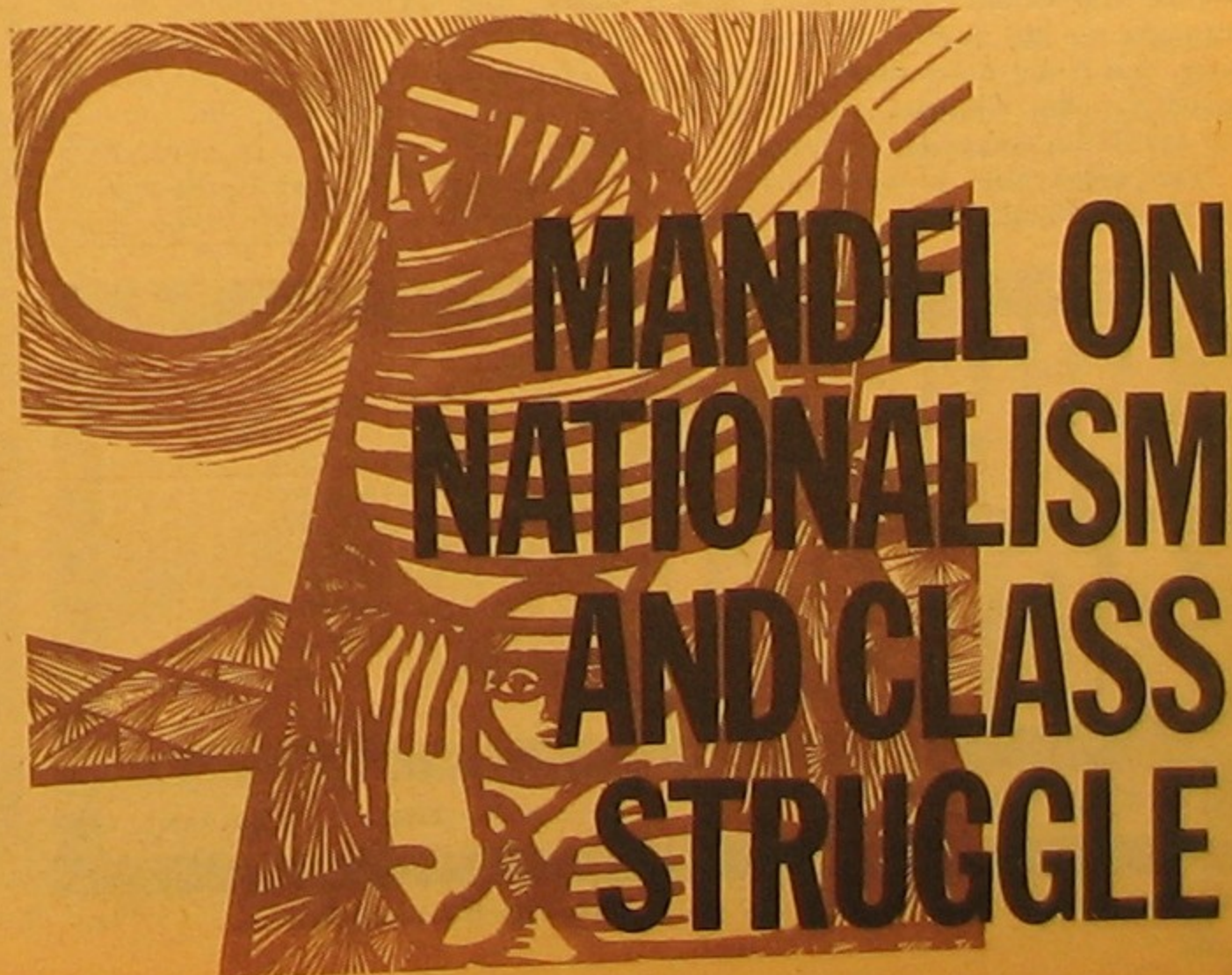
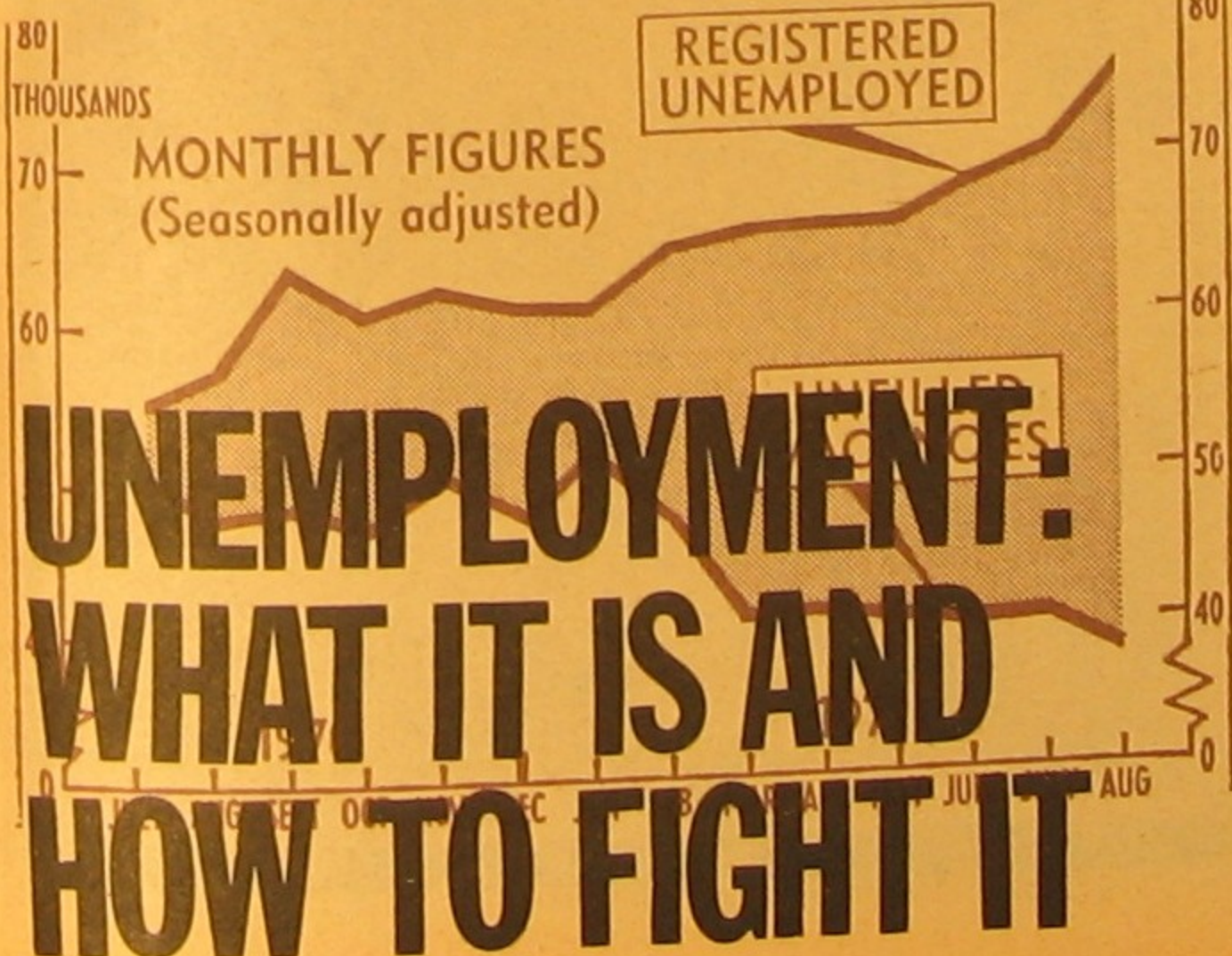


DIRECT ACTION

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A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER

Peking summit threatens Indochinese revolution



The meaning of Nixon's Peking trip

by Allen Myers

Less than forty-eight hours after Richard Nixon's "journey for peace" had concluded, U.S. planes renewed the air war against North Vietnam. Nixon returned to Washington from Peking the evening of February 28. On March 1, a U.S. plane bombed and strafed villages in Quangbinh province, according to a statement by the North Vietnamese foreign ministry.

The U.S. command in Saigon admitted to eleven "protective reaction" raids on North Vietnam in the four days beginning March 1. Additional raids occurred March 5, but the number was not disclosed.

Elsewhere in Indochina, there had not even been the pretense of a lull in the war during Nixon's visit to Peking, as a March 6 Associated Press dispatch from Saigon noted:

"For the first time in several weeks, there were no B-52 raids reported in South Vietnam during the 24-hour period ending at noon yesterday. But the United States command reported B-52 strikes against enemy supply lines in both Laos and Cambodia."

The continued bombing raids were one more confirmation of the fact that the "peace" Nixon sought in Peking was not intended to be achieved by an end to the U.S. aggression in Indochina, but by an agreement with the Maoist bureaucracy that would permit U.S. imperialism to maintain a foothold in Vietnam.

In the aftermath of Nixon's visit, the Chinese government gave every indication of regarding the Nixon-Chou communiqué as a victory for Peking. On his return to the capital from Shanghai, where he had seen Nixon aboard his plane, Chou was received with drums, cymbals, and an honor guard of soldiers, workers, and Red Guards. The crowd of 5,000 persons carried banners reading "Long Live Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Diplomatic Line." A March 1 dispatch to the *Toronto Globe and Mail* reported:

"The state-controlled media gave saturation coverage today to Premier Chou En-lai's return . . . from Shanghai, making it clear that President Nixon's visit is to be presented to the masses as a diplomatic coup for China and a personal triumph for the Premier."

The only "triumph" involved, however, was Nixon's promise of "ultimate" withdrawal from Taiwan and his verbal acceptance of the Five principles of peaceful coexistence." This could, perhaps, be regarded as a victory by bureaucrats who consider diplomatic agreements, rather than class struggle, as the motive force of history, but it did not indicate anything good for the Chinese revolution or for revolution anywhere in Asia.

The areas both of agreement and ostensible disagreement in the Nixon-

Chou communiqué provide an indication of what "peaceful coexistence" between U.S. imperialism and the Maoist government means concretely. Both sides, for example, reiterated their counterrevolutionary position in support of the Pakistani dictatorship against the people of Bangladesh. Here, even the language used by the two governments was almost identical.

The U.S. delegation stated: "Consistent with the United Nations Security Council Resolution of December 21, 1971, the United States favors the continuation of the cease-fire between India and Pakistan and the withdrawal of all military forces to their own territories and to their own sides of the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir; the United States supports the right of the peoples of South Asia to shape their own future in peace, free of military threat, and without having the area become the subject of big-power rivalry."

Chou's section of the document read: "It [the Chinese government] firmly maintains that India and Pakistan should, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions on the India-Pakistan question, immediately withdraw all their forces to their respective territories and to their own sides of the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir and firmly supports the Pakistani Government and people in their struggle to preserve their independence and sovereignty and the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their struggle for the right of self-determination."

Other than on cultural and sports exchanges, the only other areas of expressed agreement were opposition to Soviet diplomacy in Asia and hypocritical declarations of honorable intentions:

"Both [sides] wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict. Neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to the efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony; and Neither is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other states."

"Both sides are of the view that it would be against the interests of the peoples of the world for any major country to collude with another against other countries, or for major countries to divide up the world into spheres of influence."

The hollowness of these declarations was demonstrated even before they were made. It is only necessary to recall that it was Nixon and Mao's collusion against revolution in Bangladesh and Ceylon that made the Peking visit possible in the first place.

The disagreements between Nixon and Chou, as stated in the communiqué, were phrased very mildly. On Korea, each side perfunctorily repeated support for its ally. Nixon men-

tioned Washington's "friendly relations with Japan," while Chou indicated that the Mao government is awaiting Sato's replacement before moving toward rapprochement with Tokyo: "It [China] firmly opposes the revival and outward expansion of Japanese militarism and firmly supports the Japanese people's desire to build an independent, democratic, peaceful and neutral Japan."

But the most important subject, and the one that naturally drew most attention, was Indochina. Here is the way "Chairman Mao's revolutionary diplomatic line" on Indochina was expressed in the communiqué:

"The Chinese side expressed its firm support to the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in their efforts for the attainment of their goals and its firm support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and the elaboration of February this year on the two key problems in the proposal, and to the Joint Declaration of the Summit Conference of the Indochinese Peoples."

Agents and supporters of U.S. imperialism quickly indicated that they knew how to interpret these words correctly. On March 1, Nixon's top adviser, Henry Kissinger, gave a "background" briefing for reporters. (The briefing was given on condition that it be "attributed only to an administration official," but two reporters who were not invited demonstrated their annoyance by revealing the identity of the official.)

Among the details revealed by Kissinger was the fact that the sections of the communiqué labeled as the view of only one side had in reality been submitted to the other side for approval. In other words, Nixon had approved Chou's formulation of the Chinese position on Indochina. Describing Kissinger's briefing in the March 2 *Washington Post*, Frank Cormier indicated the reason for Nixon's approval:

"The Americans pointed with some satisfaction . . . to a section in which the Chinese gave their view of the Vietnam War. "While they acknowledged the wording might strike American ears as belligerent, they interpreted it as one of Peking's most moderate statements on the subject, omitting as it did time-worn rhetoric about China's steadfast stand with the heroic people of North Vietnam against the imperialist devils from the West."

There was considerable truth in Bray's remark, in the sense that the decades-long attempt to whip up hys-

"The Americans took heart from the fact that Chou even signed the communiqué at a time when the United States was at war with North Vietnam, and, periodically, bombing that country."

The "satisfaction" of the Nixon administration referred only to the public communiqué. Some of the more astute commentators in the bourgeois press have noted that Nixon is unlikely to have attained less in his secret talks with Mao and Chou. The *New York Times*, for example, commented in a February 28 editorial:

"On the most acute questions of Indochina and Taiwan, the negotiators chose to be purposefully vague, but Peking's hard line has unmistakably given way to a new flexibility. The war with Saigon is no longer portrayed as a fight to the bitter end. Premier Chou considers negotiable the peace proposals now on the table. His exclusive mention of the offers by the National Liberation Front may even contain a hint of strained relations with Hanoi." (Emphasis added.)

The conservative *Christian Science Monitor* was even blunter in a March 3 editorial:

" . . . it is a reasonable assumption that the cymbal-clashing at Peking airport [for Chou's return] proves that Chairman Mao got something he values out of the visit, and knows it. We hope we can assume that what Mr. Nixon got in return will emerge in the form of a fairly rapid abatement of the war in Vietnam."

"We note in this connection that Hanoi has still not launched the offensive for which it has long been building. And time for such an offensive is running out. The rains begin again in April. We may well be enduring the final phase of the war."

It is to be hoped that Nixon and the bourgeois press have overestimated the ability of the Mao government to restrain the Indochinese liberation fighters. In any case, an administration official indicated March 2 the belief of U.S. imperialism that it could have benefited considerably had it established "peaceful coexistence" with Mao's regime earlier.

Charles W. Bray, a State Department spokesman, told reporters that as far as relations between Washington and Peking were concerned, "The history of the past twenty-odd years was an aberration."

There was considerable truth in Bray's remark, in the sense that the decades-long attempt to whip up hys-

teria against the Chinese revolution had made it difficult for U.S. imperialism to take advantage of Mao's willingness to preserve the *status quo* under the banner of "peaceful coexistence." The "aberration" was the propaganda that pictured the Maoist bu-

reaucracy as more "revolutionary" than its Kremlin counterpart.

For those left currents that have been inclined to take the ultraleft rhetoric of Maoism for good coin, it is now past time to look at the reality

revealed by Peking's practice. The betrayal of Bangladesh, the arming of Bandaranaike against the young rebels in Ceylon, and the willingness to deal in secret with Richard Nixon while bombs rain on Indochina all demonstrate that the Chinese ruling

bureaucracy is not basically different from that of the Soviet Union.

U.S. imperialism has shown its ability to grasp the implications of this fact. It would be tragic if anti-imperialists displayed less understanding.

U.S. changes tactics in Indochina

by Alain Petersen

[The following article is reprinted from the February 19 issue of *Rouge*, weekly newspaper of the Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

To understand U.S. imperialism's new Indochina strategy one must integrate a certain number of apparently contradictory facts. Nixon's determination to keep control of Southeast Asia has certainly not diminished. The evolution of the situation in China, however, and the intensification of the Sino-Soviet conflict make less acute the necessity of militarily maintaining a costly base. But Nixon, policeman of imperialism, must always protect his reputation as a guarantor, especially since the Indian subcontinent is on the move and rumblings are being heard in Thailand and Burma. Just one push and down go the Asian dominos. All of the tactics employed up to now have not succeeded in ending the Indochinese peoples' revolutionary struggle. More than that, on the military level, U.S. failure is unquestionable.

The large-scale operations in the South, the bombings of the DRV, the fighting in Laos and Cambodia have all been stinging military defeats for the Americans. Moreover, the imperialist war has resulted not only in turning the greater part of world opinion against the United States, but also its own youth, its veterans, and even—this is something new—certain sectors of the working class, who have supported the big NPAC [National Peace Action Coalition] mobilizations.

U.S. ground forces, disgusted with a war that is more than questionable, refuse to fight, take drugs, shoot their officers. In short, they are no longer usable in ground combat. All this didn't happen overnight. The outlines of this crisis have been discernible for the past several years.

On the other hand, the air force, privileged, generally kept away from the dirty work, has remained usable, as have the Marines.

How could imperialism get out of the impasse? Nixon's response was twofold. First, Vietnamization, that is,

the increasingly exclusive use of puppet troops as cannon fodder for the "dirty work," the ground operations. Secondly, chemical warfare, massive bombings, the intervention in Laos and Cambodia to aid and reinforce the puppets.

But this strategy, followed during 1969 and 1970, presupposed the ability to bolster the puppet regime enough to keep it from collapsing. It also assumed that chemical and aerial warfare would be enough to support the Saigon troops effectively. But the strategy has not been successful or, in any case, not successful enough to assure that U.S. ground forces, which are leaving Vietnam on a rather regular basis, will be replaced by puppet troops.

So imperialism again changed its strategy, still maintaining the same general orientation that includes the inescapable necessity of bringing the GIs, who are no longer capable of fighting, back to the United States.

The Electronic War

How to make U.S. support most effective with the least possible recourse to ground troops? The answer is the air force. It has a number of obvious advantages. It need not be based in Indochina. It needs only a small number of well-paid, elite troops who see the war only as flights that are as calm as those of a regular airline, punctuated for just twenty seconds by the release of twenty tons of anonymously unloaded bombs; soldiers without direct responsibility, who see no unpleasant spectacles like My Lai massacres.

But it's not precise enough. The blanket of B-52 bombs, thick and destructive as it is, falls haphazardly in the jungle. The attempted resolution of this problem is *electronic warfare*. By now, everybody has a rough idea of what this means.

The Pentagon has most obligingly come up with a whole array of gadgets, supposedly infallible. Generally, these electronic detectors are supposed to sniff out the presence of troops on the march, report the passage of trucks, transmit to the U.S. command the slightest order given by a "Vietcong" section commander.

Once detected, the objective is de-

stroyed by an artillery barrage or by bombings, themselves electronically directed. The nature and position of the target can be ascertained, even at night, by the use of infrared rays, lasers, or ultrasensitive cameras. Anything that can be seen is destroyed.

In theory, all this is very disturbing. But in reality, it seems to be otherwise. U.S. reports indicate numerous failures, gaps, errors in transmission or interpretation. In fact, there is no proof that the B-52s—which unfortunately bomb with impunity, because south of the seventeenth parallel the Indochinese revolutionaries have no means of fighting them—have become any more effective as a result of these gadgets.

This does not mean that the bombings themselves do not, by their intensity and repetition, create a certain problem for the Indochinese revolutionaries. But not to the point of interrupting communications between different regions, or with the North and Laos.

Reinforcing the Puppets

How to bolster the puppets? In our view, this second aspect of the operation is more important. We must be frank. The complete collapse of the military and political structures of the Saigon regime has not been achieved. Certainly, without the American presence in 1965 and 1968, things would have been different.

But what's the situation in 1972? It seems that an operation unprecedented in history has been unleashed by the imperialists. It consists of substituting for the natural life style and structures of South Vietnam a new life style and new structures which can totally alter social life in a way that delivers the population, bound hand and foot, to the puppet regime.

This operation has two aspects:

1) Systematic destruction of Vietnamese cadres, not only those supposedly belonging to the National Liberation Front, but also those of traditional Vietnamese village life—people who are presumably potential supporters of the resistance. This is Operation Phoenix, initiated several years ago.

2) Forced urbanization of the rural South Vietnamese population, either bringing them into large towns or into concentration camps. For the imperialists, this policy has several advantages:

- It protects a substantial part of the population from "bad influences," which cannot be spread so easily in the closed milieu of urban or concentration-camp life.

- It suppresses or considerably reduces the natural base of support for the Indochinese revolution: the people, among whom the guerrillas move with ease.

- It destroys traditional structures, notably the family life of Vietnamese society, which is, in the local context, a factor in resistance to the "American way of life."

- It allows for the replacement of rural life—already made difficult by the war—by an urban life replete with new needs: dependence on food supplies, the black market, prostitution, subordination to the economy of military occupation, etc.

As Noam Chomsky has commented, this different society, this artificial creation of a special infrastructure, is a prelude to the consolidation of this society through its industrialization under free enterprise, which is projected by the American leaders.

Confidential reports such as the Smithies report for the Institute for Defense Analysis and those of the South East Asia Development Advisory Group (a U.S. agency specializing in Southeast Asia) confirm the deliberateness of this policy.

In fact, the United States wants to integrate South Vietnam into a huge economic complex of free enterprise and heavy investment, in which capitalist Japan will play an important role.

All this permits the construction of a "credible" puppet power on a more solid basis, ultimately resting on a real social foundation, dependent on the American system and tied to that system by all the bonds that create the neocolonial life style for those it enchains.

Multinational corporations, including French ones, have an important role to play in this operation—not only by their economic role, but also because they involve their countries of origin. The affair of the UDR [Union pour la Défense de la République—the Gaullist party] deputy Boscher will appear in this light one of these days.

While waiting for this new "sphere of Asian prosperity" (that old dream of imperial Japan) to be constructed, the United States must assure the survival of the puppet regime. For that, they must help it on the ground, underwriting the great expense of an army of more than 600,000 men.

The fighting value of these men is low. That was seen in Laos. But while they are in Saigon uniforms they are fed, lodged, paid. Their pillage and depredation are tolerated. They are the "clientèle" of the United States, certainly not by conviction but only because they have to eat and support their families.

Imperialism's maintenance of a "national" army, paid to do nothing but repress the people, is an old ploy—of which Africa and Latin America offer numerous examples. But this army still cannot stand on its own feet. It needs help. That is the aim of the electronic war and the operations of the B-52s, which are, at least from the ground (as we have seen), beyond the reach of the Indochinese revolutionaries' weaponry.

The Third Front

This policy will not be completely effective, according to American officials cited by Chomsky, until 1973-75. Until then imperialism must hold on. To accomplish this, Nixon and Kissinger moved on the diplomatic front. With a two-sided diversion aimed at gaining time—announcing their trips to Moscow and Peking and spectacularly launching a clever, although totally fallacious, "peace" plan in order to deceive public opinion—the two confederates executed an adroit ma-

(continued next page)



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Indochina continued

never. Either they will lead Peking or Moscow, or both—unfortunately on this point the present interests of the two bureaucracies converge—to put pressure on the Indochina Revolutionary Front to accept, in one form or another, a new Geneva. The second phase of the operation can then be set in motion after Nixon is reelected, whether the negotiations have been successful or not.

Or else, they will exacerbate the contradictions between the Soviet Union and China, playing one against the other, to the detriment of political and material support to the Indochina Revolutionary Front, and wind up, through alternately advancing threats and apparent concessions, at gaining the several months they want in order to assure Nixon's reelection and consolidate their economic grip on South Vietnam.

All this is perfectly coherent. U.S. imperialism has learned a lot. It knows that it can protect its control over an apparently unfavorable situation by playing its 'national' and even 'neutralist' card. The Middle East and Africa are good examples. Neocolonialist strategy has matured. It has acquired experience from ten years of mistakes.

It benefits from the aid it receives from the peaceful-coexistence and great-power policies of the two big workers states, whose leaders have never met their responsibilities to the Indochina revolution.

A Crucial Period

But is this strategy irresistible? Far from it! Above all because the Indochinese revolutionaries have always remained unshaken in their determination to fight on. The nub of the problem is the real solidity, present and future, of the puppet regime. If the famous neutralist, or even discreetly anti-American, regime is installed in Saigon—which in the Pentagon Papers Johnson's adviser Under Secretary of Defense McNamara considered an acceptable solution—what would happen? Would it very quickly evolve toward the socialist reunification of Vietnam or would it very quickly succumb to the adulterated charms of neocolonialism? And what about the puppet regimes in Vientiane and Phnompenh? Who will exercise real power over the masses of those cities?

If the whole situation very quickly swings in the direction hoped for by all the world's revolutionary Marxists, won't Nixon then be led to respond with another massive escalation? Is that why the B-52s and the U.S. aircraft carriers are heading to the Tonkin Gulf? Won't they try to accomplish what McNamara did not succeed in doing: throwing up a blockade across the seventeenth parallel—an atomic blockade if necessary—without bombs, but simply with radioactive wastes? Rumors about this have already started.

The coming weeks and months will be crucial. They will, all evidence indicates, decide the future evolution of all Southeast Asia. Our task is quite clear! More than ever before: massive militant, permanent, material, and political support to the Indochina Revolutionary Front.

No to the new strategy of imperialism!

Not one cent, not one weapon, not one investment to the puppets!

End the divisions in the workers' camp in defense of the Indochinese Revolution!

Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, the Indochina Revolution will win!

Sit-in at high school underlines education crisis

by **Jim McIlroy**

"Does it really hurt?" "Only when I laugh." This might be the comment of the average student or teacher involved in the system of Australian education today. The situation was well illustrated by the recent tragic-comedy at Watsonia High School in Melbourne. Hundreds of students and their teachers were forced to hold a 9 hour siege at their school in a vain attempt to prevent the removal of one miserable portable classroom and in the path of a low-loader truck which had suddenly appeared one morning by grace of the Victorian Education Dept. to take their portable to another school. Teachers parked their cars in the path of the truck, only to find them towed out of the way.

Students held placards reading: "Where the portable goes, we go." and "We need more; we go." They sang "We shall not be moved". A woman teacher said "We're teaching in corridors, staff rooms, the laundry, before school, lunch time because we don't have enough classrooms and teachers."

There was no stopping the process once underway however. Eventually the low-loader forced its way out through the ranks of students and took their classroom away.

According to a Department spokesman there are 19 or 20 other schools in "desperate need" of additional classrooms, while there are none in stock. The attitude of the bureaucracy was clarified by the Victorian Director General of Education (Mr. Brooks): "we are naturally very concerned at teachers taking this kind of action, and what's more bringing the children into it." We have not considered the likelihood of action against them at this stage."

Quite to the contrary, bringing the students (or rather, allowing them to act independently in a matter in which they are vitally concerned, as a basic right within any educational institution) was absolutely the correct thing for teachers to do. Indeed, it ought to be done much more often. Teachers have been rather reluctant to make common cause with students in their struggle against Education Departments. In past teacher strikes students have often been specifically excluded. So too, teachers have not seen the campaigns of students as their own and acted in support of them. This has occurred for two inter-related reasons.

1) The false notion that education 'should not be political'; that teachers ought to steer clear of stating their own positions openly for fear of 'imposing' their ideas on the students. This is largely status quo ideology in practice, for education is intensely political in its nature. The very structure of schools,

the relationships of departments, headmaster, teachers and students are political, the 'content' of courses is conservative political, and teachers have usually imposed conservative views in practice anyway. So too, the artificial separation of theory (learning) and practice, whereby students are excluded from political activity, even where they are clearly protecting their own interests has had conservative consequences - preparing students for passivity and the exclusion of political activity from their adult lives.

The campaigns of school students to control their own educational conditions are a training ground for the movement for workers' control in industry as a whole - and teacher support for campaigns on democratic rights for students is essential.

2) The other main cause of the divisions between teachers and students has been the existence of an exclusivist 'professional' attitude among teachers which sees their aims and rights as the central ones in education and fails to see the needs and aspirations of the students as the most important consideration of all. Professionalism, based purely on teacher rights is being eroded, particularly with the influx of young radicalised teachers from the student milieu who have already reached the stage of questioning the whole purpose and consequences of a capitalist educational system. This is reflected in a grappling with new ways of educating, more egalitarian relationships, more critical course contents and so on. Every school and staff room is now racked with conflicts over these questions: the schools are rapidly becoming a crucible for the development of the socialist movement overall, particularly since such a high proportion of radicalised intellectually-trained workers are now entering the field.

Watsonia is a small example of the potential for student-teacher-parent solidarity in fighting for better educational conditions. The Education Department spoke of the more pressing needs of other schools as justification for their action. Such arguments are a pathetic excuse, and must not be allowed to influence anybody. Governments and Education Departments must be forced to vastly improve conditions at all state schools, not by shifting resources from one slightly better off working class school to a poorer one, but by massively diverting resources from rich schools, particularly private ones to the most deprived state schools and increasing overall resources allocated to education considerably. In

practice, as the recent Independent Schools Grants bill showed, the Federal Government continues to increase its criminal super-subsidisation of the very richest private schools while depriving the state schools. Opposition to the class war being carried out by Liberal governments on poor working class families in education as elsewhere is widening all the time. The Victorian Council of School Organisations recently slammed the Federal Minister for Education and Science, Mr. Fraser, for his policy of making it increasingly difficult for children of low income workers to receive any sort of reasonable education. The Victorian Federation of Mothers Clubs also recently attacked the Victorian Education Department director for blatantly covering over the degree of staff shortages in secondary schools (particularly in inner suburban areas). It is well known that schools in Liberal and Country Party electorates are well stocked (relatively speaking) while strong working class areas are starved.

The situation at Watsonia is now being repeated in other schools. Eltham High School has been threatened with official attack and parents, teachers and pupils have combined strongly with barricades etc. to forestall the possibility of losing any of their already too-few classrooms. The condition of the state education system is now at a critical point, and an explosion is very near.

The Victorian teachers organisations have begun to take strong action in support of their conditions policies: maximum limits on class sizes etc. Teachers at Ringwood, Springvale and Upwey high schools went on strike indefinitely, while 38 at St. Albans High School held a stop work meeting and 36 teachers at Ascendale Tech. are on strike also because of critical staff shortages. This situation is spreading and intensifying. In order that a really successful militant movement can develop with permanent and radical consequences it is essential that the students be closely involved in these campaigns over educational conditions, and that they are able to inject their own demands and receive support for them from teachers. The concern of the Education Department over the events at Watsonia shows that they recognize the threat of such a radical alliance. The mobilisation of teachers and students together with the support of the parents has a revolutionary potential which can rock the Australian education system to its foundations, and begin to pose real socialist alternatives.



Sit-in by students in portable at Watsonia High School.

Struggle at Latrobe University

by **Darryl Hillgrove**

Repression by the administration of La Trobe University continues to grow: - Last year several students received 2 - year and 1 - year expulsions. Fines totalling approximately \$3,200 were imposed on these and 16 other students.

- This year (so far) the University Council - Has refused to recognise any S.R.C. decision while Brian Pola (Expelled and fined \$175) is still S.R.C. President. - Will give two NCC/DLP stooges, Jan Sullivan and Sue Uniacke, financial backing for Supreme Court action over Pola's presidency. - Has frozen all students' funds, pending the result of the Supreme Court hearing.

As a result of these actions on S.R.C. a General Meeting on Wednesday, March 8th, was held and attracted over 500 students.

There the following motions were overwhelmingly passed:

Motion 1 "That this General Meeting Demands: - the immediate dropping of all fines and further insists that no student be disenrolled for failing to pay fines. - the immediate reinstatement of all expelled students. - the immediate dropping of all civil charges laid against students.

Motion 2 "That in 1972, the S.R.C. shall pay, from the Bursary Fund or such other fund as the Finance Committee recommends, that part of a student's University fees which exceeds the current normal fee for the course or courses for which the student enrolls.

Fees are herein only defined as all

moneys which become payable to the University Administration before the student is recognised as enrolled; that is tuition fees, General Service Fees, and such fines as were imposed by the Proctorial Board, but not Library Fines."

Motion 3. "That this General Meeting condemns the action of Council in with-holding all payments to the S.R.C. and demands immediate withdrawal of the Council Resolution with-holding S.R.C. Funds."

Motion 4. "That this General Meeting expresses no confidence in the actions of Sullivan and Uniacke and demands their immediate resignation from the S.R.C. and the University Council."

There, Santamaria and Dowling would have boggled at the isolation of the right-wing who make up the small "Democratic Club". Because of the increased student radicalisation over the year, this organisation increased in unpopularity and so set up the Moderate Students Alliance as a front for their activities. S.R.C. meetings this year were hampered through lack of quorums, by the failure of the right-wing to attend as these meetings were centered on the administration attacks on the student elected body.

Background

1) On April 19 a mass meeting of over 1,000 students condemned the Admissions Policy which excluded expelled students from other universities from entering La Trobe. Another motion passed called on Council to resign.

2) Resulting from this meeting an Admissions Policy Committee constituted of staff and students was set up. This committee would report to the Academic Board and make recommendations for the 1972 Admissions Policy.

3) On July 19th, a University Council meeting was blocked by about 200 students specifically over the failure of Council to resign.

4) This action resulted in 8 carefully selected student "leaders" being expelled for periods up to 1974. Also charges were issued against 4 of the 8 students, all victims of double jeopardy.

5) Small, rolling occupations of the administration building followed. This was answered by more expulsions and fines for 5 more students.

6) Out of worry and fear, the Academic Board deferred the Admissions Policy Committee report until October 27th (the previous deadline was September 17th) Consequently, because of the lack of co-operation of the Board with the Committee its Chairman refused to attend any more Academic Board meetings related to the Admission Policy. The report recommended the rescinding of the exclusion principles in the Admissions Policy.

7) Due to this report, and condemnation of the exclusions principles and the University Council by students throughout 1971 -

- a) The Academic Board were forced to implement the findings of the report for the 1972 Admissions Policy.
- b) Sir Archibald Glenn, the Chancellor and Chairman of the University Council, resigned. He could now devote all efforts to his chairman ship of I.C.I.'s board of directors.

From this summation it must be emphasised that the gains from last year's efforts were due to mass student dissent culminating in the Committee's recommendations. The small blockade and occupations isolated from the rest of the students did not achieve 7, a and b. Occupations and blockades, as shown in 1970 at Monash University, are effective only when a

sizeable proportion takes part. At La Trobe the majority of those students who were against the exclusion policy and council were not interested in occupations as the Admissions Policy Committee were preparing their report.

Hence the administration had nothing to fear from the isolated vanguard actions of a few and so a few of the few were viciously dealt with.

The Current Situation

The La Trobe University Council for the first time in Australian University history has taken the decision to control all students' money directed to the S.R.C., taking it out of the hands of the student elected body. Obviously the Council shrieked with horror at the payment of \$300 by the S.R.C. earlier this year, to Pentridge Prison for the educational advancement of inmates and the setting up of "The La Trobe Pentridge Education Fund." Also the withholding of student money for the S.R.C. by the Council can be explained by their slyness in anticipating voting to allow the S.R.C. to pay the expelled students fees at the March 8 General Meeting. This, of course, happened and as the fines had to be paid by March 13, if the students were to enroll for 1972, Council's tactic worked. Currently also support (financial and political) is being canvassed in other universities. This has been forthcoming from New England, Macquarie to name two campuses. At the latter court action by reactionaries is seeking to prevent any financial support to the La Trobe students.

A campaign to force the administration to drop all fines and revoke all expulsions must be implemented at La Trobe on as wide a base as possible. The absolute power of capitalism, over student affairs, through its boards, councils, etc. needs to be realised by all at universities, colleges and schools and students must demand control of their institutions.

COME TO THE SOCIALIST YOUTH ALLIANCE 3RD NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Socialist Youth Alliance sees the present period in Australia as one of widening and deepening opposition to the capitalist system.

The rising militancy of workers in response to the current economic crisis and the attacks on their wages and conditions - the development of a mass opposition to Australia's involvement in aggression in Vietnam - the growth of the women's liberation movement demanding an end to the degrading and exploited position of women in capitalist society - the rebellion of university and high school students against repressive school conditions - the birth of militant black movements demanding self-determination, and overall an increasing feeling, especially among young people, of solidarity with revolutionary movements all around the world.

S.Y.A. supports all these movements for social change, realising that they must develop in a revolutionary direction if they are to win their demands. As a revolutionary socialist youth organisation dedicated to the elimination of this capitalist society and the creation of a new socialist society based on human need rather than profit, we seek to unite men and women, students and workers, young people from all these movements in a determined struggle for socialism.

It is only through an organisation such as ours that a challenge can be made to the whole capitalist system, with all its forces of repression and manipulation. Only through an organisation such as ours can lessons be drawn from past struggles and a strategy mapped out for the future. The revolutionary and working class movement has suffered in the past from incorrect leadership,

but the rapid growth recently of S.Y.A. makes the future prospects for successful revolutionary action very bright.

Already we are the largest and most active revolutionary youth organisation in Australia, involved in all the mass movements and with a very large audience for our ideas through the wide circulation of our newspaper "Direct Action."

Our organisation is able to act in a disciplined and united way around a common program. This program of action is worked out and democratically decided upon at our annual conference.

This conference is the highest authority in S.Y.A. It is here that our basic theoretical positions are adopted, where we make a thorough analysis of the political events and trends of the past year and plan our perspectives and

strategies for the coming year. At the conference we also elect a new national leadership, with the task of implementing the conference decisions and acting as the leading body for S.Y.A. in between conferences.

For S.Y.A. members, our conference is the culmination of our year's political activity, where we can see the physical growth of our movement, exchange experiences from other States, and assess the results of our work in the many mass movements. It is also a major educational experience for all members.

This year, we are inviting to our conference as observers all young people interested in changing this society, all young people involved in the many movements for social change. Our conference will be playing a vital part in charting the course for the Australian revolutionary movement in the years ahead. You should be there!

MELBOURNE MARCH 31 - APRIL 2

FRIDAY 31st March 7.30 p.m. -- International Report SATURDAY 1st April 10 a.m. -- Political Report SATURDAY 1st April 2.30 p.m. -- Student Movement	SUNDAY 2nd April 10 a.m. -- Women's Liberation SUNDAY 2nd April 2.30 p.m. -- Labour Movement SUNDAY 2nd April 7.30 p.m. -- Workshops -- antiwar, high schools, racism, solidarity actions
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If you oppose the Vietnam war and conscription, if you want a socialist Australia, if you support the struggle for women's liberation, the struggle for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe, China and USSR and the struggle for national liberation throughout the world- join the SOCIALIST YOUTH ALLIANCE.

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UNEMPLOYMENT: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO FIGHT IT

by Ken Howard

The problem or crisis of unemployment and redundancies should not be seen as either the stupidity of McMahon and the Liberal-Country Party Government or as a crisis affecting only Australian workers. Taken out of the national confines and viewed in an international context, the growing rate of unemployment (January figures for Australia, 130,000, Britain, one million, etc.) is an integral part of the growing crisis of capitalism. With the game of 'international grabs' for markets between the major capitalist nations the working class can expect all out attacks on their organisations and deliberately created pools of unemployed.

The Bosses Offensive

Unemployment is not caused by under-consumption or by decreased spending or increased saving (expressed by a recent headline as "the retention of savings in the banks.") Rather, unemployment is caused by decreased investment in industry, both private investors and multi-national corporations.

Because of the multi-national concerns and the increased fluidity of international capital, funds can be whipped around between subsidiaries in various countries at will, either through direct capital movements or through manipulated trade transactions. Where, as is increasingly becoming prevalent in the major capitalist countries, profits are falling, investment is curtailed. Profit rates tend to fall because of the individual capitalist's need to constantly expand his fixed capital in order to compete effectively. Accompanying this is the overproduction of consumer goods. In this context increased industrial action by the workers, both "economic" and "political" strikes, (though this distinction is misleading because all strikes are in reality "political" strikes, whether they be for higher wages, better conditions, against redundancies, etc., or of the more overt political nature, moratorium, anti-apartheid, State of Emergency, social services, etc.) further threaten the profit margin. Unemployment is thus a result of decreased productive expenditure by the capitalists who attempt to use it to bluff employed workers into foregoing wage claims, etc.

So capitalism is faced with an insoluble problem. Investment, and so a solution to unemployment and inflation will not be forthcoming until conditions are favourable for an improved rate of return. With increasing over-production and growing militancy of workers this seems more and more unlikely. What will be the capitalist solution? No doubt they would like to put an end to the militancy of the workers. They will launch attacks on the organised workers, that is the trade unions. And this is exactly the meaning of the campaigns by Snedden and Lynch where they seek greater and greater controls over the Unions.

Britain's Industrial Relations Act.

In Britain the Tory Government with its Industrial Relations Act will attempt to:

- 1) Destroy the power of shop stewards.
- 2) Impose rigorous discipline upon workers.
- 3) Destroy the negotiating strength of those Trade Union officials who are willing to fight.
- 4) Break up trade union organisation.
- 5) Cripple the trade unions financially.
- 6) Fine and imprison those who do not accept the law.

The aim of this attack on the trade unions is to force down the living standards of the British working class in an attempt to stave off their own problems.

Though Australia has yet no such legislation the aims of the Australian bosses are exactly the same as the aims of the bosses throughout the world, they will

try to rob the Australian workers of all the gains for which they have fought so vigorously. What lies ahead for the Australian workers is not as just proposed now, the outlawing of political strikes and the enforcing of penal provisions, but ever growing attacks upon the union movement and an ever increasing rate of unemployment.

Just What Does it Mean to be Unemployed?

For a married man with two children it means a sum of \$33.00 per week, and little chance of gaining employment for several weeks, or more likely, months. The minimum necessities for such a family are rent, let alone food, clothing, compulsory hire purchase payments, transport to get around to find another job, most of the time in vain. A recent example is the case of the advertisement for one process worker need ed at a factory several miles from Brisbane. Over an hour before the advertised time to apply there were over sixty applicants. During the hour the number doubled. The solution as to who was to get the job was going to be solved by the foreman throwing the forms in the air and catching one as they came down. So

added to the financial burden of getting by on the miserable benefit is the anguish and frustration of not being able to find work, and facing the degrading treatment of the Dept. of Labour, (e.g. being told to get a haircut before being eligible for

work, etc. and many more such outbursts.)

Fighting Unemployment

The fight against unemployment and attacks against the living standards of the working class lies with the labour movement, in particular the trade union movement. With the increasing rate of unemployment and redundancy, trade unions should not be shying away from defending the trade union movement, but mounting attacks against the repressive government that will enact anti-union legislation, and throw 130,000 out of work. They can do this by dividing the working class into "employed" and "unemployed" as the Storemen and Packers Union have done by closing their books.

It cannot be done by stopping strikes at all costs, even making secret deals with arbitration because a strike may be "inconvenient" and "unpopular" if looked at from an electoral point of view. (Though the inconvenience is nothing to that that has been dealt out to the working class for the last 150 years.) The right to strike is the first base in the defence of workers gains and standards.

The unemployed must be united with the employed, the struggle must not be between workers for jobs, but of the class united as a class against the attacks by the ruling class.

The organisation to facilitate this must come from the trade union whose unemployment cannot strike for their rights. So the trade unions must lead the way. The ultimate solution to unemployment is the

nationalisation of industry under the control of the working class.

Short term measures that can be taken now are:

- (1) The initiation of political action to prevent redundancy and layoff. It is not enough to put forward concepts and strategies of individual "work ins" or as the Communist Party put forward, "sacking the boss!" These strategies can only go to help the boss.

Political action must be taken by the trade union movement as a whole. That redundancies occur say, in the car industry, affects all workers in industries. If strategies of compulsory redundancies are accepted in one industry as they have been on the wharves, the flow on, and legitimization of this strategy by the employers, will go back to workers in all industries. The fundamental right of the working class is the right to a job. This is not restricted to male workers but covers and is the integral right of women workers also. Individual solutions will not ensure that this right is upheld.

The only strategy is for the trade union and labour movement to rise up to the demands of protecting the trade union movement, and the right to work. This can and must be done through the initiation of political action by the labour movement as a whole.

- (2) Complete Bans on Overtime Complete bans on all overtime should be enforced in order that the maximum number of workers remain in employment. This along with refusing to be part of productivity deals will ensure that the employers will not try to get more work for less cost by forcing some workers to become redundant while using the threat of redundancy to force others to work overtime. By threatening redundancies the employers can create the atmosphere where competition between workers is needed for them to protect their jobs. Under these conditions safety conditions can be eroded away. Only by putting a complete ban on all overtime can the trade union movement ensure that the hard won rights of the workers are upheld, and the maximum number of workers are kept in a job.

- (3) Banning individual productivity deals that result in unemployment. The employers in an effort to retain the profits that are being made through the exploitation of the working class, will attempt to make the production process more efficient at the expense of workers. This can be done through the use of productivity deals that result in the unemployment of some workers while the work load of others is increased.

- (4) Guaranteed weekly wage for all. Five days work or five days pay. No divisions must be created between the employed and unemployed. The Government and employers will use these divisions to attack the trade union movement. Through wage freezes and such the Government and employers can force conditions for workers back to what they were in the thirties. The unemployed and social service recipients cannot strike for better payment or the right to work. They can take no action at all. It is up to those employed to join with the unemployed on a class basis to fight for their rights, that is, a minimum of five days work or five days pay.

- (5) For a shorter working week with no loss of pay. In this time of economic crisis and inflation, the responsibility for which does not lie with the workers but with the employers and Liberal Government, in their clamour for greater profits, it should not be the workers who suffer. The fundamental demand for a shorter working week with no loss of pay, along with no redundancies, places the burden squarely on the capitalists and does not allow them to find solutions on the backs of the working class.

London

"Now other unions want the same." That is how the front-page headline of *The Observer* on Sunday, February 20, saw the repercussions of the Wilberforce court of inquiry into the miners' six-week-old strike "for a living wage." The inquiry came to a decision in a record time of five days, recommending increases worth between 11 and 24 percent over one year, and 15 and 31 percent over a sixteen-month period to Britain's 288,000 overworked and underpaid miners.

While still requiring the sanction of the rank and file,* should they decide to accept, the inquiry's recommendations (and extra concessions won after the report was made public, including five extra days of holiday a year and the gradual inclusion of 17,000 youth miners into the full adult rate) will stand out as a clear-cut victory for the miners. The Wilberforce Report crashes right through the government's "norm" for pay rises and, in the words of the February 20 *Sunday Times* editorial, represents no less than "the ruin of its wages policy."

What is more, the miners' win has raised the hopes of other sectors of the labour movement who are impressed by the victory and already, with justification, are claiming themselves to be a "special case" like the miners, and deserving pay increases well above the government's arbitrary 7 percent "norm."

"The tribunal's award of an overall increase in the coal industry's annual wage bill of about 18 percent represents more than twice the going rate and is the biggest settlement in either the public or the private sector during the current wage cycle," wrote *The Observer* in its editorial.

The "generous" pay offer recommended by Wilberforce dramatically underlines the effectiveness of the picketing miners in preventing the transport and use of coal throughout the country. The same editorial noted that "several factors were all-important: the miners' determination to hold out; the backing of other unions and the help of public sympathy; the unique vulnerability of power stations to picketing; the government's complete inability to foresee all this—shared, admittedly, by most of us; and the inherent justice of their claim for special treatment. It is only the last, of course, that Wilberforce deals with."

To be sure, the government had planned to wait out the strike. "But," continued the *Observer* editorial, "it reckoned, as we all did, without the pickets: their use was of a kind and on a scale never before seen in an industrial dispute."

Not only were the miners able to picket and virtually close down the mines, but they succeeded in changing the normal pattern of defense by using the strike funds that might otherwise be used in strike pay to send "flying squads" of pickets all over the country—to mines, to power stations, and to the docks—thereby succeeding in preventing the delivery not only of coal but of oil and other special substances needed to keep the generators going.

Public sentiment has been with the miners from the beginning, and this too proved a big obstacle for the Tory government. The government's invocation of a "state of emergency" on February 8, which led to massive electricity cuts throughout the country affecting household, transport, and industry, was designed to reverse this public sentiment. But it was largely unsuccessful in achieving this.

The power cuts to industry resulted in massive layoffs throughout the country. The central lobby was crowded all the afternoon, and thundering cheers and claps made the dome ring when the lights went out.

The militancy and determination of the miners throughout the strike have given a great impetus to other workers and their unions, who responded

How British miners defeated Tory wage norms

country, according to *The Times* of February 19. These amounted to 1,600,000 on the previous day, when the Wilberforce inquiry finished its public hearings. With more than 1,000,000 people officially registered as unemployed, 1 in 10 of the nation's work force was out of work on that day. Particularly hard hit by the cuts were the continuous-process industries such as steel, and production-line industries such as car manufacturing. These cuts were deliberately calculated to set other sectors of the work force against the miners.

But, by the sheer force of their numbers and their unity and determination to win, the miners' efforts cut right across these provocations and dramatically showed that this government can be beaten. Perhaps this was best shown by the events leading up to February 10, when over 6,000 miners and sympathizing engineering workers converged on and succeeded in forcing the closure of the massive

coal deposit stockpiled at Saltley, Birmingham. The miners' answer to the Tory government's attempt to isolate them was given again on February 15, when over 9,000 miners, their wives, and other trade unionists marched through London to lobby members of Parliament.

"It was a noisy but peaceful procession with some of the pageantry of a Durham miners' gala," said *The Times* the next day. "Huge scarlet and gold banners were held upright in the tearing wind by guy ropes fore and aft. They were emblazoned with the names of famous pits from South Wales to Yorkshire and Durham, with embroideries of mining scenes and inspiring mottoes. The central lobby was crowded all the afternoon, and thundering cheers and claps made the dome ring when the lights went out."

The militancy and determination of the miners throughout the strike have given a great impetus to other workers and their unions, who responded

signed to fighting alone. On the second day of the strike, the TUC (Trades Union Congress) Finance and General Purposes Committee had appeared to wash its hands of the miners by refusing to co-ordinate support at the national level. But this was before it was known that the transport unions—at local level—would not cross picket lines. The very presence of the miners' pickets allowed other unions to show their support. At the beginning of the strike they had repeatedly said, "the miners' strike is our strike," insofar as the government's incomes policy is the common enemy, and now they were given the opportunity to prove it. And they did.

However, strong may be the arguments that the miners were underpaid, there is no lack of other people who consider themselves in that category," wrote economics editor Malcolm Crawford in the *Sunday Times* February 20. "And they are bound to be impressed by the victory. Never before, in my recollection, has there been a national strike that has proved so successful. The miners have added 10 percentage points to the NCB's original offer, while bringing industry literally to its knees—and all the while maintaining the support of the other unions, whose members have meanwhile been driven on the dole."

Indeed, the ingenious mechanism that the Wilberforce inquiry called "the adjustment factor," which forms the basis of the report's case for special treatment for the miners, is one which other disadvantaged workers can expect to seize with enthusiasm. The railwaymen are about to re-enter negotiations, and the union's general secretary, according to *The Observer*, has already said that the Wilberforce Report has confirmed his members' justifiable case for large increases.

London's busmen have already turned down a 7-1/2 percent pay offer in expectation of a more favourable climate after the miners' settlement. On Wednesday [February 23], a new claim will be lodged for 300,000 agricultural workers—only six weeks after their last award. A union spokesman said last night: "Of course we shall quote Wilberforce—we are asking for only £18 which is what the miners had before their claim. We must regard ourselves a special case too," noted *The Observer*.

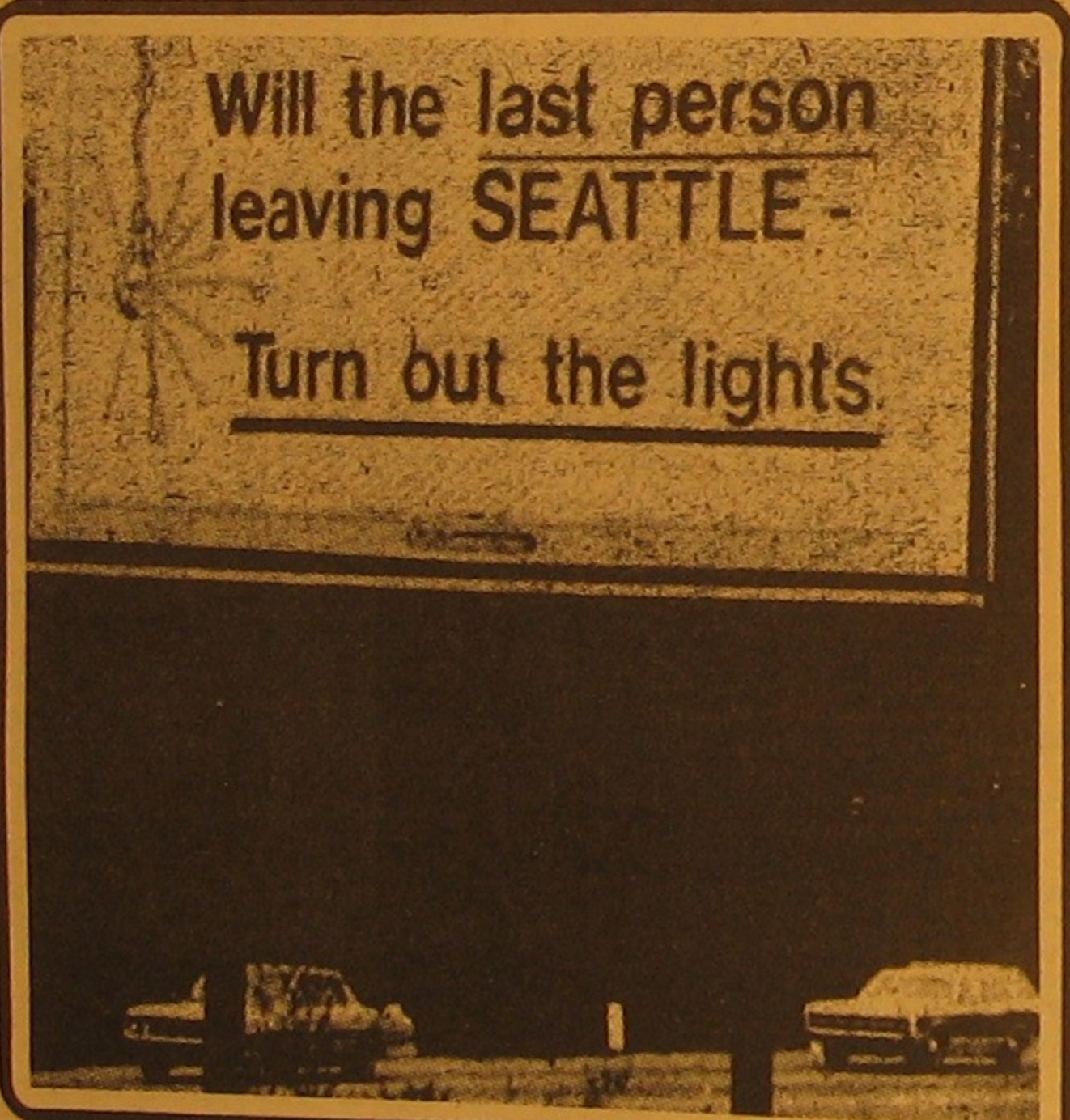
The building workers and the dustmen are further large groups with upcoming pay claims who are already studying the implications of Wilberforce. "And there are others in the pipeline, including those classic special cases, the nurses and the teachers," observed the *London Evening Standard* February 18.

Indications from the various mining areas are that the union leaders will be asking their members to return to work. But the first reaction of the rank and file to the Wilberforce recommendations was anything but submissive. Particularly objectionable about the Wilberforce Report is the suggestion that the miners themselves may have to meet much of the NCB's costs for wage increases by increasing their job productivity.

Whatever the miners decide this week about the Wilberforce award and other concessions won, what is certain is that the miners have left in ruins the government's policy of trying to impose on the public sector something they cannot impose on the private sector—a limit on wage increases to around 7 and 8 percent. And in doing so, the miners have opened up the way "for the whole of the working class to follow; what is more, by their militancy and united determination, they have provided a model of how it can be done successfully."

For several days at the beginning of the strike, the picketing had only a slight impact, and the NUM was re-

February 23, 1972



Billboard outside Seattle, which has one of the highest unemployment rates in the U.S.

Socialist Review

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The theoretical journal of the Socialist Workers League published every two months. The January issue now out contains articles on:
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In March 1971 the noted Belgian Marxist economist Ernest Mandel took part in a debate in Brussels with Professor Maxime Rodinson of the Sorbonne on the question of the relationship of nationalism and the class struggle. We are publishing here Mandel's opening remarks and a selection from his responses during the question period dealing with the Palestinian liberation movement. The Brussels debate was part of a colloquium sponsored by the Israel-Palestine Committees, which have announced plans to publish the papers of the conference.

OPENING REPLY

I would first like to make a few brief comments on certain problems Maxime Rodinson raises in his opening remarks. In the first place, I think that the statement to the effect that the class struggle doesn't explain the whole of history is not very convincing when one takes a look at it from the very general and abstract level on which Maxime Rodinson places himself. To state, as he does, that in some instances external factors are more important, is not an answer but a question. In fact, this formulation poses a whole series of questions. Why are external factors sometimes primary? Is it because they represent real interests? If so, what are these interests? Or does their primacy come from ideological alienation, which arises from the fact that certain social classes are not conscious of their interests and have been prevented from becoming so? But what is the basis of this alienation? These questions, all of which arise from Maxime Rodinson's remark, lead us to the very heart of the class struggle.

The theory of the class struggle is an attempt to explain history; to date, none other has been found. All the other explanations end with questions that send us back to the class struggle. I could cite many examples of the same sort Maxime Rodinson pointed to, and it wouldn't be necessary, moreover, to go all the way back to ancient Rome. West Germany of the sixteenth century could have been noted as a similar case of an unexpected development in history. The changeover from rent in kind to money rent served as a great liberating force for the peasants of Western Europe and hastened the arrival of a capitalist society. But in Eastern Europe, particularly in eastern Germany, the same phenomenon had precisely the opposite effect. It led to the reintroduction of serfdom, which, we must not forget, was being consolidated right up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. When one asks how it happened that the Prussians were so disciplined, the explanation must be at least partially sought in the fact that the majority of the population of this part of Germany were serfs till 1807, that is, some 400 years after the disappearance or near disappearance of serfdom in our region. But has the class struggle been eliminated from the analysis once this is acknowledged? Obviously not. What took place in east Germany and Eastern Europe must be explained by the class struggle unfolding in a different way from what we have seen in Western Europe, or more precisely, by this class struggle having a different outcome. The way in which east Germany evolved is the result of the strengthening of the landed aristocracy, which itself is a product of the defeat of the peasants in the Peasant War, of the weakening of the urban bourgeoisie by the division of commercial traffic, of the Thirty Years' War, etc. And there we are, led in a roundabout way to an analysis still based on the concept of class struggle.

Another remark in reply to a statement of Maxime Rodinson's that seems unjustified to me: According to him, Marx said that in societies with "state controlled economies" (I'd like to know by the way, where Marx used this formulation) there would be no class struggle. Marx actually said something quite different. He said that in an economy where the means of production belong to an association of producers, and where there is no commodity production, there would be no social

ORIGINS OF THE BOURGEOIS NATION

Let's return now to this evening's subject - the relation between the national question and the class struggle. Point One: The national question arises from the class struggle. To identify the national question with existence of the state, the ethnic group, the tribal grouping, or the communal or village association is a complete misuse of language. The Roman Empire was no more an example of a national entity than was the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages. England was not a nation in the twelfth or thirteenth century for the excellent reason that a good part of the ruling class there spoke a language different from the language of the people and came from a different stock - the Normans who had conquered England.

The Marxist view on the question maintains that the nation is the product of the struggle of a specific class, namely the modern bourgeoisie, the first class in history to give birth to a nation. It created a nation economically, because it required a unified national market. In order to safeguard the unity of this national market it eliminated every precapitalist, semi-feudal, guild, and regional obstacle to the free circulation of commodities. It also created this national unity from the politico-cultural point of view, because it based itself on the principle of popular sovereignty, - a principle opposed to the legitimacy of the monarchy, nobility, or church - in order to mobilise the masses against the old ruling classes.

The concept of nation arose with the great bourgeois-democratic revolutions. Moreover, it emerged in our region (a fact in which you may or may not take pride, according to your point of view), since the first great bourgeois-democratic revolution in history took place in the Low Countries. It was the national uprising against the king of Spain that began in Flanders, was defeated there, and succeeded in Holland, giving birth to the first modern nation with a national consciousness based on a capitalist infrastructure.

This same blossoming of the modern nation was next seen in Great Britain, in France with the French Revolution, in Spain, in Germany, in Italy, in Poland, in Ireland, etc. In each of these processes the material interests underlying the concept of nation are transparent, hardly the cause of mystery or speculation. During this period of its history, that is, the era in which it was still revolutionary and progressive, the bourgeoisie itself didn't beat around the bush and stated things rather bluntly. If you read the declarations of the Girondins - which was at the same time the most bourgeois and the most nationalist party in the French Revolution, much more than the Jacobins since they were the ones who pushed for continuing the war and not the Jacobins - you will see the link I spoke of between these factors. And, because in 1790 we are already in a more advanced period than in the Netherlands of the sixteenth century or in the United States of 1776, there is a third theme as well: commercial competition between the industrial-manufacturing bourgeoisie of France and the English bourgeoisie. (According to the present historians of the French Revolution, notably the school of Lefebvre, this competition played a much more important role in the wars of the Revolution and Empire.) These wars were not merely a struggle between the French bourgeoisie against the other, more or less counter-revolutionary, European powers who intervened to defend the privileges of the French nobility and royalty.

The nation is born from a specific class struggle, the struggle of the bourgeoisie against feudalism and precapitalist

semifeudal forces. Though I hardly have time to do it, the role played by the absolute monarchy in this should be discussed. In France it's quite clear. The nationalism embodied in a personage such as Louis XIV is not yet nationalism in the modern meaning of the term, but is dynastic prenationalism in the sense that the absolute monarchy prefigures a change in the relationship of forces between the nobility and the bourgeoisie. What happens when the bourgeois state, the bourgeois revolution triumphs? The class struggle evidently doesn't halt. The bourgeoisie would very much like to stop it at this time. Everyone says it should stop. But it doesn't. As soon as it regains momentum after the victory of the bourgeoisie, it shifts ground accordingly. The struggle of defeated classes shifts toward the sphere of the superstructure. I call this to the attention of my good Maoist comrades because they must explain to us why, despite the survival of semifeudal ideology throughout the entire nineteenth century, no feudal regime regained power in any of the countries where this ideology remained quite powerful. (I am thinking principally of France, where the predominant ideology of this period remained the ideology of Catholicism - a typically precapitalist, prebourgeois, semifeudal ideology, which condemned the French Revolution up to the 1880's and for an entire period remained the ideology of the nonworking classes.) Just as this survival of an ideology did not permit the restoration of a class in the nineteenth century, so I believe the survival of bourgeois or petty-bourgeois ideology following the overthrow of capitalism cannot in itself be used as evidence of a danger of the restoration of capitalism. For this danger to take a sufficiently concrete form powerful material interests and social forces must be engaged in struggle on the side of this restoration, and not merely ideological, political, or other carry-overs in the superstructural sphere as is believed, if not by Mao Tse-tung (he himself is much more prudent on this subject), at least by many of his followers or those who swear by him.

THE PROLETARIAT AND BOURGEOIS - DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONS

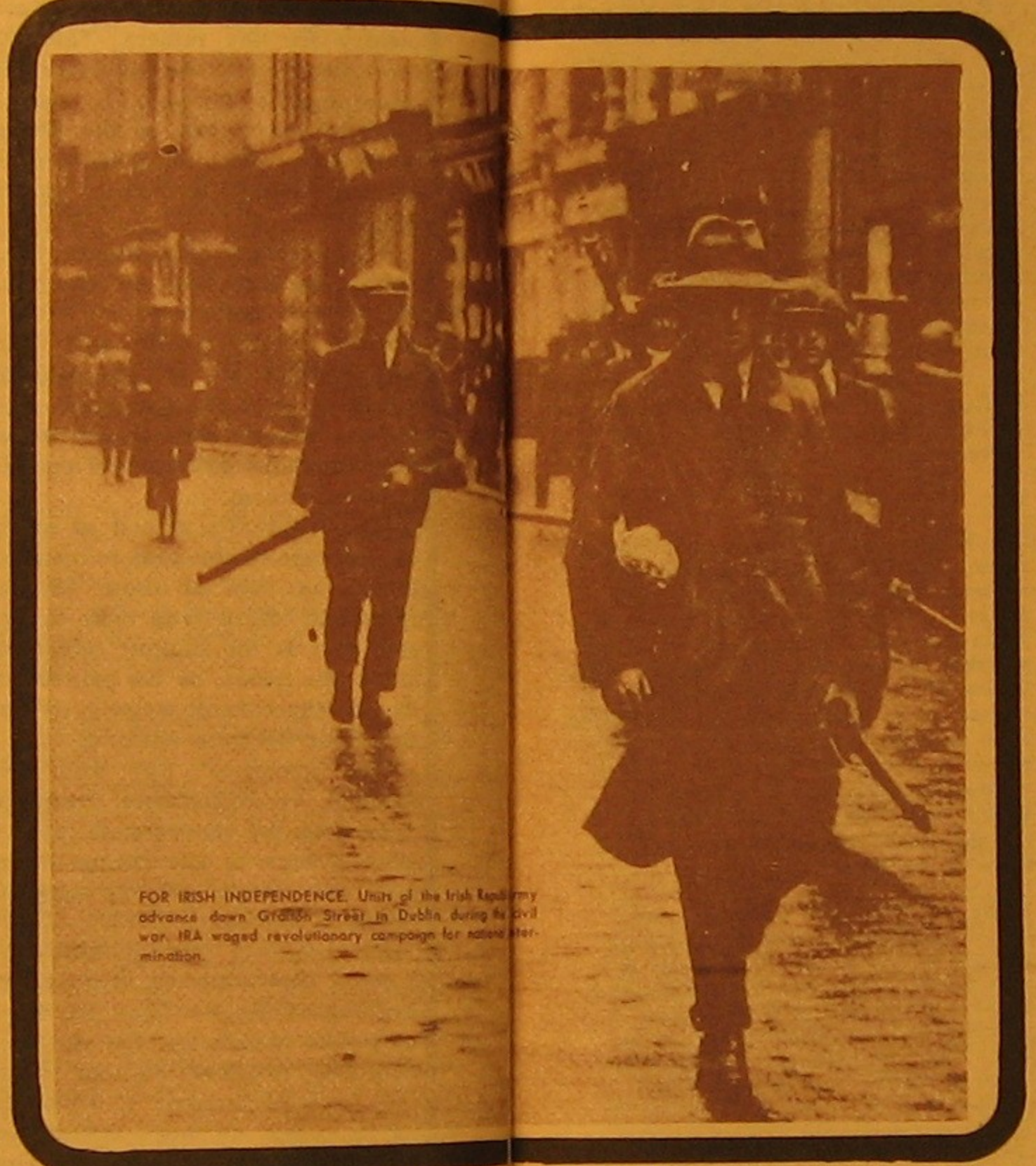
So we have seen that the struggle with precapitalist forces shifts toward the superstructural sphere. At the same time, the center of gravity of the class struggle shifts toward the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

It's at this very moment, Marx wrote as early as 1847 (very early, according to his own historical scheme, one could even say prematurely, a point to which I'll return in a moment), that the proletariat has no country which means that in the leadership of a workers' organisation nationalism or the concept of a nation must not take precedence over the international solidarity of the working class.

I said a little "prematurely" because the Communist Manifesto proclaims a historical principle that actually represents an anticipation that did not yet correspond with immediate reality. In fact, just one year after drafting the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels themselves took part in a class struggle in Germany that was also a national struggle. They declared the struggle for the unification of Germany, for the creation of a united and indivisible German republic, one of the central objectives of the Revolution of 1848. From the economic, social, and cultural point of view, and particularly from the point of view of the possibility of an uprising in the workers' movement and the class struggle, the unification of Germany would have represented an enormous step forward. The Revolution of 1848 has as its historical function the completion of the revolutionary tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in five European countries - Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Poland. These were the nationalities incorporated into the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in part overlapping the czarist empire as well. You know the reasons why the revolution was unable to succeed. It was the counterrevolutionary victory of the battles of 1848-49 who were compelled to carry out the testament of this revolution. It was Bismarck, the very incarnation of the Prussian nobility, who carried out the unification of Germany, not the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, or the working class.

NATIONALISM AND CLASS STRUGGLE

by Ernest Mandel



The same phenomenon, or something very close to it, took place in Italy, where the country was united by the Savoy dynasty.

Marx, at that time, had to take a position in practice that differed somewhat from the general principle proclaimed in the Communist Manifesto. In reality, the principle that "the proletariat has no country" applied only to the epoch in which the bourgeois revolution has already been accomplished. In the world of 1848, Marx and Engels were confronted with the situation of combined development. In every country of Europe where national unification was not carried out by the bourgeoisie it was because, in a certain sense, these bourgeoisies had arrived too late on the historical scene, at a moment when the working class was already strong enough to play an independent political role. The bourgeoisies' fear of aiding the revolutionary process was greater than their desire to accomplish the task of national unification. In other words, in all these countries a process of permanent revolution was on the agenda.

Moreover, it was at this moment and in this specific context that in 1850, for the first time in the history of Marxist thought, Marx made use of the formula of the permanent revolution. Workers in Germany must begin, he said, by supporting the struggle for the unification of the country, for the victory of a bourgeois-democratic republic. But they must not interrupt the struggle when this classic victory of bourgeois democracy is accomplished. They must continue the struggle to defend their own interests as a class opposed to the bourgeoisie. At no time should they give up their independent organization, especially in view of the fact that it

group. And thus we arrive at a fourth point, where the principle stated by Marx in the Communist Manifesto begins to have a universal application - namely, the beginning of the imperialist epoch. At this stage the bourgeoisie of the countries like Japan, Russia, and the United States, lost any possibility of playing a progressive historical role and became a conservative, reactionary, counter-revolutionary class, exploiting, apart from their own working class, a large part of the world as well - Marxists - first of all Lenin and the Leninist school, but before the First World War all those who called themselves Marxists - without reservation considered the nationalism of this imperialist bourgeoisie strictly reactionary. Kautsky himself and other Social Democrats before 1914 repeated that whenever the imperialist bourgeoisie used the words "defense of the country," or "defense of the nation," what they really meant was not defense of a cultural entity or of democratic rights in general but rather the defense of their privileged position in the world market, defense of colonial superprofits, and defense of the possibilities for super-exploitation in the part of the world they controlled.

I see nothing in what has happened since 1914 that would make me question this judgment. If we examine the analyses made by the famous and gifted sociologists, historians, and economists who sought to deny this evident causal connection between chauvinism, imperialism, and the material interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, it is apparent that they have totally failed. I will give one example. It's perhaps the most remarkable and at the same time the most lamentable. I mean the great Austrian economist Schumpeter, who, apart from the Marxists, is one of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth century. He wrote a brilliant article to demonstrate that imperialism and chauvinism have nothing to do with the existence of a monopolist bourgeoisie. As proof he cited the fact that the country with the most powerful monopolies was neither imperialist nor chauvinist. He meant the United States. This may have seemed convincing in 1912, it's less so in 1971, when the argument lends itself to ridicule. Compared to this sort of analysis, the predictions made by the Marxists and Lenin's definitions in his 1917 pamphlet on imperialism stand the test of history quite well, proving to be extremely useful instruments for explaining what has taken place in the twentieth century.

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND NATIONALISM

Does this mean that Marxists, and particularly Marxists of the Leninist school, to which I adhere, identify every national idea and all nationalism in the twentieth century with imperialist nationalism? They do not. An idea already present in writings of the older Marx, of Marx in the last ten years of his life, was expanded upon in Marxist thought in the imperialist epoch and assumed an absolutely decisive place for assessing national struggles in our century. It's the simple and perhaps simplistic notion - but I believe that at times simplicity permits clarity - that it is necessary to make a distinction between the nationalism of oppressors and exploiters and the nationalism of the oppressed and exploited. I say that this notion has a Marxist origin. It was Marx who was first to develop this notion in response to two concrete questions which he accorded a colossal importance in his entire strategy for the international class struggle: the Polish and Irish situations.

I'll pass over the Polish question because it's the best known. (It has, however, been incorrectly interpreted from time to time as a specific tactic against the czarist regime and only a tactic with no relation to any more fundamental principle.) But the Irish question is much more clear and precise in this regard. As early as 1869-1870, in an article appearing in the Belgian journal 'l'Internationale', Marx wrote that as long as the English workers failed to understand that it was their duty to help the Irish obtain their national independence, there would be no socialist revolution in England. Far from the notion that English and Irish nationalism were equivalent, that the nationalism of an oppressor nation and an oppressed nation are identical, Marx begins from this fundamental distinction (and I think it

must be said that history has shown him to be correct). If English workers did not identify with the Irish struggle, he said, the expropriation and oppression of the Irish nation by the English bourgeoisie would result in the Irish workers, who were destined to become a growing minority of the English proletariat, being lost to the class struggle for a long time. The Irish workers would be unable to form a united front against the English employing class because the English workers, in effect, would have formed a united front with their own bourgeoisie against the Irish nation.

It's a singular feature of the imperialist epoch that making this distinction between the nationalism of the exploiters and the nationalism of the exploited does not divert the proletariat from the struggle for state power and socialism but, on the contrary, leads them toward it. This is because of the fact that in the imperialist epoch the tasks of national liberation and unification of oppressed nations can only be accomplished through an alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, under the leadership of the proletariat, and through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Revolutionary victory in a underdeveloped country under the leadership of the proletariat cannot be restricted to achieving national and democratic tasks. It gives impetus to a process of permanent revolution, culminates by achieving the historical tasks of the socialist revolution, and stimulates an international extension of the revolution to the highly industrialized countries where the immediate revolutionary task is the achievement of socialism.

I feel an enormous indignation when I see figures like Guy Mollet give lessons in internationalism and expound the argument, as he did in 1955 when he was the Social-Democratic prime minister of imperialist France, that in the twentieth century, in an epoch when the concept of nationalism was outmoded, the Algerians were wrong to demand national independence. Anyone with common sense could have replied to Monsieur Guy Mollet: "A fine thing. The concept of nationalism is outmoded! Why don't you begin by rejecting the concept of the French nation? Why do you demand that an oppressed nation first overcome its nationalism, while you, the leader of a colonial and oppressor state, then refuse to give up the nationalist outlook yourself?" The slave who should be asked to refrain from violence in ridding himself of his chains. It's necessary, if one wishes to speak in this tone, to begin by demanding that the policeman, the slavemaster, cease their oppression and cease to defend their exploitation with violence. Then we'll see.

I cannot feel any sympathy for those who equate the nationalism of the oppressed with the nationalism of the oppressors. Inasmuch as the nationalism of the oppressors is ideologically and morally progressive, it is all the more important to take a careful, concrete approach to the nationalism of the oppressed. When we speak of colonized peoples (not only of peoples colonized from the outside, of peoples who live in overseas colonies, but also those who live in internal colonies, like the Blacks in the United States), when we see the deplorable state in which these oppressed populations find themselves, when we see that they are the victims of economic, political, moral and cultural oppression, and that this moral and cultural oppression very often constitutes an indispensable superstructure for maintaining economic and political oppression, then I must repeat what Trotsky said before me. The birth of national consciousness in a nation so oppressed, the attempt to win liberation not only from economic and political imperialism but also from cultural imperialism, is a first step on the path toward a realization of one's own human dignity and thus represents an enormous advance for humanity.

We must think back to what the Black slaves were like in the nineteenth century. We must recall what the Black sharecroppers were like after the American Civil War in order to understand that the gaining of national consciousness by this superexploited and superoppressed layer represents an enormous advance. It's a step that is absolutely inevitable and indispensable for making possible a further one, the fusion of oppressed nations of this sort in a humanity at last united. Internationalism tends toward the fusion of nations in a world society without classes. But this fusion will come about as the result of a previously established equality among nations. As long as nations remain on an unequal footing you will never see the national

consciousness of the oppressed disappear. Fortunately, no power is capable of smothering the spark of revolt that will not permit a passive acceptance of injustice or inequality in any form whatsoever.

REPLY TO QUESTIONS

NATIONALISM: OF THE OPPRESSED AND OF THE OPPRESSOR

I have been asked a question concerning Palestinian nationalism and my attitude vis-a-vis the nationalism of the countries of the Third World in general. In my opinion, this is a matter that must not be over-simplified. When we say that the struggle for national liberation of Third World peoples, of oppressed peoples, is a just struggle in contradistinction to the imperialist countries attempting to maintain their oppression of these countries, we are by no means saying that every political and ideological manifestation of this struggle is progressive. This is quite clear; I'll take a historical example I've already cited. The struggle of the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism, even under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, was a just struggle. But this doesn't transform Chiang Kai-shek from the executioner of Chinese workers into a "progressive," leaning toward socialism, communism, or democracy. A distinction must be made between the objective historical significance of a mass struggle and the various ideological, political, and theoretical currents competing for the allegiance of the society and oppressed people involved. Here I would say - repeating Lenin's famous thesis on the national question passed at the Second Congress of the Communist International - that to the same extent that the struggle of the Palestinian and Arab people is a just and progressive one, Pan-Islamism, Pan-Arabism, and every such racist tendency is not. A distinction must be made between a mass struggle, an objective social force, and the struggle that takes place in people's minds. But I do not conclude from the fact that people have reactionary notions in their heads that their struggle ceases to be a just one. I give primacy to social reality, to material existence and not to ideas. These ideas can only be changed by first changing the social reality. To change this reality one can never wait first for ideas to be changed. Moreover, the struggle to transform this reality is, in the last analysis, the only effective way to transform ideas.

I want to go back to the example I used just a moment ago: Let them who are (without sin cast the first stone! Who are these pure idealists who criticize the Arabs for being racist, nationalistic, and Pan-Islamists? Are they themselves unscathed by such faults? They aren't the tiniest bit nationalist or racist. See, for example, how they observe the doctrine of universal equality, without regard for ethnic or racial origin, in the state of Israel. Any Arab can immigrate there as easily as any Jew, right? And if that's not so, if we are confronted by a vicious, rotten world, a world founded for thousands of years on exploitation and oppression, it's a little too much to tell the oppressed that they have to purify themselves before they can have a right to fight for liberation. It's a little too much to tell them that, before we put the question to their oppressors!

Thus the influence of reactionary ideologies must be combated in the theoretical field within the revolutionary camp. But the existence of these reactionary ideologies must not be used as a pretext for refusing support, support which is absolutely justified from the Marxist point of view, to the liberation struggle of a clearly oppressed people. As Maxime Rodinson has already stated - there is a world of difference between real oppression, the oppression of actual deeds, and the oppression that exists only in ideas, an ideological oppression. This brings us back to the difference between Hegel and Marx in their denunciation of slavery and the exploitation of man by man. Hegel said that ideologically and morally the slave could be superior to his master, and that thanks to this superiority, he had already achieved his liberation. Marx replied: Let's leave this spiritual liberation to those (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

Bobbi Sykes on the oppression of blacks

Nationalism and class struggle

CONTINUED FROM P. 9 who are content to dwell in the spiritual realm and talk a little about liberation in the concrete, in the material world, about real liberation. From this point of view we cannot equate the real oppression suffered by the Palestinian people and the fear prevailing the Hebrew masses in the Israeli state that they may be oppressed in the future.

I don't at all question that this fear constitutes a powerful driving force. But it seems to me that there is a world of difference between being afraid of what may happen in the future and rebelling against a concrete reality. To fail to recognize this difference means getting completely sidetracked from reality, from the real struggles that are unfolding.

When I make the distinction between the nationalism of the oppressors and the nationalism of the oppressed, this clearly has nothing to do with specific nationalities because one and the same ethnic group can be the oppressor in one geographic location and the oppressed in another. France is an oppressor nation in Africa. The French-speaking community in Canada is an oppressed nationality.

By the same token, while the Israeli Jews are the oppressors of the Palestinian Arabs, the Jews of the Soviet Union are oppressed. This too is quite apparent. These principles must be applied consistently without making any kind of concession. I support the struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people just as much as I support the liberation and freedom of the Jews of the Soviet Union against an oppressive regime that tramples their national liberties and autonomy. And not just the Jewish people—that is still another criticism one can make (and my friend Nathan Weinstock justly made) of the Zionists who "revolted" in Brussels against the oppression of the Jewish nationality in the Soviet Union. They forget that it's not only the Jews who are oppressed but a whole series of nationalities, and that it is necessary to fight this multifaceted national oppression and understand its roots in the political regime of the Soviet bureaucracy.

What's shocking about the Zionists is that they repeat for the umpteenth time in history the rule of the double standard. They claim for themselves rights they are unwilling to accord others. I have a different point of view on this subject. I say to the Arabs—Palestinians and I say to the Jews—we have said it since the beginning and history shows that we are correct—and history shows that the anti-imperialist struggle and the colonial phenomenon struggle of Zionism from a purely nationalist point of view; if, for this reason, you ally yourself with reactionary forces in other Arab countries, you are going to let yourselves be led into a dead end! You will make no gains either politically, militarily, socially, or on any level. Your only chance is to take full advantage of the entire liberating dynamic of the anti-colonial movement, which is a dynamic not merely of national liberation but also of social liberation. Your only chance is to become resolute Marxists-Leninists, revolutionary Marxists, to carry out an Arab revolution in all the Arab countries, to marshal this colossal force of workers, poor peasants, of a people 120 million strong. This is the only fighting force that can impose a defeat on imperialism in the Middle East.

With only the forces of the tiny Palestinian subnationality, a subnationality within the whole of the Arab people, you will not succeed in arriving at your goals. I believe that the events of the last few months have shown that this warning we have given our Arab comrades corresponds to reality. Fortunately, more and more Arab revolutionary currents have drawn the same conclusion and are moving in the same direction.

Almost every store has a sideline to pick up the extra few dollars dealing in "Aboriginal art and artifacts." Some of the local citizens, including a bar maid with whom I spoke, bought artworks from poverty-stricken blacks and re-sold them to tourists at up to 800% profit. The bar maid, only in town for a short while, already had set up a thriving business by buying the paintings for a bottle of wine apiece. Even the legitimate Art Shops buy their wares from blacks at the back door, and some won't even allow blacks to enter the front door for whatever purpose.

Running parallel with the main street, and then turning to run at right angles to it, is a creek-bed well within sight of every tourist and every citizen of the Alice. The creek-bed is 'home' for hundreds of blacks. Some have erected humpies and lean-to arrangements from scavenged sheets of tin, but most are forced totally exposed to the elements—and to the eyes of all and sundry. Freaky, sexually-warped whites from all over the world hang around the creek-bed in the hope of a glimpse of an exposed breast of a mother feeding her infant in the open, or a person urinating, or—with a bit of luck—a couple fornicating in the open, since they are deprived of the privacy of four walls.

Not content to just make their living from exploitation of the hapless blacks, local youths run their cars up and down the dry creek-bed, almost running over sleeping children and adults, in their quest for 'gins.' The creek-bed abounds with pale-skinned evidence of the rape



Picture shows Bobbi Sykes and conditions in the creek-bed.

of the Aboriginal race, and this appears to be perfectly satisfactory to the christian citizens, who disclaim the children and frown upon any legitimate liaison between the mixed sexes of the two races.

The Monday-morning Magistrate's Court is a further example of the havoc white man has brought to this black man's country. Of the 67 defendants brought before the Court, 64 were black. Of these, 53 were cases of being found drunk on either Friday or Saturday night, and were held over—in custody—until Monday morning. Of these 53 charges, 52 were black. Perhaps that denotes that the white citizenry of Alice are all teetotalers—or hold their liquor very well. The charge, I might stress, is always one of being found 'drunk'—not 'drunk and disorderly'—merely drunk, and nine times out of ten, they were 'found' in a public beer garden of a hotel. Also noteworthy, of the 64 blacks on charges only one pleaded 'not guilty'—and on examination of the evidence the Magistrate, Mr. G.F. Hall, S.M., found there was insufficient evidence to warrant an arrest. Had they all pleaded 'not guilty', perhaps there would have been insufficient evidence for many of these charges to be brought before the Court.

Of the three white men before the Court two pleaded 'not guilty'—one of driving under the influence, and which was remanded to a later date, and one of car theft, which was only part-heard by myself.

It was further brought to my attention that in the history of Alice's court, there have been a number of charges of assault brought against blacks by whites, but never a case brought against whites by blacks. Further to this, if a couple of men are found fighting, one of each race, chances are that the black will be arrested, either for assault or disorderly behaviour, while the white goes free.

Unemployment seems to be the common state of affairs amongst the blacks

in this area. While most of the people to whom I spoke had been educated at Mission schools, none had attained any educational certificates, and were unable and unfit to hold down clerical jobs. Most of them had been employed as stockmen at one time or the other, and had been told to move off when drought or difficult conditions set in. Some of the towns people were offering the men a day's work around the home, gardening or digging or shifting dirt and rocks—in exchange for a few bob or a feed. This type of further exploitation of a people unable to resist and in so much dire need that they were—in through sheer starvation—forced to comply, was apparently very common years ago, but now only isolated incidents occur. One such incident involving the owner of a motel who had about 9—10 blacks in to dig out the entire shell of his swimming—pool in exchange for 2 cartons of beer between them is still talked about, and certain other people, from on the land and in the town, have even approached the Commonwealth Employment Service with a view to getting cheap black labour when white labour was unavailable. However, the racist manager of a Commonwealth Hostel building job would not employ blacks in any capacity, no matter how skilled or well-referred—even though he himself was under contract to the Government.

The blacks who live in the creek-bed often spend their days doing paintings in water colour or whittling artifacts for sale. With the proceeds, most buy a little food and as much cheap wine as possible, to seek oblivion from the degradation which surrounds them. Many whites, often tourists, ply the blacks with drink in order to see them act stupidly, or put on a drunken comobore. These scenes often degenerate into drunken orgies, when the black man realises how degraded he is and seeks to degrade those around him.

There are still those, however, who live decent lives in spite of the creek-bed and all it entails. One family who have lived in the creek-bed for 5 months because of the lack of employment possibilities have three children under four. The youngest, who was brought home to the fly- and bull-ant ridden creek-bed at one week old, and who is now three months old, has very little chance of survival. The other two, one attending pre-school, show signs of infection from intestinal parasites, and their chances of remaining alive are also slim. The young mother goes daily to a tap in a nearby school yard and washes the few tattered clothes which they own. When, in the height of a storm, the family sought shelter under this same deserted school in the middle of the night, the police forced them back into the creek-bed, where the children got soaked to the skin, and had to sleep on the wet ground.

Legalised robbery is also being sanctioned in the motor trade. Young blacks fortunate enough to find work on outlying stations and who come into town with their entire savings in order to buy themselves a car are being fleeced out of their money and sold un-roadworthy vehicles, which soon clap out and are un-repairable, and also un-guaranteed. These unscrupulous merchants are feathering their air-conditioned nests at the expense of men who are breaking their backs in heat at times over 120°, and who have no one to whom they could turn if they realised they were being cheated.

These people at Alice Springs are the same people one hears say 'the blacks like to live that way.' They do not realise that—in their own area—they are themselves forced to ensure that blacks continue to live in the creek-bed and in degrading conditions in order to attract tourists from whence much of the town draws its survival. For this end, employment will always be in short supply in this area, as will be housing. The people who flourish are white, and the people who pay the price are black—and the price involved is the lives of many many children, the quality of life of all blacks, and the dignity and culture of an entire race.



Letter

Dear Comrade,

Regarding Nita Keig's article "Fixing the Blame for Pollution" I wish to make some comments on the so-called Australian "Conservation" Foundation. Having been involved in many issues and aspects of the ecology movement, I have had some contact with A.C.F. This organisation can be considered an "arm" rather than "mouthpiece" for the Federal Government, hence capitalism especially the virulent kind that perpetrates both genocide and ecocide, usually both go hand in hand. It is these people who are the voice for the A.C.F., mouthpiece. To give two examples; the S.S.T. which is capable of fatal dislocation of Earth's life-support systems is being opposed by concerned environmentalists—but the A.C.F. voice remains silent. The Alligator Rivers, an area of scientific and aesthetic importance is being destroyed by the U.S. Defence Dept. mining companies for the uranium which is to supply their already huge atomic stockpiles—A.C.F. remains strangely silent.

Not only is A.C.F. in league with the capitalists it is also financed by them. To this end it is being used as a means to control and, hence, eventually destroy the voice of environmental concern, the Foundation is making efforts to choose what campaigns are to be fought and dictate its decision to the Australian ecology movement. (Sounds like the political systems set up by the U.S. imperialists in the oppressed Third World countries doesn't it?) Comrade Keig has shown A.C.F.'s support for the suppression of women, but A.C.F. also condones the suppression of the blacks by staying quiet about racist Comaleo's desecration of Cape York. I, and other environmentalists, see revolutionary socialism as the answer to the Environmental Crisis. Capitalism cannot solve the crisis and survive; to solve the crisis means its own destruction. We believe the environmental crisis must be viewed from its many facets; pollution, wildlife, National Parks, resources planning, human ecology, etc., for each will contribute some understanding of a better world in which the socialist state can exist in, leading to a quality of life non-existent in the capitalist state. Remember ecocide is perpetrated for and by those same people responsible for suppression of the National Liberation struggles, the feminist movement, the movements of black, brown and red peoples of the world and the genocide perpetrated in Vietnam, Biafra, Bangla Desh and elsewhere.

Greg Czechura.

'DEVELOPMENT' IN NIUGINI

by Bob Strong

Development is a key factor in Niugini. Development of the economy in a country that is still plagued by its masses of illiterate and underprivileged. The Australian Government and many Australian people are in Niugini, supposedly to "help develop" the country. And with the recent proclamation by the United Nations Trusteeship Council that it has agreed to self-government as-soon-as-possible, there has been a flurry of activity by the Australian Government to consolidate its own position in Niugini.

Yet today in Niugini the situation has changed little and the people are still dominated and exploited. Development is at variance with established, calculated policies. Low wages and unavailability of work, monopoly of the cash economy and attempts at land alienation still remain in the wake of "development" by the Australian Government which has had a direct effect on the people, the masses, the Niuginian.

Australian attempts at economic development in Niugini have not successfully incorporated local participation in the cash economy, and there has been no noticeable shifts in the distribution of the money income and the proportion of monetary sector assets owned by locals.

Of a population of 2.4 million in 1969, 43,000 were non-Indigenous. Yet!!! This minority group controls most areas of production in the cash economy in the form of foreign and expatriate ownership.

In 1966-67, only 39% of commercial agricultural production was in local hands and this proportion will be less in 1972-73.

The manufacturing, financial sector and most wholesale and retail trades are overwhelmingly under expatriate ownership and management.

The development sought by the Australian Administration is to involve the people through participation in the cash economy but it has been only a puny gesture. The importance of this factor of local participation cannot be underestimated as it lends the Australian Government a sense of legitimacy in its efforts of undisguised exploitation of Niugini. Development in Niugini is not motivated by concern for the Niuginian people, but only for the good of the expatriate population overall.

When the Administration speaks of development in Niugini, it means that the economy is being run efficiently as a capitalist apparatus, primarily for an industry that is wholly expatriate owned and controlled. The expansion of industrial holdings in Niugini means development for Australians, and the Government, and a firmer footing being established by capitalism. The Niuginian people receive only the fringe benefits, on a short term basis, of industry that is being undertaken today under the guise of development.

Local participation in the economy, as sought by the Australian Administration, has not provided beneficial expectations to the average Niuginian and has not provided the opportunity for participation in local industry.

Even the exceptional Niuginian who ventures into a commercial aspect of the economy, does so only on a very small scale. The rest of the people though are basically agriculturalists who grow garden crops and/or coffee, copra and cocoa, which is sold, but local participation in local industry has been relatively minor.

The current radicalisation of Niuginians over the issue of "development", has primarily arisen because the people realise that the establishment of industry will not necessarily mean the alleviation of problems in the Niuginian society. The supposed development being undertaken in Niugini is not beneficial to the people. Although financial capital is poured into the country, as in the case of Bougainville Mining, the long-term benefits are geared to make a major return to the investors—Australians and expatriates in Niugini. The people receive very short-term benefits but lose on any longer-term basis.

Niuginians realise that the Administration and the Australian Government do not respect customary land titles—where land

is not physically occupied it is considered government territory. Thus the Australian Government has the "authority" to lease land to whomever it wishes, but Niuginians cannot undertake such transactions.

Industry in Niugini has brought its own problems. As a result of the initial policy of Bougainville Mining, an upsurge in unskilled labour appeared in Bougainville for the expected jobs that came with the setting up of an industrial concern, only to be told that there were no available jobs. Later, retrenchment of unskilled labour began. Thus the short-term benefits to the local people were cut off, as abruptly as they had begun.

Development in Niugini is a major concern to the people. To most it will mean that another country is going to spend money in Niugini—(thus strengthening capitalism)—to others jobs and prospects of a prospering country and perhaps a share of the profits.

Niugini is a prospering young country, where without doubt, the easy dollar can be made in business. A few enterprising locals own small trade stores, passenger transport services and have incomes from small-holdings.

But, the real money is not being made in small-holdings, as Burns Philp, Steamships Trading Co., Carpenters and Bougainville Mining prove. Money made for these large concerns involves the exploitation of high price manipulation. The people are exploited by big business—they do not profit from it. Profit margins made by Australians have and will affect the future economy of Niugini.

In Niugini, all the basic infrastructure is apparent but who does it serve? Constantly we are told it will benefit the local people. All the Niuginian can do with roads and bridges is to walk from the village to the towns and see what they don't have. The building of the Ramu hydro-scheme benefits expatriates and big business but the people do not even have facilities to use the electricity that has been generated. The Administration has undertaken the scheme as a project of "development" for the people, in the name of the people. As yet the people have yet to taste the benefits of what has been undertaken for the "good" of Niugini.

Behind every town one will find squatter settlements, but the Administration has yet to find a solution to this problem.

"Development" is a front for capitalism in every underprivileged country, and shows itself as utterly incapable of rendering a service to the people. The capitalist development of a neo-colonial society benefits only individuals. The industrial concerns have no wish to pay back on an equal basis, dollar for dollar, for what they take out of Niugini. What they do under the guise of "development" is to

exploit and suck the country dry of resources—labour and mineral.

The New Guinea Islands Produce Company a major issue during the Matangian confrontations last year in March, has shown that it has prospered under the guiding wing of the Administration.

Formerly, the Tolai Cocoa Project—it was converted into a business enterprise last year and thus deprived the Tolai people of what is essentially theirs. It is now constituted as a company with the guidance of Niuginian capitalists in the Gazelle Council and aided by the Administration. Previous to the sell-out, the Tolai Cocoa Project was a community run project with its own fermentaries for the processing of copra and cocoa. It was set up to beat the 'middle men' processors. It steadily built up to 18 fermentaries over the years and was paid for by the sweat of the people. Its current value at that time was around \$600,000. It was put under the guidance of the Gazelle Council, then composed of village councils. Over the years the Council has undergone drastic changes. Now it is run on a capitalist basis with the interests of the expatriate and local businessmen in mind.

Today, with the title of the New Guinea Produce Company, it has a current working equity of \$24,500. It has 2,630 shareholders and issues dividends on a yearly basis.

Recently it bought up three plantations, one of which is 247 acres. All have been previously owned by expatriates all of whom were paid a handsome sum. It has also built a new fermentary and a new shop at Kokopo.

During the confrontations, the administration was quoted as saying "the only funds withheld from growers have been to meet operational costs and to repay bank loans." If so, it has not clarified the new position on how the enterprises can afford to expand at a rate.

The New Guinea Islands Produce Company which was formerly paid for by the people and registered as the Tolai Cocoa Project until the Council betrayed the people, is essentially a Tolai project belonging to the people.

Now when it is registered as the New Guinea Islands Produce Company, the majority of the people who built it up, have been disenfranchised. This reversal of positions, opposed so strongly by the Matangian Association, has deprived the Tolai people of what they have built.

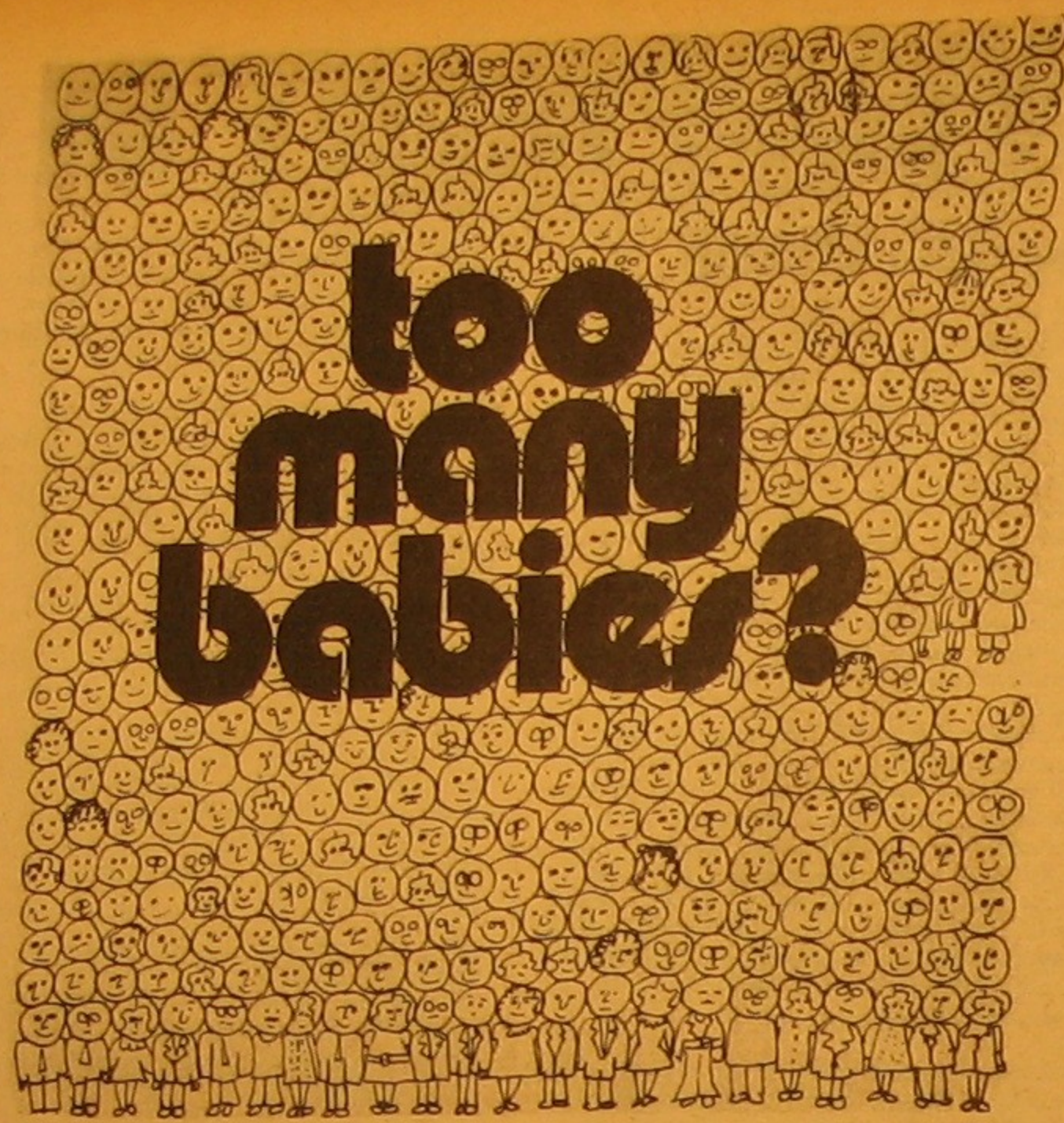
The Gazelle Council was a willing agent in the sell-out to the profit-seekers and a project that gave some equity to the Niuginian people as a whole has been destroyed.

SOCIALIST BOOKS

- "An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory" Ernest Mandel 40c
- "The Leninist Theory of Organization: Its Relevance Today" Ernest Mandel 30c
- "The Marxist Theory of the State" Ernest Mandel 20c
- "On the Revolutionary Potential of the Working Class" Mandel Novack 30c
- "On the Revolutionary and World Revolution" Ernest Mandel 20c
- "Peaceful Coexistence and World Revolution" Ernest Mandel 15c
- "The Revolutionary Student Movement" Ernest Mandel 25c
- "Fascism - What it is and how to fight it" Leon Trotsky 20c
- "I Stake My Life" Leon Trotsky 15c
- "Marxism in Our Time" Leon Trotsky 30c
- "Stalinism and Bolshevism" Leon Trotsky 20c
- "The Transitional Program" Leon Trotsky 25c
- "Statutes of the Fourth International" 15c
- "The New Rise of the World Revolution" Resolution of 9th congress of the Fourth International 10c
- "The Politics of the Socialist Youth Alliance" debate with Workers Action 10c
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'THE POPULATION BOMB'
BY PAUL EHRLICH
REVIEWED BY GREG ADAMSON.



too many babies?

Coming at a time when more and more people are becoming aware of the many crises of capitalism, "The Population Bomb" puts forward a single explanation for at least four of these problems: overpopulation. Dr. Ehrlich claims this is responsible for hunger, poverty, pollution and war. A large part of the book is spent trying to prove this link, but much of his case rests upon very superficial logic: Pollution and population are all increasing simultaneously, and so must be directly related, so if you cut back population you cut back the others. His book is therefore largely concerned with advocating zero population growth (ZPG). However, examination of the terrible 'results' of overpopulation casts doubt upon the capitalist system which Dr. Ehrlich is so enthusiastic to maintain, rather than supports his particular thesis.

Dr. Ehrlich shows that over half the world's population is starving or undernourished. Observing that, internationally, modern medicine is lowering the death rate, he concludes that with the increasing gap between food available and people to be fed the situation will be further strained, since he can foresee a major food production increase in the near future. Typical is his claim that, "The U.S.A.'s ... agriculture is already highly efficient, so that the prospects of massively increasing its production is dim." Yet agricultural production in the U.S.A. has been consistently increasing, and this trend seems unlikely to suddenly stop. But in addition there are unutilised assets there. If too much food is available, then prices fall. The U.S. government acting in the interests of 'free enterprise', to keep prices and profits up, is often found to be either paying for the destruction of 'surplus' crops, or giving farmers bonuses for leaving land unfarmed.

Similarly, the introduction of the so-called miracle rice to Asia, which was supposed to create a 'green revolution', has turned out to be a mixed blessing for most capitalist regimes in the area. James P. Sterba wrote in the January 16 New York Times, of the resulting rice overproduction:

"Officials in Burma and Thailand... are predicting long-term economic depressions as rice prices fall. In both countries, rice exports provide most of the foreign exchange earnings."

In 1967, Japan had to import 500,000 tons of rice to meet domestic needs. Last year the country exported 866,000 tons. The budget approved by the cabinet on January 14 included payments of almost \$30,000,000 to farmers as a reward for not growing still more.

Typical rice prices on the Bangkok market, Sterba reported, have fallen to approximately 60% of their December 1969 level. The situation may get even worse for the profiteers. Some experts are predicting that Asia as a whole will produce a surplus of rice within three years.

Ehrlich then turns to the absolute impoverishment of the 'teeming millions'. Overpopulation's responsibility for poverty implies a lack of wealth to share around. However, the inability to share, rather than the lack of wealth seems to be the main problem. In the U.S.A., in 1956 0.5% of the population owned 25% of the wealth. The bottom 50% of the population was left with 8% of the wealth. The effects of this are clear. Most Americans - citizens of the wealthiest, most powerful and most ideal-washed country in the world - by a very wide margin own nothing more than their household goods, a few glittering gadgets such as automobiles and television sets (usually purchased on the installment plan, many at second hand) and the clothes on their backs. A horde of not a majority of Americans live in shacks, cabins, hovels, shanties, hand-me-down Victorian eyeshades, rickety tenements and flakey apartment buildings. At the same time, a relative handful of Americans are extravagantly endowed, like princes in the Arabian Nights Tales. Similarly, in India 1% owns about 50% of the wealth. A full page of the book is devoted to the horror of Indian slum conditions. The wealth of this elite, alongside the poverty of large numbers is typical of the imbalance of class society.

Dr. Ehrlich presents in adequate detail a description of pollution. The connection between profit and pollution is

so obvious that even he makes the point. However, he continually comes back to his contention that there is individual responsibility in pollution prevention.

A 1970 Senate Select Committee on Water Pollution reported that the discharge from one fruit cannery was equal to that of a community of 350,000 people. Likewise, Jacques Cousteau, the world's best known undersea explorer, warning of the oceans' destruction within fifty years at the present rate of pollution, pointed out that it makes no sense to pick up beer cans and litter while poisons are being dumped by the ton into the oceans and the air. "We must put our emphasis on saving the world from poison first, then we can make it beautiful." To combat pollution a very conscious approach to planning is required which is not possible within competitive capitalist society.

To complete the picture, the author makes a passing reference to the relationship of excess population to war. When particular countries of Europe were extending their boundaries by force into the New World some centuries ago, it was to house overflowing populations according to Dr. Ehrlich. He 'points out' that Japan and Germany had the same reasons for their expansionist policies more recently.

Noticeably these two periods of expansion did not involve the same nations. Germany and Japan industrialised relatively recently, into a world where unlike the earlier period no territory easily conquerable was available. So while England, France, Holland and others had both external sources of raw materials, and markets for finished goods, by control of, or favourable trade relations with, other countries, neither Japan nor Germany had these opportunities. Because their internal consumption was insufficient, they were left with only one choice if their industries were to remain profitable, to capture by force the markets needed. Once again we find that overpopulation is not the villain, but unplanned production on an international scale.

War also has an added advantage for industry. Wartime munitions production is serving an unlimited market, guaranteeing the manufacturers fabulous profits. These are financed by the hardship of the vast majority of people in wartime. A present day example is the drain of the Vietnam war and arms race on the U.S.A.'s economy, which is reflected in the inflation, unemployment, and stagnation of the real wages of the workers.

The misleading effect of Dr. Ehrlich's arguments is obvious in his plan of action. Having laid the blame for all and sundry on overpopulation, he proceeds to 'explain' how we may remedy the situation. He splits up 'underdeveloped' countries into two groups: those which are too far gone to be fixed up, where extensive families are inevitable, such as India, and those which may be saved by foreign 'aid' from a benign coalition of U.S.A., U.K., U.S.S.R., and other 'advanced' countries. Such 'aid' programmes however are a factor

in keeping these countries underdeveloped. The U.S.A. gives 'aid' to a local subsidiary of a U.S. company, putting it in a better position to extract that country's resources. Such naive 'misunderstanding' of international politics occurs throughout the book.

To restrict population growth, he advocates easily obtainable abortions and contraceptives as well as forced sterilisation "if voluntary methods fail." Though we should support the first two points, in any campaign around them a distinction must be made between them and the ideas of Z.P.G.

Dr. Ehrlich begins his book postulating that at the present rate of population growth, it is inconceivable that Earth could hold the population after a considerable length of time. He then goes into much detail on the impracticability of migrating to planets or other stars. Quite amazingly, although he does not want to 'burden' us with figures to substantiate his claims, such as our inability to drastically increase food production, he does not seem concerned that more than half of all his figures and calculations are displayed in this initial, irrelevant chapter. No one can deny that overpopulation must occur if the population increases infinitely. Socialists do not deny that population may threaten to exceed the Earth's (planned) capacity. Concerning this, Frederick Engels, in a letter to Karl Kautsky, Feb. 1, 1881, pointed out:

"There is, of course, the abstract possibility that the number of people will become so great that limits will have to be set to their increase. But if at some stage communist society finds itself obliged to regulate the production of human beings, just as it has already come to regulate the production of things, it will be precisely this society, and this society alone, which can carry this out without difficulty. It does not seem to me that it would be at all difficult in such a society to achieve by planning a result which has already been produced spontaneously, without planning, in France and Lower Austria. At any rate, it is for the people in the communist society themselves to decide whether, when and how this is to be done alone, and what means they wish to employ for the purpose. I do not feel called upon to make proposals or give them advice about it. These people, in any case, will surely not be any less intelligent than we are." (Emphasis added.)

Thus, we find, the question of population is not new! In 1798, Tom Malthus published a pamphlet 'showing' that the existing poverty should be blamed on the shortsightedness of those living in it for breeding too fast. Just as the ruling class of the day applauded this we have seen recently the growth of the Protect Your Environment group sponsored by the Company Directors' Association and the Bank of N.S.W. Its aims emphasise the 'individual responsibility' in the fight against pollution, and include the

support for Z.P.G. Karl Marx devoted sufficient comment to the ideas of Malthus to thoroughly discredit them, and since that time socialists have fought these at each reappearance in whatever disguised form.

Support for Z.P.G., Dr. Ehrlich laments, comes only from a conscientious few, of minor influence among the powers that be. A brief recent history of the population control movement shows entirely the opposite.

In June, 1952, John D. Rockefeller III, father of four, eldest grandson of Standard Oil and chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation, hosted a highly select conference on population at colonial Williamsburg. To this came thirty of the nation's most eminent conservationists, public health experts, Planned Parenthood leaders, agriculturalists, demographers and social scientists. After two and a half days of intensive discussion, they agreed to from a new group which could act as 'a co-ordinator and catalytic agent in the broad field of population.' Later that year, John D. publicly christened The Population Council, and announced that he himself would serve as its first president. From this 'humble' beginning, concern for the size of other people's families increased. The Ford Foundation, Carnegie, the Commonwealth and Community Funds, the Mott Trust and the Mellons joined with John D., his mother, his sister (banker wife of Jean Mauze), his brother and their financial adviser, A.E.C. chairman Lewis Strauss in pumping fresh money into the Population Council. It is they who have recruited Dr. Ehrlich to their cause, rather than vice versa.

The links between population increase and the world's maladies do not stand investigation. A trend does appear, though, which condemns Z.P.G.'s rich patrons: Profiteering business sets the size of dividends ahead of the condition of Earth's air and water. Munitions manufacturers do not concern themselves with which side wins a war, as long as it takes a long time. So many thousands starve to death daily, because it would be "economically unprofitable" to make food available. Lack of economic planning wastes resources, and limits human capacity.

The Tasmanian Government has sealed the fate of Lake Pedder National Park (south-west Tasmania) by authorising the construction of a hydro-electric dam. Findings are now proving that the dam is unnecessary for Tasmania's economy. Instead, the real reason for its construction seems to lie in a wealthy woodchip industry (which would utilize felled trees during the dam's construction). As a result of this company making fat profits from the process, we will lose one of the most unique natural areas in Australia.

Various mining companies (e.g. Noranda Australia Pty. Ltd.), are also helping to desecrate large areas of natural landscape in the Northern Territory, and with the grace of Federal Cabinet Ministers. To say that the current Australian Governments are naive and apathetic

and privileges which flow from that ownership, the movement raises the question of true democracy, attainable only under a socialist system.

The general guidelines for the construction of a balanced environment that can co-exist with modern technology are already known: a totally revamped transport system; total recycling of so-called waste material; botanical and zoological as opposed to chemical pest control; composting of manure with plant waste; reforestation of non-agricultural land; crop rotation, etc. And it is a true comment to observe that the actual implementation of these things on a meaningful scale cannot begin until the masses of the people are in control of the productive apparatus of this society and are directly involved in the decision-making which affects their everyday lives.

One speaker at the rally, who called for NO compromises over the issue, was enthusiastically received. The internal logic of the conservation movement is plainly anti-capitalist in nature. Besides cutting directly across the bourgeois notion of private ownership and the rights

"The Population Bomb" should not be welcomed as a book which, while drawing wrong conclusions, still shows the problems of capitalism. (In fact it avoids them.) Most of the author's observations are self-evident, and he is therefore, at the best, trailing any movement to rectify them. As for his solution, its simplistic find-one-factor answer has initial appeal among some searching for the way forward, who do not yet realise the need to break with the present social system. To confuse these people and to contain the radicalisation is precisely the role of Dr. Ehrlich and other apologists for the capitalist system.

the ecological crisis and capitalism

BY GREG ROBERTS

It is vital that socialists throughout the world recognise the importance of a proper ecological balance (i.e. the relationship between humankind and nature). Humankind cannot live without the natural environment, and that natural environment is currently being menaced by the Australian capitalist regime. Nature conservation must NOT be alienated from the socialist cause.

Let us note the recent issue of sandmining at Cooloolo (on the South Queensland coast). The description of this beautiful unique area (with vegetation and wildlife the last of its kind in Queensland) was wholeheartedly supported by the bourgeois Queensland Cabinet Ministers. It is interesting to note that the titanium that would have been subject to subsequent mining would have been sold (at a ridiculously low cost) to rich American capitalists, and subsequently injected directly into the American war machine in Indo-China. The irony smells of deceit and evil intention.

The environmental crises currently occurring in this country (and other societies throughout the world) are numerous. They cannot be fully resolved under the present system, and so long as capitalism continues so will blind ecological destruction continue to thrive.

It is ludicrous, for example, to blame pollution on Australia's housewives (as the Australian Conservation Foundation would have us believe.) Although it is vital for every member of society to be aware of the need for conservation the blame for unplanned harmful exploitation of the natural environment can be placed squarely at the feet of capitalism. A socialist state is necessary for the well-being of the natural environment and our association with it.

save westempport

BY PETER CONNOR

Public outcry over the Westempport issue (see D.A. NO. 10) has far from abated. On March 2, over 2,000 people attended a rally held at Melbourne Town Hall by the Save Westempport Coalition.

The Coalition aims to halt industrialisation in the area so that a full discussion of the ecological issues may be conducted. A petition calling for a halt to further development, an independent ecological survey and a Royal Commission into the whole question has attracted over 20,000 signatures.

There is only one solution to the conflict between present industrialisation and modern scientific knowledge on the one hand and a limitation of the world's resources on the other. Realising the impossibility of everybody sitting on farms eating home grown food, the only way large numbers of people can live in harmony with nature is for the social system to be a democratic and efficiently planned socialist society.

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towards nature conservation is a massive understatement. (To illustrate this: Queensland's Mines Minister, Mr. Camm, once said: "Fish live under the surface, oil floats on top, so oil pollution can't harm fish." Enough said about that!')

The internationally-advised percentage of natural national land to total area is 10%. In Queensland that percentage is 0.6 of 1% (Half of this is desert.) However, the other states are far from satisfactory: Northern Territory - 3.5% (mostly desert), South Australia - 3.4%, A.C.T. - 1.9%, N.S.W. - 1.3%, Western Australia - 1.2%, Victoria - 1.1%, Tasmania - 6.5% (some of which is about to be ruined by the mentioned dam.) Total average - 1.8%!

In Australia about 14 species of animals have become extinct, and many are becoming extremely rare. Populations of nearly all animals in this country are declining because of an unplanned care-less economy exploiting nature for profit.

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abschol

Melbourne University Abschol met on March 3. Present were many blacks, including well-known activists Walker, Chilly (Brisbane), McGuinness and Lovett. The blacks expressed their dissatisfaction with the A.U.S. set-up - one white "Race Relations Officer" to cover both New Guinea and Aboriginals. This is obviously a situation which blacks want to see remedied and we should be hearing more about it in the near future.

Most of the discussion centered on proposals to have black directors on each of the three Melbourne campuses. As a first step, Brian Lovett was unanimously elected M.U.'s local Abschol director, and Marge Thorpe elected as Secretary.

At long last, blacks are moving in to assume the leadership positions in their own organisations.

correction

In the article "GREER AND FEMINISM" by Jill Jolliffe, Direct Action, February, 7th.

In column 4 of p.6 para 2 the passage should read:

"An enormous degree of fear and ignorance surrounds vasectomy, in particular the erroneous belief that it somehow diminishes virility. There is a confusion here between virility and fertility. There is no evidence that "virility" in the commonly-used sense is affected, and talk of "eunuchs" and "ultimate domestic animals" can only bolster the ignorant belief that vasectomy is somehow a form of castration! in the last para of p.6

"stem of extended family" should read "stem or extended family"

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sprinkler pipefitters ranks hold firm in strike

BY DAVE KERIN

Members of the Sprinkler Pipefitters Union went on strike on Friday, February 4 in support of a log of claims for improvements in wages and conditions of employment which had been served on the Fire Protection Engineers' Association on Sept. 15, 1971. This Association dragged out attempts to have conferences on the matter and, when conferences finally were held, they were not prepared to pay the \$6.00 flow on, which metal trades and building trades, including plumbers, had been receiving since August, 1971.

On November 26, 1971, the Union had submitted that the \$6.00 be granted as an interim payment from the 1st October, with related increases to 2nd class sprinkler fitters and adult helpers, pending further negotiations on the log of claims, but the employers had rejected this submission. On January 7, the employers offered the \$6.00 increase in wage rates to New South Wales and Victoria only; \$2.20 to one classification only in Queensland and nothing in the other states. They were adamant that they were going to institute a different rate of pay in each State for the first time since the agreement, registered in the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, in 1928.

The South Australian Sprinkler fitters have been on strike since the 20th Jan.

1972, and have been joined in the struggle by sprinkler fitters who are now on strike in all States.

Already the effects of this nationwide strike are being felt. New office and factory blocks are being held up for completion through the suspension of work on all sprinkler systems. With co-operation from the Fire Fighters Union, no repair work is being done and note here that the systems need regular maintenance to cover insurance conditions.

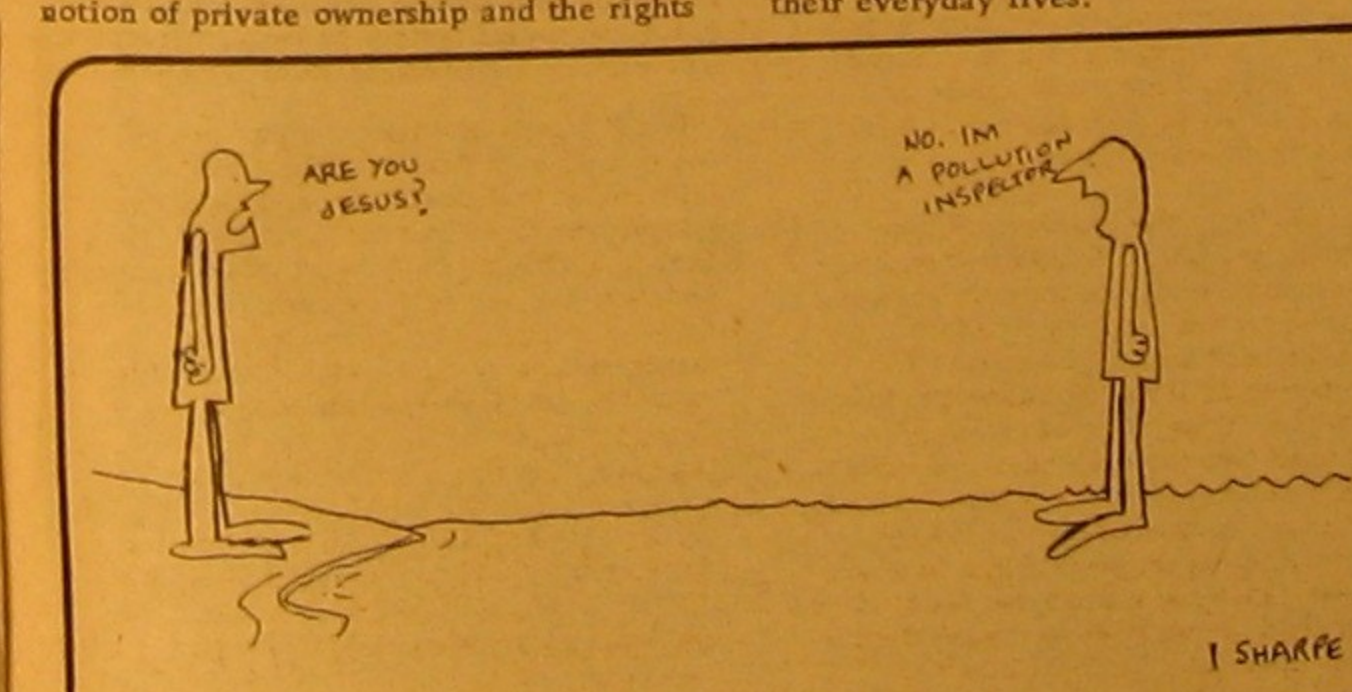
Already the bosses are smivelling and have granted concessions, one of which is an offer to make up pay to workers on compensation to full rates for twenty-six weeks.

The tactics of the employers are obvious. They seek to divide the class, in this case elements of these workers in the different States, while they remain centralised and retain nationwide control and power. However, the workers have seen through this, and remain solid, and prefer solidarity with the class, rather than "loyalty to the employer", that is to say coercion by the bosses.

Furthermore, this tactic is part of the overall strategy of the employers, that strategy being to shift the weight of the present economic crisis on to the backs of the workers.

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MASSIVE PROTESTS HIT MURDER OF FRENCH WORKER

BY DAVID THORSTAD

The murder of a Maoist activist outside the state-owned Renault factory in the Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt on February 25 has shaken France and given rise to a left-wing opposition united on a scale not seen since the May-June events of 1968.

The victim was 23 year-old Rene Pierre Overney, a former Renault employee who was fired in June 1970 for his political activity. He was shot down in cold blood by a factory guard dressed in civilian clothes. The guard, Jean-Antoine Tramoni, has been indicted for murder.

The scene of the murder was a Maoist rally outside the plant gates as the workers were leaving for the day. For three weeks, according to Le Monde of February 27-28, a group of Maoist activists had been holding daily demonstrations demanding the reinstatement of Sadok Ben Mabrouk, another former employee who was fired for "selling La Cause du Peuple outside the factory." Sadok Ben Mabrouk and Christian Riss, another fired employee, have been on a hunger strike for a month demanding that they be rehired.

According to the account in Le Monde, the rally began as had many on previous days, with a group of factory guards and demonstrators exchanging harsh words and a few blows, and with poles carrying red flags being broken. Suddenly, a group of barbouzes (secret agents) showed up. These, said Le Monde, are "actually watchmen in civilian clothes" inside the factory.

A young worker who witnessed the events described what happened next: "I was near Overney and his comrades. There were twenty of them at most. They had just turned away from the guards and were moving toward the barbouzes. One of these men dressed in civilian clothes steps aside from the group of watchmen. He's a stocky man, of medium build, wearing a trenchcoat. He's one of the administrative employees of the surveillance service.

"At this point, he is about three or four meters from Overney and appears very calm. Suddenly, out of his pocket he pulls a rather high-calibre revolver -- 9 millimeters, I think -- and in cold blood fires at Overney, who collapses, hit in the chest. . . ."

When the demonstrators realized what had happened, they and some of the workers who were looking on attacked the guards with iron bars, wounding five of them. Overney, who was taken to the hospital, died soon after.

The same evening, the Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International, called for a united-front meeting in its headquarters the following morning. The meeting was attended by most of the organizations on the French left. Besides the Ligue, these included the PSU (Parti Socialiste Unifie--United Socialist party), the Socialist party, Lutte Ouvriere, the Maoist Cause du Peuple, the Revolutionary Marxist Alliance, AJS (Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme--Alliance of Youth for Socialism), Revolution and Secours Rouge (Red Aid -- an anti-repression group). The Communist party and the union federation it controls, the CGT (Confederation Generale du Travail--General Confederation of Labor),

refused to attend.

The meeting issued a call for a demonstration on Monday, February 28, and urged "all workers, all workers' and democratic organizations, and all anti-fascists" to join it. Le Monde reported February 29 that a number of other groups joined in supporting the call. Among these were the MLF (Mouvement de Liberation de la Femme--Women's Liberation Movement), and the Center for Communist Initiative (Centre de l'Initiative Communiste), which involves a number of former leading figures in the CP like Roger Garaudy, Charles Tillon, and Jean-Pierre Vigier.

The demonstration, from the Charonne subway stop to the Place Stalingrad, drew 30,000 according to Le Monde's estimates. "For the first time in a long time, a dozen organizations representing divergent and generally antagonistic tendencies came together in this joint demonstration," reported Le Monde March 1. The march was preceded earlier in the day by meetings in high schools throughout Paris and the suburbs.

"While the activists of the Ligue Communiste were the most numerous, many of those who participated had no definite affiliation. They were students, high-school students, and groups of young workers who had come in response to appeals from leaflets distributed at factory gates and educational institutions. Thus, for the first time in a long time--but with the seriousness that the recent death of one of its own lent to this demonstration--those in Paris who are challenging the system found once again, at least on the surface, the unity in action that marked May 1968."

The front row of the march included Michel Rocard, national secretary of the PSU; two PSU deputies; Jean-Pierre Vigier, Alain Krivine, Henri Weber, Michel Rotman, and Charles Michaloux of the Communist League; the publisher Jean-Edem Hallier; and Jean-Paul Sartre.

At the head of the marchers were members of the Renault Struggle Committee to which Overney belonged, and Alain Geismar, a Maoist leader. They carried a wreath of red flowers and a portrait of Overney. There were also a few red flags, a large white banner proclaiming "Down with the Armed Bands of Capital!" and another one in Arabic behind a Palestinian insignia.

Le Monde reported some clashes between police and demonstrators who ignored requests to disperse. There were several attempts to set up barricades, a number of windows were broken, and a few cars damaged, but the sporadic violence lasted for only a couple of hours. Thirty-three were held for identity checks.

The funeral procession to Pere Lachaise Cemetery March 4 "produced the biggest show of strength of the New Left since its near-revolution in 1968," wrote John Hess in the New York Times the following day. "Chanting revolutionary hymns and calls for vengeance, the demonstrators recovered at least for the moment the unity and vitality that the appeared to have lost after the May movement collapsed and was turned into a Gaullist victory." The boulevards leading to the cemetery "were a sea of red flags and banners" as Overney's coffin was borne in on the shoulders of his comrades.

Hess estimated the size of the procession at 50,000. The National Broadcasting Company put the figure at 100,000.

On March 1, the Political Bureau of the Communist party denounced plans for the funeral march. "Naturally, Communists will not take part in such a demonstration," it said, charging that its purpose was "to divide the workers and the democratic forces."

The murder of Overney is having considerable reverberations on the French left. All the unions at Renault--except for the CFT (Confederation Francaise des Travailleurs--French Confederation of Workers), which is really not a trade union but a small organization of fascist toughs--strongly criticized the use of armed guards dressed in civilian clothes in the factory. But beyond this point, their positions contrasted sharply.

The CFDT (Confederation Francaise et Democratique du Travail--French Democratic Confederation of Labor), for instance, called for the resignation of the Renault officials responsible for the use of armed guards and demanded the "immediate disbanding of this private police force." It also called a protest rally at an intersection inside the plant premises for Monday morning, February 28.

The CGT and the Communist party, which dominates it, took a different approach. Both termed the whole thing a "provocation" cooked up by the bourgeoisie and its Maoist and "ultra-leftist" agents.

The CGT said that the "Renault management, these in power, and their Maoist accomplices bear the entire responsibility (for the murder). Thus, for more than two years, leftist groups have been used outside the factory to create an unhealthy climate on the inside. . . . The union accused the plant management of hiring "fascists" in order to carry out provocations. It blandly pointed out that "shots were fired by a man dressed in civilian clothes," as if the cold-blooded murder were simply part of a prearranged plan.

The Communist party charged that the government was using the incident "by manipulating leftist groups." Its newspaper, L'Humanite, denounced Monday's mass protest march as "an anticommunist demonstration."

The day after Overney was murdered, the CP's Political Bureau issued a statement linking the murder to "a vast undertaking of political provocation on behalf of those in power." It asserted that the "ruling powers are in trouble, their audience is growing smaller, their future is uncertain. They are looking for a way out through adventures. Workers and democrats: The ruling powers want disorder! They used it successfully in 1968, and today they want to do it again."

The CP called on "all Frenchmen and Frenchwomen--whatever their beliefs--to resolutely forge a Popular Union" and stated that "the opportunities for beating the aristocracy of money have never been as great as they are today."

Georges Marchais, the CP's assistant general secretary, was speaking in

Strasbourg the evening of Overney's murder. In response to a question about the likelihood of revolution in the immediate future, he referred to the murder as a "great boon to those in power" and evoked the specter of another May 1968: "I ask the question: Are we going to start all over again as in 1968? And I reply: No, that must not start all over again."

All this is an indication of how sensitive the CP is to the activity of leftist groups inside the CGT and in the factories. "For years the Communist party was the only political group in the factories," wrote Thierry Pfister in February 27-28 Le Monde in a two-part series on "Political Activism inside the Factory." In recent years the relationship of forces has been changing, however.

And since 1968, tendencies of the far left have begun to have an impact in the factories. Pfister mentions a bulletin distributed by the Ligue Communiste in Sochaux, which "seems to enjoy somewhat of an audience because each time it is distributed it is the topic of conversation in the canteen."

The real collusion in the factories, of course, is not between the management and so-called ultra-leftists, but between the management and the CGT. "In order to oppose this penetration of ultra-leftist propaganda or activists," noted Jean-Pierre Dumont in the February 27-28 Le Monde, "the CGT has not hesitated itself to use commando methods." During the latest firing of "ultra-leftist" workers at Renault, the CGT militants closed their eyes to the procedures followed by the management in the Paris bus and subway system, noted Pfister, "it is said without blinking that the CGT is like a small island of discipline."

"Especially since May-June 1968," he wrote in the February 29 Le Monde, the CGT has "eliminated a certain number of leftist elements who, once they sank local roots, tended to forget the instructions of the union. The Communist party has had to 'invest' a relatively large number of its cadres in the CGT in order to carry out these delicate surgical operations."

Pierre Vianson-Ponte, writing in Le Monde March 1, compared the "tacit agreements" between the CP and the Gaullist government beginning with May 1968 to one between two boxers shaking hands before they start the fight: "Certainly, each one hopes to win, but each one also hopes that the match will be played according to the rules, without any disorder, and to the general satisfaction of both."

"Perhaps the most significant aspect of the events of the past few days is that students as such have hardly figured in them. . . ." editorialized the London Times March 1. "The organization which took the initiative in calling the (February 28) demonstration, and which provided the stewards for it as well as a good part of the rank and file, is not a student group but an adult political organization, the Communist League. These events therefore serve to highlight two aspects of the development of the revolutionary movement in France since 1968: it has become more 'political,' and it has moved out of the universities towards the working class."

"Pay no attention to the opinions of people who don't know anything about sex. Socialism will put an end to the power of those who gaze up towards heaven as they speak of love whilst they crush and destroy the sexuality of youth."

WILHELM REICH ON THE SEXUAL LIBERATION OF YOUTH

Wilhelm Reich was an active revolutionary in the German socialist movement of the late 1920's and early 1930's. He was a fighter against the sexual oppression perpetuated by capitalism and class society on which he has written a number of works, including "The Sexual Revolution." The following excerpts are from a talk he gave to a meeting of German Communist Party youth, taken from his book "Sexual Struggle of Youth."

Since the Young Communist League is adopting a clear political line of social revolution, it should aim at being the leader of youth in the field of sexual problems, too. We have found time in our class struggle to deal with sport, the theatre, religion, the radio. Why are we not equally consistent when it comes to the sexual problem of youth? However, if we agree that we have been evading the issue, we must become clear about why this is so. . . .

Where were we brought up? Under what conditions did we grow up? We grew up in families and were brought up under the capitalist system. Bourgeois sexual morality nevertheless exists in the proletariat; and of all bourgeois ideologies it is the most deeply anchored because it is most strongly implanted from earliest childhood.

It is one of the bourgeoisie's strongest ideological props within the oppressed class.

We see all the time that even class-conscious youth find it very difficult to liberate themselves from this. Bourgeois sexual morality -- whose most essential feature is that it does not view sexual life as natural, self-evident, and also con-nected with the particular social order of the time, but denies it and is afraid of it -- is more deeply imbedded in the very marrow of us Communists than we all realize. . . . (Here, Reich explains at some length what a male student has said in the discussion. Then he continues. . . .)

This young comrade put the problem in the right way on the most essential points. The sexual problems of youth really can't be solved in a satisfactory way within the present system. But let us go further in our self-criticism. Let us examine the reason which the comrade gave for this -- and see how we are still imprisoned in a bourgeois mentality in sexual matters, even when our political ideas are perfectly correct.

The example he gives is that of a girl who for economic reasons can't satisfy her desire to have a child. This is doubtless true of many girls. But it is not a central problem.

Let us not deceive ourselves: Very many girls think first and foremost of how they can have sexual intercourse without getting pregnant. Young people feel bad because they cannot cope with their turbulent sexuality as a result of material poverty and a lack of opportunities, of money and contraceptives. For the moment then, let us leave psychological disturbances aside. And so I think comrade Ernst was right when he said:

Of course there is a big sex problem in Germany, like there is in all capitalist countries. It stems from the fact that young people live at home, because they

can't get a place of their own to live. Many are unemployed, haven't the money to keep themselves and therefore can't live with whoever they want to live with.

Many relationships which would be good under more or less secure material conditions break down, or can't even properly come into existence. Why? Simply because the necessary conditions are not available.

If we were to put the question of girls wanting to have babies at the top of the list, then, even if the question does play some part, we are side-tracking the issue. The typical bourgeois way of evading the problem of sex has been to

this, just as terroristic, as it is in every other area which the bourgeoisie considers important.

The possibility of having an unwanted pregnancy terminated at a public clinic is another fundamental precondition. Hungry, wretched young people excluded from every kind of culture, hanging about the streets and the bars, are not capable of having an ordered, satisfying sex life, because they are either sexually deprived -- which isn't their fault but the fault of society -- or sexually disturbed.

Since the cause of sexual disturbances and brutalization is bourgeois sexual oppression in the parental home and at

sexual revolution in the context of general historical change, we must help youth so far as we are able, but more than anything else we must realize that we are living in a time of transition.

To be put off by the confusions of such a transitional period, to take fright at the "crazy youngsters" and to fall back into bourgeois attitudes such as asceticism and moralizing attitudes which it is one of the tasks of the proletarian revolution to eradicate, means being left behind by historical events and standing in the way of progress.

After the revolution, when people liberated from their exploiters can at last begin to build socialism, to transform the economy into a socialist one and to destroy the rotten remains of capitalism in every sphere, the question is once again entirely different. The workers' society is then faced with the important task of thinking about the future order of sexual life and preparing for it. This future order cannot and will not be other than, as Lenin put it, a full love-life yielding joy and strength.

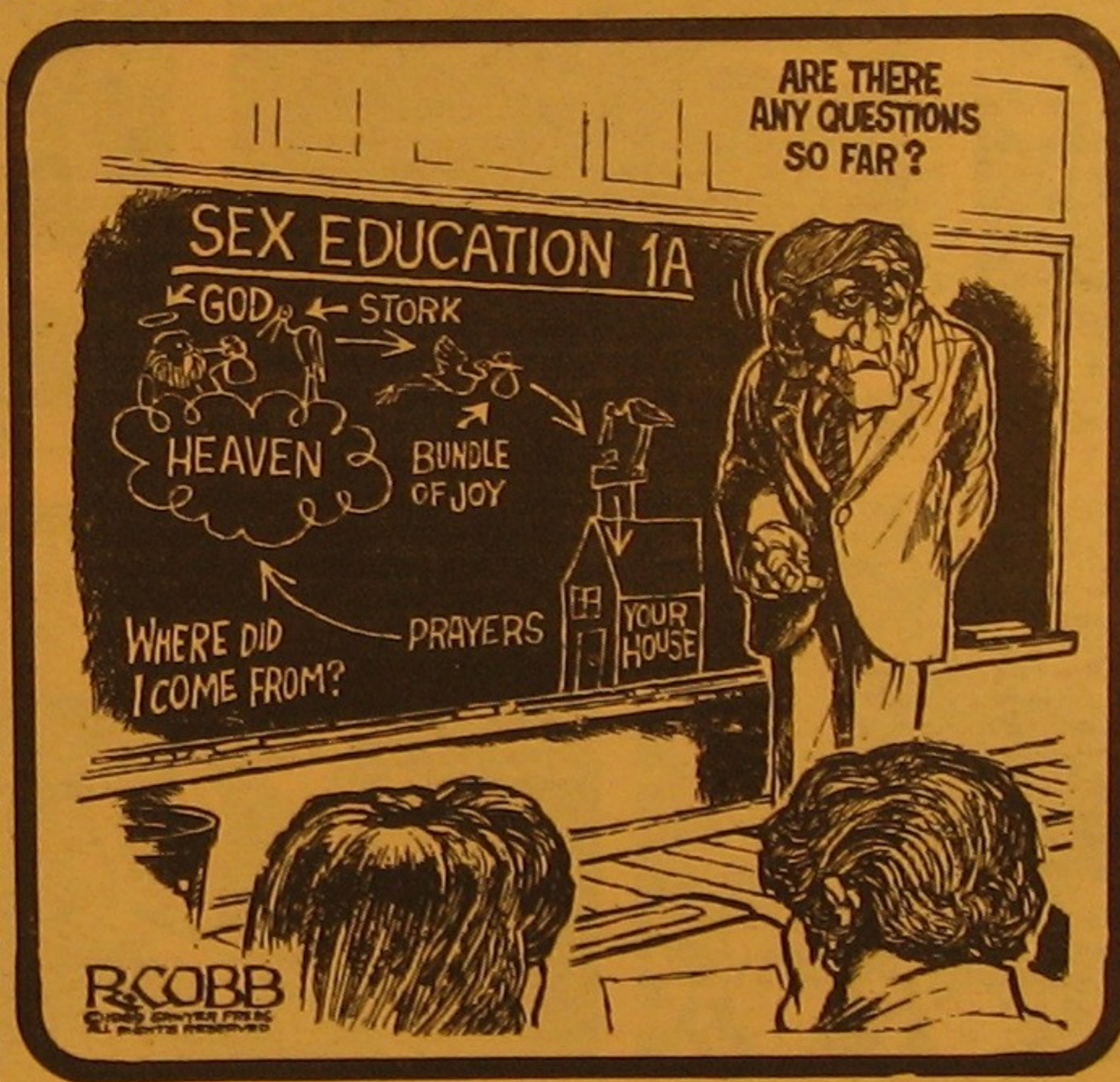
Little we can say about the details of such a life, it is nonetheless certain that in the Communist society the sexual needs of human beings will once more come into their own. To the degree that working hours and working pressures are reduced as a result of socialist rationalization of work and increased productivity of labor, sexual life, side by side with cultural and sports activities, no longer corrupted by money and brutality, will once again take its place on a higher level in human society.

And human beings will once again become capable of enjoying their sexuality, because private economy which is the basis of sexual oppression and which makes people sick or crazy in the true sense of the word, will drop away. . . .

Evidence that socialism alone can bring about sexual liberation is on our side. Therefore under capitalism we must use all our energies to convince the oppressed masses of this truth, too, and mobilize them for a merciless struggle against everything that impedes such liberation. And in this mobilization, precisely because of the great material bondage in which they are held today and which creates a link between them all, young people will march in the front rank.

We shall win them over to the cause of the revolution; we shall be assured of their enthusiasm, to the extent that we understand their sexual plight and can get across to them the only message which is compatible with complete responsibility and truthfulness today. The message is this:

In capitalist society there can be no sexual liberation of youth, no healthy, satisfying sex life; if you want to be rid of your sexual troubles, fight for socialism. Only through socialism can you achieve sexual joie de vivre. Pay no attention to the opinions of people who don't know anything about sex. Socialism will put an end to the power of those who gaze up towards heaven as they speak of love whilst they crush and destroy the sexuality of youth.



February 28 march protesting shooting of worker. Banner reads "Down with the Armed Bands of Capital!"

THOUSANDS MARCH FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS ON MARCH 11

On Saturday March 11th thousands of women and men marched for women's rights. Demonstrations and rallies took place in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane. About 2500 took part in Sydney, 1500 in Melbourne, 350 in Adelaide and 300 in Brisbane. The marches were the largest actions so far in this country by the women's liberation movement and point the way forward to involving masses of women in the fight for their own liberation.

Women marched for the following demands:

- * the right to work
- * equal pay - one rate for the job
- * equal opportunities for work and education
- * free child care and preschool facilities
- * free, safe contraceptives
- * safe, legal abortion on request

On this page we print pictures taken at the Sydney action.

