

International VIEWPOINT

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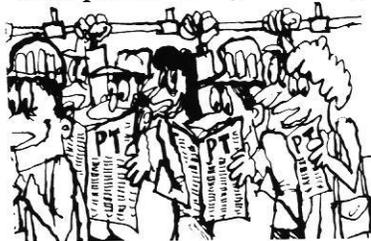
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International VIEWPOINT

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Legacy of a great revolutionary

TWENTY YEARS AGO, on October 8, 1967, Ernesto "Che" Guevara was wounded in the Higuera area in Bolivia, captured and murdered by CIA-trained officers serving a brutal and corrupt military regime.

His life and his death made him into a worldwide symbol of revolutionary humanism, an example for the resistance and protest movements. More than anything else, he symbolized the example of the Cuban revolution and the first leadership since 1917 to lead a revolution without having been cast in the mould of Stalinism.

GERRY FOLEY

AFTER MORE than two decades of Stalinist domination of anti-capitalist struggles, Che revived on a mass scale the revolutionary Marxist concepts of revolutionary morality and honesty, without which creative thought and action

and therefore the liberation of humanity are impossible.

In so doing, he responded to one aspect of the problem posed by the founding program of the Fourth International: "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a

historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat."

To say that the fundamental problem of the world revolution is leadership implies a moral aspect. Stalinism and the Stalinist betrayal of revolutions and revolutionaries did not arise from scientific error, but from a deliberate decision to disregard Marxist principles and method because they did not fit in with the interests and ambitions of the Soviet bureaucracy and the leaderships dependent on it.

Che opposed corruption by argument and example

At the level of political leadership the rise of Stalinism involved corruption. The reflection of this corruption on the ideological level was a pseudo-scientific scholasticism, which Che opposed both by argument and example. In his *Notes on the Study of the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution*, for example, he denounced "the scholasticism that...has blocked the development of Marxist philosophy" and systematically obstructed study of the period after the "establishment of socialism."

A scholasticism rooted in corruption can only be maintained if all critical voices are suppressed and all critics excommunicated and made anathema.

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The first 35 new 1-year subscriptions received in the post from November 1 will get this magnificent 1977 special issue of *Socialist Challenge* free. Text by Isaac Deutscher and design by David King. 16pp, 2 colours, on glossy art paper.

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EDITORIAL

Autumn sales campaign

SEVENTY NEW subscriptions to celebrate the anniversary of the Russian revolution — that's the *minimum* target of our *IV* autumn promotion campaign.

After our very successful campaign last year we are confident that, with your help, we will be able at least to double this target by the new year.

To help us reach this objective, we are launching the campaign with a special offer for the first 35 new 1-year subscriptions received in November's post.

Their free gift will be the special commemorative magazine (left) produced by Isaac Deutscher and David King.

We will also be making other special subscription offers at nat-

ional events. So let us know if you have major events coming up where *IV* could be sold and promoted.

The next issue of *IV* will include a feature on the USSR today, with articles by Ernest Mandel and David Seppo. Extra copies can be ordered to help with promotion efforts.

In addition to this subscriptions drive, we need help from our readers in extending our sales outlets for *IV*. Check out the left bookshops in your area — do they take *IV*? If they are interested, send us details and we will contact them direct about taking a sale or return order at discount rates.

College and public libraries are another place where *IV* is a must — all you have to do is get a few people to request that they stock it. *IV* can then be available to a wide range of readers who may otherwise never see it.

Finally, we still need contributions to our ongoing fund-drive to improve the magazine.

With enough cash coming in, we could produce an extra issue next summer, and avoid the long gap caused by having to cut back two issues a year.

So keep the money coming in! ★ **3**

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION 1917

Socialist Challenge



Thus, liquidation and excommunication of Trotskyists has been from the outset an integral part of Stalinism.

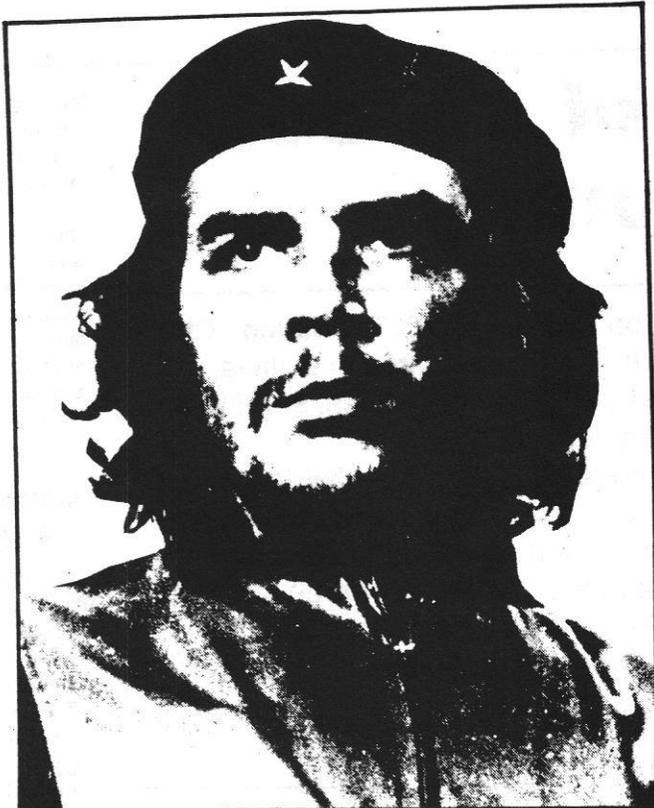
Consistent with his rejection of Stalinist scholasticism, Guevara also rejected the anathematization of Trotskyists. For example, the day after he attacked an ultra-left group of Trotskyist origin over Cuban TV, he apologized to "the Trotskyist comrades" for misinterpreting their views.¹

This non-sectarian attitude marked a dramatic break from the decades-long Stalinist practice of simply using Trotskyists as a symbol of every conceivable evil, with whom no discussion — and still less any collaboration — was possible. Such practices, moreover, were by no means limited to the Communist parties, but were often imitated by other individuals and currents on the left who were impressed by the power of the Stalinist bureaucracy and shared its cynicism. In Che's time, it took considerable moral and political courage to reject them.

By rejecting Stalinist scholasticism and sectarianism, Guevara could break the bureaucratic mould encasing Marxism and restore it as an instrument of revolutionary thought. He showed that to be a Marxist, it was not necessary to defend or rationalize, like a high priest, everything that Marx and Engels ever wrote. He was prepared to differ with Marx and Engels, in particular over what he considered underdeveloped analyses of the role of national liberation struggles.

Guevara himself symbolized the union between a higher form of the consciousness of national liberation struggles that has played a key role in the revival of revolutionary struggles since the second world war and a revived Marxism. That came out of his own experience. He worked in Guatemala under the Arbenz regime, which in the early 1950s challenged US domination of Central America. He tried in vain to organize armed resistance to the US-backed coup that overthrew Arbenz in 1954. The most obvious aspect of that experience was that it was impossible to win freedom from imperialist domination in the Latin America countries without breaking up the bourgeois armies.

In the aftermath of the Guatemala coup, which established a brutal terror in that country that has never ended, Guevara became involved in launching the guerrilla war for the liberation of Cuba from the Batista dictatorship. He



took part in the original landing, serving in the mountains first as a doctor and later as a commander.

In 1958, he led the rebel forces in the Battle of Santa Clara that opened the way for the triumphant entry of the rebels into Havana in January 1959.

Guevara predicted as early as 1959 that the revolution would continue in an "uninterrupted way," going on to destroy the economic and social bases of the dependent capitalist system.

The scholastic Stalinist argument was that socialist revolution had to be put off to an indefinite future, until national democratic development was completed.

An influential theoretician of the Cuban revolution

Che became an influential theoretician of the Cuban revolution. In this, he was distinguished by the stress he put on the human factor in building socialism and by a courageous frankness in his analysis. For example, he did not hesitate to criticize the Stalinist regimes at the Algiers conference in 1965 for their failure to follow socialist principles in their economic relations with Cuba and other third world countries.

The revolutionary regime that Che was part of broke in a fundamental way with the practice of the leaderships of the previous postwar revolutions. It did not look to being accepted into the world status quo, to an accommodation with the imperialist and capitalist world. It linked its fate to extending the revolution against imperialism and capitalism. Che came to symbolize

that choice most dramatically.

Whereas the first postwar generations had become used to seeing former partisan leaders settle into enjoying the spoils of power and become bloated and ruthless bureaucrats, Che turned his back on the highest offices of state in 1965. Instead he went to risk his fragile health and his life in guerrilla bands fighting in Bolivia against "counter-insurgency" forces trained and armed by the world's greatest power. In hindsight, it is clear that he never had a chance, among other things because of deficiencies in his understanding of political strategy.

However, pioneers seldom succeed entirely. Someone has to open the way. Guevara's heritage is by no means one of failure. It is essentially one of victories.

In the Cuban guerrilla war, he showed that a small group of courageous and dedicated revolutionists could lead a fight that could defeat the police and army of a brutal dictatorship. That lesson was confirmed 11 years after his death by the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution.

Che showed that successful revolutionists are not inevitably corrupted by power. He and his comrades showed that anti-imperialist revolutions could win lasting victories, despite the ultimate failure of the greatest previous struggles in Latin America. He pointed to the way to lasting victory in his Message to the Peoples Through the Tricontinental Congress shortly before his death. "Real liberation of the peoples...in Latin America will inevitably take the character of a socialist revolution...The national bourgeoisies are no longer capable of opposing imperialism, if they ever were....Either a socialist revolution or a caricature of a revolution."

Twenty years after Che's death, his ideas and example are still growing in power: in a Latin America sinking deeper in debt and corruption; in the so-called socialist countries where the bureaucracies who claim to speak in the name of revolution are crumbling into dust; and in the advanced countries where the likes of Reagan and Thatcher offer "intelligent selfishness" as the supreme ideal. We will be publishing more about Che Guevara's legacy in coming issues. ★

1. Joseph Hansen, *Dynamics of the Cuban revolution: the Trotskyist view*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1978, footnote on p. 161.

Crisis cannot fail to ignite new explosions

PUSHED BACK onto unfertile land that they usually do not own, Haiti's small peasants are condemned to constant insecurity. They have to live from hand to mouth, and never have the means to improve their equipment. Often they have to take short-term leases for the land.

They are bled from every side, by the state and its pyramiding taxes, by food speculators, by Tontons Macoutes and similar groups of thugs, by big landowners, money lenders, surveyors, notaries and other parasites.

FILIP MARTENS

AFTER HANDING over the better part of their harvest to the big landowners, small-scale coffee producers receive only 40% of the price paid for the coffee by foreign firms, while their counterparts in Central America — who are not overflowing with riches — receive 75%! The remainder goes to the state and to middle-men, notably the big wholesalers at the ports.

The state has never used its tax income to really make investments in the countryside and help small peasants to produce. For its part, the bourgeoisie of the big towns, who essentially devote themselves to foreign trade, have never invested in the modernization of the country. They consume the profits or send them abroad.

At the bottom of the heap, obliged to sell their labour by migrating periodically during the year, the poor and landless peasants have always carried the Haitian nation on their backs. The origins of the Haitian crisis go way back. It is rooted in strongly hierarchical social relations and the submission to foreign powers. It has been marked for a long time by a prevailing trend of economic stagnation.

Land erosion is one of the most dramatic aspects of this crisis today, and ultimately threatens the very existence of the country. Although the population's growth rate is not extremely high (mainly because of the high mortality rate), the peasants are more and more numerous, and have less and less land. Two-thirds of the cultivated surface is in the mountainous zone and,

with every rainfall, the thin soil washes down in sheets in the torrents. Sediments are deposited further down, degrading what fertile lands may be found there, and making irrigation systems unusable.

This situation is essentially due to the intensity of deforestation. It is estimated that 50 million trees are cut down each year. In the 1930s, forests covered 23% of the territory. This had fallen to 7% on 1974 and can be no more than 1.5% today! Consequently, when it rains, less water soaks into the sub-soil leading to the drying up of springs; and correspondingly more water runs off, leading to floods that are disastrous for agriculture.

The massive deforestation originates

from colonial times. Today it is cause and consequence of a situation of poverty and of permanent precariousness. Small peasants super-exploit what land they can get, and cannot afford to give a thought for the future. Charcoal is the only source of energy. And selling charcoal is often the only means to get the cash to buy necessities and pay taxes. This is why it is impossible to solve so urgent a problem as land erosion without a profound transformation of the social structure and the system of land tenure.

Forcing people into abject poverty

Duvalierism was not an accident, but rather the fruit of a long history. According to the Haitian writer Michel-Rolph Trouillot, the nineteenth century already set the stage for three future days of reckoning. The first would be when the governments, merchants and foreigners "had so bled this peasantry that there was no longer anything they could grab without forcing the people into the most abject poverty".

The second was when "the role of the leech" played by the "urban parasites" employed by the state would "largely exceed the partial and unequal distribution that they had carried out".

The third would be when "the pretenders to the remnants of the throne became so numerous as to overwhelm the throne itself", and "where any political faction that stayed in power could only do so at the expense of asserting this power daily by violence....It was the day of reckoning in blood, that would congeal the exceeding of all these limits."¹

The North American occupation

1. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Les racines historiques de l'Etat duvalérien*, Editions Deschamps, Port-au-Prince, 1986.



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**IV 128: A SPECIAL FEATURE ON
THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE
RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**

YEARS

The USSR today

- ★ Reform and revolution
Economic reform and democratization
- ★ History and memory
The debate on the rehabilitation of victims of the Stalinist purges
- ★ A hundred flowers?
The appearance of independent reform clubs and committees

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(1915-34) removed the obstacles that had held back these occurrences. It increased the exploitation of the peasantry and the country's dependence, forged an army designed for internal repression and centralized Haiti completely around Port-au-Prince. The days of reckoning arrived in the 1950s. A

political and economic crisis led to François Duvalier seizing power in September 1957.

Thirty years later, Haiti is in the grip of paralysis, a generalized crisis similar to the 1950s. The economic crisis ripened in the 1970s, during which there was a constant deterioration of agriculture. This accelerated abruptly from 1981 onwards.

In 1982, the slaughter of pig stocks had catastrophic consequences. This was the result of pressure from the United States, and was done with its collaboration. Repeating the expression of the economist Jean-Jacques Honorat, it could be said that this operation broke the "underpinning of the Haitian nation", represented by the peasant subsistence economy.²

This corresponded perfectly to the US project: to considerably reduce that section of the Haitian economy devoted to feeding the country, to better integrate Haiti in "its" international division of labour. Haiti underwent a remodelling of agrarian structures and an unbridled penetration of capital into the countryside. The US tried to put such a project into operation during their occupation, but could not bring it to fruition.

The other side of the US plan is the transformation of Haiti into a "vast free-zone", according to the formula of present economy minister Leslie Delatour, who shares this objective. With his agreement, the subsistence economy has been — since Duvalier's departure — subjected to new hammer blows. The National Government Council (CNG) has lifted most protectionist barriers and allowed the market to be inundated by products that one hardly dares call "contraband" because the trade is so overt.

Each day boats coming in from Miami discharge tons of merchandise, food products and producers' goods in provincial ports that had been shut down for decades. The first victims of this traffic were rice producers. Because of the differences in productivity and the numerous financial demands on the Haitian peasants, local rice sold at a much higher price than the American product.



Duvalier has left but the Tontons Macoutes remain (DR)

The American rice is much more highly regarded than Haitian rice. It is hardly any dearer than corn, which has led to a drop in corn prices. Whether they grow rice, corn or beans, Haitian peasants can no longer sell their produce and find themselves being strangled.

The medium and rich peasants sometimes manage to invest elsewhere. On the other hand, landless peasants no longer have work and are left without resources.

Tens of thousands thrown out of work

The disaster does not stop there. The food-processing industry, whose machinery is outdated, cannot meet competition from foreign products. Cooking oil and tomato paste factories have had to shut their doors. That will soon be the fate of the flour mills. Still more serious, the sugar factories, which have generally worked six months a year, have had to close after just three months because of competition from Dominican sugar. Thousands of workers have been made redundant, depriving tens of thousands of people of resources — for example, the domestic employees of these workers. At the same time, tens of thousands of peasants who cultivate sugar cane can no longer find outlets for their harvest.

Smuggling has increased the divisions between town and country. Consumers, for their part, are seeing a big drop in food prices. Smuggling has created thousands of extremely precarious jobs in the port towns, and has given impetus to the "informal sector" in the big towns.

Although under Duvalier American food aid — the "*mangé sinistré*" — had already begun to be rejected, contraband today is a form of "imposed food aid", which is bringing closer and closer the ruin of whole sections of the economy and dragging Haiti in the tow of the US.

Miami rice is being sold today in

Haiti at below world market prices. It is very possible, moreover, that its price will climb once it has supplanted all the local products. Those organizing the smuggling — the military, some big merchants and haulage contractors — will then be making new profits while the Haitian masses will see their buy-

ing power plunge once again.

The loss of industrial jobs, caused by the borders beginning to open up, has not been counter-balanced by the development of an assembly industry. According to the economic plan that the US has drawn up for the country, Haiti should take advantage of "the comparative advantage" represented by an abundant workforce, made still less demanding by an influx of destitute peasants in the reserve army of the unemployed.

In fact, for some years in Haiti there was an impetuous growth of assembly plants in the Port-au-Prince industrial zone. Up to 45,000 people were employed in these factories. At one time, Haiti figured as the "leader" of the Caribbean in this field. But now it has to trim its sails. Haiti no longer enjoys the "stability" that the American employers so appreciated under Duvalier. Since this type of industry did not require them to make investments, a lot of these employers packed their bags in 1986.

Above all, perhaps, the industrialists realized that the Dominican Republic offered more advantages. Since the devaluation of the peso, the minimum wages of the two countries have been very similar. Particularly, the wages of skilled workers — who represent half of the waged workers in this type of industry in Haiti — are 50% less in the Dominican Republic. At the beginning of 1987 there were 50,000 jobs in the Dominican Republic's assembly plants, and like Haiti some years ago, the factories already set up there attracted others.

The crisis in Haiti is currently having some contradictory effects. It is accentuating relations of dependence, and making it difficult to build autonomous organizations. But, at the same time, it is creating some explosive situations and giving rise to a growing radicalization of the oppressed layers.

The extreme destitution of large sec-

2. Jean-Jacques Honorat, *La peste porcine en Haïti: de l'éradication d'une épizootie au grand projet d'antidéveloppement national*, Collectif Paroles, Montréal, 1983.

tions of the population is a major obstacle to the construction and stabilization of mass organizations. Most of the neighbourhood committees that sprang up in Port-au-Prince after February 7, 1986, have disappeared, or been taken over again by the city government. Some were diverted from their goals by individuals who saw them as a way of making a living. In the countryside, it is not difficult for people with a lot of money to recruit unscrupulous marginal elements.

The deepening of the crisis exacerbates the tensions that may exist between some oppressed sections of the population. And the absence of strongly implanted organizations able to unite all these layers is being felt sorely. For their part, the ex-Tontons Macoutes are very adept at stirring up and exploiting problems that can divide communities.

Problems of independent organization

In Haiti's present economic situation, the churches' "development" projects sprinkled across the country give these religious institutions a considerable role in the economy of some areas, one that they generally exploit for their own ends. Since the most dynamic elements are dependent on the churches, it becomes very difficult for the peasants to organize independently from them.

Despite these obstacles, the explosion that caused Duvalier to flee has not stopped there. It was the product of a groundswell that shook up all of society. Since then, there have been a number of waves of mobilization that partially paralyzed the country, interspersed with calm spells that were sometimes long but deceptive.

The movement is very different from that of 1956, when massive crowds came into the streets, manipulated by some demagogues. Today, the situation is reversed. The politicians try to regain control of a movement whose initiatives continually take them by surprise. The population's distrust of presidential candidates (who mostly served Duvalier at one time or another) is particularly illuminating. The United States, in thinking that it could quickly manufacture a "national saviour", was totally mistaken.

In spite of the problems, the mass organizations and some multiform networks have developed and shown themselves capable, in certain cases, of coordination between towns. This is no longer a privilege solely of the youth movements created under the aegis of the Church, as was the case during the mobilizations against Jean-Claude Duvalier.

It was the mass organizations, nota-

bly of youth in the shanty towns, students and the transport union, that were the driving force of the mobilizations this summer. The "Group of 57", who proclaimed themselves the "strike coordination committee", and were pushed to the fore by the press, have often been reduced to short-circuiting the initiatives of the mass organizations. It is the latter that have been the spearhead of the anti-imperialism that is one of the striking features of the current situation.

The attitude to communism has also changed a lot among poor people in the towns, reflecting a growing radicalization. In the countryside, on the other hand, anti-communism is at fever pitch, whipped up by propaganda from various churches. But, in many zones, the average level of consciousness of the peasants is higher than it has ever been.

The Catholic Church, which remains the only big "mass party" in Haiti, has been hit head-on by the effects of this radicalization and, since February 1986, has continually wavered in its attitude to the CNG. It has just condemned the positions of its own radical minority, which calls for a "people's Church". Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide's sermons about self-defence and socialism corresponded too closely to the needs of the hour! [See interview.]

The National Government Council has no confidence in the bourgeois leaders' ability to put an end to the social crisis. For them the only defences are the army and the para-military groups. Coming out of 30 years of Duvalierism, the men of the CNG know what they are talking about. The CNG is not, strictly speaking, a pure and simple instrument of Duvalierist sectors. It has its own interests, including economic ones in smuggling. But it has rapidly understood that the Duvalierists' and the ex-Tontons Macoutes' well-implanted networks in the countryside — where three-quarters of the population live — are indispensable for quelling the growing discontent, and that it is vital to ally itself with them.

It has often been said that the CNG has failed. Rather, it is the anti-Duvalierist bourgeoisie that has failed. Perhaps two-thirds of its members carry a North American passport. That is enough to explain why, in spite of the nashing of teeth in some sectors that have suffered from foreign competition, this fundamentally parasitic social class has supported the politics of Leslie Delatour. It no more has a political alternative to offer to the CNG than it has an economic one.

Indeed, what is there to say about the presidential candidates supported by the anti-Duvalierist bourgeoisie, except that in all the political crises Haiti has

gone through since Duvalier fled they have proved incapable of making the slightest impact? The anti-Duvalierist bourgeoisie has dragged petty bourgeois organizations such as the Parti nationaliste progressiste haïtien (PANPRA) and the Congrès des mouvements démocratiques (CONACOM) down with it.³ The project of these groups is to establish a democratic parliamentary-type regime. How could a "democratic" government, limiting itself to reforms, confront an economic and social crisis as deep-going as that in Haiti? By what means could it reform an army that developed out of the American occupation and Duvalierism? They refuse to face these questions.

At the beginning of the summer, when they had to come down off their cloud and propose a governmental alternative, they could not find anything better to do than include in it "an officer ranking just after generals Henry Namphy and Williams Regala". This only confirmed that, in Haiti's situation, the choice was between the revolutionary road and an alliance with the army (and, beyond that, with the US).

A party acceptable to the bourgeoisie

The policy followed by these organizations this summer is the same as the one that prevailed when CONACOM was formed. The official line then was to coordinate the mass organizations for the struggle, but in reality to control them. Its initiators wanted to create for themselves a political base for building a party acceptable to the bourgeoisie, the Church and foreign powers. And they were already getting support from Latin American currents in the Socialist International, and from "liberal American circles".⁴

The crisis in Haiti is so profound that it cannot fail to ignite new explosions. But today the petty bourgeois organizations hold the upper hand, and there is apparently no well-rooted revolutionary vanguard capable of offering perspectives to the mass movement, of helping it to coordinate and to successfully confront the Tontons Macoutes and the army. This is a serious deficiency and it threatens to lead to a wearing out of vital energies. This would facilitate the installation of a new dictatorship — perhaps even more savage than the previous one — the only response that the dominant classes and imperialism have to the Haitian crisis. ★

3. PANPRA, Haitian Nationalist Progressive Party, a split from IFOPADA; it is led by Serge Gilles and supported by the French Socialist Party. CONACOM, Congress of Democratic Movements, a formation created in January 1987, led by Victor Benoit and Serge Bajeux.

4. *Caribbean Contact*, April 1987.

Religious and political imperialism

ON THURSDAY August 14, hundreds of young people occupied Port-au-Prince cathedral, and seven of them began a hunger-strike. They were protesting against the transfer of Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide to a remote suburb of the capital, and demanded that the bishops speak out clearly on the Jean-Rabel massacre. [See *IV* 125, September 14, 1987.]

Jean-Bertrand Aristide — a radical priest in the Salesian order — was in charge of one of the poorest parishes in the town, and worked for many years with shantytown youth and homeless people. His popularity has spread country-wide, and for a long time the Haitian authorities have been demanding that the Church transfer him. There was a proposal to send him to Rome.

On August 19, Aristide's transfer was cancelled, and the following day he gave a press conference. We publish some extracts of this below, which appeared in the paper *Haiti en marche*. Three days later, Aristide and several other priests were ambushed and only just managed to escape.

HOW DO you see the relationship between your position and the general situation in the country?

In the Church, more so than in any other section of society, every person now has an immediate responsibility and a decision to make: whether to let the Macoutes' corruption go on and on, or to take part in the historic movement to eradicate it. In other words, what is happening now is the resurrection of a whole people.

Liberation theology is becoming a lever capable of raising up all the youth against a corrupt generation. It is the story of Jesus of Nazareth that we, the Christians in Haiti, are called on to relive today. In a word, we have become subjects of our own history, whereas we have always been only the objects.

Haiti's "historic handlebars" are in our hands, and it is we who are steering the bicycle. The corrupt want to force us to keep the handlebars tilted to the extreme right — driving us straight towards the precipice. But we, the young people, say in the name of our faith:

no to this interminable turn to the right. And we say yes to a leftwards turn.

What does this mean concretely? That we are communists? No. But does it mean that because we are not communists, we agree with those who are killing communists? No.

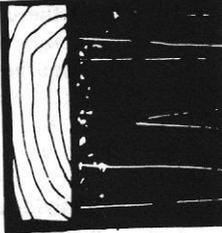
Voluntarily, freely, we are rejecting the corrupt right and advancing towards a left where the strength and the depth of our faith makes it possible for us not to turn away from society, but to join in, without the danger of being sullied, and to fight for a socialist Haiti. This is the only way that offers a possibility for everyone to eat, and to believe in justice, liberty and respect.

Without a socialist system — while we remain Christians — we can only consider ourselves a people condemned to die like dogs under the blows of imperialism and their local lackeys.

To attain these objectives it is important to rise above barriers of class, color and even political differences. Whatever political party people belong to, there must be a historic alliance that allows us to break out of the

framework of the National Government Council (CNG) and of the corrupt capitalist system that keeps it going.

Afterwards, we can see by what name to call the Haiti that today true patriots are calling by names that express their desires: a system that can guarantee honest work, justice, liberty and respect to everyone.



■ Let's talk precisely about the Church's privileges. For example, it is one of the biggest landowners in the country, and perpetuates the existence of a privileged elite through the education given in some schools...

The Catholic Church's structures are, in my eyes, an exact mirror of the old society, the society of the fourth century. Before the fourth century, the Christians lived in a community where everything was shared equally (Acts of Apostles, Chapter 4, Verse 32). Nobody was left alone or in want. For four centuries Christian structures were more human and facilitated relations where the gospel had a better chance of being fully lived.

However, at the beginning of the fourth century Emperor Constantine broke up this initial structure by giving Christians immunity from persecution. Automatically, a sector came forward within the Church to sing Constantine's praises and to pander to him, to him and his court. The appearance of flattery and corruption in the Church dates from that time. From then also the Church linked its destiny to the feudalists and integrated itself into their ossified structures.

Today's Church is the heir of Constantine's Church. However, it is at the centre of an enormous contradiction, which I will try to explain. The Church has accumulated quantities of material riches (land, houses and so on) which it puts at the disposition of its members so that they can live communally without being bothered with material needs. This is peculiar in that it allows individuals from very different social backgrounds to live, if one can say so, as brothers and sisters. At this level one could speak of a sort of religious socialism existing inside the religious communities.

But the contradiction comes from the fact that this system transforms small groups of bishops and members of religious orders into big land owners. From then on how can the Church preach agrarian reform, if it is not determined itself to set an example, to take the first step? To put the goods it holds at the disposal of the people — this is the only way that the people will stop thinking that the Church



National Palace at Port-au-Prince are more in tune with Washington's policy and also with those of the political authorities in the Vatican. This creates an alliance of two imperialisms: religious and political.

Consequently, we must note that today it is not only US imperialism that is out to stop Haiti from taking the leap forward that its people want, but also that there is a mafia-CIA-theology that the protestant pastors, particularly the Mormons, have been trying brutally to graft into our country.

Finally, inside the Catholic Church, even if our theology is not in itself an imperialist theology that wants to rule by fire and sword, there are a number of not insignificant elements who practice and interpret it in a way that we have to say is imperialist. That is to satisfy the two imperialisms defined earlier.

In conclusion, the fight against political imperialism goes hand in hand with attempts to unmask religious imperialism.

We cannot let people tell us that when John-Paul II said "things must change here", all he meant was a modest "change of heart". These words must also include structural change. I must be able to interpret the Pope's speech into Haitian, make it come alive with Haiti's problems and relate it the difficulties currently facing Haiti, my country. Theology can be interpreted in a way that "zombifies" people's minds so as to subject human beings to the power of the wealthy. So, we think that liberation theology is the only way to reconcile all Haitians today, because it does not throw out excommunications here there and everywhere like the missionaries in colonial times — although this still goes on here.

I must not accuse Haitians who practice voodoo of sin, without first having analyzed voodoo from the viewpoint of my real experience as a Haitian.

There is good and bad in voodoo. But in the Catholic religion, do we not also have to take some things and leave others? Theologically, we have to pursue a thoroughgoing analysis, striving to liberate the passion and energies of the Haitian people. And this passion and vigor cannot exist without voodoo.

You always have to understand where interlocutors stand in order to grasp the real meaning of their proposals. When the Vatican talks to me about God, I have to first work out from what position it is addressing me. Is it from an evangelical or a political point of view? Or is it hiding behind an evangelical or diplomatic mask to further its political plans? ★

only serves a minority.

Indeed, the Church owns a number of educational institutions where an elite is trained which has produced some of the most reactionary and anti-people elements in this country, while at the same time we have an 85 per cent rate of illiteracy.

In the context of liberation theology, this contradiction is intolerable. At the same time as we, priests and nuns, live in socialist Christian relationships inside our religious communities, we must also help civil society to choose fairer and more equitable forms of sharing.

The land, the schools, the institutions — in other words, the Church's holdings — should not be at the disposal of a small group but available to the whole collectivity. If not, the gospel we preach is devoid of meaning, and the Church will again be a barrier to the changes our people are looking for today. The alternative is a purification of the political system where the Church would be forced to put its holdings at the disposition of the majority...such a solution will not be to its credit!

■ **Do you always call for an end to the CNG? Do you have an alternative to replace it?**

We consider the concept of an alternative as a trap in the present context. On the contrary, we recommend clear-thinking centering on the question of the need to fightback, to advance the struggle. What's important for us is through consciousness-raising, organization and mobilization to be able to create the conditions for real, if not revolutionary, change.

Then the alternative will be apparent, like a hired hand it will carry out the

people's programme.

■ **The source of the problems that we have touched on is not only to be found in Haiti. There are also the interests of the big powers. The Vatican is involved in your case. In Port-au-Prince, Jean-Paul II exclaimed: "Things must change here".**

These words continue to permeate the discussion on Haitian liberation. The Vatican representative here, the Apostolic Nuncio, is denounced today for acting against the "forces of change". What do you think about that?

There are no human sciences (anthropology, psychology, theology and so on) that are not dialectically related with the aim of orienting society in one direction or another. Even when the theology coming from the Vatican seeks to be a power for changing hearts and minds, there will always be a political science that will try to nudge the theological current in question towards serving its objectives in a specific region or in a given historical context.

Unfortunately, there is always a tendency to forget that alongside political imperialism there is also religious imperialism. Even though Jean-Paul II did not mean a change of government, still less of system, when he declared "things must change", the historical reality that we are living in means that we interpret this speech as an appeal for fundamental change.

However, the Vatican's political or diplomatic institutions don't necessarily give the same interpretation to the Pope's words. On the contrary, they are going to remove any political dimension from his words, because the policies being followed today in the

Rabuka on the rampage

THE SECOND COUP by Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka on September 25 escalated the Fiji military's assault against the labor movement and the Indian-origin majority community.

The first coup on May 14 was given legal cover by the aristocratic institutions established by the British colonialists and by the British Crown itself. [See IV 121, June 1, 1987.] Now Rabuka is threatening to shove the aristocrats aside in order to set up an unlimited military dictatorship.

The following interview with Mehendra Chaudhry, general secretary of the Fiji Public Service Association, and a leader of the Fiji Trades Union Congress, is from the September 4 issue of *Socialist Action*, the weekly paper of the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand section of the Fourth International. It describes the situation that developed in Fiji in the period leading up to the September 25 coup, especially for the labor movement. The overthrown coalition government was composed of the Fiji Labour Party and the major party of the Indian-origin community, the National Federation. Farmers and workers of Indian origin predominate in the vital sugar industry.

WHAT ARE the problems facing unions under the regime put in power by the May 14 coup?

The biggest problem we face is that the right of assembly is restricted.

Secondly, under the draconian emergency regulations that have been in place since May 14, the regime has wide powers over workers in essential services. They are required to work as directed, and this virtually rules out industrial action.

What about the sugar workers?

The workers in the sugar mills, in particular, have protested against the coup. The mills were opened [in late June] when the overwhelming majority of farmers were refusing to harvest the cane. The military was put into the factories in the guise of security. Naturally, there were incidents, and this led to a walk-out by the workers.

Those who were active in this were more or less blacklisted — about 170 workers. When an agreement to harvest the cane was finally reached with the approval of the coalition, these workers were not taken back.

They were told they would be once the mills were in full operation. However, so far only about 80 of them have been re-hired, although they all

ought to have been by now. So, there is some victimization of those workers who sided with the coalition.

This is happening also to those farmers who refused to harvest their cane. A large number of mostly Indian farmers are not being given their harvest quotas, which means they will not receive any payments until much later in the season. It is a punitive measure.

What is the level of support now for the ousted coalition government?

I think we have consolidated and increased our support. The Indian community is solidly behind the coalition. This includes many who supported the Alliance government in the past, because the question of survival of an entire community is at stake.

Among ethnic Fijians, the coalition has also gained increased support.

Support for the Taukei movement [the right-wing, racist movement that helped instigate the coup] has dissipated quite rapidly over recent weeks. For example, a rally which they staged last Saturday [August 8] attracted only about 400 people, when they had publicized that they expected 5,000.

How is this support for the coalition being expressed?

Over the last four weeks, we have held

a number of rallies in the main centres.

This sentiment is also being demonstrated by the massive support that the "Back to Early May" movement has received from both communities. [The movement is calling for the parliament elected in April to be restored.] Over 100,000 people signed its petition, which was presented to the government on August 12.

Why did the Labour Party agree to participate in the governor-general's constitutional review committee?

Our initial refusal was because of the terms of reference. We negotiated a change in these, and only then did we agree to participate.

What has been the reaction to the proposal by the Great Council of Chiefs to disenfranchise ethnic Fijians?

That drew immediate criticism. Now the Great Council of Chiefs says it wants to modify that proposal. It was a stupid suggestion that would have entrenched power in the hands of a few chiefs.

This seems to underscore the reasons for the coup, that a layer of chiefs were determined to maintain their hold on political power. Is that fair comment?

Yes, that is quite a fair comment. There were people entrenched in political power and they used it to enrich themselves, their families, and their associates over the past 17 years.

The claim that the mass of ethnic Fijians have not benefited economically is entirely true. I think it is beginning to dawn on them that they have been grossly misled by these leaders.

What is behind the Taukei movement's calls for a republic?

They do not really mean a republic. They mean military dictatorship.

If the coalition government was restored to office, wouldn't you continue to face a threat from the army acting to uphold the interests of the Alliance Party and the Great Council of Chiefs?

We are under no illusions about that. We cannot act freely under the constant threat that the army will act again if it is not happy about what is going on.

It is a major problem. Since the coup, the army has grown from 1,300 to 5,000. They have been visiting Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and Honolulu to strengthen the army.

What if democratic rights are not restored in the immediate future?

Then it will become an internal struggle. The vast majority of people want democracy. We would need a massive resistance campaign. ★

AT ITS LAUNCHING in 1985, after four years of long and difficult unity discussions, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was undoubtedly already the most powerful union confederation in the history of South Africa's Black workers. The number of paid-up members at the time of the confederation's second congress in mid-July strongly reconfirms that fact.

In the space of 19 months, there has been impressive growth. From 430,000 paid-up members organized in 33 unions, paid-up membership has increased to 769,000 workers in 13 unions and industry structures, and about a million workers have signed up. [COSATU's objective is to group all its members in each industry in one industrial union.]

In its recent development, some outstanding features have been the broadening of COSATU's activity, the concentration of its forces in each industry and the maintenance of trade-union militancy, despite the repression. In 1986, strikes increased in number, duration and in the number of workers involved. The present year can already be regarded as one of a sharp increase in the economic struggles of the workers' movement.

COSATU in the forefront of social conflicts

Despite the repression focused on them by the state, the bosses and clandestine extreme-right groups, the COSATU unions have been in the forefront of most of these social conflicts. Important victories have been scored in the state sector (railway and postal workers). Moreover, in a three-week strike, the miners gave a gigantic demonstration of strength.¹

Broader categories of workers (building, domestic, municipal and railway workers) are now covered by COSATU. Others, such as agricultural workers and the unemployed, are being organized. Accelerating this process was one of the tasks set by the recent congress of COSATU. This positive evolution cannot, however, conceal the unresolved problems of internal organization and the important political debates that are stirring the confederation.

The attempt at unification into one

A milestone congress for COSATU

THE STAKES and pressures in the strategic debates within the Black unions are mounting alongside the tumultuous growth of the movement. The following article looks at the issues involved in these discussions, in particular following this year's COSATU congress.

TONY ROUX

union for each industry has run into considerable resistance. The fusions have been much slower than the six-month time limit at the founding congress provided for. This fact has been publicly recognized by the union leaders. Sydney Mufamadi, assistant general secretary of COSATU, has explained, for example, that the "general unions feel they are being pushed too fast and need more time to discuss practical changes. But the industrial unions feel general unions are dragging their feet and it is the central executive's task to try and strike a balance."² Fusions are still to be carried out or completed in transport, wood and paper, and among

over legitimacy and a split. This was a revelation of the split threat that could be involved in the political discussions that are going on today.

Differences emerge publicly

The differences came out publicly in the congress of the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union of South Africa (CCAWUSA) in mid-June. This gathering was to define the union's political orientation and establish the framework for fusion with two small unions — the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union (HARWU) and the Retail and Allied Workers' Union (RAWU). On these two questions, a line of cleavage appeared between several regional branches of CCAWUSA and the Johannesburg branch.

At the end of a congress marked by conflict, the positions upheld by representatives of the Johannesburg region were adopted. Thus, the Freedom Charter was not adopted as a programmatic reference, on the grounds that the union should not be divided. A current in the membership identifies with AZAPO's Azania Manifesto

or with the National Forum.

As a commentator noted in the *South African Labour Bulletin*, "congress ended with a number of branches obvious-



municipal workers.

In most cases, two things combine as obstacles to unification: One is differences in orientation. The other is that unions already organized on an industrial basis, and those general unions less prepared to dissolve and integrate themselves into the confederation's

1. See IV 125, September 14, 1987.

2. *Weekly Mail*, October 24, 1986.

3. COSATU document.

ly unhappy with proceedings and the decisions taken. These tensions were to be carried forward to the merger talks, opening up greater division."⁴ The result was that two wings of CCAWUSA turned up at the congress of unification with RAWU and HARWU at the end of June.

This unification congress was held finally without the endorsement of the Johannesburg branch of CCAWUSA, and adopted resolutions conflicting with those of the previous congress of the commercial and catering union. Notably, it adopted the Freedom Charter and decided to change the name of the unified union.

A single framework for debate and action

Far from combining the organized workers in the industry, the unification process stumbled over a political debate and resulted in a new fragmentation of forces. Conciliation meetings are underway, but this episode shows clearly the dangers involved when union fusions are combined with discussion of strategic orientations.

The founding of COSATU in 1985 did not put an end to discussions and differences. It did create a new situation by establishing a single framework for debate and action. But important differences in approach remained. This step forward in unifying the workers' movement was an essential element in the rapid growth of COSATU. It was a demonstration of the viability and effectiveness of a workers' united-front framework involving various trade-union traditions, when democratic functioning is the rule for resolving political conflicts.

This evolution was guaranteed by the commitment of a broad trade-union current to maintaining this framework of united work. Undoubtedly this was what made possible an evolution in the terms of the debate itself.

Consideration of the socialist perspective has now been explicitly put on the agenda for discussion. The great majority of the COSATU leaderships seem convinced of the need for the working class assuming the leading role in the present struggle. So, it is questions of what form and programmatic content to give to this general orientation that are arousing numerous controversies.

These differences, nonetheless, hark back to what are sometimes very different strategic outlooks. Into what stages should the ongoing struggle be divided? How should the fight against apartheid be linked to the fight against capitalist exploitation? To what extent should the trade-union movement get involved in socialist propaganda and in

concrete struggles today for workers' control? Such general themes underlie the current trade-union debate.

After being the center of ideological disputes on the fringes of the union movement, the question of a socialist perspective and of the trade-union movement's role in the fight for socialism has now become the focus of COSATU's discussion.⁵

Over these last three months, the discussion has centered above all around evaluating the content and function of the Freedom Charter, the political program of the ANC, as well as the Chartist current that it influences and which dominates the mass movement. This was illustrated throughout the industrial union congresses that preceded COSATU's Second Congress.

All currents in the trade-union movement recognize the minimal nature of the Freedom Charter's demands. Nonetheless, several orientations toward it are emerging. An initial position seems to be to view the adoption of the Freedom Charter by COSATU as an end in itself. This program of democratic demands is judged sufficient to carry through the struggle's democratic stage. As for the question of a socialist perspective, it is simply not supposed to be on the agenda.

In two other approaches, the Charter is seen as an element in mobilizing against national oppression and exploitation. In a general way, the positions taken by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) can be put in this category.⁶ But these positions diverge over the question of how adequate the Freedom Charter is programmatically for a growing over of the struggle into a fight for socialism. They also diverge over the question of the spontaneous social dynamic that could be touched off by a concrete application of this document.

Debate over the Freedom Charter

Finally, another current opposes adopting the Charter or any political document, on the grounds that this would be a divisive factor in the union movement and that the debate on these documents has not gone through COSATU's rank-and-file structures.⁷

The discussion around these questions focuses around the documents adopted by the two most powerful industrial unions, the NUM and NUMSA. Both unions adopted the Freedom Charter at their congresses. Thus, their differences of assessment are not over the need for a democratic program summing up the aspirations of the mass movement — a function that the Freedom Charter and

other similar programs have fulfilled for decades. They are rather over two questions: One is the specific context and place of workers' demands that reflect the South African workers' movement's recent experiences. The second is the form of unity to be sought between the various components of the mass movement and the manner in which the working class should exercise hegemony over it.

In a nutshell, does the Freedom Charter summarize the main demands of the working class today? To what extent is it the single or best instrument for enabling the workers' movement to win hegemony over the mass movement? Should not the workers' movement itself define a programmatic orientation that brings together workers' demands with a potential socialist dynamic?

In this regard, the NUM resolutions seem to want to exercise a certain self-limitation. The policy of the miners' union was explained explicitly in that way by its leader Cyril Ramaphosa:

"A democratic, socialist South Africa"

"Our view is: fine, ultimately there has to be a system where there would not be any exploitation by anybody — a socialist system — but then again you still have to canvass mandates from people. We believe it could be incorrect at this stage to actually say we want this kind of socialism, put it down on paper in black and white, when it is an issue which needs to be canvassed on a much wider scale."⁸

Of course, despite this statement, you find articles in the NUM's journal that have a socialist perspective. At the miners' union congress, James Motlatsi, president of the NUM, said: "It is only in a democratic socialist South Africa that the working class and all the oppressed people will control the wealth they produce."⁹

One of the resolutions of the NUM congress specifies: "The workers in this country are not only striving for better working conditions in the

4. *South African Labour Bulletin*, Braamfontein, South Africa, July 1987.

5. See IV 111, December 22, 1986.

6. The metalworkers' union, which claims 130,000 paid-up members, is the result of a fusion between MAWU, NAAWU and MICWU.

7. Such an assessment was adopted by the CCAWUSA congress, a resolution of which says, "the demands of the Freedom Charter though important are limited. Endorsing either of the two documents [the Freedom Charter or the Azania Manifesto] lays the union open to serious divisions." This trade-union current — in which activists close to AZAPO or the National Forum have an influence — therefore resolved "to discuss at all levels of the union and our federation the importance of a socialist programme of action which will bind together all workers regardless of political affiliation." (*South Africa Labour Bulletin*, July 1987.)

8. *SALB*, May-June 1987.

9. *SALB*, March-April 1987.

mines, but for a democratic socialist society controlled by the working class." And the NUM does not reject the idea of workers' control, because it states, "the solution to the workers' problems was clear — they must take control of their workplace." In this regard, it has to be pointed out that there may be differences in the union leaderships on all these questions.

However, the conception supported by Ramaphosa seems above all to put the emphasis on the objective social dynamic of the democratic struggle. Going on from this, the content of the Freedom Charter, "a guiding document of the struggle against national oppression," is also presented as a possible basis for the workers' struggle for socialism, which is seen rather as a pre-ordained growing over of the national democratic stage.

NUMSA also adopted the Freedom Charter, but "as containing the minimum political demands that reflect the view of the majority of the metalworkers' vision of a free and democratic, non-discriminatory South Africa." It thus regards this document above all as "a good foundation stone with which to start building our working class programme."¹⁰ That is the nub of the debate.

Proletarian leadership of the mass movement has to be expressed concretely in daily struggles, but also through the workers' movement having its own programmatic references. NUMSA has, therefore, called for drafting a Workers' Charter that would sum up the workers' demands of the moment and define a specific strategic orientation. The union declares, "it should be a priority of the new union and other organizations of the working class to build a clear political programme."

Discussion on proposed Workers' Charter

Questioned about this perspective, the miners' leader Cyril Ramaphosa acknowledged that "a Workers' Charter which demands the recognition of unions and democratically elected shop stewards committees should be seen as complementing the demand on freedom of association enshrined in the Freedom Charter."¹¹

But in so doing, from the outset he limited the content of this Workers' Charter to certain democratic demands (the right to strike, union rights in the workplaces) that do not appear in the Freedom Charter. He seems to want the trade-union movement's contribution to end there. In fact, he specified, "Any other position to the contrary, I'm afraid, plays into the hands of those who, in the 1956 Treason Trial, characterized the Freedom Charter as a com-

munist and therefore subversive document."

The self-limitation proposed does not, however, seem to be motivated only by the threat of greater repression. It is based on a strategic conception of the struggle. It is clear that if you attribute to the Freedom Charter a capacity to set in motion a natural dynamic of the democratic stage growing over into the socialist stage, then it is hard to see the usefulness of adopting a program with overly specific socialist references.

But how, then, is the working-class hegemony over the mass movement that is called for to be asserted? Can this hegemony be reduced to the union movement adopting the general democratic program (the Freedom Charter) and on this basis forming a united front between COSATU and the Chartist current?

In the minds of those who support it, developing a working-class program seems to serve a twofold need. On the one hand, such a program would be an element in a strategic advance toward "the creation of a worker-controlled socialist society." On the other, it would give substance to the need to concretize "the practical leadership of the industrial working class in the struggle for the establishment of a socialist society."¹²

This is the first time that a major trade-union current has spelt out the content of working-class hegemony over the process of popular mobilization. This formulation is an important contribution to the debate. It represents an interesting perspective, offering, in the framework of trade-union unity, a concrete advance over the

purely propagandistic approach of those who previously evoked the goal of socialism. A good part of the debate is over this question and precisely over the clear limitations of the specific role of the unions.

Alliances and the united front

In fact, as long as the idea of working-class hegemony remains a general concept, everyone seems to be in agreement. Because it is hard to set your face against an objective reality: the size of the working-class in the social formation and its growing weight. But every different point of view gives a different concrete meaning to this idea. Who specifically is to exercise this hegemony, the South African Communist Party, the ANC or the industrial unions?

Moreover, behind the discussion on the Freedom Charter looms a debate over concrete alliances and the conception of the united front. Holding up criteria of representativeness, the NUM proposes a special alliance with the Chartist current. On this basis, it criticizes certain interpretations of COSATU's initial conception of organizational independence.

It is clear that in its day-to-day policy an organization like COSATU has to make a distinction between organizations that have a mass influence and actually lead a part of the mass movement and small propaganda groups that

10. SALB, July 1987.

11. SALB, May-June 1987.

12. SALB, July 1987.



are absent from the real battle grounds of class struggle nationally. But this is quite a different matter from trying to make restrictive definitions of what a "progressive" organization is.

Once adopting the Freedom Charter becomes a precondition for being considered "progressive," there is a danger of sectarian backsliding and divisiveness, including in the trade-union movement.

In this respect, some of Cyril Ramaphosa's formulations could lend themselves to confusion, as, for example, when he says: "At a political level, the Freedom Charter has been adopted as a guiding document, and if there is an organization which is violently opposed to the principles of the Freedom Charter our members would find it very difficult to regard that as a progressive organization with which they could get into alliance."¹³

UDF writes on "errors of workerism"

Political formations, both legal and illegal, are also intervening in this debate.¹⁴ A position in the United Democratic Front (UDF) has been expressed in several articles. One of these, published in *Isizwe (The Nation)* in November, under the title "Errors of Workerism," criticized both those union leaders who opposed the trade-union movement adopting too precise a political definition and those who too openly displayed their infatuation with socialism. "For the UDF, the problem with the workerists is not their correct call for worker leadership but rather what they understand by this."¹⁵

What this article rejects is the idea that "the leading role of the working class means the leading role of the progressive trade unions." The upshot of

this is a conception of alliances that reduces the role of the union movement to one element among others in an anti-apartheid unity based on the Charter.

Rising level of consciousness

It is clear that the trade-union form limits the political expression of the working class, and this has given a certain shape to the debates. But the growth of union organization and the rising level of consciousness of the industrial section of the proletariat organized in COSATU could offer real possibilities for overcoming this situation by giving explicit form to a mass socialist workers' current. A necessary step in this direction might be for the union movement to assume a greater responsibility in popular mobilization and political debate.

For its part, the South African Communist Party has launched an out-and-out ideological offensive in this area. One of its journals, *Umsebenzi*, for example, contains a clear admonition:

"The trade union movement...cannot act as the working class political vanguard. If it attempted to do so, it would risk committing organizational suicide as a mass force. We must therefore take guard against premature attempts to formally incorporate the objective of socialism into programs of trade unions and the federation to which they belong. A trade union cannot demand such a high level of political consciousness from its members or affiliates as a condition for joining."¹⁶

From this standpoint, it goes on to say: "The adoption by the recent NUM conference of the Freedom Charter correctly reflects the mass popular mood and understanding. It is a pointer to

the trade-union movement of a more realistic linkage between the economic and political struggle in the present phase."

This orientation flows from a specific strategic conception. The Communist Party views the revolutionary process as consisting of two stages, a democratic one and a socialist one. Rejecting crude stageism, it says in some of its writings that there is no Chinese wall between the two, that it is as important to carry through the second as the first. By this token, the working class must take the forefront of the struggle to guarantee the future.

The social nature of the democratic state, however, is not defined. For the CP, it is a result of the social forces existing at the given moment. Without denying what is obvious in this statement, it can, however, be said that a relationship of forces is something that has to be built. And the debate in the mass movement is precisely over the tactical way to build a relationship of forces favorable to the working class.

Moreover, the discussion on the precise formula of support for socialism to be adopted bears on the social nature of the state (mass democracy, workers' control and so on). One might wonder, then, whether a democratic drafting of a workers' program is not precisely the best means for assuring the hegemony and unity of the proletarian masses in the course of the struggle, and thereby to influence the relationship of forces. Do not COSATU's organizational gains offer the possibility concretely for mass education in socialism, for drawing broad strata of workers behind a workers' program?

Internal democracy and unity

It was in seeking to respond to this real possibility that the idea arose of a Workers' Charter. The drafting of such a document was supposed to make it possible to open up a debate of this sort without risking trade-union legality or limiting the trade-union movement's capacities for action and unity.

COSATU's Second Congress in July marked a turning point in the debate in the unions. It confirmed that the con-

13. *SALB*, May-June 1987.

14. These discussions are not limited to COSATU. SAC-TU, an exile trade-union pole linked to the ANC, has also expressed itself on these themes. Its message to the COSATU congress was described in the following way in the September issue of the magazine *Work In Progress*: "In a not altogether clear message the South African Congress of Trade Unions startled most congress delegates by saying that while they should discuss socialism, they should not 'elevate it to a policy.' Some delegates did pursue a rather crude version of this argument."

15. *Isizwe*, November 1986, reprinted in *SALB*, March-April 1987.

16. *Umsebenzi*, second quarter 1987.

Notebooks for Study and Research

REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY TODAY

IN THIS new NSR 4, Daniel Bensaïd reviews some of the fundamental positions of socialist politics: the role of the state, the evolution of proletarian class consciousness, the notion of revolutionary crisis and dual power. He attempts to demonstrate their relevance to current debates on left governments, the welfare state, self-management and democracy, and in the light of experiences in the 1960s and 1970s in Southern Europe and Latin America. Also included are extracts from articles by Ernest Mandel and Nikos Poulantzas.

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federation was maintaining its own orientation and its commitment to the internal democracy and unity of various points of view in the unions that was forged in the 1985 fusion.

After being adopted by several industrial unions, the Freedom Charter was adopted by the COSATU congress as a document that "encompasses the minimum demands of the democratic majority which lays the basis for the building of a non-exploitative society."¹⁷ This is a clear recognition of the impact of this document on the broad masses of workers.

"Encouraging the fullest discussion in COSATU"

COSATU also declared, on the other hand, that the fight against national oppression and economic exploitation are "complementary to each other and part of an uninterrupted struggle for total liberation."¹⁸

The debate over COSATU's political orientation is not closed. As Jay Naidoo said, "the immediate task facing the COSATU at the moment is to develop a coherent working class understanding of the Charter while encouraging the fullest discussion on democracy and socialism within the federation's ranks."¹⁹ This is a particular view of the role of this document.

However, the question of a complementary program did not come up in the debates over motions submitted for a vote.

Nonetheless, Jay Naidoo said that this idea had supporters in COSATU, but that its implications were not yet entirely clear. And he added, "If, however, most of our members wanted a Trade union or Workers' Charter, we will have to consider it."²⁰

The formulation of specific policy is thus beginning to surface in COSATU, reflecting the experience in recent years of a non-racial trade-union movement that has been in the forefront of the social struggles.

Jay Naidoo no doubt summed up the feeling of the majority when he said:

"In adopting the Charter, we see it as a guideline, not as a blueprint.... There will not be a suspension of the struggle for a non-exploitative society. There is no contradiction between adopting the Freedom Charter as a programme of minimum demands and the struggle for such a society."²¹ ★

17. *Weekly Mail*, July 24, 1987.

18. *Work in Progress*, September 1987.

19. *Weekly Mail*, July 24, 1987.

20. *Work in Progress*, September 1987.

21. *International Labour Reports*, September/October 1987. Jay Naidoo contributed, moreover, an interesting clarification of the question of alliances by specifying, "the united front alliance is based on agreement on the leading role of the working class in the struggle for liberation." (*Work In Progress*, September 1987.)



Stop South African coal!

THE THREE WEEK strike of South African miners this summer again underlined the crucial role that the mining industry plays in propping up the apartheid economy. It is gold which has been viewed as South Africa's central life-line. But today, coal is playing an increasingly important role, becoming the regime's second largest contributor to export earnings and providing 75% of the country's energy needs.

In recognition of this growing strategic importance of coal, an international campaign has

been launched in Britain by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) to block all South African coal exports into Europe.

STEVE ROBERTS

SINCE THE early 1970s, South African production of coal has more than tripled from 53 million tonnes to 172 million tonnes, making South Africa the world's third largest producer after Australia and the USA. This increase in production had the dual purpose of satisfying the country's energy needs, and creating a major export industry.

This strategy was particularly aimed at Europe. The South African authorities calculated that if they could stimulate an appetite for cheap South African coal, this could mean energy costs low enough to act as a further disincentive to taking effective action against apartheid.

The export of coal is directly linked to undermining sanctions. In 1971, the South African government announced its plans for the expansion of the coal industry in the 1990s. These plans were centred on the allocation of export quotas, linked to the increase in the handling capacity of the loading terminal at Richard's Bay to the north of Durban.

There was surprise and dismay among South African mine owners in 1976 when, out of a total quota of 20 million tonnes, Shell was allocated 3 million and a further 3 million were al-

TOTAL 1986 DOMESTIC COAL CONSUMPTION AND SOUTH AFRICAN COAL IMPORTS TO EEC COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	Domestic coal consumption (1000 tonnes)	Imports of Sth African coal (in 1000 tonnes)		
		1984	1985	1986
Belgium	12,936	1,801	2,197	2,136
Denmark	12,477	2,737	3,454	2,663
France	32,229	5,601	6,283	1,534
F.R. Germany	90,016	2,249	3,228	4,002
Greece	1,766	139	105	261
Ireland	2,248	23	21	(unknown)
Italy	20,467	6,045	6,376	5,392
Luxembourg	179	145	72	117
Portugal	2,158	50	104	115
Netherlands	10,203	776	892	1,536
Spain	23,815	1,636	2,244	3,979
U.K.	118,726	258	724	313
EEC TOTAL	327,220	21,460	25,700	22,044*

* Excluding Ireland • Source: Eurostat 1987 No. 7

located to Ermelo (a consortium of BP, Total and Gencor). Three years later the reason for the government's "generosity" became clear when Chris Heunis, the then South African minister for economic affairs, explained: "Export quotas for BP, Shell and Total have been subjected to the condition that they continue their obligations in supplying petroleum fuel to this country".

A carrot to bribe the oil monopolies

Thus the implementation of the coal export strategy was also designed to secure vital oil imports — a carrot to bribe the oil monopolies to maintain supplies.

Not surprisingly, these companies also figure largely among those who actually ship the coal to Europe. Shell, in particular, owns a large number of coal bulk carriers with which it ships coal to Europort; Amsterdam, Ijmuiden; Aabenraa, Antwerp, Taranto; Ancona; Augusta (Italy) and Carboneras (Spain). Other major shipping companies are BP (UK), Cetrappa (France); Bocmar and Cobelfret (Belgium); Carboex (Spain); Thyssen (West Germany); and Nippon Yusen Kaisha (Japan).

About half of South Africa's coal exports are shipped to EC countries. Italy, West Germany, the Spanish state and Belgium are the major importers [see table above].

Sanctions imposed by France (in 1986) and Denmark (1987) have drastically reduced the amount of *direct* shipments of coal into those countries. However, the response of the South African authorities has been to increase the secrecy surrounding the shipments of South African coal.

Neither is the coal trade limited to Europe. Hong Kong plays a crucial role in the transshipment of South African

coal to South Korea and other countries in the Far East.

Numerous methods exist to circumvent sanctions:

- semi-direct shipments — discharging part cargo in another port prior to discharge of the remaining South African coal cargo in another port;

- transshipment and temporary storage in some European port (usually Rotterdam) before shipment — on another vessel;

- import and subsequent re-export of South African coal by one European country to another, perhaps with a new "certificate of origin";

- mixing South African with other coal, either during shipment or in port.

Stopping the remaining 21 million tonnes of apartheid coal coming into Western Europe was the aim of a new campaign launched in Sheffield, in the north of England, on September 19. A conference called by the NUM and the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) drew together 430 labour movement delegates, including 103 representatives from pits and the Women Against Pit Closures movement.

NUM President Arthur Scargill opened the conference with a speech applauding the South African miners' strike and condemning the refusal of the South African authorities to let Cyril Ramaphosa attend the conference (see box). The NUM collected well over £375,000 from many European countries to assist the strikers.

Scargill called on governments in Europe to stop completely the import of coal stained with the blood of the 48,000 South African miners who have lost their lives this century in accidents. However, concluding his speech Scargill said that it was not sufficient merely to demand sanctions: "We, as trade unionists, should impose our own sanctions. We should take a leaf from the book of the Liverpool dockers and the Dunnes Stores' strikers".

The Dunnes' strikers were shop assistants in a large Dublin store who refused to handle South African goods, were sacked and remain in dispute with the management. [See IV 99, May 19, 1986.] A representative of the Liverpool dockers explained to the conference that, following an appeal by Ben Ulenga, general secretary of the Mine-workers of Namibia, they now refuse to handle shipments of Namibian and South African uranium into the port.

Action to stop apartheid coal

The conference went on to adopt an action programme including:

- Disinvestment campaigns against all companies involved in the coal trade, particularly Shell, the number one target of the international anti-apartheid movement.

- Action to be organized at all ports of entry.

- Research into sanctions evasion.

- A campaign in the European parliament.

- Action to ban all South African coal transshipments via Rotterdam and Hong Kong.

After the South African miners' strike, one of the best ways that militants can support their struggle is to choke the coal connection between apartheid and Europe. ★

[Further information on the campaign from: NUM, St. James House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield, Yorks, GB; Kairros Working Group (Coal Section), Kromme Nieuwegracht 10, 3512 HG Utrecht, Netherlands; or national anti-apartheid campaigns.]

Travel ban on Ramaphosa

SOUTH AFRICAN miners' leader Cyril Ramaphosa was refused permission to leave South African for the Sheffield conference.

The only basis on which the apartheid authorities were prepared to allow him to leave the country was on a passport of a designated homeland. Accepting such a passport would have enabled the authorities to deport Ramaphosa to the Venda homeland as an alien on his return to South Africa.

Strong protests from the British NUM and Trade Union Congress eventually secured the necessary documents for Ramaphosa to visit Britain, although, of course, too late for him to attend the conference. ★

AROUND
THE
WORLD

OBITUARY

Christos Anastasiadis (1910-1987)

AFTER 60 YEARS of continuous work in the revolutionary movement, Christos Anastasiadis died of a heart attack on September 12 in Athens. "For us, he represented historical continuity, experience and knowledge; he was an irreplaceable comrade and teacher," the Greek section of the Fourth International wrote in the September issue of its paper *Spartakos*.

Anastasiadis' activity continued through two open dictatorships, the German occupation and the Greek civil war. He joined the Greek Left Opposition in 1929. In the Archelo-Marxists, one of the groups from which the Trotskyist movement came, he was the closest collaborator of Michael Raptis, who later, under the name Michel Pablo, became an international leader of the Fourth International.

In the mid-1930s, he joined with Pantelis Poullopoulos — a leading Marxist thinker and fighter who came from the Communist Party — in the process that led to the formation of the Greek section of the Fourth International, of which he remained a member until his death.

From 1936 to 1942, Anastasiadis was jailed and subjected to internal exile, along with Poullopoulos. His imprisonment began under the fascist-like dictatorship of Metaxas and continued under the German occupation. In 1942, he managed to escape.

Just before the start of the second phase of the Greek civil war, in 1945, he represented the Trotskyist movement in an exceptional open debate with the Greek Stalinists. He was instrumental in the fusion of all the Greek Trotskyist groups in 1946.

Following the civil war, when all Marxist organizations were banned in Greece, he was the pillar of the Greek section's clandestine paper *Ergatike Pale* until 1959, when the Greek Trotskyists were able to begin bringing out a semi-legal publication, *Marxistiko Deltio*, which continued until the April 1967 coup that established the dictatorship of the colonels.

Under the dictatorship, Anastasiadis continued to work for the clandestine paper of the Greek section, *Ergatike Pale*. After the fall of the colonels in 1974, he was a regular contributor to the legal *Ergatike Pale* and to the section's theoretical journal, *Marxistiko Deltio*. In the last year, he continued to write for the section's paper, now named *Spartakos*, and for its magazine *Marxistike Seisprosi* (*Marxist Regrument*).

ΣΠΑΡΤΑΚΟΣ

In the last period of his life, Anastasiadis devoted himself in particular to the publishing house Protoporiake Bibliotheke ("Vanguard Library"). Among the books he prepared were four works by Trotsky (three on the rise of fascism in German plus *Whither France?*), the *Open Letter to the Polish Communist Party* of Kuron and Modzelewski, Pierre Frank's *History of the Fourth International*, and Ernest Mandel's *Against Ultraleftism*, as well as the Fourth International resolution on socialism and democracy.

He was also involved in republishing many of the writings of Pantelis Poullopoulos, and collaborated in the publication of Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, *The Crimes of Stalin and Literature and Revolution*.

Anastasiadis was the principal translator of the Greek section and its link with the press of the Fourth International. As a cornerstone of the section's theoretical and organizational continuity, he educated hundreds of cadres. He remained active until his death, including in the streets. ★

ISRAELI STATE

**Information Center
reopens**

SIX MONTHS after closing the Alternative Information Center (AIC), the Israeli authorities have had to back off and allow it to reopen. The Center was closed in February on the accusation that it had served as a front for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Israeli public opinion, in particular the press, was outraged by this unprecedented action. The authorities were quickly forced to release all the members of the collective who had been arrested, except Michel Warschawski. He was to be charged for "aiding an illegal organization." After a month in prison, he was finally released on bail.

The reopening of the center represents another victory in the campaign against the repressive crackdown. But Warschawski is still awaiting trial, and could be sentenced to 23 years in prison.

It is important that the international campaign in his defence continues. ★

IRELAND

**"Lively
debate"
in Irish**

THE REPORT on a national gathering of Irish-language activists organized by Sinn Fein in the



September 24 issue of *An Phoblacht*, the revolutionary nationalist organization's weekly paper, points up some interesting debates. The framework of a broad gathering of Irish speakers seems to have favored political discussion.

Two debates were particularly relevant. One was on "Building Socialism" between Eoin O Murchú, representing the Communist Party; and Pádraig O Maolchraoibhe, representing Sinn Féin. Seán O Flannabhra, president of Branch No. 12 of the Transport and General Workers Union participated as an individual. O Murchú stressed the need for discussion among anti-imperialist organizations such as Provisional Sinn Féin and the Communist Party.

Another key debate was between Father Joe McVeigh and Bernadette McAlistkey on the theme "Can Christians be revolutionists?" In its report in Irish, *An Phoblacht* commented: "The discussion between the two was very lively, and after what they said everyone in the hall agreed that the clergy had betrayed the poor." ★

INTRODUCTION TO BRAZIL FEATURE

General strike challenges Bresser plan

THE NOVEMBER 1986 elections were undoubtedly a triumph for the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), the main component of the ruling alliance. At the same time, they were a personal victory for the president, José Sarney.

THE REFORMIST left parties that supported the government, especially the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB, pro-Soviet) and the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B, pro-Albanian), paid dearly for this policy. They were left with very thin pickings indeed.

The Democratic Labour Party (PDT), dominated by the charismatic Leonel Brizola was weakened but maintained its general position.¹ On the other hand, the Workers' Party (PT) gained from its class-struggle policy, increasing its strength considerably.²

However, the adoption of the Cruzado Plan II a few days after the elections was to destroy the president's popularity and unleash a wave of angry workers' strikes.³

From January to May 1987, more than 530 strikes were registered, 11 of which were national strikes of whole categories of workers. For example, in March, the army went in with tanks to occupy the oil refineries, whose workers were on strike. Moreover, the navy intervened against the merchant fleet, which had been on strike for three weeks.

The starting point for all these social struggles, which were accompanied by violent riots in the country's main urban centers, was wage demands. In a few months, workers' buying power dropped by 30% to 37%, depending on the various categories.

The minimum wage, received by 42% of Brazilian workers (62% in the Northeast), is the lowest in the country's entire history. Today, it stands at 2,200 cruzados (\$1=48 cruzados on the legal market and 60 on the black market). But basic living expenses are estimated at 16,000 cruzados a month.

18 The draconian economic plan instituted in June by the new finance mini-

ster, Luis Carlos Bresser Pereira, is making the situation still worse.

The Bresser plan marked the end of the "unorthodox" measures represented by Sarney's much-vaunted Cruzado Plan I and a return to the IMF's fold. It meant strict application of the IMF's "recommendations" in order to put the economy "in order" and choke off inflation, which would have reached 1,000% a year if the tempo of the first six months continued. Its measures included devaluation, priority for exports (to pay the foreign debt interest amounting to \$108,000 million), cut-backs in public spending (except on the army) and "true" prices (a 50% increase in transport fares in June). This was to be accompanied by a partial, extremely flexible, price freeze and a very strict wage freeze, as well as abolition of compensation if inflation rose above 20%.

Promises of social justice and agrarian reform

For wage earners, the Bresser plan meant a new nose-dive in buying power. From February 1986 (Cruzado I) to the end of July 1987, workers' real wages dropped by 45%!

In the election campaign, Sarney presented himself as "the president of the poor," promising independence from the IMF, social justice and agrarian reform. Today he is discredited and the target of all the demonstrations, where social demands are combined with calls for direct elections.

The PMDB itself campaigned in 1983-84 for universal suffrage in the presidential elections. At the end of the day, it was an electoral college that chose Tancredo Neves, who died shortly after his election, to be succeeded by Sarney. This administration

was supposed to preside over a short transitional period allowing the time necessary to put the constitution into operation and call new, direct presidential elections.

But now Sarney is taking a different tack. He announced that he would remain in office until 1990. At the same time, he came out against the constitution that is being drafted, which provides for a notable reduction of the president's powers in favor of parliament. Already the army, the essential element in the country's political life, has let it be known that it was supporting Sarney on this matter.

On the other hand, a crisis has developed within the PMDB on this question. A wing of the party, known as the PMDB Left, joined with Brizola's PDT to launch a campaign for direct elections (*diretas ja!*), well aware that this slogan is as popular as Sarney is unpopular. According to a poll carried out in August by the magazine *Exame*, 60% of Brazilians favor universal suffrage for the 1988 presidential elections, if not before.

In this context, the PT's launching of Inlacio Da Silva, "Lula," as the PT's candidate for the presidential elections is cutting the ground out from under the feet of the bourgeois or reformist opposition to Sarney. These forces were projecting a broad front for *diretas ja!*, possibly around Brizola.

On August 20, the United Confederation of Workers (CUT), which supports the PT, and the General Confederation of Labor (CGT, reformist), called a general strike against the Bresser plan. The action was uneven from city to city and from industry to industry. Unlike Argentina, or even Chile, there is no tradition of general strikes in Brazil. What is more, a large part of the CGT, which was forced to call for the strike under pressure from the CUT, did everything possible to keep this action from being successful.

Brazil remains today in a socially explosive and politically unstable situation. In this context, the PT bears an enormous responsibility, both as a political party and as a force in the CUT.

The following documents are from *Em Tempo*, the paper of the revolutionary Marxist current in the PT. They were published in the framework of preparations for the national congress of the PT that is coming up in December. They take up the main questions under debate in the PT today. ★

1. Although it has links with the Socialist International, the PDT is a bourgeois party. It is very much tied to the big landowners in the Rio Grande Do Sul region.

2. See "Austerity follows November elections," *IV* 112, January 26, 1987.

3. The Cruzado Plan I was set in motion in February 1986. On this question, see "Stabilization plan fails," in *IV* 118, April 20, 1987.

Building the PT

SEVEN YEARS after its founding congress in 1980, no one can deny that the Workers' Party of Brazil (PT) has both greatly increased its influence in the main sections of the masses in the country and considerably sharpened its political profile. Nonetheless, it still suffers unquestionably from great weaknesses that impede the building of the party.

In a situation in which it confronts greater challenges and responsibilities than ever before, the PT is feeling the pressure of certain problems that have existed virtually since its formation. There are notable organizational difficulties. But there are also difficulties in defining program and strategy.

The following article, from the July issue of *Em Tempo*, is part of a larger contribution in which other themes are taken up. This contribution will be submitted by PT members in the Socialist Democracy current to the pre-congress discussion at both the state and national level.

JOÃO MACHADO

THE PT's fundamental task, the one that historically justifies its existence, is to politically organize the active and conscious sectors of the working class independently from the bourgeoisie. The party has an indispensable role. It is to



politicize workers' struggles, not by counterposing political struggle to immediate or sectoral demands, but by combining and radicalizing both types of demands.

This means making party-political work an integral part of the daily activity of the more conscious workers, to make the PT a forum in which comrades discuss politics and deepen and consolidate their class consciousness in order to go beyond the limits of defending their immediate interests. The PT is the place for them to organize as party activists and work out a political line for intervening in the various social movements.

The PT has an enormous influence among the activists in the social movements, the mass movement, the trade-union movement, among women, students, peasants and so on. It has many tens of thousands of sympathizers, who make up a not insignificant part of the politically active workers in the country. Nonetheless, the political activity of these comrades remains external to the party's work, very often being reduced to defending sectoral interests in immediate struggles.

Lack of rank-and-file organization

While those who make up the vanguard of the social movements are usually PT sympathizers, they are very often not party members. But they should participate in the life and discussions of the party in order to advance toward consistent political activism and to develop a socialist class consciousness. This is why organizational weaknesses lead to wasting the party's potential.

There is a consensus that the lack of rank-and-file organization is at the root of a situation that we have to overcome urgently. As a consequence of this lack of organization — we could say, the lack of foundations for the party edifice — our organizational structure suffers from three grave weaknesses:

- Separation between political intervention at the institutional level

(activity by parliamentary groups) and intervention in the social movements (activity in the structures of the mass movement by PT members who are organized poorly, if at all).

- A growing gap between the PT and the CUT. Activists who get no response to their demands end up moving away from the party's structures. The CUT becomes the place where the political concerns created by the radicalization of trade-union struggles are expressed.

- A growing gap between the party leadership (precariously erected on the directorates) and the ranks, with the latter being called on for hardly more than voting at congresses or mobilizing for the party's activities, such as electoral campaigns.

Rich experience and practical training

We cannot put the blame for this situation on the vanguard activists in the social movements. Many of them will join the PT but end up moving away. The problem now is that the party is not very much involved in the discussions and intervention of these activists in the movements they are part of. This impoverishes the life of the PT because of the failure to incorporate fully the rich experience and practical training that is obtained in the social movements.

These three weaknesses can become worse. We can only change this situation if there is a determined reorientation of the process of building the PT. To accomplish this, the traditional appeals for activating the rank-and-file groups are insufficient. There are objective reasons for the failure of these groups to grow and function:

- The party's structure continues fundamentally to be based on the directorates, which concentrate decision-making power in their hands. The groups are only appendages of the structure laid down by the statute on political parties, which still governs the PT's organizational dynamic.

- In order for these groups to function, they have to have an active political life, systematic political debates on questions of the day, socialist political education and an orientation for work in the various fields in which their activists intervene.

None of this can be achieved on a significant scale without the support of the general structure of the rest of the PT. Discussions have to go through the press, educational activities and the orientations of the party's secretariats and commissions at the municipal, state and national levels. The PT cannot have 5,000, or 10,000 groups, each one with its paper, its own educational program and its own orientation for the

mass movement, the union movement, students, women, and so on. Such tasks have to get a collective response within the party.

To achieve the level of professionalism required by such tasks, it is necessary to take the question of financial resources much more seriously, to view it as a political activity of the organization. Today, the party's material resources depend fundamentally on the contributions of its members of parliament, which is a grave deformation.

Political commitment and financial support

The party needs to finance itself collectively. That depends above all on the political education of its members, the development of an organizational consciousness and tradition that make the connection between political commitment and financial support. Honoring this commitment should be a precondition for exercising the full rights of a PT member, of taking part in the party's deliberations and meetings.

● It will be decisive to take a position of independence with regard to the laws on parties, which serve the interests and objectives of the parties of the ruling classes. We must structure the PT in accordance with our needs, and find a way to meet the legal requirements without undermining the party's identity. In particular, the groups must be our rank-and-file structures, and not the directorates stipulated by the law.

In order to attack and overcome these problems, it will be necessary to correct erroneous conceptions and positions on building the party. One such notion sees the PT as an "expression of the social movements." According to this view, the PT is only a "reflection" of the struggles and demands of the social movements, without any concern and still less any structure for promoting, impelling and leading these struggles. The party takes no initiative, being drawn along by the spontaneity of the social struggles.

This position means programmatic sterility, since in the name of "rank-and-file discussions and decisions," it rejects any working out of programmatic definitions.

At first, such a position could be justified by the idea that we were building a party "from the bottom up." But with the years that have gone by, this "virtue" has been transformed into a grave weakness. Our ability to attract

the masses that have become depoliticized owing to a great unevenness of political experience will depend on our involvement in the struggles, on a clear defining of our program. It will depend on the consistency we show in struggles and on our ability to unite the exploited and oppressed into a powerful broad movement.

This depends fundamentally on the homogeneity and unity of the activists around strategic objectives. If we fail to make it clear to the public who we are and where we are going, we will not become a political reference point and we will not attract into our ranks the millions of people that we want to organize.

A simple and clear programmatic definition does not run counter to the practice of internal democracy or eliminate the need for it. On the contrary, it puts the needs of internal democracy on a higher level.

A false dichotomy is made implying a counterposition between a "cadre party," that is a small, narrow, sectarian party made up of "armor-plated" activists who decide everything and run everything; and a "mass party," with a loose structure, without members who regularly pay dues, where everyone does what he or she likes, a party that recruits supporters for the sake of numbers in congresses, like any bourgeois party.

That is not what is involved. A party is always the vanguard of a class or a

militants, above all in a country of 140 million inhabitants.

We want to build a vanguard party made up of thousands, of millions of workers actively involved in political life and struggles, because this is the scale of the task facing us. Precisely for that reason, it is necessary to fight now for a party that will not be made up of members who vote every four years, or who are called upon from time to time to attend a congress to assent to the leadership's proposals.

We continue to maintain that there is a need for increasing centralization of the activity of PT members. Organizing the PT's activist base is a precondition for combining the activity of members confronted by different developments or working in different social movements.

Genuine exercise of internal democracy

Building unity in action and coherent activity by PT members working in the mass fronts is indissolubly bound up with a genuine exercise of internal democracy in the PT and in the party's relations with the social movements. A deep-going respect for all positions and a guarantee of their representation are pillars of the party's unity in action. These principles cannot be left to the goodwill of any majority but must be adopted explicitly as basic principles of the party, valid at all times and for all bodies in the PT.

Grave distortions that have already been overcome in Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul still exist in São Paulo and at the national level.¹ In the latter cases, proportional representation of the various positions getting over 10% support in congresses is not assured.

A position can be supported by 45% of the votes in a congress and in practice be completely marginalized in the party's leading bodies at the district, city, state and national level. This state of things not only stifles the energies mobilized to build the party, but transforms gatherings into confrontations and occasions for estimating relationships of forces, when they should be opportunities for working out political axes. The result is profoundly de-politicizing and favorable to sectarianism, and therefore

section of a class. The reason for this is simple and obvious. The essential problem of organizing in a party structure is the development of class consciousness, which is an uneven process, because the levels of political experience and organization vary among the toiling classes. Nonetheless, a vanguard party cannot be a small party of "big chiefs," and "armor-plated"



1. In São Paulo, where the PT has its biggest forces, there is no proportional representation for the various currents in the party.

is not educative.

The representation of positions, including in the executive leaderships — a principle we defend also for a democratic trade-union structure and for any workers' organization — has to be accompanied by a guarantee of a right to form tendencies, regulated by the statutes (or by internal rules, if we do not want to challenge the law on parties).

Political differences inevitably arise in the course of class struggles. Social classes themselves, including the working class, are politically heterogeneous, owing to different trajectories and experiences, and different levels of consciousness. Different political currents, which are not fundamentally antagonistic but offer different contributions to the process of social emancipation, reflect the diversity of experience and positions within the working class.

A guarantee of tendency rights in the PT does not exclude but rather assures a growing unity in the public activity of all PT members. If the bodies in which discussions and deliberations take place are democratic, it is imperative once decisions are reached that the party act in a united and cohesive way. Such unity is not imposed out of an arbitrary whim or in the spirit of achieving greater orthodoxy. It is imposed by the unity and power of our common enemy. Through the monopolies, the police, the armed forces and the media, the bourgeois state is applying more and more concerted repression and showing a greater and greater capacity for concerted action.

Party is an instrument of the workers' struggle

Since the party is an instrument of the workers' struggle, it also needs unity, cohesiveness and power in order to be able to fightback and to go on the offensive.

Such unity does not mean just making decisions in congresses but also implementing them in practice. This extends from the application of organizational resolutions on the functioning of the groups, dues and newspaper sales to achieving the necessary unity in intervening in the mass fronts, community groups, unions, student organizations and so on.

It is in this work that we will put into practice the positions and proposals that we have discussed and test their viability.

Today, decisive class confrontations are taking shape and forging the class consciousness of broad masses of working people. They can and must give rise to a broad socialist political movement actively involving millions of Brazilians. ★

The PT in the union movement

THE CLASSICAL question of party-union relations has become an acute one in the present stage of building the PT and the CUT. But it is a specific problem in the context of the development of the Brazilian movement. The following article from the September issue of *Em Tempo* describes the problems and proposes solutions.

ON THE QUESTION of party-union relations, the PT reiterates the "classical" principles. The starting point for this conception is a clear distinction between the character of party organization and of trade-union organization. A party is a vanguard (and mass) political organization that has its own rules flowing from this function. A union is an organization whose aim is to unite all of the class, one that opposes capitalist exploitation but also functions within the framework of capitalist social relations.

Despite the limitations deriving from their structure, unions have a potential for mass action that can exceed a mere struggle for reforms, and which enables them to become an instrument for expressing the revolutionary energy of working people. Nonetheless, this potential is not expressed spontaneously. It depends on a conscious intervention of a party or parties that adopt a revolutionary perspective.

In this regard the PT must develop its trade-union policy and, in particular, its policy for building the United Confederation of Workers (CUT).

This is a question that has not yet been resolved by the party, although we already have a trade-union line that helps to pave the way forward. In order to play the role of a catalyst of the potential class-struggle trade-unionism of the CUT, we have to avoid two errors.

One would be to try to "solve" the problems of building the PT as a revo-



lutionary party through a conception according the role of the party to the CUT. In practice this would be to deny the specific and fundamental task of building the party and would at the same time be an obstacle to building the CUT.

Trade union independence from the state

The other error would be to react to the problems encountered in building the PT by trying to impose limitations on the growth of the CUT, subordinating the union artificially to the PT at its present stage and turning away from the need to overcome the difficulties in building the PT.

We support the idea of independent, democratic class-struggle unions. That means a trade-unionism organized around the following four axes:

- Independence from the state. It is imperative in order to maintain the unions as organizations that serve the workers' struggle to fight any attempts by the bourgeoisie to impose controls over them.

- Internal democracy. This is essential in order to achieve the broadest possible participation, the best conditions for unity of the class, to promote the development of the class struggle and to make the unions into schools of workers' democracy that will prepare them for exercising power in the future.

- Class unity, mass participation. We see the unions as the most basic united-front bodies (that is, uniting all currents in the class, from reformists to revolutionaries).

- A line of trade-union militancy seeking to mobilize the class on an ongoing basis in defence of its interests.

A trade-union movement that assembles these conditions will take on a

revolutionary role, inasmuch as it helps to unify the workers and mobilize them against the bourgeoisie as a class, thereby becoming a cornerstone of building a workers' alternative.

At this point, we have to go back to the question of how political the trade-union movement can be. It is clear that trade-union struggle and the unions necessarily have political features. A union's primary task is to organize its ranks to fight to defend their interests — first of all their economic interests. But these economic struggles also take on a political character, if they widen, as is the case of the struggle against the government's economic policy, against the Bresser plan.

Certain methods of struggle, such as strikes, have an inherent political character, especially if they face repression. Likewise, unions must participate in broader struggles that concern workers' general interests, such as, for example, the fight for electing the president through direct, universal suffrage.

Uniting the majority of the working class

The bounds of unions' political activity are defined by the need to maintain their character as united-front bodies that must be able to unite a great majority of the class (consequently, these limits can vary in accordance with the progress of the class as a whole).

The PT's trade-union line puts this question correctly: "The CUT and the unions must not restrict themselves to economic demands. In working to get the CUT and the unions to take up political demands, PT activists must be careful to see that these demands reflect

the aspirations, demands and needs of the broad masses, and not of a small part of the workers." (*The PT's trade-union line*, May/June 1986.)

On that basis, we can go forward to define the role that the CUT and the unions must play in building a workers' alternative.

The CUT and the unions have to be the expression of the class independence of the workers on a trade-union level. This means above all independent class activity that advances workers' class consciousness and promotes mobilization to fight for their interests against the bourgeois, its state and its economic system. That is the meaning of the resolution adopted by the CUT's second national congress.

In this way, the unions acquire an anti-capitalist and socialist dynamic, without adopting a program of fighting for power, which would require a more advanced political consciousness than that of the mass movement as a whole.

This understanding of the CUT's role in building a workers' alternative, by giving impetus to working-class trade-union and political action, is entirely consistent with the policy of uniting the proletariat around a perspective of political independence. In this sense, it is an integral part of a more general endeavor by working people. But obviously only one aspect of this policy falls to the CUT. It is up to the parties (and in reality, essentially to the PT) to advance the policy as a whole. However, even on the level of uniting the workers in a class-struggle perspective, the CUT is not adequate today.

The CUT has not organized all workers under its leadership. Some sections of the working class remain unorganized, and some are under the leadership of the CGT. It is essential that the CUT, besides having a policy of unity

in action with other sectors, seeks to draw all organized workers into its ranks. Concretely, this means continuing to fight to expand the CUT and to attract into it those sectors in the CGT. With this growing strength, the CUT daily becomes a bigger pole of attraction.

Broadening the CUT means fighting for the leadership of unions that are not yet affiliated to it, but also working to attract to it the political currents that are in the camp of the CGT, such as the PCB and the PC do B. Some comrades may be afraid that drawing these forces into the CUT will get in the way of the trade-union line we want the confederation to adopt. That is because they fear the intrusion of reformist policy, of a policy of class conciliation.

However, it is possible to attract such forces into the CUT and still maintain the dominance of the class-struggle forces. The fight for dominance that is developing between the CUT and the CGT today would not disappear, but would be waged within the CUT, in conditions highly favorable for us and for organizing the class struggle.

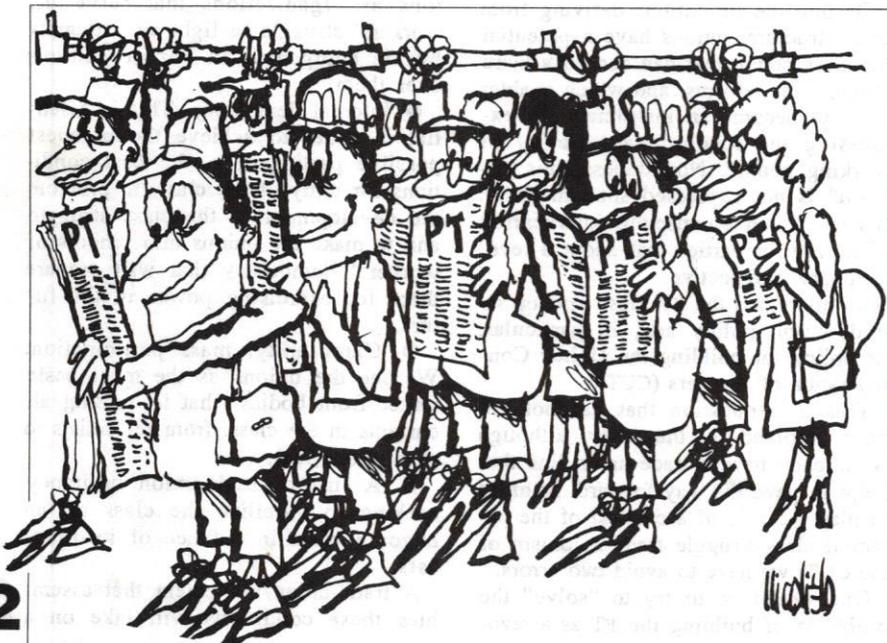
This does not mean calling for "reunification of the CUT and the CGT," a policy that is rightly criticized in the document *The PT's trade-union line*. Such a proposal would, as its authors explicitly say, put into question the basic gains of the CUT. It means simply that these reformist forces could be obliged to join the CUT in conditions that would be unfavorable to their class-collaborationist policy and favorable to the interests of the class-struggle forces (if the class-struggle forces were weak, the terms of the situation would be reversed).

Class-struggle trade unionism

Until now, the CUT has combined the features of a union confederation with those of a broad political current supporting class-struggle positions in the trade-union movement. This situation is not the result of our conception but of the way in which the CUT was formed, of its separation from the CGT. In practice, the CUT functions almost like a PT trade-union current.

This framework is tending to change. The growth of the CUT itself is conducive to a widening of its political heterogeneity. This has therefore been leading to the appearance of openly reformist or very confused positions. All this is positive, because it leads in the direction of the CUT becoming an all-embracing confederation, a cornerstone of mass, independent, democratic class-struggle trade unionism.

At the same time, this evolution will



lend urgency to the question of fighting to maintain the dominance of the class-struggle forces in the CUT. This will be the focus of continual disputes between widely differing political positions, from the most reformist to the most revolutionary, including forms of vacillation and ultra-leftist and sectarian policies.

Thus, organizing and coordinating PT activists' work in the CUT, which is already an integral part of our strategic conception of building the PT as a revolutionary party, is continually taking on a greater importance. It will be basically up to PT activists to ensure that class-struggle positions dominate in the PT and that it retains its character as a democratic and independent confederation.

Overcoming sectarian confrontation

To accomplish this, it is necessary to meet certain preconditions:

- A more thoroughgoing clarification the PT's general principles (the character of the party itself) as well the principles of its trade-union work, in order to develop a higher degree of political unity.

- Overcoming the sort of sectarian confrontation that has marked PT activists themselves in various trade-union processes and bears a considerable responsibility for our defeat in the elections in the São Paulo metalworkers' union.¹

- Genuine democracy at all levels, in the PT as well as in the CUT. Founded on the principles of workers' democracy, the CUT must overcome the exclusionist and bureaucratic practices that dominate the life of the confederation today. Conscious action is necessary to defend the exercise of internal democracy.

It also has to be understood that relations between the various sectors that make up the CUT and those that join it must be regulated by common action in the mass movement and by the integration within the CUT of different trade-union experiences.

Very often such differences reflect different conceptions in the process of formation, but which are not yet crystallized today, especially if we take the ideas that exist simultaneously in the CUT and in the CGT. ★

1. In the São Paulo metalworkers' union elections in June, there were three slates. Slate 1 was headed by Luis Antonio de Medeiros and backed by the CGT bureaucracy and its general secretary, Joaquinão. Slate 3 had the official support of the CUT and certain sectors of the PT. Then, a Slate No. 2 appeared bringing together sections of the CGT in conflict with the confederation leadership (PDT dissidents, PCB and PC do B activists) but also some PT and CUT members, such as Lucio Belentanni who headed the slate.



"Power to the workers"

The test of the general strike

THE BIGGEST obstacle to organizing a general strike against the Bresser plan was the difficulty of building unity in action with the CGT. Three dates were proposed. July 15 was proposed by the CUT. August 12 was rejected by the majority sector in the CGT (but accepted by the PC do B and the CONTAG leadership). Finally, the national executive of the CUT and the CGT agreed on August 20. The following article is from the July issue of *Em Tempo*.

THIS SHUFFLING of dates is not meaningless. It reflects underlying processes at work in the union movement — relations between the CUT and CGT that involve

both attempts at unity and clashes, but also the changing relationship of forces within the CGT itself. An understanding of these two questions will be of fundamental importance in the CGT's ability to lead a process of unifying struggles in the coming period.

We have always highlighted the considerable expansion of the CUT since it was founded in 1983. This growth can be gauged by various standards: winning the leadership of unions; its involvement in the overwhelming majority of strikes in the country, including national strikes by whole categories of workers; building its own apparatus; the CUT's much more solid unity compared with the CGT; the organization of class-struggle union oppositions.

Reasons for the CUT's advance

We have to explain the fundamental reasons for this advance by the CUT. A confederation that represents a pole of class independence is benefiting from the powerful upsurge of trade-union struggles that has been developing for many years and could not be broken by the bourgeois transition [to parliamentary rule]. A confederation that represents a project of class conciliation is permanently weakened by the few possibilities that exist for concluding a social pact when the government's policy is clearly anti-labor.

This growth of the CUT is leading to a situation in which it holds a position of dominance, of leadership of the main active centers of the trade-union movement. But recognizing this should not lead us to underestimate the CGT's strength.

In the country's major concentration

of workers — Greater São Paulo — the CGT holds the leadership of the most important union, the metalworkers. It also leads other strong unions such as the electrical workers, teamsters, and the Osasco and Guarulhos metalworkers. The CGT leads a large part of the Baixada Santista unions and the majority of the rural unions in the state of São Paulo. It also has the leadership of key metalworkers' unions, like those in Porto Alegre and Rio de Janeiro.

Through the leadership of the Confederation of Agricultural Unions (CONTAG), the CGT exercises a largely predominant influence today in the rural unions. For example, it holds the leadership of one of the most important nuclei of agricultural workers in the Mada district of Pernambuco.

Masses of unorganized workers

The CGT's influence can also be seen through the masses of unorganized workers who have little experience in struggles, such as the civil construction workers, store workers and other less important categories.

The CGT's weight results in a considerable inertia. It is an important factor in limiting the energies of the movement. Thus, you can work much more effectively to build a general strike if you have the neutrality or even the formal support of the CGT, or factions within it, than you can in direct confrontation with it, when all the CGT's apparatuses, influence and fire-power are directed against the strike. Moreover, the obstacles placed in the way by the CGT are magnified by the government and the media, which play its opposition up to the maximum.

Likewise, it is significant that the only two processes of partial general strikes in which the workers have participated — July 21, 1983 and December 12, 1986 — were the result of a united call by all the forces in the trade-union movement.

All this in no way means that the CUT should in practice accept a CGT veto. It means simply that one of its two central tactics has to be finding a way to work for a policy of unity and to put pressure on the CGT.

To lay out such a policy, it is essential to become familiar with the present situation inside the CGT, with the internal differences which, for example, played a big role in the recent discussion on the date for the general strike.

Today, the CGT can be divided into three basic sections whose evolution over the last two years has determined the general drift of the confederation.

The majority section in the CGT is the one that provides the political and material underpinning for "Joaquinzão,"

the present president of the confederation.¹ It basically consists of national union leaders, who have had decades-long careers of living off the union apparatus and have had no links with the ranks of the movement for a long time. As a layer that plays no role in the process of mobilization (we might call it the "traditional bureaucracy"), it is today unable to respond to a whole series of questions raised by the situation.

The reformist section represented by the PCB, the PC do B and the leadership of CONTAG (which does not have a unified policy within the CGT) has gradually been pushed back inside the confederation. Its policy won out initially at the November 1983 congress, when the CONCLAT was formed, which was more of a coordinating body than a real confederation.² But it was checkmated in the various developments that led to the formation of the CGT. Despite that, within the CGT, the reformists are the section with the greatest mobilizing capacity.

Finally, in recent years, a section that we might call the "modern bureaucracy" has been developing a certain independence from the traditional bureaucracy. Strongly influenced by American trade-unionism, its main representative is Rogério Magri, chair of the São Paulo electrical workers (his policy is financed by fat subsidies from the American Institute for Free Labor Development, AIFLD).

Another representative of this section is Luiz Antonio de Medeiros, who was recently elected to the leadership of the São Paulo metalworkers. He gained notoriety for his statements opposing the 40-hour week and job security. This section is getting an upper hand over Joaquinzão in the CGT, and has the possibility of winning the leadership.

Steady pressure for unity in action

This observation that within the CGT there is a reformist sector that is going to come into conflict more and more with the majority indicates that there is a major opening for the CUT to apply steady pressure for unity in action and to speed up the moving apart of these sectors. That would strike a thoroughgoing blow to the CGT.

If the above is true, would it not have been better for the national leadership of the CUT to maintain the August 12 date for the strike in order to accelerate the dynamic of differentiation between the PC do B and the CONTAG leadership on the one hand and the rest of the confederation on the other?

An element that weighed heavily in the decision of the CUT national leader-

ship to put off the general strike was the poor preparation for the action in São Paulo and in its ABC suburbs.³

Putting off the date helped to keep up the pressure on the reformist elements and narrowed the opening for the more right-wing sections of the CGT to work against the strike. For example, after a common decision on the date was agreed, Luis Antonio, who had formerly taken a position against the strike while trying to make a deal with the São Paulo state industrialists' federation, found himself forced to give it at least verbal support. Many comrades wonder whether this policy of unity in action is not going to lead to the reformists coming into the CUT and whether this might destroy the character of the CUT as a democratic class-struggle confederation opposing the bourgeoisie.

Contradictory pressures on reformist leaders

In fact, the question should be turned around: Could some reformist sectors join the CUT? Such leaderships are always under contradictory pressures. On the one hand, there is the pressure of the union apparatus, the pressure of the bourgeois state in which these apparatuses are integrated to various degrees and with which they collaborate. On the other, an objective pressure is exercised by their base, which is linked to the workers' movement.

The fact that some of these sectors may envisage joining the CUT undoubtedly reflects the growth of the CUT as the dominant confederation. But above all, it represents a victory of the class-struggle policy that they can see is building the CUT.

The CUT is increasingly tending to take on the profile of a united-front body and to lose its appearance of simply representing one sector of the trade-union movement. So now, in this process, it is necessary to seek ways of grouping together the class-struggle sectors in the union movement. A clear discussion on formulating the PT's trade-union work, on organizing united action by the union militants linked to the party, should therefore be one of the fundamental elements for maintaining the CUT's historic gains — democracy and independence. ★

1. Joaquin dos Santos Andrade, called Joaquinzão, preceded Luis Antonio at the head of the São Paulo metalworkers' union, which he led for 22 years.

2. In August 1983, the Second Workers' Congress (CONCLAT) decided to found the CUT, while the reformists (PCB, PC do B) and the union bureaucrats called for another CONCLAT in November 1983, which was to give birth to the CGT.

3. The ABC is São Paulo's belt of big working-class suburbs, where nearly half a million metalworkers are concentrated. The initials stand for São Andre, São Bernardo and São Caetano.

PT runs candidate for president

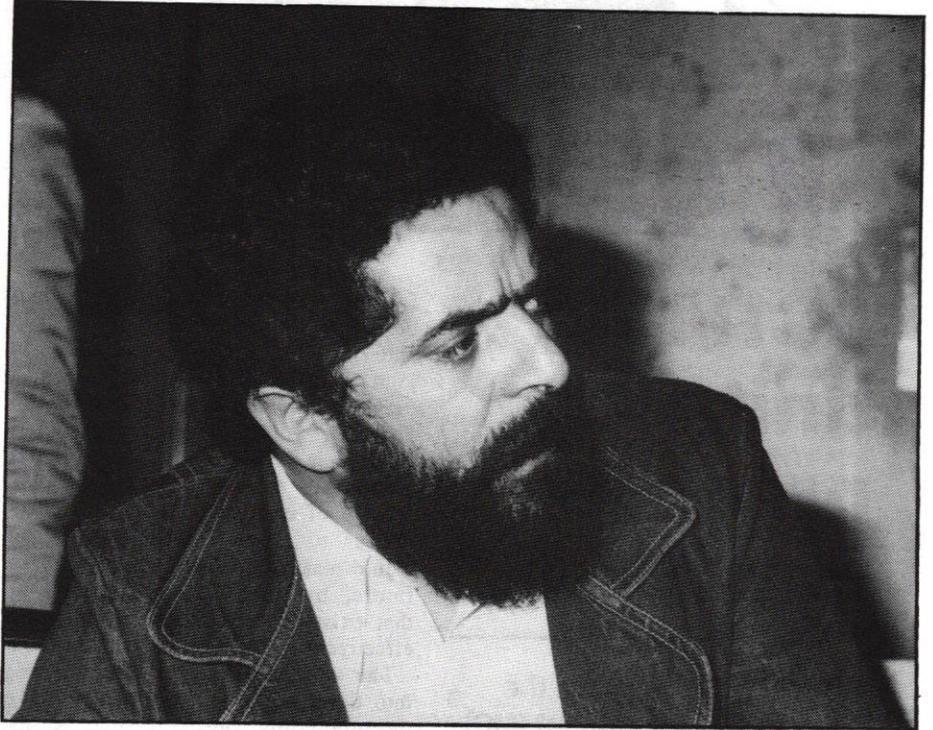
THE DECISION to run a working-class alternative in the presidential elections was explained in the following resolution adopted by the PT's national leadership:

"We reaffirm our determination to fight for direct elections and to offer democratic and popular forces a program for a governmental alternative to the New Republic. Once we win direct elections, we will have to have a candidate of our own, and our natural candidate is comrade Lula.

"We obviously need the broadest possible discussion among party members on this question, where other names could be presented. The national meeting [scheduled for December] is the most appropriate time to approve the launching of a campaign for the presidency of the republic." *Em Tempo* published the following comment on this decision in its September issue.

BY A LARGE majority, the PT's national leadership adopted this resolution at its August 1-2 meeting. It was a fundamental step forward, a decision of the first importance in the history of the party.

The resolution also stresses that this decision has to be discussed broadly by



Inacio Da Silva, "Lula" (DR)

the ranks and approved in December by the party's highest authority. The plan for launching this candidacy needs to be clarified in several respects.

Three essential features make this campaign worthwhile. It is a means of putting forward the idea that the fight for direct elections has to be combined, starting now, with building a governmental alternative to the New Republic. It puts us on the offensive to occupy the ground of left opposition to the Sarney government, consolidating the idea of class independence against the proposals of Leonel Brizola and the "left" wing of the PMDB. It increases the impact of the PT in the present situation and therefore its potential for serving as a pole of attraction and for growth.

A powerful weapon for the party

The decision to run Lula for president is a powerful weapon for the party. How to use it best for the interests of the workers is the subject for a rich debate that must be conducted in the coming months.

At least three big questions loom. The first is defining the exact character of this campaign. Should it be strictly a PT campaign, or should it be an occasion for establishing certain political alliances around some axes of a given program?

Lula's candidacy can be a means of political expression for organized sections of the trade-union and mass

movement that are not affiliated to any party. It can accelerate the break of reformist currents in the workers' movement (such as the PCB and the PC do B) from the New Republic and stimulate the development of dissent in the PMDB and the PDT.

The second point has to do with the program of this campaign. Here we are coming back on a higher level to the discussions that we had in the party at the time of the launching of our slates for the city governments and the state governorships.

The problem is to formulate a program with a socialist dynamic that will give expression to the demands of the broad masses and, at the same time, lay a foundation for breaking with the bourgeois state and the power of the big monopolies.

Finally, we need a discussion on the relationship between launching this campaign and a plan for building working-class and popular organization in the country.

The PT's need for a national mass paper is becoming urgent. Throughout the country, this would be a focus for organizing support committees for the campaign. This would put the PT more on the offensive in organizing its activists in the various structures of the trade-union and mass movement.

Launching Lula's candidacy for president will not only be a blow to political elitism in the country, but will certainly inspire in the workers a confidence in their own strength and their determination to struggle, as did the formation of the PT itself. ★

4 NEWS FROM THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

LCR/MC: unity process continues

FOR SEVERAL years the Communist Movement (MC) and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state, have carried out common work in the feminist movement, the Workers' Commissions and the peace movement.

Both revolutionary organizations also waged a joint campaign to support the candidates of the Basque revolutionary nationalist organization Herri Batasuna in the June elections for Euro-MPs. [See *IV* 121, June 1, 1987.] The following statement on this unity process was published in the July 18 issue of *Combate*, the LCR paper.

AN IMPORTANT STEP forward in relations between our two organizations was represented by a resolution that was discussed and adopted at the MC's Fifth Congress, held July 3-5. In fact, the congress ratified agreements that had been reached beforehand by the MC's Federal Committee and the LCR's Central Committee.

These accords involve setting in motion a gradual process in which we will undertake a series of experiments in joint work and debates, and in which each step forward will be the basis for the next.

The stage we are beginning here is preliminary to, and different from, a process of unification. Its main objective is to create the conditions that would make unification possible in the future, by clarifying the differences that exist now and adopting the most effective methods for overcoming them.

The measures chosen for entering into this gradual unity process involve thoroughgoing political discussions, which are necessary to clarify the possibilities for a fusion process. They include attendance by members of the leaderships of both parties at meetings of the LCR Central Committee and the MC Federal Committee; the adoption of formulas for joint study and education; regular collaboration in the press; and, as a pilot experiment, regular meetings between members of a national leadership body and a common leadership in certain areas of the peace movement.

Fraternal relations go back several years

Taken as a whole, the unity agreement represents a step forward in relations between the MC and the LCR. But it also has important elements of continuity. In fact, fraternal relations between both parties go back several years. They have concerned both practical work and general political debate. It can be said that the balance sheet of these relations was positive overall. The present unity process is based on this previous experience.

Why has a step forward in relations between the two organizations come about at this time? Because, through a rather complicated process, both leaderships reached the conclusion that it was not enough to recognize the rapprochement between the two parties, to promote it in certain concrete areas and expect that a spontaneous ripening would lead to party unity. Now they see the need for working actively and consciously toward this objective.

To this end, they have chosen a realistic, cautious and gradual road, based

precisely on all the positive elements in the preceding period — a long common practical experience, recognizing that differences have become smaller (especially in the most recent period), and a confidence in the openness of both parties and their capacities to rectify their errors.

In the unfolding of this unity process, problems and difficulties may arise. But this process itself also involves a determination to resolve such problems in a positive way, to overcome the obstacles still in the way of unification.

Discussion to clarify agreement and differences

Some problems may come from frictions continuing to exist in practical work, inasmuch as we will continue to be independent parties whose tactics may clash at given moments. Each party must try to anticipate such problems, and when (despite everything) they arise, they must be dealt with correctly, without exaggerations and taking into account the interests of both parties and the common perspective of unity.

However, the main problems may arise from a lack of sufficient general political agreement between the parties.

On this level, we cannot take anything for granted, and only the development of the discussion will enable us to continue to clarify our points of agreement and difference. The only thing we can do is to approach the discussion with a method that will not freeze the initial differences, but seek to overcome them through common study and elaboration.

Throughout the entire process, the objective is to continue to reinforce each party as we develop a unity process. This is going to mean a certain innovation, certain changes in our styles of work, which up until now have been guided only by the needs of building our own parties. The growth of unity must not in any way mean abandoning the effort to build our own parties.

Undoubtedly, the stronger both parties are, the more progress will be made toward unity. On the other hand, the worst possibility cannot be excluded, that is that unification will fail. In that case, our concern must be that both parties remain strong and self-confident, with relations at least as fraternal as they are now.

But while we have to be realistic, we are staking our hopes on the success of the unity process, which we will develop cautiously, without pre-established timetables but with a determination to see it culminate in unification. ★

Declarations on the murder of Lean Alejandro

THE MURDER of Lean Alejandro, general secretary of the Bayan coalition, was a blow against the people's movement in the Philippines (see article on back page). Here we publish Bayan's response and messages of solidarity.

Bayan declaration: In the wake of Lean Alejandro's assassination, let us unite against fascism, militarism and US intervention.

LEAN'S assassination is a heinous crime against the people, his death being a grave loss to the Filipino people whom he even at a young age had ably and valiantly served and led in their fight against poverty, oppression and exploitation.

Lean's killers have not been identified but we are certain that his death is the handiwork of...those who seek to silence the militant organizations, create an atmosphere to justify the restoration of an open fascist rule and shock our people into abandoning the nationalist and democratic struggle.

This latest political killing comes in the wake of the government's worst political crisis heightened by the groundswell of mass protest since February 1986....Apparently cringing from the [August 28] coup attempt, the Aquino government has been acceding to the militarist demands of the plotters even as it accelerates the implementation of its own fascist agenda.

The Aquino government has conceded to increasing the budget and extending the powers of the military in counter-insurgency, removing cabinet officials tagged by the military to be leftist and establishing a council of state which includes military men. All this, after all, is quite consistent to the Aquino regime's "total war" that is cutting a wide swathe of fascist repression and human rights violations across the archipelago.

Lean's assassination joins the growing list of bloody anti-people crimes for which the Aquino regime must be held responsible. Malacañang [the presidential palace] described the killing as a "serious travesty of law and order" in the same lame way that it has noted gross human rights violations under its administration. The government unabashedly absolved itself even as its US-designed "total war" policy has further emboldened military groups of various loyalties to perpetrate more anti-people crimes.

The fascists and other oppressors in this country would wish to believe that eliminating leaders like Lean Alejandro and Lando Olalia [chair of the union KMU — May 1 Movement — killed on November 13, 1986] would permanently strike fear in the hearts of the people and push them to inaction and submission. But history has shown that the torches carried by the peoples' martyrs before they fall are carried on by the inspired and enlightened multitudes...

This is no time to falter and temporize. The signs are rather ominous. We can project the direction these events are leading to: the transformation of the pseudo-liberal reactionary Aquino administration into an instrument of outright fascist rule or its being replaced by an all-out military regime still dominated by US imperialism....

We call on our people to expose the steps being taken by the militarists to restore open fascist rule in our country. Neither a military junta established by likes of General Honasan under US tutelage, nor a US-backed Aquino regime increasingly implementing Honasan's demands can be expected to uphold the people's basic interests or to respect their democratic and basic human rights.

We call on our people to close ranks, abandon narrow group interests and earlier illusions and converge in a mammoth mass movement to assert and defend the people's democratic rights and our national interest. The country is in grave crisis and we can ill-afford to let imperialist and military vultures within and outside the Aquino regime devour our political rights, our economic survival, our patrimony, our very life.

Justice for Lean and the other victims of political repression! Carry on the fight against fascism and militarism! Expose and resist all forms of US imperialist intervention in our internal affairs! Close ranks, rely on the people's strength, save our country from further predation and ruin. ★

Message from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to Bayan

DEAR COMRADES of Bayan,

It is with anger and emotion that we learnt that your general secretary, Lean Alejandro, was the victim of a criminal attack on Saturday, September 19.

We know with what courage Ka Lean carried out his activities, after the assassination in November 1986 of Rolando Olalia, chair of the KMU and Partido ng Bayan (PnB), and then in June of this year the ambush against Bernabe Buscayno, also a PnB cadre — an ambush in which two of his companions lost their lives.

The militarist extreme right is trying to terrorize the popular movement in the Philippines into limiting its activity. It is profiting from a broad complicity and the process of remilitarization which is occurring in your country. It is today again attacking your organization, already hit several times by governmental and paramilitary repression.

In this sad hour, we want to assure you of our complete internationalist solidarity.

We hope with all our hearts that the comrade of Lean wounded in the attack will recover from his injuries. We ask you to please express our deep sympathy to the companion of Lean, Liddy, who, like him, is engaged in the battle for the freedom of the oppressed and exploited. ★

"Our friend and comrade"

LEAN, Leandro Alejandro, was our friend and comrade, like his companion, Liddy Napcil. We met them for the first time several years ago, when Lean was still active at the University of the Philippines. We were immediately struck by their commitment, their intelligence, their frankness and their capacity for reflection and analysis, as well as by their kindness.

We saw them again during our trips. The last time was only a short while ago, in the aftermath of the attempted coup d'etat of August 28. General secretary of Bayan, the New Patriotic Alliance, Lean stressed the gravity of Colonel Honasan's putsch.

As the central personality in the legal popular left in the Philippines, Lean Alejandro was a symbol and a target for the military extreme right. He was fully aware of that. He kept on with his political activities, as did Liddy, who headed Bayan's international commission.

Only six months ago, Lean became the father of a little girl. He was 27 when he was killed. He was coming back from a press conference where he announced the mass actions that Bayan intended to involve itself in building to fight against the growing militarization of the country and the regime. He died, shot down by killers, so that others would not suffer the same fate in the future.

Lean will not be forgotten by his friends. Paul Petitjean and Sonia Rupon ★

Assassination of a militant

LEANDRO ALEJANDRO, general secretary of the New Patriotic Alliance, Bayan, was murdered on September 19.¹ A hundred thousand people marched in his funeral procession on September 29, in the most massive popular protest since the installation of the Aquino government.

He was one of the outstanding figures of his generation of political activists, and played a fundamental role in the leadership of the legal National Democratic movement.

PAUL PETITJEAN

LEAN WAS SHOT down by killers hidden in a truck as he was returning from a press conference, where he announced that Bayan was building a series of mass actions to protest against the growing militarization of the country.

A hard blow to the mass movement, Lean's murder was also designed to reduce the radical left's capacity for legal activity through terror and to sharpen the crisis of the regime, which has been acute since the August 28 attempted coup. [See *IV* 126, September 28, 1987.]

This brutal act illustrated dramatically the gravity of the general remilitarization going on in the islands. It was precisely this process that Alejandro denounced in the news conference he held just before he was killed.

International solidarity has to be stepped up at a time when death squads are murdering leftists and repression by the government, the military and parallel-police gangs is on the rise.

Aquino's concessions to the military

Corazon Aquino has just dismissed seven officers, including three generals and Colonel Gringo Honasan, the leading figure in the August 28 coup. She is still refusing to impose martial law, despite pressures from the General Staff. Nonetheless, she has made many concessions to the military's demands.

General Montano has been put at the head of the Manila regional command. He had been suspended at the end of 1986 because he was responsible for internal security in the capital at the time of the Mendiola bridge massacre. This slaughter occurred when the army opened fire on a peasant demonstration

in November.

Although formally dismissed, Colonel Honasan and most of the leaders of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) who were implicated in the August 28 putsch remain at large. "Underground," Honasan has been giving more and more interviews to the media, waging an intense propaganda war. The soldiers jailed for participating in the mutiny have now been judged "not responsible" and released.

The weakening of the president's positions is manifest, internationally, regionally and domestically. The US government condemned the August 28 putsch. But although the State Department denounced the rebel officers' power grab, the Pentagon, while denying any responsibility in the coup, is making a show of "understanding" the mutineers' demands.²

The reaction of several members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), especially of Thailand and Indonesia, was more than prudent on Friday, August 28, when the survival of the Filipino regime seemed to hang in the balance.³

In the Philippines itself, the Church did not rush to Aquino's aid as it has done before. The House of Representatives is dominated by the political clans of the big provincial families with their shifting alliances. The vice-president, Salvador Laurel, publicly broke with Aquino, resigning from his post as minister of foreign affairs. He is flirting shamelessly with the army.

Former finance minister Jaime Ongpin has also distanced himself from Aquino. Challenged over the way he negotiated the payment of interest on the foreign debt, Ongpin still has major influence and open links with the bodies of the IMF.

Finally, and most importantly, the

administration and the government have again been purged of elements considered by the military to be too far to the left.

The departure of the head of the customs service, Alexander Padilla, is significant. As a progressive (a former leader of the Nationalist Alliance) who fought all sorts of traffickers, especially arms traders, he became the pet hate of the military and the right-wing politicians.

Aquino had to get rid of her two closest advisors, her executive secretary, "Joker" Arroyo and Teodoro Locsil, despite the fact that they had made quite a few demonstrations of anti-communism. The hard core of the presidential staff has thus largely been broken up.

After the ministerial reshuffle, the new government looks quite weak relative to an army that remains strong despite its divisions, whose long arm already extends into the executive branch.

Militarization is on the advance

Also a champion of civilian government Corazon Aquino is a prisoner of her own choices — her refusal to undertake radical social reforms and to commit herself to "people's power"; her determination to seek support first of all from the army and Washington; her declaration of "total war" against the communist guerrillas; and her counter-insurgency policy. Militarization of the country is on the advance both inside the regime and outside it.

When Leandro Alejandro gave his last press conference, he announced the mass actions that Bayan was building for September 21, the fifteenth anniversary of Marcos' proclamation of martial law. This date has today become as symbolic as any day could be, given the threat that the military has left hanging over the civilian regime and democratic rights.

On September 21, only about a dozen military officers demonstrated for defence of the country's freedoms and to condemn Lean's murder. The left organizations refused to be provoked into staging an immediate test of strength. They turned toward building a march for Lean's funeral and continuing the fight for democracy. ★ *September 25, 1987*

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1. Bayan is a coalition of popular organizations making up a section of the union federation KMU and the peasant federation KMP.

2. Nayan Chanda, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 24, 1987.

3. As well as the Philippines, members of ASEAN include Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei. See Jane Clade, *FEER*, September 10, 1987.