to be an example of the benefits that a free market could have for countries deprived of it by collectivism. The Soviet authorities at least were impressed. Before Gorbachev's visit to

**THE BUREAUCRATIC regime in China has demonstrated that it is anti-popular and has no future. No government representative of the people would send troops to open fire indiscriminately on crowds packed together in city streets, or tanks to roll over them. Such slaughter can have no purpose except to terrorize the population in general. Only a group enjoying privileges at the expense of the masses would have reason resort to this sort of terror.**

**GERRY FOLEY**

Peking in mid-May, *Pravda* published approving articles about the Chinese economic reforms, and in particular about their success in attracting capitalist investment.

## Singing the hymn of the world workers' movement

The forces fighting for change in China, however, are not the ones that capitalist West looked to — the rich farmers, the new businessmen and the advocates of market reforms in the Communist Party. The vanguard have been students singing the hymn of the revolutionary world workers' movement, *The Internationale*. And the masses of working people in Peking and other cities have joined them.

The correspondents of the Paris daily *Libération* (June 5) described an insurgent crowd at a flashpoint in Peking as follows: "The fury of the crowd, in which there were few students at the time, was unleashed against the [army] vehicles. Windows were broken, tires flattened, the bodies ripped open. Between Xidan and Xinhuaamen, two army buses, three jeeps, a mini-

bus and two trucks could be seen abandoned.

"Arms seized in one of these vehicles were displayed. The crowd had neither slogan nor organization nor clear goal. A great part of it was young workers...."

" 'We are not going to let ourselves be intimidated,' a youth said. 'We don't have weapons, but we are not going to sit by and do nothing. We will fight with whatever is at hand.' 'Without violence we will not get change,' another worker said. 'We have to prepare ourselves. We are not afraid of violence.' "

Later on, they picked out a figure among the young people resisting the military: "He is 18, and belongs to the independent workers' union. He has a red flag around his head. He is wearing a long back jacket, which he opens with a triumphant smile to show the four Molotov cocktails in his belt."

It hardly likely that this is what Western business circles were hoping would come out of the Chinese regime's belated recognition of the beauties of the capitalist market and imperialist investment. Some Western commentators have been quick to explain away the problem by saying that the Chinese made the mistake of introducing free-enterprise reforms without an increase in democratic rights, without *glasnost*.

But even Gorbachev's *glasnost* does not as yet seem to have been applied to the events in China. The official Soviet press, reportedly, has repeated the Chinese regime's Stalinist-style slanders against those resisting the military takeover.

What has happened in China is the nightmare of Gorbachev and the Soviet bureaucracy. It could (and will) be their future. That is why they have tried by a number of means to suppress independent mass mobilizations in the Soviet Union.

Whatever the outcome of the present crisis in China, it is now glaringly obvious that bureaucratic rule in that country — or in the other so-called socialist countries or "people's democracies" — has no future. And their future is not capitalism either. These regimes cannot be reformed. They have to be overthrown. And it is the workers and youth who will overthrow them, like the fighting young workers of Peking, who are unlikely builders of capitalism. They will build a system that genuinely reflects their aspirations. ★