

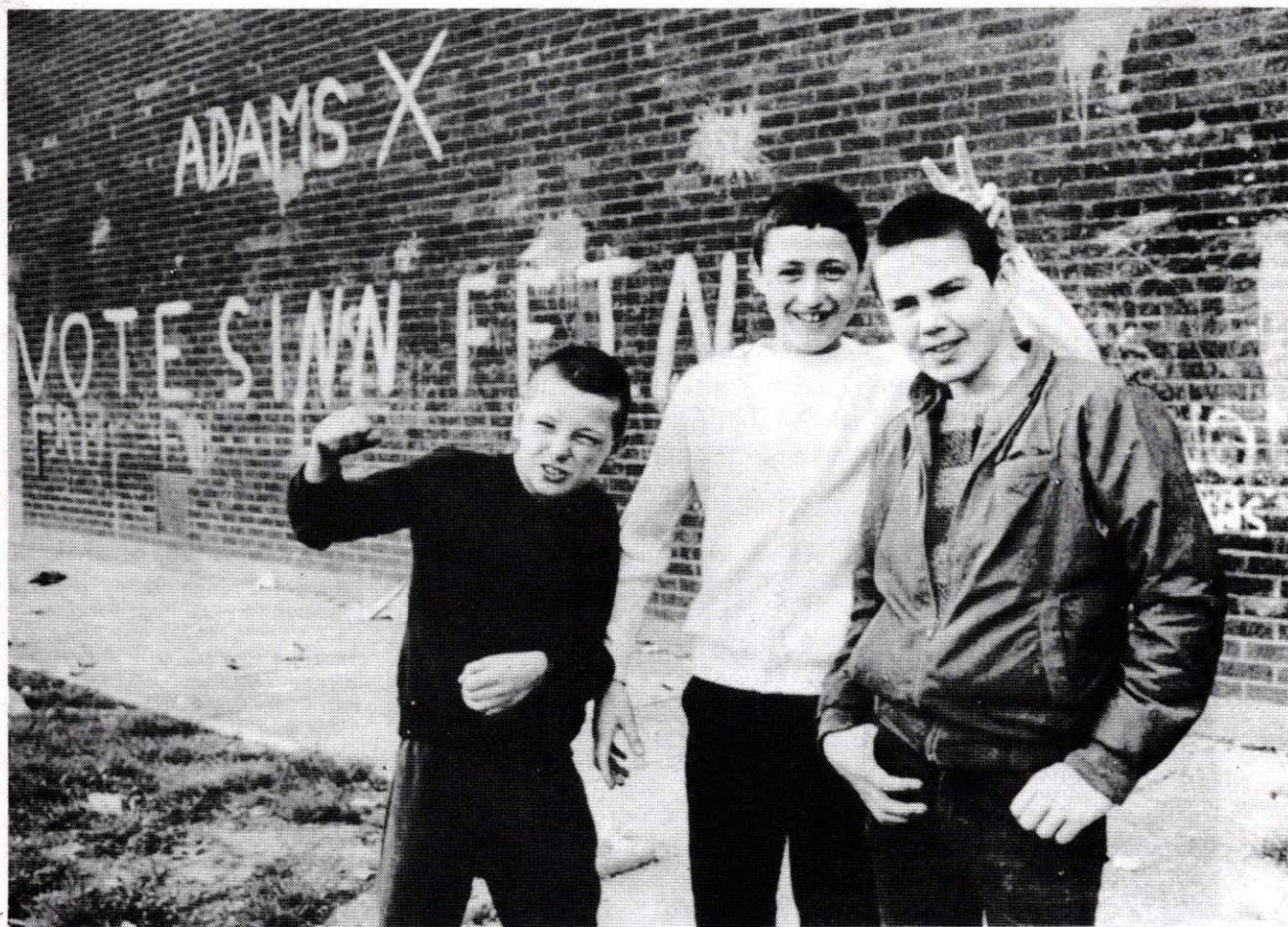
International VIEWPOINT

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After three years of the Anglo-Irish Accord



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Turkey: Hunger strikers and strikes by the hungry

Colombia: "Dirty war" gets out of hand

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International VIEWPOINT

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Palestine: the state and the resolution

RARELY has a political event provoked such a paradoxical convergence of positive reactions! The nineteenth session of the PLO's Palestinian National Council (PNC), held in Algiers from November 12 to 15, raised hopes and provoked a renewal of combativity among the majority of the masses in the West Bank and Gaza struggling against the Zionist occupation. The same PNC session was unanimously awarded top marks by the imperialist powers, from George Bush's "it's very, very good" to the official greeting from the EEC.

SALAH JABER

A MONUMENTAL misunderstanding or crossed reactions to different decisions, themselves contradictory? In reality, the bourgeois leadership of the PLO has sent out, in the name of the PNC, two divergent messages to two antagonistic audiences. The first message was aimed at the masses engaged in the *intifada* [uprising] when Yasser Arafat proclaimed "in the name of God and the Palestinian Arab people, the institution of the State of Palestine". Thus he replied to the expectation of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, whose uprising against the occupation entered its second year on December 9.

The central and almost immediate objective of the *intifada* is to force the Zionists to evacuate the territories that they have occupied since June 1967, while avoiding these



territories falling under the repressive tutelage of any of the Arab regimes. Its goal is the setting up of a free Palestinian government in those parts of Palestine where Palestinian Arabs remain the overwhelming majority, after more than 20 years of occupation and colonization. The *intifada* is equipped with the structures of a veritable clandestine government. Popular committees organize the masses' struggle at a grass-roots level, as well as diverse aspects of their daily collective lives. These are headed up by a Unified Patriotic Leadership, a grouping of tendencies active on the ground and represented in the PLO outside the territories.

Condemnation of "terrorism"

The PLO's proclamation of the Palestinian state, conforming to some extent to the aspirations of the masses involved in the *intifada*, became both indispensable and easier after the decision made by King Hussein of Jordan last July to give up the West Bank, which had been annexed by his kingdom following the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948. This decision, motivated by the dissuasive effect of the *intifada*, created a juridical vacuum that the PLO could not avoid filling. Furthermore, it removed from the proclamation of a Palestinian state the character of a challenge to the monarchy of Amman and its reactionary allies that it would have had if it had been made earlier.

The November 15 declaration was nevertheless accompanied by a message with a totally different significance that was

aimed at Washington, imperialist Europe and "moderate" Zionists. Even the text of the proclamation read by Arafat contained a refutation of all "use of violence or terrorism" — against the Palestinian state, of course, but also against "any other state"! The condemnation of "terrorism" is repeated in the PNC's political resolution, whereas the previous session in April 1987 had reaffirmed: "the legitimate right of our people to carry out armed struggle against the Zionist racist occupation".

The new resolution reaffirmed the principle of the Jordan-Palestinian "confederation", first adopted by the PNC in 1983, echoing the Reagan plan advocating a "Palestinian entity linked to Jordan". It repeats the appeal for an "international conference" under the auspices of the big powers to resolve the Israeli-Arab conflict. However, while in 1987 a "just and lasting peace" was to have been founded on the "right to return" of the Palestinians expelled in 1948 and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the new resolution stipulates that in addition to this latter right, "the international conference will meet on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338 of the [United Nations] Security Council".

Declaration nullifies the PLO's charter

To evaluate the importance of this innovation, it should be remembered that the Palestinian organizations were built after 1967 in opposition to resolution 242 (November 1967), denouncing as capitulators and traitors any Arab regime that supported

it. The PLO's representative in Paris, Ibrahim Souss, was perfectly correct when he candidly asserted that "the PNC's political declaration nullifies the PLO's charter". (*Le Monde*, November 22.) Indeed, resolution 242 foresaw that, in exchange for an Israeli retreat "from territories occupied" in 1967 (and not all the territories), there would be a "termination of all claims or state of belligerency", as well as a recognition of each state in the region and of its "right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force". In this goal, resolution 242 foresaw some "measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones". Without even mentioning the Palestinian people, it was content to advocate "a just settlement of the refugee problem". This last formulation was used for the first time in the PNC's new resolution, which no longer explicitly mentions the right of return.

A new dead-end for the PLO

Is it necessary to recall that the PLO and El Fatah were founded well before 1967 in order to, as their names imply, fight for "the liberation of Palestine", of which the West Bank and Gaza Strip only constitute 20%. The bourgeois leadership of the PLO has performed a real political strip-tease over the years, leaving itself today with only an olive branch to cover its nakedness. Unfortunately for the PLO, the Israeli and American leaders remain motionless because they know that the Arafat leadership cannot guarantee the docility of the Palestinians. The real relationship of forces allows them to be intransigent.

This is why it is possible to state that the PLO leadership's new capitulation has once again led it into a dead-end. The Palestinian masses will understand the lesson themselves. Only their struggle, and not the compromises of the Arafat leadership, can bring results.

Unfortunately, the political force that is today most capable of attracting all those who are losing any illusions in the PLO leadership — increasingly numerous, particularly among the 1948 refugees who are the vast majority of Palestinians — is none other than the Islamic fundamentalist current.

Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement, active in Gaza and the West Bank) has called for three days of mourning in reaction to the PLO's recognition of the Zionist state.

Here, as elsewhere, the fundamentalists are expressing a certain radicalization in a skewed way. Hamas rejects "all proposals for peace and international conferences", and calls for "a holy war" to set up an "Islamic state in the whole of Palestine". True Palestinian, Israeli and Arab revolutionaries are now confronting a considerable challenge. ★

The "dirty war" gets out of hand

"DIRTY WAR," that is terror by the repressive forces, has been sharply on the rise in Colombia. After the fall of the military dictatorship in Argentina, the civilian government in Bogotá seems to have taken the lead in official gangsterism in Latin America. But are these methods paying off?

RODRIGO O'FARREL

THE GENERAL commanded, and his men responded. The November 12 massacre in Segovia, in the department of Antioquia, in which 42 harmless citizens were murdered and another 35 wounded, was carried out cold-bloodedly by an extreme-right squad calling itself "Death to the Revolutionists in Northeast Antioquia."

Spokespersons of this organization said shortly afterwards that the action was intended to demonstrate support in deeds for the statements made a week before in Bogotá by the Colombian defense minister, General Rafael Samudio Molina.¹ In fact, during the funeral of eight soldiers killed in a battle with guerrillas, the general called on officers and soldiers to "go on a total offensive, to destroy and liquidate the enemy."²

This bloodthirsty order from the minister, who has been a stubborn advocate of military solutions — even if they might take the lives of civilians uninvolved in the conflict between the army and guerrillas³ — was seen by the rightist paramilitary group for what it was: authorization to perpetrate outrages against individuals and towns that voted for the left candidates in the last elections.

Death squad thugs murder activists

So, a dozen thugs from this death squad arrived in Segovia in the afternoon of November 12 in three unmarked jeeps and drove to the town hall. They wanted to murder Rita Tobón, the mayor and a member of the Unión Patriótica.⁴ Since they did not find her, they dynamited the building and started shooting at passersby.

The first to fall were two boys playing in the street. The slaughter continued in some homes and on some farms. The paramilitaries used lists of activists, searching house to house for the persons named. The shooting lasted more than an hour. Neither the police nor the army, which had barracks in the locality, intervened to stop the massa-

cre. Thus, the thugs were able to get away without the slightest inconvenience.

Minutes later, the country was informed that the criminals belonged to a guerrilla column made up of members of the FARC and the ELN.⁵ This report was given by a policeman, who quickly got in contact with a Bogotá radio network to put out disinformation. The network did not bother to check with the local people and broadcast the cop's story as factual news.

"Total war on subversion"

A day later, when a Unión Patriótica delegation came to Segovia to verify the facts, it found the town quiet but terrorized. At the same time the police, still in contact with the Bogotá radio network, were broadcasting live that an "intense" battle was going on in the town between the "forces of order" and the guerrilla column "responsible for the massacre."

The official masquerade could not be maintained any longer. A few hours later, the perpetrators of the massacre claimed responsibility for the operation and explained their motivations. After identifying totally with the minister of defence's call for launching "total war on subversion," the terrorist gang stressed that it was opposed to the position of President Virgilio Barco Vargas, who on September 1 proposed a political solution for curbing the violence.

1. *El País* (Madrid), November 14, 1988.

2. *El País*, November 6, 1988.

3. In November 1985, General Rafael Samudio Molina personally commanded the assault on the Palace of Justice in Bogotá, which had been taken by M-19 guerrillas. Samudio Molina was the one who gave the ruthless order to dynamite the hall where 15 judges and other hostages were sheltering. The explosions and the machine-gunning of those who tried to flee brought the civilian death toll to 54.

4. A party founded in 1985 by former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), members of the Communist Party and other smaller left groups.

5. ELN — Ejército de Liberación Nacional, of Castroist origin, the second largest guerrilla force in the country.

The paramilitary group's opposition to the president's plans was only a copy of the line laid out by Samudio Molina in his strident statements of November 3, in which he also said: "I don't know anything about dialogues; I know that the armed forces are going to respond with their weapons."

Official tolerance of scorched earth policy

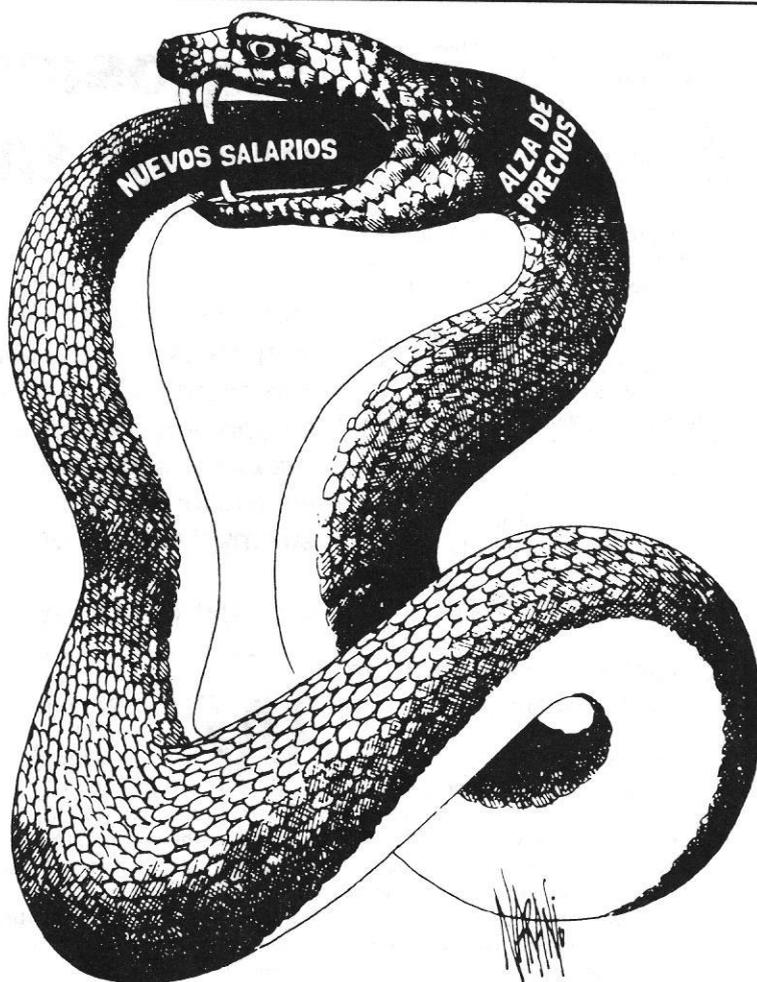
General Samudio's challenge to the decisions of Virgilio Barco was so obvious that the president found himself forced to call for the minister of defence's resignation, 24 hours after publicly disavowing him. Trying to keep the general's proposal from getting any further, since he had already gotten the support of two other ministers, the Colombian chief of state declared that it was necessary to avoid a situation "where the country's options would be limited to a scorched earth policy or a political revision of the state." The duty of a democracy, in his opinion, was "to seek civilized solutions."⁶

The president's energetic sally surprised observers, because it was the first time that Barco has clearly differentiated himself from the military top brass and removed a head of the Ministry of Defence, which has been an almost untouchable preserve of the armed forces. Samudio's successor was another general, Manuel Guerrero Paz, who has been commander-in-chief of the armed forces.⁷ Still, the question arises whether his appointment means a change in the government's orientation with respect to "public order."

In fact up until now, official tolerance of a scorched earth strategy planned and executed by the armed forces in concert with paramilitary groups and criminal gangs financed by drug traffickers has been total. The evidence of this is that there has been no serious investigation of the great wave of atrocities perpetrated over the last three years against peasants, workers intellectuals, trade unionists, students and human-rights defenders.⁸

Of course, the balance sheet of this strategy today is worrying for the regime. Despite the brutal repression, the guerrillas are stronger than ever, and have achieved certain levels of military unity. They have achieved real results. For the first time in many years, the army has been put on the defensive in various regions of the country, and the number of military casualties exceeds that of the guerrillas.

According to the data of the government security agencies, in the first nine months of 1988 there were 235 armed clashes between the guerrillas and the army in eight departments, resulting in 1,174 deaths. In October alone, 55 military men were killed in combat in the course of a rebel offensive. Dozens of soldiers were captured, and electric pylons and bridges were hit, especially in the banana-growing region of Urabá, where the death squads had perpetrated



particularly savage massacres against the population.

A few weeks before the ousting of the minister of defence, fears began to be expressed that the tens of millions of dollars the government has channeled to the armed forces over recent months had been flowing into private pockets. The pro-regime press even went so far as to criticize some trips that General Samudio made to Israel to conclude negotiations for purchase of Kfir airplanes, whose usefulness in "anti-subversive" warfare is far from apparent, when the generals have "been complaining that the soldiers do not have boots," as a Liberal weekly put it.

The press also raised questions about where the \$80 million appropriated last year for submarine repair finally went. There was also a flood of criticism of the way in which certain military operations were carried out that resulted in disastrous failures for the army, such as those in Puerto Wilches, San Pablo, Paujil and Saiza.

It was in this context of setbacks for the military and doubts about where national defense money goes, which represents 40 per cent of the national budget, that the first signs of disagreement appeared in the governmental team. While General Samudio was talking about relentless war, the minister of the interior, César Gaviria, was pouring oil on the waters. He invoked the September 1 peace plan, despite the fact that rebel activity was up by 140 per cent.

It was evident that a section of the executive branch had begun to question the exclusively military scheme that has been followed up until now, in view of the poor results it has been having in keeping the people under control.

The other dimension of Barco's problem is mass upsurges in urban centers, such as those that have occurred recently in Pasto, Riohaha and Bucaramanga. Such rebellions remain for the moment isolated and sporadic, but they have been very radical. The demands raised have been for an end to the "dirty war," better public services and rejection of the IMF's plans.

In addition, there were the peasant marches in May, which were severely repressed by the army, and the general strike conducted by the United Federation of Workers (CUT) on October 27, despite the militarization of the country. All these mass actions are a new factor which, in addition to the advance of rebel activity, may be forcing the Colombian bourgeoisie to draw up another strategy.

6. *El País*, November 6, 1988.

7. The general narrowly escaped an attack recently in Bogotá, in which his driver and bodyguard were killed.

8. According to the Standing Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, in 1987 there were 1,651 political assassinations, 109 disappearances and 372 persons tortured and wounded. In only 60 days (from the end of June to mid-August) in 1988, the Comité reports that there were 14 massacres in which 119 people were killed; 163 individual political assassinations, 24 disappearances and 17 death threats.

Such a "new" strategy has not been explicitly formulated for the moment. It would not involve an end to military harassment of the population and those areas where the rebels have influence. It would probably consist of a more sophisticated two-sided alternative — a "peace plan" calling for "direct" dialogue with the insurgents and regional dialogues for "coexistence" with the population; and a reform of the constitution.

The problem is that dialogue with the guerrilla bodies has not been clearly defined so far by the government, and such proposals have in general been rejected by the armed groups. The latter have considered that this amounts to a sort of "unconditional surrender in three stages," in disregard of the fact that the Colombian guerrillas have not been militarily defeated. The proposal of a constitutional reform does not appeal to them either.

Turbulent political situation will continue

In fact, the change proposed is a timid one that would not alter the foundations of the present institutions. It would only increase the powers of the Congress and allow for referendums. Despite its moderate character, the government's constitutional reform scheme has been criticized by liberals and ultra-right conservatives, who want a more retrograde and clericalist constitution. Barco was expressing his opposition to this when he rejected General Samudio's view and ruled out both scorched earth policies and "a political revision of the state."

The signals given by the Segovia massacre indicate clearly that the most extremist wing of the armed forces and civilian right will place serious obstacles in the way of negotiation with the rebel movement and even the most timid liberalization. The article in the proposed constitutional reform stipulating that all parties represented in parliament, even radical opposition parties, are to be briefed by the government on foreign policy, national defense and public order has thrown a scare into the reactionaries and the military.

For his part, Barco lacks the political strength to open up the way for these cosmetic reforms which, moreover, have not aroused any enthusiasm among the masses. Everything indicates that the turbulent political situation that Colombia has been experiencing will go on. International solidarity is more necessary than ever. It is urgent to send letters and telegrams protesting against the Segovia massacre and the dirty war to Dr Virgilio Barco Vargas, presidente de la república, Palacio de Narino, Bogotá, Colombia; and to Colombia's embassies in every country.

Copies of such messages can be sent to the Comité Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, Carrera 7 N. 13-58 oficina 806 B Bogotá, Colombia. ★

Yugoslavia's genie is out of the bottle

MASS MOBILIZATIONS have occurred in a number of places in Yugoslavia in the late summer and fall, both demonstrations of Serbs and of the Albanian population in the autonomous province of Kosovo. The following article from *Die Linke*, paper of the Austrian section of the Fourth International, looks at the context and implications of these stormy developments.

MATTHIAS SCHREIBER

WITH A 217 per cent inflation rate, a \$21 billion foreign debt and nearly 1.3 million unemployed, the economic crisis that has been brewing for years has reached its sharpest point yet. In May, the government adopted an austerity program along IMF guidelines. These measures in no way improved the situation for the masses but rather brought a drastic worsening of their material situation.

The discontent aroused by the effects of the May reforms was so great that the chair of the Yugoslav State Presidium, Raif Dizdarevic, was the first post-Tito head of state to be forced to appeal directly to the population over TV. Against the background of continual strikes and demonstrations, he declared on October 9 that there was no turning back from the economic policy undertaken in the spring, but that its negative social consequences had to be mitigated.

People not ready to pay the price for the reforms

In less euphemistic terms, that means that the Yugoslav government is going to stick to the reform concept that it can only impose against the will of the population, if it could in fact impose it. Even if the purposed liberation in the currency market and in the setting of prices and wages could make it easier to "reflate" the economy, in market-economic terms, the Yugoslav people are hardly ready to pay the price for that. The price is, namely, still more social inequality and, along with that, a further decline in the standard of living.

On a national average, the living standard has been pushed back to where it was 20 years ago. But this figure does not accurately reflect the problem. While in Slovenia, Croatia and Vojvodina, we can

still talk about a slight upward movement, living conditions are deteriorating dramatically in the southern part of the country. In this respect, Macedonia and Kosovo are bringing up the rear. In Kosovo, it is said that the living standard has declined by 70 per cent in comparison with 1970.

Material and social roots of discontent

The explosion of massive conflicts in Kosovo and Vojvodina this fall has to be seen against this background. It is, after all, nothing new to find that it is especially easily to incite national groups against each other in time of crisis in order to divert a discontent that has material and social roots.

At the head of the Serbian League of Communists there is a personality who understands quite well how this is done. His name is Slobodan Milosevic, affectionately called "Slobo" by his followers. By pointing up the poor situation of the Serbian minority in the autonomous province of Kosovo, he managed to rally almost all of Serbia behind him. But his targets were not only the regional (Albanian) leaders in Kosovo but also those in Vojvodina, despite the fact that, with 54 per cent of the population, Serbs are a majority in that province.

Is Milosevic simply a convinced nationalist leading all Serbia into a holy war? That is the appearance of things. However, the real causes lie elsewhere. Milosevic, who sees democratization only as a market-economy orientation, and who would like to replace the Yugoslav federal system with centralism and a personality cult, needs mass pressure in the streets to win his objectives in the League of Yugoslav Communists. In fact, while the Slovenes and Croats have also long been for a market orientation and mixed economy, they

are uncomfortable with the centralist-authoritarian style of the Serbian Milosevic.

Nonetheless, at the Seventeenth Plenum of the League of Yugoslav Communists, Milosevic managed to win an important victory. A constitutional change institutionalizing the rights for Serbia over Kosovo and Vojvodina that he had been demanding sailed through.

Movement may turn against Milosevic

The fact that the Serbian candidate, Ckrebic, went down to defeat in the preceding election for the Presidium of the Yugoslav federation was a drawback, but not an essential one by comparison with the victory on the constitutional question.

In order to strengthen his position, the Serbian party leader was again impelled to seek mass support. He could do that best, and keep the mobilizations under control, with populist-nationalist slogans. It is questionable, however, how long that can work.

Only too easily, Milosevic can find that he can no longer conjure away the spirits that he has called up. Already in Kosovo, almost every adult carries a weapon, and

the Serbian minority has long since organized semi-legal vigilante patrols. Will the Serbian population let itself be ordered off the streets when Milosevic no longer needs them? This is hardly likely, especially since the Serbian population, which is being presented in the media here as purely nationalist, has also raised social demands.

For example, the Rakovica workers who besieged the parliament not only demanded more rights for Serbs in Kosovo and Vojvodina but also wage raises and the creation of a third house of parliament, a "Council of Association Labor," through which workers could exercise a direct influence over economic policy.

This demand itself is a devastating criticism of the form of self-management practiced in Yugoslavia, which for the workers means not really self-management but powerlessness against the mismanagement of the party leaders and factory managers. Thus, if Milosevic one day wants to take his leave from this movement, it may easily turn against him.

It is not out of the question that then the movement would split into a militant nationalistic wing that would want to continue the fight for Serbia even without "Slobo," and a wing, sobered by the great leader's departure, that would turn to the real political problems. ★

Trial and error

THE TRIAL of Michel Warschawsky (Mikado) and the Alternative Information Centre (AIC) opened on October 19. The first session was marked by an astonishing sloppiness on the part of the prosecution, who again and again were obliged to correct their accounts as a result of skillful cross-examination by Mikado's attorney, Avigdor Feldman.

The following report on this first session of the trial is from the November 14 issue of *News From Within*, an independent political newsletter published by the AIC.

IN HIS opening speech, the prosecuting counsel, Moshe Lador, argued that the AIC had produced material for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), notably a handbook instructing detainees how to hinder police investigations (that is, how to behave under interrogation...); had typeset material for West Bank organizations, including *al-Taqadum*, journal of the Student Progressive Front of Birzeit University, and *al-Maraa*, the West Bank women's magazine; and had printed leaflets for front organizations of the PFLP.

Lador stated that charges were being brought under the Defence (Emergency) Regulations, 1945, and the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, 1948. Mikado was not on trial for his beliefs, but his conscious actions. Feldman argued that this was untrue, and that Mikado's beliefs were in fact being cited as evidence that he was the sort of person who would do what he was alleged to have done.

The first witness, Inspector Raphael Mizrahi, stated that he was an investigator in the Minorities Division, who recorded Mikado's statement on February 17, 1987. Under cross-examination, Mizrahi confirmed that he was in fact a member of the Youth Division who was working as duty investigator on the night in question. He admitted that he had "forgotten" to record that a Shin Bet [security forces] agent had also been present during the interrogation, and had in fact dictated all the questions. Mizrahi had also "forgotten" to record Mikado's statement that he could not read Arabic....

The next witness, Inspector Yossi Mizrahi of the Minorities Division, gave evidence about the search of the Centre in February 1987. Forty crates of documents were removed, plus office equipment.... He



presented 69 computer discs taken from the Centre. Defence Counsel Avigdor Feldman submitted that, without evidence of the "chain of supervision" over the discs, they should not be accepted as evidence, since it was so easy to alter the contents.... After a recess, the judges agreed to accept the discs as evidence, but the defence has the right to challenge the authenticity of the files.

Mizrahi presented leaflets allegedly removed from the AIC. "I took away 3,150 leaflets like these. I neglected to mark them at the time, and cannot testify with absolute certainty that these are the documents, but to the best of my memory these are the leaflets that were removed." The leaflets, which argued against the PLO/Husseini agreement, were signed in the name of the "Hebron Revolutionary Committees".

A taste of Israeli state "justice"

Here Avigdor Feldman again intervened. "Who are the Hebron Revolutionary Committees?" he asked. "Why are they not named in the charge sheet? Are they an illegal organization?" The prosecution replied that not all illegal or terrorist organizations are known by name to the intelligence authorities. The contents of the leaflet — for national unity and against collaboration — prove that it is illegal and terrorist. Expert evidence would be produced later to show how the PFLP works through front organizations.

The witness confirmed that he had entered the AIC with both a closure order, and a search warrant permitting the removal of material relating to incitement or support for a forbidden organization, but had in fact removed all written material in the office. "We were under pressure", he explained. "There were very many documents, the phone kept ringing, lots of people — journalists, friends and others — were coming in." So he supervised the removal of the 40 crates of documents. He

could not remember if personal letters and documents were removed, but agreed that much material was taken that, even at a cursory glance, could not be connected with the indictment.

Further cross-examination established that, although each box was marked, documents could easily have been moved from box to box; that the fingerprints department had been unable to identify fingerprints on them; that, in any case, the fingerprints department had returned only photographs of the documents sent to them; and that several letters from Attorney Lea Tsemel requesting a full list of the seized documents had gone unanswered....

The judges suggested that, instead of trying to prove exactly what material was removed from the Centre, and establishing the full "chain of supervision", the prosecution instead produce the documents relating to the alleged offences, and witnesses who would testify that these were indeed found in the Centre. Attorney Lado, however, rejected this proposal — possibly because none of his witnesses could remember specific documents, only that "many" were taken.

Workers at the Centre, who have suffered 18 months deprivation of our equipment, held "as evidence" in the trial, were astonished to hear the prosecutor argue that, in order not to clutter up the court with the equipment, he would produce only photographs of it.... This casual attitude is characteristic of the way in which the prosecution case is being presented.... The AIC and Mikado are represented by thorough and able lawyers; we wonder what sort of "justice" is meted out to those thousands of detainees who do not have our international contacts and efficient evidence team. If they even reach court, that is.

At the prosecution's request, the trial has been deferred to next February. By then — two years after the closure of the AIC and the arrest of Michel Warschawsky — the witnesses may be able to "remember" the facts more clearly. ★

Drop the charges!

AFTER TWO SESSIONS, the district court in Jerusalem decided to postpone the remainder of the trial of the Alternative Information Centre (AIC) and its director, Michel Warschawsky, to February (see IV 147). The judges did not conceal their wonder at the meagre evidence of the first three prosecution witnesses, all police. The witnesses were meant to testify about the search which took place in the Centre offices and about the written material taken. It has become clear that, due to their eagerness to present public opinion "tens of boxes filled with illegal material", the police didn't make a point of acting in accordance with accepted procedure, and all signs indicate that most of the material submitted by the prosecution has no validity as evidence in court.

It seems that the prosecution will have to give up one of its three accusations — holding material which belongs to prohibited organizations. However, from here to the dismissal of all the legal procedures against the AIC is still a long way, and the security forces (Shin Bet) will not easily give up their attempt to attain convictions against Michel Warschawsky. We call upon you to use the next three months to increase the support for the AIC and to repeat again and again the demand for abolishing the legal procedures against Warschawsky and the AIC. ★

Statement by the AIC Collective, November 14, 1988

Changing the guard at the White House

ON NOVEMBER 8, 1988, millions of Americans must have sighed with relief as one of the most loathsome presidential election campaigns in US history finally came to an end.

The fact that Republican Vice President George Bush beat Democratic Governor Michael Dukakis was almost anti-climatic. Bush was leading in the polls right up to election day. And Dukakis, despite a last-minute campaigning surge, seemed to go out of his way to lose the election.

JOSEPH RYAN

BOTH CAPITALIST candidates refused to address the issues of most concern to American working people, relying instead on what has become known as "negative campaigning," that is, slick TV ads where slanderous charges are hurled back and forth and candidates are canned like a dog-food commercial. It became obvious to many people that no matter which candidate won, the working class would be the big losers.

The majority of eligible voters expressed their disgust by staying away from the polls in record numbers. Despite the best efforts of the TV and news media to play up the importance of the elections, 51% declined to vote. Ninety million American voters believed it made no difference who won the election.

In short, George Bush was elected by receiving only 27% of the votes from eligible voters — hardly a glowing mandate! In fact, it was the lowest voter turnout since 1924. But even before election day, many potential voters were already holding their noses. In an October 1988 *New York Times* poll, over 58% said they would prefer to vote for someone else — indeed, *anyone else*.

Millions of working people, the unemployed, and the poor saw no political alternatives in this election. Significantly, Jesse Jackson was unable to stampede Black voters, who were crucial to a Dukakis victory,

to the polls. The lowest voter turnout in the country was in Washington, DC, an overwhelmingly Black city.

Following Bush's election victory, many of the post-mortems and analyses in the liberal and left-wing press were filled with a certain despair. After all, many of them said, Bush's victory will mean four more years of Ronald Reagan's policies.

Publications like the left-wing magazine *the Progressive* found the elections "particularly disturbing." In its December 1988 issue, the editorial board of *the Progressive* noted disappointedly: "The hapless campaign of Michael Dukakis provided no inspiration and leaves no solace. He failed to uphold the faded banner of liberalism, let alone to articulate a vision of a better America freed from the shackles of the Cold War and runaway capitalism [sic]."

In its November 1988 pre-election editorial, *the Progressive* correctly pointed out that Dukakis offered "only the palest of alternatives — and on many crucial issues, no alternative at all." This correct but platonic assessment by *the Progressive* reflects the frustration of trying to build a "left wing" inside the Democratic Party.

All those who rallied around Jesse Jackson's bid to win the Democratic Party presidential nomination now have a bitter taste in their mouths. The trek from the illusions in Jackson to the reality of Dukakis must have been a painful one.

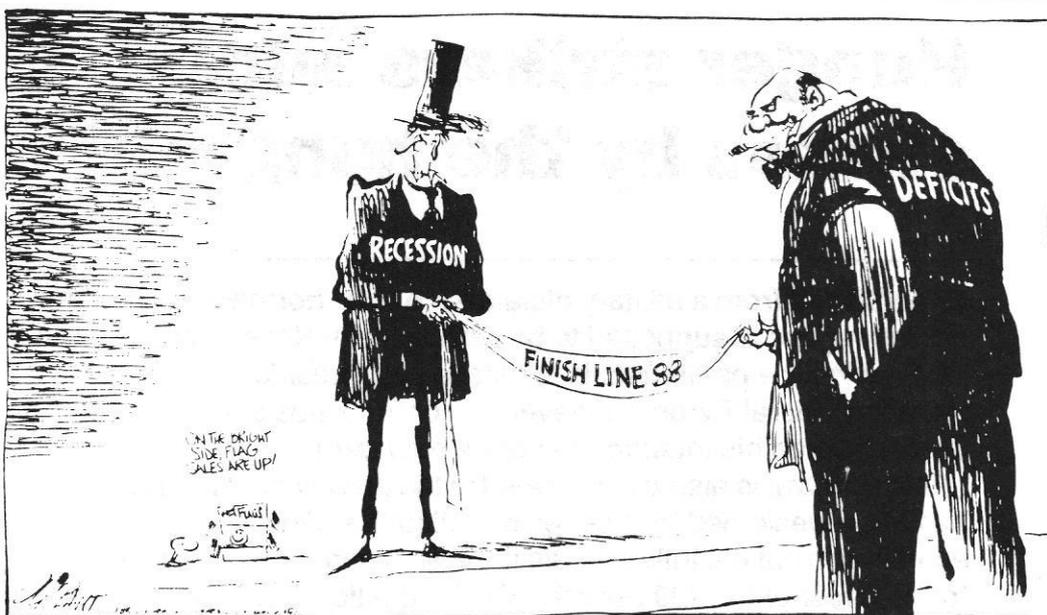
When George Bush attacked Dukakis for being "soft on defense," the Democratic Party candidate responded by being photographed while driving a new MX tank. When Bush said Dukakis was "soft on terrorism," Dukakis announced that he would support pre-emptive military strikes against "terrorist" bases. When Bush accused Dukakis of being "too liberal," Dukakis retorted, "No! I'm a moderate."

And then, only two weeks before election day, Dukakis emerged from his cocoon and became a "flaming liberal," albeit a dollar short and a day late. All of a sudden, when it was too late to matter, he started to talk about his concern for working people and the oppressed.

After all, the capitalist political party shell game had to be preserved for the 1992 elections.

Many capitalist political analysts are saying that Bush's election victory is a further confirmation of the "rightward drift" of the American people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Polls indicate that the majority of Americans are for a *cut* in the so-called defense budget and an *increase* in funds devoted to improving social services. The majority are against US aid to the contras. The majority state they support a woman's right to abortion. They want solutions to the plight of



the poor and the homeless.

But none of these burning issues were addressed by either capitalist candidate, and consciously so.

Furthermore, the looming crisis of the US economy was avoided like the plague by both candidates. Despite the victory of the Republican candidate, the stock market plunged 110 points between November 3 and 20. In doom-and-gloom language that socialists are usually accused of using, many prominent US economic analysts are wringing their hands about the future.

A refreshingly frank, but brutally apocalyptic, article published in the November 20, 1988, *San Francisco Examiner* begins with the conclusions of many capitalist analysts: "After six years of economic expansion built on enormous public and private debt, the faceless fear of a great American financial collapse is beginning to take on some ugly features."

Economic time bombs are ticking away

Roger Robinson, former senior director for international economics in Reagan's National Security Council, believes "1989 could be the year" for an economic recession. President-elect Bush credited his Pyrrhic electoral victory to the eight years of "peace and prosperity" of the Reagan administration. Now it is revealed that the economy contains so many ticking time bombs that economic analysts fear a chain reaction of explosions.

The crisis faced by the US capitalist class and its new chief executive is many-sided. The bankrupt savings-and-loan system is collapsing, requiring a bail-out of close to \$15 billion per year. Heavily indebted Latin American countries may soon be forced to cancel billions in interest payments they owe to US banks. Foreign capitalists like the Japanese and Germans might reduce their willingness to finance the US debt.

As the dollar falls on the world market,

thus making US goods cheaper, the pressure to increase interest rates accelerates to attract more foreign investment. This in turn will lead to a repetition of the never-before-seen "stagflation" of the early 1970s — a "slowed down" economy combined with rising inflation.

And, of course, always lurking in the background is the \$152 billion federal budget deficit — a budget that by edict of the Gramm-Rudman Law is supposed to be balanced by 1993.

The US government is not the only institution that's out of money. Corporations have laden themselves with huge debts while pursuing frenzied buy-outs of other corporations. After losing over \$1.2 trillion in the Oct. 19, 1987, stock market crash, any precipitous move by the government — like higher interest rates — could spell doom.

The so-called "peace and prosperity" that Bush bragged about is nothing more than a house of cards built on a foundation of sand. What economists fear the most is that one ill wind could topple the whole structure.

During the election campaign, neither Bush nor Dukakis would address this question. That's because no matter who won the election the same program would be implemented. For example, the Farmers Home Administration delayed sending foreclosure notices to 85,000 family farmers until after the election. The money to balance the budget and pay the debts has to come from the hides of working people. The ruling-class program calls for increasing taxes on consumer items like tobacco and gasoline and reducing entitlement programs like social security.

In this sense, a large proportion of working people knew instinctively that the 1988 presidential election was nothing more than the changing of the guard on the executive committee of the capitalist class. But the best laid plans of mice and men.... ★

[From the US monthly newspaper, *Socialist Action*]

Hunger strikers and strikes by the hungry

TRANSITION from a military dictatorship to a "normalized" civilian regime is supposed to be completed in November 1989, when the parliament is to elect a new president to replace General Evren. However, the general has already demonstrated his intention to seek a new term.

Premier Ozal is also a candidate for the presidency, but he has been weakened by a series of difficulties. On the economic front the inflation rate is coming dangerously close to the threshold of 100 per cent. On the political front, he faces internal dissent in his party, the ANAP (Motherland Party), and the backlash of the defeat suffered in the September 25 referendum. In the social arena, workers' struggles are reviving, and massive strikes are looming in the public sector.

The parliamentary "normalization" has not wiped out the imprint of the 1980 coup d'état. The hunger strike of nearly 2,000 political prisoners that has been going on for more than a month in about 20 prisons reveals the limitations of the liberalization, despite all the democratic cosmetics applied to make it easier for Turkey to join the EEC.

ERDAL TAN

SYSTEMATIC TORTURE, inhuman living conditions and humiliating treatment had already provoked hunger strikes, in particular in 1983 and 1984, in which several protesting prisoners died.

The struggles in the prisons have been projected outside by solidarity campaigns initiated by organizations such as the Turkish Human Rights League (IHD) and the Association for Solidarity with the Prisoners' Families (TAYAD), several of whose leaders have recently been arrested.

The prison rebellions broke out in response to the application of the August 1 circular issued by the new justice minister, Topaç. This set of orders reinstated the ultra-repressive measures in force during the martial-law period — compulsory wearing of prison uniforms, even for those in preventive detention; increased censorship of books and newspapers and of communication with the outside; a ban on the use of radios, tape recorders and typewriters.

Exercise periods for left political prisoners were arbitrarily reduced. Visits were reduced from one per week to one every two weeks. Collective use of the kitchens was

forbidden, and food packages were confiscated. On November 21, the hunger strike was in its 37th day in Diyarbakir prison, and the latest figure given of the numbers involved in the action was 1,839. This included about a hundred prisoners who were in a serious condition and hospitalized but refused treatment. About a dozen of them were on the verge of death.

Prisoners demand basic democratic rights

The prisoners are demanding an end to the compulsory wearing of prison uniforms and to the new restrictions imposed by the August 1 circular, as well as an end to the chaining of inmates together when they are moved (to the court, hospital and so on); an end to beatings and torture; and an end to arbitrary disciplinary penalties, such as the cancelling of time off for good behavior.

They are protesting against vandalism and theft perpetrated by guards during searches. They are demanding the right to talk to their lawyers face to face and the right to speak their native language during visits. This last point is crucial for the

Kurdish prisoners, whose parents, especially their mothers, generally speak only Kurdish. Officially, this language does not exist in Turkey, and therefore they are forbidden to use it during visits.

A broad solidarity movement has been organized on the initiative of the prisoners' relatives, the IHD, TAYAD and other progressive associations. In Diyarbakir, as a demonstration of solidarity with their children, 35 mainly elderly parents of prisoners, including 30 women, have been on hunger strike for 23 days in the offices of the People's Social Democratic Party (SHP). Two mothers of prisoners are in a critical state, but have refused treatment in hospital. Similar actions have been organized in several other towns.

On November 11, coming out of a TAYAD meeting in Istanbul, Hanim Sönmez tried to immolate herself. She is the mother of a member of the Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK) sentenced to life in prison, who had been on hunger strike for 25 days. She had had no word of him.

Military's repressive apparatus still exists

The government has turned a deaf ear to these protests, adopting a Thatcher-style policy. Nonetheless, the struggle in the prisons, the brutality of the repression and the government's cynicism have shown that little has really changed since the establishment of the military dictatorship.

Of course, the situation is not entirely the same. A slow and steady liberalization has widened the room for political activity. But the gains are very precarious and the repressive apparatus set up by the military is still there. For example, four years ago, the chair and general secretary of the Confederation of Progressive Unions of Turkey (DISK), Bastürk and Isiklar, were in prison threatened with the death penalty. Today, they are members of parliament for the SHP. But DISK is still outlawed, and the trade-union laws introduced by the military dictatorship remain in force.

Censorship of the press has been relaxed, and even left and far-left periodicals can be published legally. But in four years of civilian government, from 1984 to 1988, 2,127 journalists have been prosecuted, and 1,426 cases of "press offences" have been brought to trial.

In January, Turkey signed the European Convention on Torture. But that has not reduced the number of people tortured. A case in point is that of the editor of the magazine *Yeni Çözüm*, who was tortured for four days so savagely in the Ankara prefecture of police that he tried to kill himself.

Martial law has been lifted, but it has been replaced in the provinces of Kurdistan by a "state of emergency," and in the rest of the country by a beefing up of the police forces, whose numbers have increased by 50% within a few years.

The police, moreover, do not hesitate to

carry out summary executions. In October, near Istanbul the cops riddled a car carrying four suspected members of a far left group, although the latter were clearly unarmed. They fired 283 bullets into the vehicle!

Despite the lifting of martial law, the mass trials of left organizations are continuing before military tribunals. At the trial of Dev Yol (Revolutionary Road) members now underway in the Ankara military tribunal, 74 of the 723 defendants are in danger of being sentenced to death. In the Istanbul military tribunal, after seven years of "preventive detention" (!), the 1,243 defendants in the Dev Yol (Revolutionary Left) trial, were able in October to begin to present their defense. Some 180 of them face the possibility of death sentences.

There have been some "steps forward" on the Kurdish question. It is no longer an absolute taboo, even in the parliament and the bourgeois press. Ozal included on his slate a former Kurdish deputy who under martial law was imprisoned and tortured for "Kurdish separatism." The person concerned was elected. But in Kurdistan, hundreds of people suspected of having links with the PKK have been arrested and tortured. And the police have been given orders to "shoot-to-kill" presumed members of the PKK.

The Turkish government's attitude toward the Kurdish refugees who fled Iraq and chemical weapons massacres is another example of the Ozal regime's hypocrisy and cynicism. At first, Ozal refused to let them cross the border, but he was obliged to yield under the "physical" pressure of the 100,000 refugees massed along the frontier. However, he managed to portray

this as evidence of his government's humanitarian and democratic character! With a great fanfare, temporary housing supplies and infrastructural equipment were sent in order to foster this image, and, of course, to try to win the votes of Turkish Kurds for the September 25 referendum.

In reality, the Kurdish refugees were crowded into veritable concentration camps, where they were searched and registered, "in order to prevent any infiltration by PKK members." The government applied all sorts of direct and indirect pressures to force them to return to Iraq or go to Iran, which did not want to accept them either.

Cover-up of Iraq's Kurdish massacre

Food supplies were largely deficient both in quantity and quality. The journal *Kurdistan Press*, which is published in Western Europe, reports that the government did not transmit the international aid for the refugees, that it prevented Kurdish personalities in Diyarbakir from giving the refugees material help and that it has done everything possible to conceal the evidence of the use of chemical weapons by Iraq, its ally in repressing the Kurds.

"They have committed a crime against the state. They have rebelled....If it had not been for the West, we would have shown what you get for that here. No, no-one has been tortured, thanks to the West of course." These words of the prefect of Hakkari, a small Kurdish town on the Iraqi frontier illustrate the Turkish government's real policy toward the Kurdish refugees.

[Vers 2000, October 16, 1988.]

President Evren's official trip to Germany in October put the European seal of "respectability" on him. The statement that he made during this trip, "One day Turkey should also have a legal Communist Party," was hailed by a part of the Turkish and international press as evidence of a liberalization. Nonetheless, this was not the first time that the general raised such a possibility for a vague and distant future.

Moreover, even if you leave aside the fact that the two main leaders of the United Communist Party of Turkey (TBKP) are still behind bars charged with "Communist propaganda" and that the Socialist Party, successor of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Turkey (TIKP) outlawed by the military, was banned almost as soon as it was founded, it is still hard not to wonder about the general's real intentions when you read the end of his statement:

"Because while there is no Communist Party, you can't know who is and who is not a Communist, and they infiltrate other parties. In any case, the formation of such a party can only occur if the people want it, and this question should certainly be submitted to a referendum."

In fact, it is clear in the present situation that a referendum on the question of legalizing the CP would result in a conservative landslide of "no's." In a period of depoliticization, of retreat for the mass organizations, and especially when democratic freedoms are extremely limited and channels of information blocked, such a referendum could become a plebiscite of a fascist type.

Referendums used as a diversion

The government systematically resorts to referendums as a weapon to divert the attention of the people from the real problems, to conceal the fundamental issues and deepen depoliticization. A typical example was the September 25 referendum that Ozal staged in order to bring forward by four months the municipal elections scheduled for March 1989.

The premier was in a hurry to apply new austerity measures that would have lost him votes if they had been put into practice on the eve of the municipal elections. The opposition, for its part, tried to turn this referendum into a vote of no confidence in the government. The campaign was thus chaotic and no one knew what they were voting for.

The "no's" won by more than 65 per cent. But the formal victors found themselves incapable of translating this into political gains. Far from being weakened, Ozal managed to recoup his bet. He even declared himself the victor. If the "no's" were a rejection of his government, then the "yes's" meant approval, and they brought him to within 1 per cent of what he won in the November 1987 legislative elections, which,

"AAH! THE TURKEY OF MY DREAMS! NO STRIKES, NO OPPOSITION AND NO NOISE!"



thanks to the subtleties of the electoral system, give him two thirds of the seats.¹

ANAP seems to have managed to stabilize an urban electoral base, especially among the lumpen proletariat in the shantytowns and among the urban petty-bourgeoisie. It is not a cadre party but rather a combination coalesced around the personality of the premier and based on patronage and the advantages of holding governmental power.

The party's activist base is mainly in the hands of the "holy alliance" that includes former members of the Islamic party and of the fascist groups. At the ANAP congress in June 1988, several supporters of the holy alliance were elected in place of "liberals" who had Ozal's support. But despite their victory, they were excluded from certain key posts in the party and the government. The premier wanted in fact to maintain his party's "liberal and modernist" showcase.

On the eve of the referendum, Ozal did threaten to withdraw from politics if he were dealt a "significant" defeat. But this was mainly to bring to heel the supporters of the holy alliance who were discreetly sabotaging the campaign in order to express their discontent. Even if this threat was enough to restore order during the campaign, the frictions inside the ANAP are far from over.

Corruption and careerism

These clashes have more to do with struggles for influence aimed at gaining access to government posts for the sake of patronage and personal enrichment than they do with ideological differences, which are real but relative. The corruption of the ministers and their hangers-on is notorious, and often ANAP deputies themselves expose their own ministers. This has happened notably in the case of the financial scandals around bonuses and tax reductions for fictitious exports.

The attempt by a former fascist activist to assassinate Ozal during the ANAP congress in June may have been linked to this sort of business. Many former fascist activists have in fact been recycled into the mafia, with which they already collaborated closely in the arms and drugs traffic before the coup d'état.

The crisis in the right is also the reflection of the discontent of some sections of the bourgeoisie. But despite his difficulties, Ozal still has the support of the big bourgeoisie, which has every reason to be satisfied with him. According to the annual study of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, which took in the 500 biggest companies in Turkey, the share of profits in turnover rose from 23.7% in 1986 to 27% in 1987, while that of wages dropped from 37.9% in 1986 to 34.7% in 1987. In the lat-

ter year also, the country's two main holding companies, Koç and Sabancı, increased their profits respectively by 160% and 122%.

The grumbling today in business circles is due to the inflation rate, which may reach 90% by the end of the year. The real difficulty comes from the foreign debt burden, which rose from \$16 billion in 1980 to more than \$38 billion in 1987. The service on the debt amounted to \$7.8 billion in 1988. The economy's growth rate, 8% in



1986, fell to 5% in 1988.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) want to impose a new austerity program, with cuts in appropriations for infrastructural investment and for social services. They do not want wages in the public sector to rise, and are demanding an end to subsidies for agriculture.

It is on these points that Ozal faces social problems. Falling incomes in agriculture are impelling rural voters to support the Just Voice Party (DYP) led by former premier Demirel, Ozal's great rival, and a candidate to succeed him if the ANAP falls apart.

In the cities, moreover, Ozal faces reviving activity by the working class, which has seen its wages drop by 50% in ten years, even according to the official figures. From 1976 to 1986, the share of wages in the national income has dropped from 33.6% to 18.6% (per capita GNP is \$1,110).

According to a study by the union Petrol-Is, taking the year 1963 as a 100, average wages increased slightly for 15 years — 107.6 in 1976 and 109.9 in 1977 — and then dropped sharply over the last decade, reaching 45.1 in 1987! In the public sector, wages dropped by 32.7% over the last 2 years and by 25% in 1988.

Over the last four years, wage increases have remained below the rate of inflation. In 1984, wages went up by 29%, and the official inflation figure by 43%. In 1985, wages went up by 26% and inflation by 47%. In 1986, the increase in wages was

26% and 35% in inflation. In 1987, it was 35% and 67%.

The minimum net wage was increased by 60% in June, and is about 126,000 Turkish lira, or \$60, a month. Moreover, the official inflation rate is a poor reflection of the real situation. While the inflation rate now stands at 78%, basic food prices have increased by far more than that — 104% for bread (the staff of life), 145% for rice, 131% for cooking oil and 96% for vegetables.

Pushed into a corner by the deterioration in their living conditions and buying power, the workers are beginning to express their discontent. Despite all the restrictions and fetters on the right to strike, the number of hours lost due to strikes reached 2 million in 1987, and has exceeded 1 million in the first nine months of 1988. This total is far higher than in 1979 and 1980 (1.1 million and 1.3 million respectively). The bosses, who complained of social chaos at that time, are a lot calmer today. The reason may be that the days lost have been partially in long strikes in small enterprises, without major economic repercussions.

However, things may change quite rapidly. The recent conflict involving the SEKA state paper mills offers a good illustration of the workers' mood. For more than half a century,

there had never been any serious labor conflict in these factories. But since September 10,000 workers there have been on strike.

Despite a draft agreement between the union Sellüloz-Is and the bosses, the workers organized special general assemblies and forced the union to break off the negotiations. The government, for its part, did everything to delay and head-off the strike. In order to break it, three days before it was scheduled to begin, the government decided to import newsprint freed from all taxes, thereby giving the big press barons a handsome present.

Restrictions on the right to strike

Since then, the government has refused to yield, and has let the conflict drag on. After 70 strike days, the economic losses are estimated at 173 billion lira, while it would have cost only 94 billion to meet the workers' wage demands.

In order to get around the many restrictions on the right to strike, the workers have resorted to passive-resistance methods. Denied the right to strike, since this is forbidden in the oil industry, the 3,500 workers at the Aliaga refinery, which is linked to the Petkim petrochemicals complex, decided to boycott meals, work barefoot, take their work overalls home and, as a last resort, go

1. For the legislative election results, see IV 133, January 25, 1988.

on hunger strike. As a token of solidarity, in response to a call by Petrol-Is at the beginning of November, 80,000 workers in various enterprises boycotted meals in the canteens.

In the auto industry, the workers decided not to shave their beards. At the Gölcük shipyard, 4,500 workers blocked highway traffic. In the Zonguldak coalfield, 45,000 miners opposed their unions, which wanted to sign a contract, and are now preparing to go on strike. At present, 55,000 workers in various enterprises have already given strike notice.

Contracts will run out at the beginning of 1989 for 640,000 wage earners, the great majority of whom are in the public sector. And the government is determined not to give an inch on wages. So, we can expect a wave of mass strikes starting in February-March next year.

Even if some ingredients for a social explosion have been assembled, hasty and over-optimistic conclusions cannot be drawn from this revival of activity in the plants. These are above all strictly economic strikes, and are not automatically accompanied by an increase in consciousness sufficient to break down the limitations imposed by depoliticization.

Trade-union law limits possibilities for action

In fact, along with their standard of living, the workers' levels of consciousness and organization have also sunk sharply over recent years under the weight of demoralization and the defeats suffered in the period before and after the coup d'état. The eight years of bourgeois stability and the depoliticization policy pursued by the civilian and military governments have left deep scars, especially since no credible left alternative has taken shape either in the trade-union or political arena.

Trade-union membership represents no more than 11% of the workforce. The conservative confederation Türk-Is, which became totally dominant after the outlawing of DISK, includes 83% of the country's 2 million union members. Of course, the militant DISK trade unionists are active in the ranks of Türk-Is, which they have been forced to join. But the peculiar way of functioning of this "state union," which is very closely tied to the state apparatus and the bosses, severely restricts their maneuvering room.²

Some independent unions have occasionally adopted a more militant stance, but they are still too weak, and are struggling to survive. The trade-union law, moreover, limits their possibilities for action, because in order to sign a contract in an enterprise, a union has to include more than 10% of the workers in the industry.

The "left wing" of Türk-Is, for its part, is integrated into the apparatus of the SHP. And while it has a profile of demanding more for the workers, it is not able to offer a

real solution for the crisis in the union movement.

SHP leaders refuse support for hunger strikers

The SHP, bogged down in factional struggles, is not even capable of waging a consistent democratic struggle. On the anniversary of the coup d'état, when some SHP deputies strongly criticized Evren and demanded that he be tried for his crimes, the party's president, İnönü, came to the general's defence on the grounds that it was necessary to respect the head of state. He has also disavowed his party's Kurdish deputies.

The SHP leadership has likewise refused to support the recent hunger strikes, and İnönü has made appeals for them to be ended. Confronted with the active support of some of the SHP deputies and federal secretaries for the hunger strikers, especially in Diyarbakir, İnönü and his general secretary, Baykal, have ordered the party to take its distance from the strikes and "not to involve the party and its headquarters in this action."

On the economic front, the İnönü-Baykal duo is offering to manage the crisis better than Ozal. They have been holding more and more meetings with businessmen to reassure them of their intentions.

The SHP left wing divided recently, and although it has offered active support to some democratic struggles (the hunger strikes, the May 1 demonstration, struggles against state terror and repression) it is not in a position to offer an overall alternative to Ozal. It confines itself to the role of an impotent opposition, trapped within the SHP, its bureaucratic structures and its statist-populist ideology.

The revolutionary left, for its part, is still in crisis. And for the moment it is far from being a pole of attraction. Today there is a general crisis of confidence. Nobody believes in the government's promises anymore. The workers no longer have any confidence in their unions either, and feel a need to keep a close eye on them to prevent them from signing contracts behind their backs.

The Türk-Is leadership is totally discredited. Photos and caricatures of its chair, Sevket Yilmaz, arm-in-arm with Halit Narin, the top dog in the employers' confederation, are multiplying in all the newspapers, symbolizing this leadership's incompetence and corruption.

Workers slowly regaining combativity

Eight years after the coup d'état, the workers are slowly regaining their combativity and finding their way back into struggles. But they still do not have a clear perspective for rising above the present level of consciousness and organization.

The prison revolt and the solidarity movement that has developed around this struggle also show that it would be wrong to think that the years of repression have managed to wipe out all the gains and potential of the left in Turkey. But it will be necessary to go through a long and laborious process of recomposition before any solution begins to emerge to the crisis of confidence. ★

2. Türk-Is was built in the 1950s with the help of the US trade-unions. It constantly played a braking role in the struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. After the 1980 coup d'état, its general secretary was minister of labor in the first military government.

Eight years of repression

ACCORDING to research by the Turkish Human Rights Association (IHD) for the eighth anniversary of the September 1980 coup d'état, 700,000 people have been detained for political reasons. In addition, 210,000 trials have been initiated by civilian and military prosecutors, of which 202,000 have been carried through.

Amnesty International's report talks about 250,000 arrests. Fifty people sentenced to death have been executed, and a further 220 death sentences are awaiting ratification by the National Assembly. A hundred people condemned to death are waiting for the military appeals court to confirm their sentences. More than a thousand people have died in "clashes with the forces of order", and at least 177 have died under torture.

According to the official figures, there are more than 50,000 people in civilian prisons, of whom more than 20,000 are in preventive detention. Moreover, despite the lifting of martial law, 1,400 are still being held in the military prisons. The overwhelming majority of the political prisoners belong to various left and far left groups and to the Kurdish nationalist organizations.

According to the IHD report, about 30,000 Turkish and Kurdish political refugees are now in Western Europe, and 14,000 of those have reportedly been deprived of their Turkish citizenship. ★

(Bulletin Info-Türk, October 1988)

UNABLE to resolve the national question, the British and the Dublin government agreed to a form of words that pushed it to one side. The British indicated that they would not oppose Irish unity in the unlikely event that their loyalist supporters in the occupied northern counties would agree to it. For their part the Dublin government, rulers of the formally independent 26 Counties, went as far as they could towards recognizing the occupation by linking Irish unity to a loyalist veto. The result, as Britain's Northern Ireland secretary Tom King said afterwards, was to guarantee partition.

In this framework the British offered "equality of two traditions". The Nationalist minority in the occupied 6 Counties, while continuing to be denied their national rights, were to be offered equality with the pro-British unionist population in employment, and social, cultural and judicial reforms.

The agreement also aimed to restabilize partition by re-establishing a local parliament in the occupied North. (The former parliament, Stormont, ruling on the basis of protestant ascendancy and military repression, had been swept away in the mass nationalist revolt that began with the civil rights struggle in 1968 — see *IV* 150). Significantly, this proposal made no offer of power for nationalists within a unionist administration, which was the basis of an earlier British strategy, the Sunningdale agreement of 1973.

The accord also attempted to press ahead with the economic and political restructuring of the whole island, begun in the 1960s and explosively interrupted by the mass upsurge of nationalist resistance.

Border would not obstruct capitalists' profits

At that time traditional industries like textiles and engineering, on which unionist power was based, were on the decline, and Dublin politicians were accepting that their attempt to build an independent capitalism had failed. Both parts of Ireland were moving towards a strategy of attracting multinational investment. Imperialist strategy aimed at a rationalized Irish infrastructure. The border between North and South would remain as a barrier to workers' unity, but would not obstruct capitalist profits.

Since then, the entry of both Ireland and Britain into the EEC has facilitated this process. But the struggle in the North has remained a formidable barrier to Dublin collaboration. The Hillsborough Accord established an "Ireland Fund" with money from the USA, Canada, New Zealand and the EEC to spearhead a new restructuring, especially in the border areas.

But a fundamental contradiction lay at the heart of the agreement. The mass base of the British occupation rests on the support of Northern loyalists — and that, in turn, rests on defence of protestant supre-

macy and discrimination against Catholics. The reforms were therefore limited to what the loyalists would accept, and a violent backlash when the agreement was signed limited this even further.

There were other contradictions. The Dublin government had attempted to link support for imperialism with liberalism of its own society, dominated by the Catholic Church. In practice, operating the agreement meant an increased dependence on the forces of reaction and made this sort of liberalization impossible. The defeat of a referendum to legalize divorce marked the end of this con-trick.

Promises of reform largely unfulfilled

Leaving aside the need to support loyalism, the direct interests of British imperialism also contradicted the promises of reform. Their war against the IRA and the nationalist population of the North had become increasingly vicious. This meant legal immunity for state forces, defence of emergency laws and further restrictions on civil liberties.

The agreement has to be put in the context of the overall interests of imperialism, which are directly in opposition to the needs of the Irish people. The imperialist programme means austerity, unemployment, forced emigration, repression, the removal of the last vestiges of political independence from the southern neocolony and the direct co-optation of Ireland into the imperialist war-drive.

Finally, the Hillsborough deal had to contend with the fact of republican resistance in the occupied North. This resistance had a mass base that had survived 20 years of savage repression. It would not be bought off by a programme of fake reforms linked to an all too real increase in oppression.

All these factors came into play following the signing of the agreement. An initial welcome by a war-weary nationalist population quickly cooled when the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), the representatives of the Irish bourgeoisie in the occupied sector, time and again announced reforms that were then delayed for a long time, and following this either cancelled or cut back to a farcical level. Initial promises of reforms included curbs on loyalist marches (traditionally staged in nationalist areas as a form of intimidation), repeal of the Flags and Emblems Act (used to ban the display of the Irish tricolour), legalization of Irish street names and resources for Irish language and culture, and an end to intimidation

After three Anglo-Iris

THE HILLSBOROUGH deal, the latest attempt to stabilize the situation in the North, due for renegotiation after three years in existence, celebrates its anniversary. It has not met its objectives, and has deepened the divisions between the British and Irish allies. Yet it has survived any previous initiatives, and is a platform for a new approach against the

The agreement co-opted the Irish working class into a formal alliance to suppress the mass movement of the working class for the

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After three years, the Flags and Emblems Act has been repealed — with the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC¹) retaining the right to ban the Irish flag under public order legislation. Some loyalist marches have been curbed (and the right to intimidate many nationalist areas reinforced by massive RUC protection). Disputes over threatening loyalist displays in workplaces have led to “compromises” where workplace flags are removed and management erect giant Union Jacks at the factory entrance.

Remobilization of loyalist death squads

Despite the lack of reforms and the clear role of the Hillsborough deal as a bulwark against a united Ireland, unionist resistance remains total. This illustrates the sectarian character of unionism — for them the issue is not British nationality, but protestant ascendancy. The fact that a response including mass demonstrations, the remobilization of loyalist death squads, a breakdown in local government and attempts to stage revolts in the RUC and Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR²) has not brought down the agreement shows the dependence of the loyalists on imperialism. It also underlines the fact that it is British interest and not loyalist reaction that fuels the war in Ireland.

That British interest came to the fore in a series of violent incidents: a “shoot-to-kill” massacre by the elite SAS (Special Air Services) troops of the British army at Loughgall that claimed the lives of eight IRA men; the “battle of the funerals”³, where the full panoply of state repression was used to attack mourners and prevent any display of republican solidarity; and, finally, the scandal of the Gibraltar killings.⁴

The state forces carrying out these actions needed immunity from the law. A series of RUC officers were acquitted of murder. The Stalker report into the shoot-to-kill policy was distorted and suppressed. Private Ian Thain, the only soldier ever to be convicted of murder during 20 years of British violence, was released after two years in prison. More recently, a soldier charged with murder in County Tyrone was released when the charges were dropped. The Diplock Courts, sitting without a jury, remained. The Prevention of Terrorism Act, routinely used as a weapon of racist harassment against Irish people in Britain, was made permanent. Perhaps the most burning resentment was produced by the failure of the British judiciary to release the Birmingham Six

who were jailed for the Birmingham pub bombings in the early 1970s, despite their obvious innocence. The history of torture and conspiracy by state forces could not be admitted. This judicial decision was endorsed by the British government when it refused to exercise its prerogative to pardon.

British interest — and British incapacity — are most clearly demonstrated on the economic front. In order to defend loyalism they have mounted a world-wide propaganda campaign against the McBride Principles, a programme of affirmative action to end job discrimination against Catholic workers. Their own “reforms” outlaw positive discrimination and thus make any real change in the pattern of employment impossible.

They have their own programme of discrimination. “Political vetting” means that any community, social or educational group that the British allege have republican connections can be refused state funds. Money is refused to Irish language schools, and a new plan for state education effectively bans the Irish language from the curriculum. The result is to turn the SDLP and Catholic Church into gendarmerie for the occupation — given control over hiring and firing in an attempt to isolate republicans.

This is a very dangerous position for the capitalists to be in. Recently, the SDLP triumphantly leaked details of a £100 million (about \$180m) job-creation scheme in the nationalist ghetto of West Belfast. When the scheme was announced it was £10 million to be used mainly for environmental and educational purposes for deprived areas in general, rather than West Belfast.

Continuing instability of British rule

In any case, these sorts of stunts are more than offset by the spilling over of the offensive against the working class in Britain and also by the imperialists' unwillingness to continue propping up dead sectors of the colonial economy. So much more than £10 million has been lost from West Belfast in housing, social services, the health services and education. The British plan to privatize lignite (brown coal) reserves and the electricity, shipbuilding, aircraft and missile industries. Some republicans see this as signs of an impending withdrawal. It should more properly be interpreted as a sign of the continuing instability and decline of British rule.

Other sections of imperialism, concerned at the lack of British progress, have begun to intervene. US pressure was partly responsible for the signing of the Hillsborough agreement, and the US was directly responsible for the setting up of the Ireland

1. RUC — native colonial paramilitary police.

2. UDR — a local protestant militia, armed and controlled by the British.

3. See IV 138, April 4, 1988.

4. See IV 137, March 21, 1988.



Fund. There are problems here too. The money involved is quite small. It is earmarked for entrepreneurial schemes that are unlikely to be found in the areas of greatest deprivation, and it is not aimed at building an Irish economy — a large amount of the money spent so far has gone towards tourism and agribusiness.

Imperialist pressure on the Dublin government has been more successful. They have signed the Single European Act and the European Convention on Terrorism, following this with an agreement to extradite republicans to the occupied territories. It has recently been confirmed that the British now have permission to overfly the territory of the 26 Counties on reconnaissance missions. A report in September on British nuclear defence inadvertently admitted that the South had linked into the British system. Their economic policy is geared towards paying interest on a massive foreign debt, leading to a savage austerity offensive and advice to Irish youth to emigrate.

British push for a military solution

The Irish bourgeoisie is in too deep to back out, no matter how disastrous the agreement has been. To the British, the Hillsborough agreement is just the latest in a long line of initiatives. For the Dublin government and the SDLP, its collapse would carry the threat of their own fall, especially as the republican vote in the North, while having fallen slightly, is very far from collapsing. As both London and Dublin get more impatient, so repression becomes more and more the dominant expression of the Hillsborough agreement.

The agreement is due for negotiation this month, but effectively it has been pushed to one side while the British push for a military solution. The SAS murder squads have been reintroduced. Sinn Fein has been banned from British television. This proscription includes sympathizers, so in practice it will include all those opposing the British occupation, including People's Democracy, the Irish section of the Fourth International. The right to silence under police interrogation has been abolished. A "loyalty" oath for candidates in elections is to be introduced and new financial laws will make it possible to seize the savings and property of republican sympathizers.

This leaves the subordinate position of the Dublin government pretty clear. Each week they face new humiliation and embarrassment. The repression and collaboration are widely unpopular and there is growing discontent in the ranks of the ruling party, Fianna Fail. The latest humiliation was the sentencing of three young Irish people to 25 years in jail for attempting to murder Tom King on non-existent evidence.

The only escape route for Dublin is to join with the British in persuading the unionists involve themselves in the renegotia-

tion of the deal. Unionist involvement would justify further delay in reforms, and the growing viciousness of the repression and could be presented by Dublin as a long-term strategy for Irish unity.

Yet three years of the agreement have demonstrated conclusively that the central element of any imperialist strategy will be military repression. The British have demonstrated their incapacity to make meaningful reforms. Dublin has demonstrated its dependence on imperialism, and the unionists a unique combination of demoralization and thoroughgoing reaction. The Hillsborough accord exists today only because there has been no offensive by anti-imperialists to bring it down.

The lack of such an offensive marks a crisis in the anti-imperialist movement. The republican movement has undergone massive changes since the days of the hunger strike [early 1980s]. It has built an electoral machine and a party apparatus. It has a young, left leadership. But its programme remains a programme of revolutionary nationalism. It argued for an alliance of all classes against the imperialist military presence and has traditionally oriented towards building alliances with capitalist parties, while a pro-imperialist trade-union leadership has held organized workers aside from the struggle and often this force is "invisible" to republicans. An agreement designed to preserve that presence, backed by all the bourgeois nationalist parties and where they spearhead the attack on republicanism was bound to lead to confusion.

Initially, republican resistance was expressed in military terms. In the absence of mass struggle this led to a series of tragedies and mistakes. More recently, a modification of traditional policy has been applied. Appeals have been made to the leadership of the bourgeois parties in the hope of influencing their supporters. In practice this has confused republican supporters more than those of the SDLP, and made it impossible to campaign on the

Hillsborough accord. One example is that during the recent Sinn Fein/SDLP talks, Sinn Fein offered to leave opposition to the agreement to one side in order to build cooperation on social and economic issues.

On the third anniversary of the accord things are beginning to change. Republicans openly accept that there is confusion. A sharp debate is taking place in their own movement and they have not been afraid to bring this to the broader anti-imperialist movement.

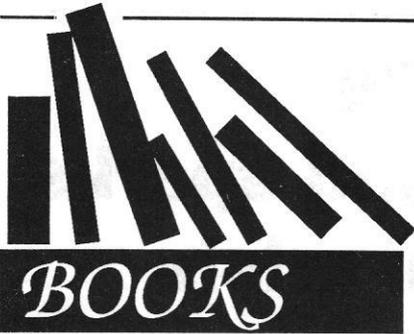
"Freedom Charter" for the Irish revolution

A campaign to mark the twentieth anniversary of the civil rights struggle, the '68 Committee, has attracted both veterans and youth and held a series of marches, debates and rallies. At one of these rallies in Derry, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams proposed a "Freedom Charter" for the Irish revolution. He said that it should centre on the need for national liberation, but that its content — political, social, economic, cultural — should be part of a discussion in the wider movement.

There are shortcomings with this conception. A true Freedom Charter will come not from discussion but from the living demands and struggles of the working class and oppressed. However, initial discussion and formulation can help provide an ideological alternative to the "new Ireland" that the Hillsborough agreement proposes, and help make the alliances with working class forces on which a counter-offensive can be based.

Imperialism is launching a new and bloody offensive. This represents a great danger. But that offensive comes from imperialist decline, loyalist fragmentation and decay and the bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism. This represents a real opportunity, and, slowly and hesitantly, the anti-imperialists are moving on to a counter-offensive. ★





Twenty Years On

Michael Farrell (editor),
Brandon Books, Co. Kerry,
1988. £4.95

THE MEMORY of 1968 has provoked much mocking commentary in the major media of the developed capitalist world.

A lot of fun is poked at "students playing at revolution" and reassurance is offered through interviews with people who participated in the 1968 events, but who now conform to the established order.

Ireland had its share of such people, but they are not among the eight contributors to this book. All are still political activists, seven of them were members of People's Democracy in 1968 and its precursor, the Young Socialists. This current, in Michael Farrell's words "best expressed the spirit of worldwide youth revolt within the civil rights movement in the North of Ireland". The eighth contributor comes from the other major strand in the civil rights movement, the republican movement. He is Gerry Adams, currently MP for West Belfast and president of Sinn Fein.

The book captures the excitement of the times. The sudden rise of the civil rights movement after the October 5 march in Derry was beaten off the streets by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and TV film of the event was flashed across Ireland, Britain and the rest of the world.

A few days later the students of Queens's University Belfast held their own protest march, and later that evening founded People's Democracy (PD). Farrell's Young Socialists (YS) became its "hard core". PD did things other more cautious organizations would not even contemplate, and as a result conflict with the moderate leadership of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was unavoidable.

A decisive turning point arrived in December 1968 when the Unionist Prime Minister Terence O'Neill granted a few

measly reforms, sacked the ultra-rightist Home Affairs Minister William Craig, and called for a "truce". NICRA wanted to pull the movement off the streets. PD, or as Farrell puts it a little more precisely, "at least (we) in its YS hard core" were not fooled.

Farrell and his comrades decided on a march from Belfast to Derry in January 1969. The march, modeled on the 1965 Selma-Montgomery march in Alabama in the USA, was harassed and attacked by groups of loyalists and finally ambushed at the bridge which later gave the event its name: Burntollet. The RUC led the marchers into the attack and later stood around chatting with the assailants. It was a grim lesson in how deeply sectarianism was built into the Northern state and sharply radicalized the Catholic masses.

Barricades go up around "Free Derry"

The marchers got a heroes' welcomes in Derry, and by August 1969 the RUC and their auxiliary paramilitary force, the B-Specials, had been physically driven out of the city. The barricades went up and "Free Derry" was born. As British troops appeared in Derry streets for the first time, events in Belfast took a more sinister turn. The RUC and the B-Specials attacked the Catholic ghettos in West Belfast "spraying the Falls Road with machine-gun fire". Over 150 Catholics were burned out of their houses and five people were killed.

The RUC and the local Stormont government had reintroduced the gun into Northern politics, but the civil rights movement had neither anticipated nor prepared for this development. This touched off an extremely important split in the Republican movement a few months later and profoundly shaped the politics of subsequent years.

We have already mentioned the fact that PD clashed with the moderate leadership of NICRA over what direction to take in late 1968. It may come as a shock to some readers to know that the Communist Party (CP) and the leadership of the republican movement backed the moderate NICRA leadership on this and several other significant occasions.

The republican leadership of that time had emerged after the disastrous 1956-62 armed campaign. They concluded that military struggle alone was insufficient. They

turned to political action, and were a component part of the civil rights movement. But this leadership had also adopted the idea that democracy was one "stage" in the struggle to be completed. Once it was achieved then there could be unity between Catholics and Protestants, then Irish unity, and later still some form of socialism.

The limitations of this scenario, not to say its right wing implications, were dramatically exposed in the revolutionary upheavals of October 1968 to August 1969. A traditionalist right wing had remained a sizeable minority inside the republican movement, and was hostile to the political turn. But they did understand the need for armed physical defence in the wake of the August 1969 events: they formed the "Provisional" wing of the republican movement in 1970 and gradually won mass support in the Catholic ghettos. The other wing, the Officials, gradually broke with its republican roots and is today a Stalinist-tinted, virulently anti-republican organization known as the Workers' Party.

The Provos were thus born with an extreme suspicion of politics and only after

TWENTY YEARS ON

the H-Block/Armagh mass movement of 1979-81 did they move away from a purely military strategy.

"RUC led the marchers into an ambush"

Gerry Adams offers an extremely interesting account of the late 60s and early 70s because he was one of the very few "political" Belfast republicans who sided with the Provisionals in the 1970 split. Significantly, when he led Sinn Fein to abandon the "principle" of abstaining from the Dail (the Southern parliament) in 1986, the old Provisional leadership of Ruairi O Bradaigh and Daithi O Conaill themselves split to form Republican Sinn Fein.

Adams candidly lists the republican leadership with the "gradualist" NICRA leadership and graphically states that they were wrong about the Burntollet march: "This leadership position (opposition to the initia-

tive) was submerged by the boots, bricks and batons of the off-duty B-Specials and their associates as the RUC led the marchers into the ambush".

Adams concluded that the rise of the mass movement had put a challenge to the very existence of the Northern state on the agenda. This, and the emergence of armed struggle put him on the Provisional side of the split. But as he puts it so well, "the political ground was left untilled".

Inevitably this review has only concentrated on one or two areas. Other contributions include an account of the women's movement which shows how backward the components of the civil rights movement (including PD) were on this issue. Bernadette McAliskey writes about what she achieved as a Westminster MP (there is a lesson there for Sinn Fein who still boycott the British parliament), and Carol Coulter writes about the South of Ireland.

The book does, in my opinion, meet Michael Farrell's objective of outlining "some of the steps needed to resolve the crisis that began 20 years ago with a popular revolt against the injustices of the sectarian state in Northern Ireland."

British response to mass upsurges

Farrell points out that all the major initiatives taken by the British over the last 20 years — the latest being the Anglo-Irish Agreement — have been in response to all-Ireland mass upsurges with substantial support. Controversially, he suggests the IRA put its military struggle "on hold", and that if a new serious challenge were to develop to the partition structure, "at least it would be clear again just who was responsible for the violence".

One may agree or disagree with this, but the truth is that since the demise of the H-Block/Armagh campaign Sinn Fein's strategy in the South has produced little success. Not only that, but recent indications are of increased electoral support for both the Workers' Party and the Labour Party. Neither of these organizations has a consistent anti-partition stand, and Sinn Fein's support has actually declined in the last five years. The path of electoralism plus verbal support for the Northern armed struggle is not the way forward, and badly judged military operations like 1987's Enniskillen bombing produce very negative results in the South.

The Northern leadership of Sinn Fein is now taking up the idea of a "Freedom Charter" suggested by PD for the last few years. It implies a struggle for some common objectives by different political currents, not just Sinn Fein alone. This debate has been gathering momentum around events commemorating 1968 and was taken up by the contributors to Michael Farrell's book. If it bears fruit it will be a fitting continuation of the spirit evoked by this work. ★

John Meehan

Abdou Diouf's electoral fraud sparks new political crisis

A FORMER French colony that received its independence in the early 1960s, Senegal has had a virtual single-party state — run by the Socialist Party — since that time. First Leopold Senghor, and now Abdou Diouf, have run the country with an occasional benevolent nod from their old masters. In 1979, the country adopted an austerity and restructuring plan laid out by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Senegal's foreign debt grew from \$1.8 billion in 1985 to \$3 billion in 1987. The average annual income per capita is \$420.

In 1987, as a reward for the success of the first round of its austerity policies, the Senegalese government was able to renegotiate its debt and received \$93 million more in credits. In this "oasis of Western democracy in Africa" where corruption reigns and electoral fraud is standard operating procedure, the "students' revolt" and the opposition's challenge to the February 1988 election results have opened a period of political crisis.

AMADOU GUIRO

FOUR CANDIDATES stood in the presidential election on February 28, 1988. They were Abdou Diouf, the incumbent and candidate of the SP, Abdoulaye Wade of the SDP, Babacar Niang of the PLP, and Landing Savane from And-Jef/RMND, who was also supported by the SWO. Six slates were put up in the legislative elections taking place at the same time: the SP's, the SDP's, the PLP's, the SDP-Renovators', as well as the LLP's and the DL/MLP's (see box).

The election rallies demonstrated an unprecedented mobilization of the Senegalese people behind the opposition parties. Without a doubt, it was the liberal bourgeois candidate Abdoulaye Wade who succeeded, thanks to his demagogic promises, in capturing this popular mobilization for his campaign. To the masses, Wade represented a perspective of immediate change, there being every indication that he would defeat Diouf.

The revolutionary candidate, Landing Savane, was nicknamed the "candidate without illusions," because he never doubted that the SP would fix the elections yet

again. He advanced an anti-imperialist program against the World Bank and IMF's plans, for a popular alternative and for the defense of democratic liberties. This was the first time that a revolutionary had taken part in a presidential election, and the campaign attracted attention, gaining credibility and winning a definite audience, especially among young people.

Thirty years of ruin and crooked dealings

The PLP nationalist candidate, Niang, had to toughen up his rhetoric halfway through his timid campaign, when it became clear that Diouf and his lackeys were going to perpetrate a fraud. Despite the support of the *marabouts* (Muslim notables and dignitaries organized into religious brotherhoods) and the billions spent, Diouf and the SP mounted a lackluster campaign. The opposition parties in fact had a field day exposing and explaining the results of nearly 30 years of ruin and crooked dealings for which the SP was responsible. And they did

Senegal's political parties

SP — Socialist Party, member of the Socialist International, in power since independence, led by Abdou Diouf.

SDP — Senegalese Democratic Party, bourgeois liberal group led by Abdoulaye Wade.

PLP — People's Liberation Party, nationalist group led by Babacar Niang.

And-Jef/RMND — Revolutionary Movement for a New Democracy, revolutionary group with Maoist origins.

SWO — Socialist Workers Organization, Senegalese section of the Fourth International.

SDP-Renovators — a split from the SDP organized by the government which supported Diouf in the elections.

ILP — Independence and Labor Party, a pro-Soviet party.

DL/MLP — Democratic League/Movement for a Labor Party, pro-Soviet organization. ★

not neglect the policies of the IMF and the World Bank.

In the midst of the campaign, despite the censorship, a French-language paper, *Taxi Ville*, revealed the scandalous riches of the president and those close to him. Among other things, there were villas in Beverly Hills and on the Riviera, yachts, an attempt to take over the textile industry, and so on.

Diouf was utterly discredited. In the town of Thiès, his campaign cortège was greeted with stones. During his final speech, broadcast on television and radio, he gave way to panic, calling opposition leaders "highway robbers" and young Senegalese people "sick youth." He promised to clean all of that up after the elections, sure that in spite of everything he would win again.

On the day of the elections, the SP election cheats possessed undistributed voters' cards. So it was a simple matter for them to try to vote five, ten, even twenty times in a system that does not require identification at the polls. The opposition party members and neutral observers came out in force to polling stations to counter that. Watchers succeeded in stopping the SP from stuffing ballot boxes, especially in urban districts.

So, there was nothing left for the government to do but engineer the fraud at a higher level. Thus, on the basis of results from fewer than ten polling stations, not one of which

was in Dakar, the minister of the interior announced rigged results late in the evening of February 28, giving 76% of the votes cast to Abdou Diouf.

State of emergency and curfew declared

The next day, February 29, the people of Dakar, especially those from the poorer areas, surged into the streets to protest against the proclaimed results. Thousands, mostly young people, went to the independence monument near the headquarters of the SDP. After several hours had gone by, a confrontation developed with police who were seeking to disperse the crowd. Demonstrators set fire to buses, big cars and gas stations.

That night the government declared a state of emergency, and a curfew in the whole Dakar region. The students were driven off with clubs. The university and all schools were closed. Wade, the rest of the SDP leadership and Amath Dansokho, the general secretary of the ILP, were placed under arrest. Wade was thus denied a chance to challenge the election results, though he said that he had all of the official records from the polling stations. At that point, all the opposition parties put aside their differences in order to mount a common defence of democratic rights.

A united action committee of the opposition was formed; the "Group of Eleven."¹ Its first platform, signed on March 5, 1988, raised the following demands: release of those detained, lifting of the state of emergency and the curfew, declaring the

elections null and void and holding new free and democratic elections; full respect of the rights of political parties and citizens; reopening the schools; consideration of the demands and aspirations of youth; and lower prices for basic goods and services such as rice, sugar, gas and electricity.

Under the impetus of this, some Popular Resistance Committees (PRCs) began to appear. They were united-front bodies comprised of political party members and radicals, and took up the slogans of the "Eleven," making pot-and-pan-banging protests, leafletting, fly-posting, and organizing demonstrations. The reformists believed the PRCs should only include party activists, but revolutionaries thought they should be structures for self-organization. The protests were held weekly, and they resulted in more arrests and trials, leading to more demonstrations.

Trials for "violating state security"

On April 4, national independence day, Abdou Diouf — who had been declared "elected" with 73% of the votes cast² — staged a quickie celebration in Independence Square. It lasted no longer than thirty minutes. The whole downtown area was blocked off by security forces to keep the people away. In spite of the state of emergency, the opposition called its own demonstration in one of the poorer neighborhoods of the capital.

On May 1, the national bureau of the Senegalese National Workers' Confederation (SNWC), the official union, called on workers not to hold a parade because of the state of emergency, but to go to the various union headquarters. The national bureau discreetly handed the government a list of grievances. The independent unions' attempts to organize a demonstration ended in failure, in part because of some of their leaders' subordination to reformist parties. The "Group of Eleven" again called a protest march in the Niary Tally area, which had become a symbol of resistance to Diouf's dictates. The security forces tried to prevent the demonstration, and young people responded by throwing stones and setting fire to tires in order to keep them out.

The post-election mobilizations



1. Apart from groups already mentioned in (the SDP, the ILP, And-Jef/RMND, DL/MLP, and the SWO) this also brought together the Movement for Popular Democracy (MPD), the Senegal Peoples Party (SPP), the African Independence Party (AIP), the Communist Workers League (CWL), the National Patriotic Front (NPF), and the Union for Popular Democracy (UPD);

2. According to the official results announced by the Supreme Court, Abdou Diouf received 73% of the vote, the SP got 103 seats, and the SDP 17.

culminated in the trial of Wade and the SDP leadership, a month after the arrests. They were brought before the National Security Court for "violating state security." A team of 30 lawyers — from Senegal, as well as from Algeria, France and the Congo — was formed to defend them.

When the trial opened, Wade solemnly swore to the examining magistrate that he had received a 56% majority of the vote in the presidential elections. Throughout the trial, people waited in vain for publication of the official records that he claimed to have. Even though the legal statute of limitations had run out, this would have given a boost to the popular mobilization

Daily demonstrations at the court

Nonetheless, the defence was able to expose the election masquerade. It demonstrated the real reason for the arrests, which was to keep the SDP from challenging the results within the 48-hour time-limit after the vote. To show that they could not lend any credence to such a mockery of a trial, in which the rights of the defence were totally disregarded, the lawyers decided to stop presenting their case and walked out of the courtroom for good.

During the trial, people thronged outside the courthouse, whose entrances were carefully guarded by an impressive cordon of police. Each day, when the court sessions ended, there were demonstrations called by the "Group of Eleven."

During this period, two booby-trapped cars exploded in the capital's center. The pipes supplying water for Dakar was also sabotaged. These actions were claimed by the "February 29 Movement" and the "Revolutionary Brigade of Senegal." Both of these groups remain mysterious to this day.

A leaflet signed by "a group of Senegalese Army officers" circulated exposing the corruption rife in the police force. It claimed that some officers had received a payoff of 150,000,000 CFA (about \$550,000) to "ruthlessly curb demonstrators and assure the head of state's safety if things get worse." Confronted with a situation going from bad to worse, Diouf decided to back down a bit, and announced lower prices — especially in the cities — for some staples, such as rice, sugar and cooking oil. But the population considered these cuts pathetic.³ In fact the reforms cost him nothing, since he had simultaneously lowered the purchase price paid to peasants for peanuts from 90 CFA to 70 CFA a kilo. On the same day, he lifted the state of emergency in Dakar.

The second step in Diouf's strategy was to bring the opposition into a dialogue. At the feast of Koriteh, which follows the Muslim fast of Ramadan and is considered a time for forgiveness, Diouf made a speech announcing amnesty for all those convicted during the post-election period,

and called for national reconciliation.

He also put out a call for a round-table with Abdoulaye Wade to discuss the problems facing the nation. Wade immediately responded favorably, dropping all claims to the presidency. The press leaped at the chance to distract people's attention and demobilize the popular committees.

This was the beginning of the breakup of the "Eleven." Eight of its component groups, including And-Jef, refused to sanction the round-table called by Diouf. The ILP and the DL/MLP once again tail-ended the liberal bourgeoisie, deciding to back Wade.

Confronted with the failure of the "Group of Eleven," the SWO and And-Jef organized a public meeting on May 28 in Niary Tally to expose the round-table as demobilizing maneuver by the imperialists and the neo-colonial bourgeoisie. The two parties called for the continuation and the strengthening of the mass organizations. The round-table brought nothing but a discussion of the electoral machinery and the parties' access to the media. It collapsed in October.

The only winner in this fool's game was Abdou Diouf, who got out of the tight corner he was in. At the same time, Wade was discredited for having bought his freedom in exchange for selling out the mass social movement that was beginning to radicalize.

Youth erupt onto political scene

A distinctive feature of this period was the eruption of youth onto the political scene. This came as a result of the general discontent with Diouf's policies. In fact, with the application of the new World Bank and IMF measures in the schools, there had been constant deterioration. The government's so-called New School Policy was synonymous with hardship. Boarding schools were eliminated. A system of two-shift classes was introduced in rural areas and poorer neighborhoods. Class size skyrocketed — in some cases up to 90. It was estimated that there were about 105,000 too few desks and chairs.

There was a considerable cutback in the hiring of teachers, and the standard also dropped. In the high schools, common problems were a lack of water, black-outs, an insufficient amount of books and a nearly total absence of educational aids, or even medicine in the infirmaries.

In the university, things were hardly any better. Auditoriums were overcrowded. There was a lack of laboratory equipment for experiments, pathetic budgets for the departments and so on. The consequence was a drastic rise in the examination failure rate. But the biggest worry was the unemployment affecting all young people, whether or not they had qualifications.

Unsurprisingly, student strikes have been frequent occurrences in recent years, but

the one that took place this year was different. From January, the high-school in Thiès was on strike demanding the readmittance of an expelled student. Quickly, specific demands were added on. Other high schools joined in solidarity with their fellow students in Thiès, and the movement spread throughout the country. Preoccupied with the election, neither Diouf nor his government took much notice of the students' demands.

In February, the campaign got underway and the whole of the government's policy became a target of the students' agitation. The "New School" was at the center of the oppositions' denunciations. During the elections, youth actively mobilized around the opposition and helped to defeat the SP's election cheaters. They sabotaged the SP's rallies

In the wake of the vote, the government decided to close the university, although the students were not yet on strike. The high-school and university students had just linked up. In the streets, as clashes developed between demonstrators and the police, bridges were built between young people in and out of school. Diouf had turned all Senegalese youth against him. "Sopi, Sopi" ("change," in the Wolof language), the SDP's slogan, became the rallying cry. Taken up by the youth, it expressed their desire for transformation. For many youth, Wade represented a perspective of immediate change. But young people were also quite receptive to the speeches of Landing Savane — the candidate of the working class, peasants and left intellectuals — who wound up his campaign with a large rally on campus.

Moreover, young people did not waste any time in shedding their illusions in Wade. After his release from prison, the latter exhorted high-school and primary students, as well as college students, to return to school even though their demands had not been met. The university student organizing committee in Dakar and the Senegal students' committee met with Wade and reaffirmed their independence from political parties.

Attempt to corrupt high school leaders

Rather than try to meet the students' demands, the government tried to corrupt some of the high-school leaders. Nearly 6,000,000 CFA (about \$22,000) was funnelled to members of the school students' organizing committee in order to liquidate the movement. Those involved were quickly unmasked and expelled from the committee.

The government also tried to destroy the movement by setting a date for re-

3. The price for one kilo of rice went from 160 CFA (about 70 cents) to 130 CFA (around 50 cents), while the people wanted a kilo of rice at 60 CFA (about 20 cents).

registration, after which any student who had not re-registered would be expelled. The maneuver failed because everyone re-registered, and then immediately went back out on strike.

Negotiations were frequently stalled by the government, which at the least sign of progress called everything into question again. It forbade general assemblies, tried to expel a student from Mali, set up ersatz exams and so on, leading to an impasse.

1988 will be known as an "idle" year. Out of nearly 15,000 students at the University of Dakar, less than a hundred (mostly military students) sat their end-of-term examinations. The middle-school leaving exam was not even held for third-year students. The *baccalaureat* exam took place in a state-of-siege atmosphere. All of the students at military schools and private academies were able to sit for the *baccalaureat*. They represented only 10% of all students. In many public institutions, not a single person came forward to take the exam.

Rise of a regional movement

Apart from the chaos created in education, other areas of Senegalese society are also teetering on the edge. In the south, the last few years have seen the rise of a regional movement challenging the central government, and this conflict is far from resolved today. Many "pro-independence" activists in detention did not benefit from the amnesty voted by the SP and the SDP.

In Gambia, the Senegalese occupation is proving more and more costly for the government. When there was a mass uprising in 1981, Senegalese troops (with French support, of course) went to the aid of the regime and then stayed on. Now a faction of the Gambian bourgeoisie is turning up its nose at the "Senegambian" confederation, and the Gambian population is growing more and more openly hostile to the Senegalese.

Several problems have also showed up within Senegal's repressive apparatus itself. In April 1987, the police force went on strike. Many were quite simply kicked out of the force. Some were later taken back. Others formed a clandestine organization called the "National Coordinating Committee of Expelled Police," which is asking for complete and unconditional reinstatement without loss of pay. It states that it is ready "to work or die".

This whole picture shows that the country is in an explosive situation, and upheavals can be expected, out of all proportion to what happened in May 1968. Today there is a national consensus against Diouf, and the population is becoming ever more convinced that this regime will never accept a democratic turnover in government. This feeling was reinforced with the failure of the round-table initiative.

The post-election struggle was only a

taste of what the national struggle will be like tomorrow. But neither Diouf nor Wade have anything to gain from a strengthening of an independent mass movement whose dynamic and demands are opposed to their bourgeois program.

A fallback for imperialism

There is no doubt that under the pressure of imperialism and the *marabouts*, Diouf and Wade will be forced to make up, despite the failure of the round-table. All Diouf has to do is clean house a bit within his party and open up his government to the SDP. But if the mass movement grows, Wade or the army could serve as the fallback for imperialism.

Thus, the only credible alternative on offer for a real *Sopi* is the perspective of revolutionary change. And it is not by chance that public opinion sees the candidate who supported a revolutionary program, Land-ing Savane, as the candidate of the future. It is important not only for all revolution-

aries to seize this opportunity to raise public consciousness, but to continue to build independent and united-front structures among all sections of the population. It is through such long and patient work that a revolutionary solution can be found for this neo-colonial crisis.

Such work, which is already showing results, cannot be accomplished if the left forces in Senegal are dispersed. The unity reached between the SWO and And-Jef/RMND before, during, and after the elections proves that it is possible for organizations in our country coming from different backgrounds and with different traditions to arrive at an understanding and work together in good faith for revolutionary change.

The unification of the long divided Senegalese left is imperative in order to take on the imperialists and local reaction.

Revolutionaries must be seen by the masses as the most unified force, in the first place by uniting their activity around the concerns of workers, peasants, and the popular layers. The SWO is actively working towards this end. ★



AROUND
THE
WORLD

SOUTH AFRICA

Semi-liberty for Mandela

NELSON MANDELA, who is now 70 and quite ill, has just been moved permanently to a clinic in the Cape. According to the South African government, there is no question of sending him back to prison after his convalescence. Mandela has served 24 years of a life sentence for "high treason". He symbolizes the implacable opposition to the apartheid regime by the Black national movement.

The semi-liberation is therefore an event of first importance. After having refused over the years any possibility of a pardon, the Pretoria regime finally proposed Mandela's release on condition that he renounced the ANC's position on "violence". Today, the South African government has taken a rather spectacular initiative in a period when the mass movement is marking time.

This must be seen in a context where premier P.W. Botha has succeeded in re-taking the political initiative since 1987. After several years of extremely large-scale confrontations, the regime was able to weaken the popular movement using both repression and a series of manoeuvres that interfered with the strategy of the main component of the movement, the ANC.

Botha has blown hot and cold

So, for the last year Botha has systematically blown hot and cold. On the one hand a new, particularly anti-union and repressive, labour law was introduced, along with bans and constraints on a number of movements, notably COSATU and the United Democratic Front. On the other hand was a proposal to privatize part of the public sector, an acceptance to desegregate certain commercial zones, negotiations for the independence of Namibia and, just a short time ago, the lifting of the death penalty for the Sharpeville Six after a strong campaign of international solidarity.

Using this tactic the South African government has successfully managed to win back the confidence of the liberal bourgeois sectors. It has thus been able to destabilize part of the strategy of the ANC, who were hoping to profit from the deep divisions in the ruling class to give itself a

space for semi-legal activities. It is particularly significant that a section of the Afrikaner electorate has moved to the right to the profit of the Conservative Party, while a section of the traditional supporters of the liberal PFP has transferred allegiances to Botha's National Party.

Mandela's semi-liberation therefore has contradictory meanings. But that takes nothing from the fact that if there had not been a campaign of international solidarity to demand his liberation, he would no doubt still be in prison. The South African government thinks that it can take this significant initiative precisely because Mandela represents a symbol. Like all his generation of militants from the ANC, the Pan-African Congress or other movements who have been through Robben Island prison, Mandela represented a perfect example of courage and energy for the new generations who have taken up the struggle these past years. ★

CANADA

Demo against trial

NEARLY fifty people picketed and rallied in front of the Israeli Consulate in Toronto on October 19 to demand that false charges of aiding a terrorist organization laid against Michel Warschawsky, director of the Alternative Information Centre, be dropped. (See article page 7.)

Participants carried signs that called for freedom of expression in Israel and an end to political trials targeting examples of Jewish/Palestinian cooperation, like the AIC.

As petition signatures were collected from passersby, chants rang out: "Drop the charges against Michel Warschawsky", "Defend supporters of Palestinian rights" and "Stop Zionist repression".

The rally, covered by a CTV news camera crew, was addressed by Elias Hazineh, president of the Canadian Arab Federation; Yossi Schwartz of Jews for a Just Peace; Varda Burstyn, member of the Israeli-based Peace Now movement; and Professor James Graaf of the University of Toronto Middle East Group. They rally was chaired by Barry Weisleder of Socialist Challenge, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in the Canadian state. Over \$70 was collected to aid Warschawsky's legal defense.

Thirty counter-demonstrators from the Jewish Students' Federation waved Israeli

flags and tried to drown out speakers by repeatedly singing the Israeli national anthem.

An attempt by a Zionist student physically to disrupt the peaceful picket was stopped by the organizers. Police then stepped in to cordon-off the Zionists whose respect for freedom of speech seemed comparable to the practice of the government with which they identify. ★

NETHERLANDS

"A sea of people"

"THE BIGGEST demonstration since the war," that was the way leaders of the Dutch trade-union movement described the October 8 labor demonstration in Amsterdam, which brought out 150,000 people. Aldus Paulus Plas, chair of the Federation of Dutch Unions (FNV), commented: "Demonstrations are a great boost for self-confidence."

Food workers' union chair, Geert Wijnhoven, said: "People say that demonstrations don't have any purpose anymore. And then we get the biggest trade-union demonstration since the war. Then you see that people at the bottom of society, where poverty exists, are ready to do something." It was the Food Workers who took the initiative for the demonstration and fought a hard fight in the FNV to get approval for the project."

Klassenstrijd, the paper of the Dutch section of the Fourth International, began its article on the demonstration by noting that it was the first united demonstration by the FNV in five years and that "expectations were not very high. But at the stations, it became clear that it was going to be a massive rally." The crowd included many women and youth, as well as an estimated 20,000 foreign workers

"Museumplein was transformed into a sea of people — older people, youth, women and foreign workers were everywhere. Away from the loudspeakers, there was group of women. They came from Vlaarindgen to protest against the cut-backs. But they were also in Amsterdam to demonstrate for a 'better environment,' one of them said."

Klassenstrijd's reporter talked to groups of people eager to bring down the rightist government of Ruud Lubbers.... "They all have to go. That's what we're here for," a member of the public workers' union said.

The demonstration became a focus for many opposition groups in society, including radical youth, students, women and gay activists. "A new phenomenon for the Netherlands was the call of many groups to demonstrate in their own 'contingent.' Thus, there was a peace bloc organized by the Broad Initiative for Continuing Actions for Nuclear Disarmament. The Women's Union of the FNV decided at the last minute to organize a women's contingent. And the Youth Movement linked to the FNV joined a youth contingent." ★

A critique of the rural reform in China after 1978

AT THE END of the 1970s and beginning of this decade, the Chinese leadership launched a sweeping plan of economic reforms, the new economic policy (see IV 113). Central to any reform is, of course, the question of agriculture: according to 1985 figures, Chinese peasants make up over 63% of a total population of over 1,000 million.

The following article, from the September and October issues of the Hong Kong journal *October Review*, looks at the contradictions that have appeared at the heart of the 1978 agricultural reform and their impact on China's economy and development.

XIAO DIAN

SINCE the launching of the rural reform at the end of 1978, major changes have taken place in China's countryside. Official figures gave an extraordinary 9.48% average annual increase in total agricultural output from 1979 to 1984, and 17.1% in 1984. Non-agricultural enterprises began to develop in the countryside after 1979, reaching a climax in 1984-85. The average annual increase of the output value of rural enterprises was 40%-50%. In 1985, reform of the unified purchase of subsidiary products spurred the production of meat, aquatic products and vegetables, along with a high rate of price increases.

However, after 1985 the rate of growth in the rural economy gradually slowed down, marking the end of the previous period of rapid growth. The rate of growth was 1.6% for 1985, 3.5% for 1986, and 4.7% for 1987. Yet the strong impact of the rural economy on the country's economy has not weakened; the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been forced to carry out more radical reforms in industry and prices, which has triggered off an acute social crisis.

Low incentive for production

It is therefore necessary to analyze the changes in rural economy since 1978.

In 1978, after two decades of damage caused by the fickle rural policy of the Mao Zedong period, the rural economy was stagnant. The per capita net income of peasants was 134 yuan a year, or around 40 cents a day. Compared with the 73 yuan a year in 1957, the average annual increase was only 2.9%. The peasant household had on average 32 yuan in savings, 30 catties of reserved grain, and less than 500 yuan in housing value. About 200 million peasants were below the poverty line.

There are several reasons for this phenomenon, but the basic problem is the very low incentive for production among peas-

ants. The fact that peasant productivity on collective land was only one-fifth to one-seventh of productivity on their own piece of land speaks the question.

Peasant incentive was low mainly because of the egalitarianism of the people's commune policy. The collectivism imposed on peasants went beyond the subjective cognition of peasants and the objective level of agricultural productivity. In addition, party bureaucrats were arbitrary and repressive, causing peasants to feel divorced from the land, means of production and produce.

Another reason is the CCP's Stalinist policy of stressing heavy industry and ignoring light industry and agriculture. This contrasts with the Leninist and Trotskyist proposition of evenly developing industry and agriculture. The CCP, because of the scissor-like difference between agricultural and industrial prices, maintained low wages and low raw materials' costs for big industries, hence obtaining funds for heavy industry construction. For long periods, agriculture lacked funds for reinvestment.

To maintain this policy, the CCP carried out a series of measures. In production, it made land collectively owned, banned land transactions and tied peasants to the land via household registration. In distribution, it maintained low purchase prices and supplied low-cost agricultural means of production. In circulation, it imposed state monopoly and closed down markets, restricted inter-regional trade and controlled prices.

The result of these measures was the bondage of 800 million peasants to the land, with per capita farm land being only 0.5 hectares. It was a waste of labour resources and an obstacle to mechanization and effective management. Peasants did not have the right to leave the land or to decide what they grew. When the rural economy was stifled, the potential of machines and transport produced by industry could not be brought into play.

At the end of 1978, the ruling CCP faction headed by Deng promoted a rural re-

form. With the household as a unit, collectively-owned land was contracted to peasant households; collectively-owned animals and machinery were either sold or allocated to peasant households; communally-run enterprises were either contracted to the enterprise collective or manager, or distributed to peasants in the form of shares. Almost all peasants responded in favour of changing the system of the people's commune.

Expansion of market mechanisms

The state recognized the right of peasants to own property and accumulate private wealth. The state also allowed peasants the right to engage in different economic activities, thus peasants had the freedom to change their social status. The status of brigade-run and privately-run enterprises was confirmed, the right to use land could be transferred, peasants could go to the city, the market was reopened and the monopoly of trade by state-owned enterprises was ended. These laid the basis for the restoration and expansion of the market mechanism.

In 1979 and 1980, the CCP also increased the purchase prices of agricultural produce, and peasants had better incomes that enabled them some primitive accumulation and increased consumption. This helped stimulate peasant incentive for production.

Under the slogan of giving aid to specialized households so that those getting rich first could aid the rest, the state provided loans and technical help for specialized and able households and prioritized purchasing their products. Regions originally better off, such as the coastal provinces, benefited from this policy and produced quite a number of 10,000-yuan households.

The CCP also encouraged, especially through loans, the growth of rural industries in the form of cooperative or private enterprises. This led to a rapid growth in rural industry, commerce and services.

Extensive changes in the countryside resulted from the reform. From 1979 to 1984, the average annual increase in agricultural output was 9.48%, higher than the 8.96% of total social output. Grain output increased by an annual 4.95%, though grain farming areas decreased by a total of 6.4%. From 1978 to 1986, per capita peasant income increased from 134 yuan to 424 yuan, a 320% increase. Though this was still only half of the income of workers, the difference had diminished. It was estimated that in 1985 peasant households on average owned fixed assets, cash, savings and reserved grain totalling over 3,800 yuan. However, due to discrepancies in peasant income, the gap between the income of the 10-15% low-income peasants (about 100 million people) and the rest had widened.

A major achievement of the reform was the transformation of a larger sector of the rural economy from small-peasant to commodity economy, bringing it into the social division of labour, thus laying the basis for raising agricultural productivity. In 1985, total purchases of subsidiary foods doubled over that of 1979, the commodity rate of rural products was 64%, and on average cash constituted 65% of peasant income. Peasants had over 50% of the total purchasing power of society, and 60% of commodities were sold to the countryside (compared to 52% in 1978).

Major changes had also occurred in the rural labour force. Between 1979 and 1985, nearly 46 million rural labourers had changed to non-agricultural activities. Urban population increased by a net 127 million people, and, in addition, over a million mobile workers stayed in the cities to find a living. Every year, six million people left the countryside for temporary work. In sum, about one-fifth of the rural labour force had changed their work, residence or social status.

Present leadership supported Mao's line

The CCP's unequivocal support of rural enterprises in 1984 spurred their rapid development. The output value of rural enterprises constituted 44% of total rural output value and 17% of total national output value. They provided 64 million jobs and helped free 17.3% rural labourers from the land.

How were the achievements of the reform brought about? Are they positive gains from the Deng policy? Or are they a negation of the policy of the Mao Zedong period? It must not be forgotten that the present leadership also supported and implemented the Mao Zedong line, and cannot shirk their responsibility for the situation caused by the previous policy. To look at the question more profoundly, has the political system that facilitated the implementation of the past (and present) policies changed because of Deng's reforms?

The Dengist faction discarded the peo-

ple's commune system and directly linked peasants to the fruit of their labour through the household responsibility system. This helped raise peasant incentive for production and caused labour intensity to rise. This is the primary reason for the growth in agricultural production. From the negative side this confirms that compulsion of, and forced appropriation from, the peasants can only lead to passive resistance, stagnation in rural productivity, and a heavy cost paid by the whole of society. The forced collectivization in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and the communalization in China in the 1950s had brought extremely serious consequences. CCP theorists only recognize the truth today, that the transformation of peasants cannot be forced.

Growth of rural enterprises

The rise in prices for agricultural products allows capital accumulation by peasants and development towards industry, commerce and subsidiary farming. With some peasants freed from the land, land began to be concentrated and mechanization was possible. Productivity per hectare was raised.

Another factor for the active rural economy is the growth of individual and family enterprises and rural enterprises. The previous policy neglected the consumption needs of the rural and urban population, and so there was a strong potential demand for agricultural and subsidiary products, consumer goods and various services. Shortages of consumer goods and services had caused society to accumulate a lot of purchasing power. When the administrative constraints were lifted, the demand and purchasing power propelled a rapid development of economic activity.

Some household industries took off from a very primitive basis, making use of waste materials for production. Despite the low quality, they could meet the low-standard demand in the countryside. Later, they improved on technology and mechanization, raising their productivity. Thus, potential or wasted social material and technology were used to help rural industries develop quickly from a very low level. Improvements in agriculture were partly the result of putting the emphasis on and employing agricultural technology, knowledge and new strains.

The three decades of industrial and technological development in China have provided the necessary material conditions for the development of rural industries (such as medium and small tractors, raw materials for industrial production, insecticide, chemical fertilizers and so on). Without these objective conditions, the rural economy could not have developed at such a speed.

To sum up, the Dengist rural reform rectified the extremely irrational pre-1978 rural policy, and to a certain extent lifted past

constraints on peasant incentive. Propelled by a massive social demand and unused purchasing power, relying on a free market and coordination by existing but not yet rationally used social material conditions, technology and potential for production, compensatory rapid development of the rural economy was given a boost. This is the secret behind the initial success of the Dengist reform. The rapid rural development cannot be credited to the Dengist policy.

The rise in agricultural production in 1979-84 was basically due to the increase in productivity, and on the other hand it made up for the big gap left by previous wrong policies. Thus, in 1984, when the peasant's labour intensity reached its peak, when grain production reached the highest level in history and a temporary overproduction of grain appeared causing grain prices to drop drastically, peasants found difficulty in selling grain and some of them were attracted to other subsidiary farming and non-agricultural activities. Cultivated land was reduced along with the number of labour hours devoted to agriculture. This led to a reversal in grain production after 1984.

From 1978 to 1984, per hectare grain production increased every year, offsetting the reduction in cultivated land. In 1985, per hectare grain production decreased, and with a rapid reduction in cultivated land, total output decreased by 7%. Total grain output in the next two years did not rise to the 1984 level. The instability in grain production cannot be settled easily.

Fragility of the CCP's policy

The 1984 good grain harvest caused the price to drop by 12.5% in the free market, lower than the state purchasing price. The state's unified purchase became a serious subsidy and a heavy burden. It also caused a storage crisis. Under such circumstances, the CCP announced in 1985 that unified purchase by the state would be cancelled, and it would be replaced by the contract system.

This policy soon met with difficulties. Due to reduced grain production, the grain price in the free market rose higher than the contract price, and peasants were unwilling to sign contracts. Faced with this crisis, the CCP resorted to administrative measures, and announced that contract purchase was under the category of command planning, and peasants had to fulfill the quota despite their reluctance. At the same time, in some regions the free market was restricted, and inter-regional trade of grain was forbidden. This led to peasant grievances. This shows the CCP's arbitrariness in policy changes, and also the fragility of the policy.

The rural reform causes the rural economy to produce anarchically for the market. Often, a whole village turns to produce a certain crop or product, and production suf-

fers from the fickleness of the market. The bureaucrats cannot provide guidance. On the contrary, they encourage peasants and enterprises in anarchic production. As a result, there is serious overproduction of certain products and serious underproduction of others. The peasants become the main victims. This is just the opposite to the CCP's original intention of having the peasants respond in a timely way to demand through market mechanisms.

Reform aimed to promote specialization

Another aim of the reform was to promote specialization in the countryside, so that the able could help raise productivity. However, rural specialization reached the highest level of 2% in 1984 (the percentage of specialized households among peasant households), but fell to 1.7% in 1985, showing a reverse trend. This might be due to the greater risks of vacillations in the market, hence peasants feeling that it was safer to spread the risk.

Another phenomenon contrary to Dengist expectation is that though the amount of subsidiary foods and consumer goods has increased, their prices have not dropped. One reason is that circulation and transport facilities are insufficient, hence monopolistic super-profits can be earned in the transport and retail sectors. There are still shortages of quite a number of products, so there is hoarding and speculation. Another main reason is that various levels of bureaucrats arbitrarily demand fees and taxes, obstructing the links of production and circulation on various pretexts, in order to increase government revenue and personal income. Regionalism flourishes, and the direct and indirect losses caused by custom duties and retention of goods leads to a big difference between the market prices of goods and the selling prices obtained by the peasants. Both peasants and consumers are victims.

The reform cannot fulfill initial expectations, and some negative effects and underlying crises have developed.

On the national level, though the number of tractors had increased substantially, they were basically medium and small tractors. Tractor-ploughed areas had decreased, reflecting the decreased usage of large tractors. There were also the visible and invisible social costs of machinery depreciation, fuel, insecticide and air pollution — thus the overall efficiency of mechanized farming was reduced. When the peasants were still enthusiastic about production, this deficiency could still be offset. But when their enthusiasm waned due to the development of market production and other non-agricultural activities, the consequences and long-term effects of this regression were to be more pronounced.

Irrigation work had not developed because the state had reduced investments and the peasants were unwilling to provide

uncompensated labour. Long-term negligence and desertification would seriously affect China's capacity to resist natural disasters and cause unimaginable losses. This is a question deserving a lot of attention since the climate on this planet is changing drastically and droughts, floods and storms are much more frequent. Lately, the droughts and floods emphasized by the Chinese authorities were not unrelated to the drop in the efficiency of irrigation works.

Another underlying long-term crisis is



the question of protecting the fertility of land and water, soil and forest resources. Peasants who contract land and forests tried to obtain the maximum profits during the period of contract. In the long run, this would gravely affect the productivity of land and forest resources. For this reason, the CCP gradually extended the period of contract to over 15 years, and hoped that the peasants would consciously protect the land and forest resources, but this is by no means a positive solution. The peasants were wary of the fickleness of CCP policies, and would still try to squeeze the maximum profits in the short term.

A more direct consequence of the rural reform was that caused by rural industries. Initially, rural industries filled the gaps of demand for consumer goods and so developed rapidly. However, they were mostly low in productivity and substandard in quality. Their massive development quickly seized the raw material, transport capacity and energy required by big industries of high efficacy. This caused soaring prices and extensive speculation. In addition, regionalism was flaring, and barriers were erected by local governments. This affected the normal production of big industries in advanced regions. The overall efficacy of production was seriously affected, and confusion was the order of the day.

Another consequence of the reform was the prevalence of the concept in society that there was no point in studying. In the countryside, there were many withdrawals

from the schools. Though individual specialized households turned to pursue more specialized knowledge, this could not compensate for the general negligence of education. Faced with the soaring prices, teachers were compelled to take up part-time jobs and this affected the quality of teaching. The crisis of the education system was aggravated.

Besides, the cooperative sectors of production in the countryside, such as forest preservation departments, veterinary surgeries, irrigation works departments and

supply and sale cooperatives were in a state of paralysis or disintegration due to the rapid development of the responsibility system, whereby members of staff were drained away, capital was deficient and management was in disorder. Before new cooperative organizations could be extensively set up, the blow was serious.

One other underlying crisis was the question of overall agricultural investments. One aim of the Dengist reform was to reduce state investments in agriculture and rely more on spontaneous investments by peasants. The proportion of state investment in agriculture to total capital investment had been falling — from 11.1% in 1979 to 3.4% in 1985. As for the peasants, while their income had risen, their productive investment had declined. In 1983, the proportion of productive investment in total peasant expenditure reached a high of 5.7%, and then dropped to 3.8% in 1985, and it was particularly significant in the cultivation sector. This was particularly worrying since this sector depended a lot on peasant investments.

Since the CCP gave active support to "competent" and specialized households, a lot of land, resources and means of production were accumulated in the hands of a small number of people through contracting, and in a mere few years, they earned an income of several ten thousand yuan. Quite a number of individual businesses and small enterprises exploited the immense unevenness in circulation and sales, and

gained considerable incomes. Peasants who did not make use of opportunities to enrich themselves became poorer in relation to the rich peasants, and the standard of living for some even deteriorated due to price inflation. Some peasants became wage labourers. Generally speaking, social and class differentiation among the peasants had intensified.

Differentiations between rich and poor grow

On the other hand, coastal regions and provinces obtained advantages from the reform, and, with the effect of the market law on investment, these coastal regions obtained more capital and could develop at a quicker pace. The development of the backward regions and provinces was relatively slower, and, because of the further tightening of the flow of resources, the gap between regions widened. Another phenomenon was that within rich regions, the difference between the rich and poor was much bigger than in the poorer ones. In the former, there was a 100 times difference in income between rich and poor households. In sum, far from what Dengist propaganda described as those getting rich first aiding others to get rich later, social differentiation was increased. The income and riches of a small number of people increased at an astounding rate, including bureaucrats and cadres who got rich by means of power, corruption and speculation.

Quite a number of bureaucrats, besides being corrupt, made use of the shortage of raw materials and consumer goods to engage in hoarding and speculation. They interrupted the normal supply of resources, caused many man-made shortages, and on this basis accumulated wealth.

The CCP had not taken active measures to restrain such developments. It proposed a 35% flat profit tax for enterprises, and 40% flat income tax for enterprise investors. It did not apply a sliding tax structure on individuals or enterprises making huge profits. More important still, serious loopholes existed in the tax system, and in practice the tax system was arbitrary and irregular. It provided one more channel for bureaucratic corruption. This again demonstrated that under a dictatorial bureaucratic system, where social control is absent, even the best system can be used by bureaucrats as a means of securing power, wealth and privileges.

The intensification of income and social differentiations, and the instability of income due to market competition aggravated contradictions in the countryside. The discontent and envy of peasants was frequently expressed in mutual attacks and sabotage, such as poisoning other people's fishponds. In July 1988, 20,000 peasants in the Henan Province seized tons of watermelons worth 2 million yuan from 200 households, and dozens were wounded in the scramble.

Peasant grievances against bureaucratic corruption and incompetence, and the market confusion, developed in some cases into peasant riots. In May 1987, peasants in Shandong Province participated in a mass riot involving 30,000 to 40,000 people. The government had encouraged peasants to grow garlic, but when the harvest turned out to be very good the government stopped buying it, and the peasants rioted and attacked the county government offices. This unprecedented resistance to the CCP regime was a concrete manifestation of peasant discontent and a changing attitude towards the regime. It was also an indication of the grave consequences of a combination of bureaucratism and blind production in the commodity market.

The credibility of the regime was quickly declining. While the market economy increased social differentiations, the CCP itself took the lead in corruption, privileges and speculation. Since the reform relaxed the regime's control over peasant residence and grain allocation, the peasants were no longer bound or afraid, and there were incidence of mass robbery, riots, and even the beating-up of tax collectors and security men. Under the influence of "get rich quick" and "money first" ideologies, previous social ideologies and moral standards were disintegrating. The CCP's own decay intensified its crisis in the countryside. The Dengist intention of basing itself on rich peasants eventually caused it to lose more support among poor and middle peasants.

Threat of capitalist restoration

More serious than the crisis of CCP rule is the threat of capitalist restoration to the gains of the Chinese revolution. The Dengist reform promoted the concentration of wealth and resources in the hands of a small minority, and strengthened the objective conditions for capitalist restoration. The capital accumulated by the specialized households or the bureaucrats could be used in now more generalized commodity production to carry out expanded capitalist production by employing more labourers and making use of the unevenness in the economic structure. The privatization of land (although it only applied to the right of use) and other means of production, and their flow into the hands of capitalists forced more people to sell their labour. The massive appearance of wage labourers is a dangerous sign. Another is the rise of loan sharks in the countryside who charged an interest rate of 100%. All these developments indicate a dangerous trend of capitalist development in China's countryside. The anti-socialist market reform and the corruption of the cadres are the impetus of capitalist restoration in China.

The question facing China urgently now is as follows: When the Dengist faction had changed the previous wrong rural policy, how would it conduct reforms in the cities

and big industries, stimulate workers' enthusiasm for production and raise — or at least maintain — workers' living standards?

In the past, the persistent policy of stressing industry at the expense of agriculture gave rise to a rigid price structure that covered up the unequal exchange between the two sectors, and underpinned the low efficiency, the redundancy of the bureaucratic structure and the irrationality of the industrial structure under bureaucratic command.

Bureaucrats engaged in speculation

The rural reform partially changed the suppressed prices of agricultural products and raw materials. In addition, due to bureaucratic obstacles and the high costs of circulation, market prices rose (though the producers did not benefit from this). With an already existing shortage of raw materials, this problem became more acute when rural enterprises competed for them and bureaucrats engaged in speculation. The prices of raw materials rose to an irrational level. Coupled with the problems of transport and energy, urban enterprises were severely affected, and production either dropped or stopped. So, when the crisis in the rural reform was developing, the crisis in the cities also intensified. It was estimated that 80% of the urban population were seriously hit by soaring price inflation.

The problem that agriculture faced in the past was the burden of irrational bureaucratic policy on peasant incentive and conditions of production. When this burden was by and large removed, agricultural production could carry on in a more normal way, and a compensatory leap took place in 1979-84 until the market and the bureaucracy slowed down the development in agriculture. However, the problem that industry faced could not be temporarily solved by correcting some wrong policies.

The major problem faced by industry was a low incentive for production among the workers. Industrial production is essentially different from agricultural production, and the system of responsibility cannot be applied here. Nor can incentive for production be raised by widening the income gaps among workers. To have the workers increase their efficiency in terms of production, they must either be forced to produce for their living as in the capitalist mode, or exercise their enthusiasm as real masters of society under genuine socialism. The former can be implemented only with a counter-revolution in which the present state ownership system is privatized, that is a general restoration of capitalism, but its prerequisite is a victory over the workers' defence of the state ownership system. At present, this counter-revolution has not appeared, though with the wrong Dengist policy, capitalist development in the countryside has expanded. The prerequisite for the latter is the overthrow of bureaucratic

rule so that genuine workers' control can be realized. Of course, this path will not be charted by the bureaucracy, and only with the workers leading the peasants can the political revolution be carried out and genuine socialist democracy established.

The Dengist reform tries to shift the cost for the reform onto the workers and at the same time compel them to work harder: power was decentralized to factory directors and the technocrats; wage differentials were expanded and a piece-work system imposed; contract employment replaced long-term hiring, and dismissals were used to threaten workers; social security and subsidies for such things as water, electricity, housing, medical care, pensions, food and necessities were gradually cancelled.

There are now signs that the workers are passively or actively resisting these measures. Strikes have increased and general social discontent is surfacing. The official trade unions are obviously feeling this pressure and are forced to respond. Student movements have erupted in different forms. Of course, for the working class to develop from discontent to organized resistance, and even to the level of the Polish Solidarnosc workers' movement, there is still a long way to go. However, further Dengist reforms in the cities would undoubtedly result in more working class resistance.

To advance the development of China's countryside and cities in a truly persistent way, neither the Maoist policies of the people's commune and priority for heavy industry, nor the arbitrary market economy and policy that creates differentiations promoted by Deng, can work.

Revolutionary socialist reforms needed

To really push forward economic development in the countryside, the policy towards the peasants must first be correct. The mode of production must comply with the general level of productivity and the voluntary will of the peasants. Forced collectivization and even communalization can only incur passive resistance from peasants. The consequences are obvious. The workers' state must not let peasants remain at their present productive level. It should provide cheap and quality industrial goods, sufficient insecticide, fertilizer, tractors, agricultural technology, irrigation and electricity to aid peasants to raise productivity and mechanization levels. It should expand the exchange of social products between the peasantry and the working class, strengthen social divisions of labour among peasants, gradually attract peasants to engage in social production, absorb the surplus labour released from higher rural productivity into the industries, and help peasants set up supply cooperatives to avoid exploitation in selling products.

On the other hand, the state should adopt unequivocal laws to impose appropriate re-

strictions, including a sliding tax structure, banning loan sharks, encouraging cooperatives, imposing heavy taxes on rich peasants who employ agricultural workers and setting up a minimum wage system. All these measures should aim at preventing capitalist accumulation, concentration of land and capitalist exploitation. The state should assist production and coordination, and set up a certain level of storage of goods to offset the consequences of big vacillations in production.

The development of rural commodity



production definitely carries with it a capitalist inclination. To develop China's countryside, the Maoist attempt to leap over the stage of rural commodity economic development is not feasible. This is conditioned by the petty-bourgeois nature of peasants. Yet, when tolerating or even encouraging the development of commodity economy in the countryside, the working class cannot allow it to develop arbitrarily, and must not actively promote social and class differentiations, as the Dengist policy does.

A correct rural policy is to consciously repress the capitalist inclination of the commodity economy, aid the poor peasants and recruit the support of the middle peasants. Loans should be given to the peasants according to class criteria, their taxes reduced and cooperatives formed on a voluntary basis. Poor and middle peasants should also enjoy a privileged allocation of land and supply of tractors, fertilizers, insecticide and new strains of seed. The strength of the regime in the countryside should be based on the poor and middle peasants to counter the influence of the rich ones. In the final analysis, the development of rich peasants is based on repressing other layers and impeding their productive development. The result is that, on a general social level, a bigger and bigger sector of agricultural productivity is repressed. Hence, in the interest of the development of the rural economy and the economy as a whole, the working class regime should help the poor

and middle peasants, instead of the Dengist policy of aiding the rich and the competent.

More fundamental is the selfless aid to the peasants bestowed by the working class in workers' states: peasants are not rejected or exploited because they are individual producers not integrated into the state ownership system and economic planning. Here lies the real difference in attitude towards peasants between genuine workers' states and the so-called "socialist" Stalinist bureaucracy. The working class regards peasants as their allies, helps them to raise

productivity, collectivize and gradually integrate into the socialist family. The Stalinist bureaucracy strives to control and manipulate peasants, and squeeze the maximum interests from them in order to support heavy industries controlled by the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy also does not give any importance to the development of light industries, because they are mostly for consumption by the "people", whereas the products of heavy industries are controlled by the bureaucracy and can facilitate the consolidation of its power.

Though the Dengist faction proclaimed that it would give the peasants freedom in the production of commodities, in reality the bureaucracy's intervention and control was still there. The market economy opened a path for bureaucrats to seek consumer privileges, and also supplied the means and the goal of accumulating capital by using their privileges. This not only aggravates the corruption and decay of the bureaucracy, but also strengthens the objective forces for capitalist restoration.

In order that China can develop, the state ownership system be defended, the gains of the 1949 revolution be safeguarded and capitalist restoration prevented, the working class needs to be organized urgently, and to ally with and lead the poor and middle peasants. The aim must be to overthrow the CCP's bureaucratic role, advance the world revolution and realize genuine socialism in China and the whole world. ★ 27

Who gains from the anti-Armenian pogroms?

DESPITE the international scandal of the communal violence and the reported tens of thousands of refugees, the immediate effect of the anti-Armenian pogroms is to strengthen Moscow's hand. The rule of the Soviet bureaucracy depends, in large part, on its ability to play an arbiter's role, including among the nationalities of the Soviet. In particular, in the context of mass mobilizations for national rights, communal conflict restores that role. (Azeri mass demonstrations have been manipulated by the bureaucracy in the past. The most recent ones seem to be more contradictory. We will take up this aspect in a future issue.)

There has been an awareness of this problem among national rights fighters. The nationalist hard-core of the Karabakh movement has from the beginning put the responsibility for the communal violence squarely on Moscow, and avoided the temptation to raise the old cry against the "abominable Turk."

This attitude was reported by Grigoriantz at the beginning of the mass demonstrations. It was confirmed by the exiled Armenian nationalist leader, Parour Airikiyan in an interview in the *Soviet Nationality Survey* (London), August 1988: "The [Armenian] nation was selecting democracy and freedom. It also rejected extremism, anti-Azerbaijani and anti-Muslim sentiments. All of this was an expression of broadly democratic principles."

In a statement in July, the Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Helsinki Association warned about the bureaucracy's attempts to stir up inter-nationality conflicts. It began.... "Recently, in connection with the growing strength of the national-patriotic movement in Ukraine, the party bureaucracy...has taken up the old imperialist watchword of 'Divide and rule.' For this purpose, it has exploited its monopoly over the mass media."

Among examples of this tactic, the statement mentioned an article by the Lviv paper *Vil'na Ukraina*, which claimed that the mass rallies for national rights in the city in July had given "a hint for a Lviv variant of the events in Sumgait."

The statement ended, "On our native Ukrainian land, we — as genuine democrats and not phoney internationalists — will be able to achieve understanding among ourselves without the deceitful mediation of this new bureaucratic class that was born in the bloody shirt of Stalinist terror and flourished in the rotten swamp of Brezhnevite stagnation."

In the Baltic countries, one of the main responses of supporters of the central bu-

POGROMS against Armenian communities in the Azerbaijan republic have both served as a pretext and a cover for a clampdown on the mass movement in the Armenian SSR and Nagorno-Karabakh. The fact that a curfew was imposed on the Armenian capital of Erevan on November 24, when no serious disorders had occurred in the republic, and that a general strike in protest was apparently suppressed by a military occupation has been effectively buried in horror stories of communal conflict in the international press.

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reaucratic authorities has been to create loyalist or unionist movements called specifically "Internationalist Fronts." Only representatives of these organizations have been invited to present their views in *Pravda* and apparently in the rest of the all-Union press.

Rallying the "healthy forces"

The Soviet Communist Party daily of November 26, for example, carried an interview with representatives of the Latvian "Internationalist Front." In it, E. Aboltinsh complained that the Latvian People's Front was made up of "about 88% Latvians" and that "in a republic where about half the population is Russian-speaking (to use the current term), such a front cannot really be called a 'Peoples' Front'."

S. Bukashkin said that the aim of the "Internationalist Front" was to rally the "healthy forces" in Latvian society. It was supposedly the "healthy forces" in Czechoslovakia that supported the "international-

ist" intervention of the Soviet army in 1968. A. Alekseev complained that the Latvian *Literatura un Maksla* had talked about "continuing occupation of Latvia by Soviet troops."

In its November 26 issue, *Pravda* interviewed Vassili Gennadievich Koltakov, one of the seven deputies to the Estonian Supreme Soviet who voted against the pro-sovereignty resolutions adopted on November 16. Needless to say, it has not opened its columns to the majority. Koltakov claimed that the deputies of the Estonian Supreme Soviet had voted for the sovereignty resolutions because of "pressure."

Despite his attempt to discredit the vote of the Estonian Supreme Soviet, Koltakov paid an involuntary tribute to the extent of the mass mobilization in support of Estonian national rights. He said for example there was a threat to the place where the Supreme Soviet session considering the resolutions was to meet, that a unionist rally had to be called off because of a threat of a protest strike against it, and that the Internationalist Front was "ridiculed." He claimed that the term "migrant" had started to be used, referring to Russian speakers in Estonia.

Actually, *Pravda's* Lithuanian correspondent, D. Shynukas, a few weeks ago signed an article giving a negative view of Russian immigrants into Lithuania. (see IV 151), but in the November 22 *Pravda*, he condemned the "irresponsibility" of the Lithuanian movement, Sajudis, in mobilizing opposition to the constitutional amendments proposed by Gorbachev that would limit the formal rights of the republics. Shynukas also noted the formation of a loyalist movement, made up essentially of Russian speakers, in Lithuania, called "*Edintsvo*" ("Unity"), in order to oppose Sajudis.

In fact, in the weeks preceding the start of the Soviet Supreme Soviet session that was to take up the Gorbachev amendments, there were a series of articles attacking the national movements under the common rubric, "USSR, Our Common Home." The high point of this campaign was Gorbachev's speech on November 26, in which he said notably that the objective of *perestroika* was "not to loosen the ties among the republics, but to strengthen them."

Clearly, the Soviet leader felt compelled to confront the sovereignty movements head on, although he and the Soviet press retained a more nuanced and tactical tone than that displayed toward the first mass Armenian demonstrations earlier this year. It is in this context that the recent developments have occurred in Armenia and Azerbaijan. ★