

**International**

A SURVEY OF BRITISH AND  
WORLD AFFAIRS

January 70's! nat

# **BOLIVIA** an analysis



## **EUROPEAN STRIKE WAVE**

# Letters

## AN APPEAL FROM SPANISH MILITANTS

(Editorial note: the following letter has been sent to us via the SPANISH WORKERS DEFENCE COMMITTEE, 29, Rylett Rd., London W. 12 This committee publishes a regular bulletin and has other material which is useful for building solidarity action with the Spanish workers' movement).

We, a group of Spanish political ex-prisoners most of whom have spent more than 20 years in Franco's prisons, address ourselves to our friends all over the world and our compatriots resident abroad and we invite them to show their solidarity with the political prisoners and their families this coming year of 1970.

We know only too well how sad it is to spend Christmas and the New Year in prison far from the family, surrounded only by the cold prison walls.

We know only too well the meaning of the solidarity which, in those days, reached our prisons and homes as a living proof that the world had not forgotten us.

Today, once more, Spain's prisons are full. In Segovia, Soria, Jaen, in the prison of Carabanchal in Madrid, in Catalonia, in the Basque country and in Galicia, in the prison of Ocana in Palencia, in America, Burgos..... hundreds of our brothers are still imprisoned some, mainly in Burgos and Soria, have spent more than 15 and 20 years in prison. Others - communists, socialists, anarchists, members of the workers' commissions, catholics, intellectuals, students, priests, militants of the ETA, men and women from the anti-Franco opposition, have recently been condemned by the Emergency Laws, some by military tribunals for activities which in your countries are within the normal rights of every citizen.

Let us hope that during this coming year the warmth of your solidarity will reach the prisons and the homes of those imprisoned. Let us send the prisoners and their families thousands of cards, money orders, presents for their children, for their wives and for themselves.

This solidarity will not only provide a necessary material support, but at the same time will demonstrate the international protest

against the repression and the injustice which they are suffering. It will be a public stand for the freedom of the Spanish prisoners and for a general amnesty in Spain.

We address ourselves to our friends all over the world with profound gratitude and hope.

Rafael Alcala Balaguer - sentenced to death; served 20 years.

Gilberto Alvarez - served 16 years imprisonment.

Santiago Alvarez - served 9 years imprisonment.

## EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We have received a number of letters about the Dave Windsor articles; too many for us to publish in one issue.

The editorial board will be discussing this problem and examining suggestions for dealing with it. We will notify correspondents of our decision.

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# Forward to the Revolutionary 70's!

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1970 is indeed a year of anniversaries. Most notable, of course, will be the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth but we should not forget the centenaries of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. August, 1970, will mark the 30th anniversary of the assassination of Trotsky at the hands of a Stalinist agent. Next year will mark the centenary of the great Paris Commune, forerunner of proletarian revolution in "advanced" capitalist countries. Will the 1970s live up to this heritage?

In the "under-developed" countries the struggle is now on the upswing and the heroism of the Vietnamese people has ended U.S. imperialism's dreams of holding back the colonial revolution. In the Middle East, imperialism's greatest "success" of the '60s - the Zionist/imperialism 6-day war against the Arab people - is turning sour. The great fight of the Palestine guerrillas is preventing imperialism (aided by the Soviet bureaucracy) from maintaining the status quo.

Through-out the "under-developed" countries movements inspired by these two struggles (and the Cuban revolution) are growing.

In the workers states the bureaucrats have been unable to give their rule any stability. Despite the crushing of the Czech people's bid for greater democracy, the anti bureaucratic struggle continues. No bureaucrat sleeps soundly in Eastern Europe, China or - least of all - the Soviet Union. It is difficult to find words to express the courage of people like Grigorenko, Yakir, Krassin et al. In this centenary year, Lenin's words are being turned against the bureaucrats who have prostituted his teachings. In the 1970s the call for the return to Lenin will become louder and louder in the Soviet Union.

In the "advanced" capitalist countries the temporary economic breathing space, given to imperialism by the treachery of the Stalinist and social democrat parties after the second world war, is coming to an end. The U.S. economy faces recession - at a time when nearly all the other capitalist economies face trouble - experts only disagree about the date.

The 1960s showed how wrong those people were who had written off the revolutionary potential of the western working classes. France in 1968 and Italy in 1969 showed the mighty force which resides in the proletariats of the "advanced" capitalist countries. Even in Britain, despite misleadership and downright betrayal, the workers put a stop to Wilson's plans to imprison strikers. The first cracks have appeared in the grip of bureaucracy over the U.S. trade union movement.

But everywhere - and most important of all - the young people are on the move. Whole new generations have come on to the scene which reject the opportunist leaderships of the traditional workers organisations. This new youth vanguard rejects Stalinism, social-democracy, imperialism and capitalism. It comes into action in a period of great revolutionary upsurge and is anxious to take part in the fray.

The International Marxist Group exists for no other purpose than to assist such revolutionary processes to achieve a successful conclusion. However, we know that the revolutionary process by itself is not enough to destroy capitalism - the only way to prevent the destruction of mankind in a nuclear holocaust (the other perspective we face). In addition to, and as part of, all these revolutionary struggles a world revolutionary party needs to be constructed.

Capitalism will always find a solution to its problems without the intervention of a conscious leadership. A new mass revolutionary international party is needed to take world revolution from its empirical to its conscious phase.

In the 1970s the IMG will join its comrades in every continent in fighting to construct this international party. The 1960s saw tremendous advances for our movement - the Fourth International. In many lands we have started the process of breaking the grip of the reformists and Stalinists upon the minds of the workers and the youth. We are absolutely confident that the 1970s will see much bigger strides by our movement - not least of all in Britain. We invite all those interested in turning the 1970s into a revolutionary decade to work with us for the construction of a revolutionary party in Britain - as part of the world party of revolution: the Fourth International.

# Vietnam: all out against Wilson's complicity

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On January 26 Prime Minister Wilson leaves for a cap in hand session with the chief war criminal in Washington, President Nixon. As leading British apologist for U.S. imperialism, Wilson will no doubt reassure Nixon of his support for U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

In response to Wilson's Washington visit, a December 30th meeting initiated by the Vietnam Solidarity Committee (VSC) decided to organise a demonstration against Wilson's visit on January 25th, the eve of his trip. Representatives of VSC, International Socialism, International Marxist Group, Tri-continental Committee, Independent Labour Party branches, the BLACK DWARF and other anti-imperialist organisations attended the meeting.

The action will take place starting at 6pm with a march from Charing X'embankment to 10 Downing St.

The importance of the demonstration is crystal clear. The heroic Vietnamese continue to struggle to force the U.S. to withdraw while the determination of the U.S. ruling class to crush the Vietnamese revolution remains unchanged. At the same time, the world wide opposition to the war has reached unprecedented mass proportions. One million Americans demonstrated against the war in Washington and San Francisco on November 15. In late November a GI rebellion took place in Chu Chi near the Cambodian border. On Christmas Day U.S. soldiers and civilians demonstrated in Saigon.

The Song May massacre disclosures have underlined the criminal complicity of the Wilson Government in Vietnam. Wilson's hypocritical calls for "peace" have been exposed by George Brown's call for the U.S. "to get on with the job", expressing the real policy of Wilson, his Cabinet and the Tories. More concretely, Sir Robert Thompson, Britain's anti-guerrilla expert who served British imperialism in Malaya, has brought back a report from Vietnam for Nixon explaining how

the U.S. can best prosecute the struggle against the Vietnamese people. Wilson's trip to Washington is part of this complicity and must be opposed by the united action of all those who have raised their voices against U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

On January 11th there will also be a demonstration against Wilson's Washington visit. The demonstration is called by the KEEP LEFT Young Socialists and is supported by the Socialist Labour League and the WORKERS PRESS. Support for the six-year old anti-Vietnam war movement is a recent thing for the KLYS, SLL and WORKERS PRESS.

No one could deny that this 180-degree turn is not welcome. But there are some unfortunate aspects to it all. Up to now the SLL has made no serious attempt to collaborate with any other organisation in the building of the January 11th demonstration.

The rich history of the international anti-Vietnam war movement is a powerful example of the tremendous power of united front action against U.S. imperialism. The perspective of building a mass movement against the Nixon-Wilson war has proven to be hollow if the concept of united action around a principled position of all forces opposed to the war is ignored. This is the meaning of the 100,000-strong October 27 1968 London demonstration (boycotted by the SLL).

The August 12th NEWSLETTER, forerunner of the WORKERS PRESS, stated that anti-war campaigns built around "ad-hoc" or united front committees "were formed as substitutes for Marxism". It is possible that in changing its position on the anti-Vietnam war movement the WORKERS PRESS will follow through and change its opposition to united action against U.S. imperialism's intervention in Vietnam by recognising the necessity of united action (a legitimate Leninist tactic).

Continued on page 13

# VSC & IMG

## worry Mr Gresham Cooke

Mr. Gresham Cooke, Tory MP for Twickenham, is a worried man. Apart from bemoaning the cost of the police sent to ensure that the Springboks matches take place, he sees a hidden danger to Britain's democracy. Indeed in the House of Commons on December 18th, he was so concerned that he asked for action against the VSC and IMG. The following is the exchange between Mr. Gresham Cooke and Mr. Callaghan:

MR. G. COOKE.—Is it not disgraceful that this riotous assembly is costing the police, the ratepayers and the clubs tens of thousands of pounds?

If groups like the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the International Marxist Group are inciting violence, should they not be prosecuted under the Public Order Act, 1936, which makes it an offence to organise a display of force in pursuance of political ends?

MR. CALLAGHAN.—I would not dream of answering the last part of that question without notice. As regards the rest, demonstrations do take up a lot of police time and money.

For Messrs. Callaghan and Gresham Cooke's information, the following is the text of our very modest leaflet distributed at Springboks matches in Scotland (the VSC has only publicised its forthcoming demonstrations against Wilson's trip to Washington):

### SOUTH AFRICA—WHERE IMPERIALISM MEANS RACISM

The International Marxist Group supports every action which is taken to try to stop the tour of the apartheid rugby team. We believe that socialists in Britain have the elementary duty to protest against this white supremacist regime. In particular we completely support those who take militant action to stop these games and reject the arguments of the hypocrites who claim to oppose apartheid but spend more time attacking the tactics of the demonstrators.

But we should understand that such protests are in themselves insufficient. Many would have us believe that South Africa is just an island of intolerance in a sea of hostility. On the contrary, it is one of the fastest-growing economies in the capitalist world, whose trade with the advanced countries has boomed for many years. As such, it has attracted huge investments, of which the biggest share, over £1,000 million, is held by British capitalists.

For these foreign capitalists, the apartheid system has many advantages. One prominent British business man was recently featured extolling the virtues of cheap South African labour. Thus the Nationalist rulers play a key role on behalf of imperialism. By ensuring a plentiful supply of cheap and adaptable labour they help to guarantee the enormous profits which are to be made in South Africa.

It is precisely because of the close links between the apartheid system and world imperialism that we can say definitely that the only struggle which will liberate the black masses of South Africa will be the struggle for the socialist revolution.

Meanwhile the arch-hypocrites in the British government who pretend to oppose apartheid actually encourage trade and investment in the racists' paradise.

There should be no illusions about the way in which the apartheid system will be overthrown. Demonstrations, picket lines, etc. will highlight the situation, but will not change it. The South African racists and their imperialist backers will do anything to keep themselves in the saddle. This is not an unusual characteristic of imperialism, as the present extended struggle in Vietnam shows.

In 1960 the African people of Sharpeville learnt this lesson the hard way when they were massacred as they demonstrated peacefully against the Pass Laws. Since then almost all sections of the opposition have accepted the necessity for armed struggle based on the support of the African peasants and workers.

Because of the strength of British imperialist interests in South Africa, British socialists have a particular duty to assist this struggle. We must popularise their case, organise material and political support, and prepare for the day when massive assistance to the emerging South African socialist revolution will be the order of the day.

**SUPPORT THE ANTI-SPRINGBOK DEMONSTRATIONS!**

**NO BRITISH INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA!**

**VICTORY TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS!**

(Published by: International Marxist Group, c/o Stewart, 52 Belmont Street, Glasgow W.2, & c/o Miller, 35 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh 1.)



# LEON TROTSKY ON THE TRADE UNIONS

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Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions. Part I, Communism and Syndicalism. Part II, Problems of Union Strategy and Tactics. With prefaces by Farrell Dobbs. Merit Publishers 80 pages. Price 8/6. Available from Pioneer Book Service, 8 Toynbee Street, London E.1.

Between 1960 and 1967 there was a semi-annual average of 780 strikes in Britain. This figure jumped to 1,000 in 1968 and to 1,300 in the first half of 1969 and probably reached 1,500 in the last half of 1969. Most of the strikes were unofficial. Key areas of industry were involved along with more traditionally conservative sectors like the teachers and the dustmen. The strikes are a powerful echo of the rising struggle in the rest of Europe which brought France to the brink of revolution in May 1968 and currently holds Italy in a prerevolutionary period. In France, the upsurge was smothered by the traditional leadership in the Stalinist-led General Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.). The Italian upsurge is also breaking its head against the bureaucratic wall. Here in Britain, the General Council of the Trade Union Congress is now moving into action against its 155 affiliates to restrict rank and file and shop steward initiative with its procedural "guidelines" to fill the breach for the Wilson government which is unable to enforce its incomes policy and the state restrictions outlined in "In Place of Strife."

The numerical strength and awesome power of tens of thousands of workers taking initiatives to defend their living standards against the vicious inflationary spiral stands in bold contrast to the tiny size of the gang of trade union bureaucrats who spend their time in Transport House offices and plush

negotiating rooms. Yet their ability to contain and crush movements of thousands of workers is obvious. What the source of this power is and how it is to be destroyed is the key question facing not only revolutionary socialists and militants but every worker caught in the squeeze of the British economy.

In this context the publication of Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions is most timely. The book, a collection of letters, articles and notes by Trotsky as leader of the Left Opposition, which spans the early twenties up to the eve of the second World War, deals with this central problem. Can the trade unions be instruments of socialist revolution or have they become part of the state machine of capitalism? Can unions within capitalism be independent or politically neutral? Will the trade union bureaucracy be bypassed? What should revolutionaries do in the trade unions? These questions are posed and answered by this book in some of Trotsky's most incisive and prophetic writings.

The first section deals with the experiences of British and French Communists. In letters to leaders of French syndicalism, Trotsky argues for the decisive role of the Communist Party in giving leadership to the working class as a whole in the struggle against the reformist social democratic leadership, through the open and independent intervention of Communists in the organised sectors of the working class - the trade unions. Trotsky underlines this when he deals with the disastrous experience of Stalinist opportunism in Britain where communist subservience to the "left" trade union bureaucrats of the Anglo-Russian Committee and the Minority Movement resulted in the defeat of the 1926 general strike and the Minority Movement.

The second section dealing with trade union strategy and tactics outlines a clear perspective for revolutionists in the trade unions. It includes a section from the transitional program from the 1938 founding conference of the Trotskyist movement and a conversation with an American CIO organiser and notes found on Trotsky's desk after his assassination entitled "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay."

This last contribution on the central question of unionism of our time, "the complete and unconditional independence of the trade

unions in relation to the capitalist state" is the most powerful. Within imperialism, Trotsky explains, there can be no politically neutral or independent trade unions. Either they become secondary instruments of imperialism for disciplining the working class and blocking revolution or they can become instruments of socialist revolution. It is enough to look at the TUC's procedural guidelines, Barbara Castle's policies and Rochet's CGT in France to have a concrete understanding of this.

But an understanding of the position of the trade unions within imperialism is not enough. Truly independent unions within capitalism need a revolutionary, that is, a Trotskyist leadership. Again and again, Trotsky emphasises that it is this leadership which will crystallize a mass left wing against the Feathers, Woodcocks, Scanlons, Wilsons and Castles. It is this leadership which will be forged within the organized working class through the active intervention of revolutionary socialists fighting

for independent democratic unions struggling with a transitional program for a socialist society.

Is this book relevant for today? A survey of the British left shows the lessons outlined by Trotsky have yet to be understood by some claiming to give revolutionary leadership. The Communist Party, hanging on to the coat-tails of the labour "lefts" continues the opportunism of the days of the Anglo-Russian Committee. The failure of International Socialism to come to grips with the role of the revolutionary party is reminiscent of the French syndicalism Trotsky fought against. The attempt of the Socialist Labour League to counterpose the All Trades Union Alliance to the reformist controlled TUC brings into the 1970's the sectarianism of the Stalinist third period.

Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions is a must for every militant serious about the prospects for social change in Britain.  
Tom Philips

## "Workers' Press" Treachery on Bolivia

Since last July, repression has hit the Bolivian vanguard. The Fourth International has engaged in a campaign against this repression and for the support of the POR and ELN.

The *Workers' Press*, published by a group calling itself Trotskyist, has attacked this campaign, dedicating a whole page of one issue to texts from a "POR" in Bolivia. The Trotskyist movement in Bolivia had been divided into two tendencies for many years. Both of them had the same name. One of them was led by Hugh Gonzalez Moscoso and was affiliated to the Fourth International. The other was led by Guillermo Lora. These two organisations joined together on 17th February, 1966 (cf. the agreement on unification in *Quatrieme Internationale*, no. 28, June 1966). But Lora, who gave his agreement while he was outside Bolivia, refused, when he came back, to enter the unified organisation. He gathered a small clique round him and took the name of "POR" again. It is this (Lora's) microfraction which now launches—out of a lack of other activities—these attacks, which the Editorial Board of the *Workers' Press* seized, happy to be able to appear for once as internationalist, without much cost. Away from it all, it is difficult for the reader to be able to judge the numerical importance of the different groups, whereas on the spot, the balance of forces from the same point of view is obvious. But the nature of the political divergences is clear enough. We attach less importance to the slanders of the *Workers' Press* than to the political line followed by our Bolivian comrades and to its exemplary international impact. Lora's group claims to be "in absolute dis-

agreement with the guerrilla". Its declarations on the nationalisation of the Gulf Oil limits itself to generalities which lead to no programme for struggle against the military dictatorship—not even an appeal against the repression. Last July, after the arrests, Lora was already doing nothing more than condemn the guerrillas, which his group regards as "a typical adventure of petty-bourgeois despair". Under such circumstances, one will understand that this group is somewhat isolated from the revolutionary vanguard in Bolivia, as well as in the whole of Latin America.

Besides, slanderous attacks against the arrested militants or those who carry on the struggle underground are sufficient to demonstrate the political quality of this newsheet as of its correspondents. It declares that "there exist today serious suspicions that Mr. Gonzalez Moscoso would work for the Bolivian Government".

If Lora and his clique had some proof, they would produce it and would not resort to publishing insinuations in England, because in Bolivia it would cost them the indignation—at best a verbal one—of the revolutionaries who until now used to find them ridiculous and who unanimously will judge them criminal. The Bolivian revolutionaries know who continues to fight beside the ELN, as an independent organisation, with its own press, still alive in spite of the repression, but in absolute agreement as far as the necessity of armed struggle is concerned: and who has renounced all struggle.

Slander has always been the weapon of opportunists: only politically bankrupt sects can recognise themselves in those rotten methods favoured by Stalinists.

The *Workers' Press* shares full responsibility for such slanders with Lora.

The campaign in support of the Bolivian revolutionaries of the POR will not be hampered as the *Workers' Press* may hope.

Santa Cruz

On September 26, the civilian team headed by Siles Salinas was ousted from the Palacio de Gobierno [Government Palace] by the armed forces and replaced by a military-civilian government headed by the supreme commander of the armed forces, General Alfredo Ovando Candia.

This changing of the guard was carried out peacefully, without a shot being fired or even a knife being stuck into anybody. It was only for propagandist purposes and in an attempt to confuse the people, or at least to create expectations of political change, that a big theatrical performance was staged with a display of military equipment, statements of support, etc., and with the protagonists of the action as a finale terming it a "revolution".

We consider it our responsibility to expose the reasons that motivated the armed forces to take this step and the concrete aims they sought, and, at the same time, to alert the people to the dangers they threaten, concealed by demagogic poses.

Fulfilling this revolutionary obligation two days after the event, we must say categorically that what we are faced with is a change of personnel in the Palacio de Gobierno and not a social revolution. We must, therefore, contradict the official apologists, the naive souls, and the utopians.

There is no revolution, whether with regard to the forces involved, which are the same as have monopolised political power since 1964; or with regard to the sprinkling of opportunistic intellectuals in the new cabinet who have no fixed party affiliation or ideology. Still less is a revolution to be found in the projected programme, the "Mandato Revolucionario", which does not propose a single fundamental change, which lacks coherence, and which is nothing more than a salad of ambiguities and contradictions.

The "Mandato" is inferior to any trade-union minimum programme of struggle these days. These features are quite in accordance with the spirit of the middle petty bourgeoisie from which its authors come.

The changing of the team in the Palacio de Gobierno was not an attempt to make the revolution but rather an attempt to block the revolution of a proletarian and popular nature—socialist in essence—which is on the march.

Such a move was an intelligent response under the circumstances. It was the product of the impotence of the capitalist system in face of the present unstable and threatening situation—an extremely serious attempt of the bourgeoisie and imperialism to contain a revolution arising from below by offering to carry out the revolution from above, but ... within the bounds of law, order, tranquillity, and with respect for the private property of the monopolies.

This conclusion is based on the following considerations:

1. *The guerrilla movement and the rise of the workers' movement have forced the generals to take defensive measures.*

Our judgement is confirmed by the contradictions in what the military commanders themselves say and by what can be read in the introduction to the "Mandato Revolucionario"

In fact, this introduction says that the attitude of the armed forces was provoked by the danger threatening the "institutions of the nation", due to the advance of the forces of the extreme left and the growing activities of the guerrillas, a situation which

the Siles government showed itself impotent to contend with. The Siles government was especially incompetent in containing terrorism, that is, armed struggle.

These "sincere" or "precipitate" statements—inadvertently, naturally—expose the new cabinet's insistent asseverations as to their revolutionary objectives. At the same time these statements show the clear aims of the officers, which are still the same as they were in November 1964, when a developing popular insurrection was also shaking the country and endangering the institutions of capitalist society.

Today, as yesterday, the generals have come out of their staff headquarters to confront—with the methods they find most appropriate—a new ascent and mobilisation of the people, of the worker, peasant, and student masses, an ascent whose most energetic and dynamic expression is the guerrilla movement.

# BOLIVIA: an analysis

Shortly before the ouster of Siles Salinas, the military chiefs were forced by the evidence to admit that guerrilla activities in Bolivia had not been destroyed by the blows dealt to the ELN [Ejército de Liberación Nacional—Army of National Liberation, the guerrilla force created by Che Guevara and Inti Peredo] or by the murder of Inti Peredo. This was equivalent to a confession that the military's plans had failed. The repression had been unable to smash the revolutionists.

The destruction of the unions and their radio stations, the gag laws, the concentration camps, and the military encirclement of the mines had produced very precarious results. The contradictions and exhaustion of the regime had not been overcome.

To the contrary, they were growing more acute, provoking the ex-chancellor Medeiros to say that it was nonsense to talk about development of the country because the per capita income was continuing to fall. The annual income per inhabitant fell from \$130 in 1950 to \$80 at the present time (according to a Parliamentary report).

This objective situation stirred up the mass struggle, which is now simmering more vigorously than before, drawing in broad sectors of intellectuals and of the Catholic church, whose priests have become leaders of discontented popular masses. And this struggle has attracted the well-off university and college students, who are rising up against the capitulation to imperialism and the anti-democratic, anti-national and anti-labour policy of the army.

In this context, the guerrillas were nothing more than the continuation of the revolutionary mass movement whose development was cut off and truncated by the massacres and repression of the military circles.





Ousted civilian president Siles Salinas

While in Che's time in 1967 the guerrilla movement had broad popular support, its reappearance in 1969 with Inti Peredo occurred in a much riper situation, when the students, priests, workers and radicalised sectors of the middle class no longer hesitated but accepted armed struggle as the only way.

This popular judgement, which accepts and endorses the road of guerrilla warfare, is what sustains and bolsters the guerrillas. Otherwise, it could not be explained how, after the defeat at Vado del Yeso, the death of Che, and the brutal blows of this July, fighters remain in the field and a pro-guerrilla spirit is sweeping the country.

This spirit is expressed in the homage of students, writers, priests, and unions to the figures of Che and Inti. The people have not been scared off, no terror gnaws at their vitals. The guerrillas seem like the early Christians, who were exterminated and devoured by the beasts in the Roman circuses but who raised up new fighters in their place, inspired by their faith and the certainty of victory.

The purely military repressive measures proved insufficient, and to continue along this road, under the conditions described, would have led to a revolutionary explosion and an extraordinary upsurge in the strength of the guerrillas. The military high command understood this. It had to let some of the air out of the balloon before it exploded; it had to isolate the people's guerrilla fighters.

According to Ovando's main adviser, the sociology professor Rolon Anaya, the violence had exhausted itself without provoking any changes. I would add that it ended by releasing potentially greater revolutionary forces and that it was only a question of time to organise them and propel them into the struggle.

It was for this reason that the military command decided to adopt an apparently leftist social and economic programme; it decided to liberalise its regime, to give a few concessions, to give the impression of a confrontation with the imperialist concerns. It pushed for an increase in the state share in the monopolies, and even, why not?, a little statisation. That is, the military wanted to appear to be the defender of the national and popular sovereignty and the national interests. The rope and the murderer's machine gun were henceforth to be used in the name of a revolution!

Siles Salinas was not ousted because he was an obstacle to carrying forward a revolutionary policy of national and social liberation but because he was considered incompetent to contain the guerrillas and the advance of the left and because it was urgently necessary to perfect a new tactic or method the better to deal with the tusses.

The anti-popular essence of the Ovando regime thus shows up very clearly. The rest, the pseudo-revolutionary language, the promises of trade-union and political democracy, new civilian faces in the cabinet are incidental, secondary questions which will be forgotten or altered when it suits the military command.

2. *The armed forces holding power have been converted into a political party.*

The armed forces took power in Bolivia in 1964. The traditional political parties had lost their historical validity. They had shown themselves incapable of comprehending the international and national situation and the new relationship of forces then developing. Worn-out and ossified, they became useless for defending the order established by imperialism and native capitalism against a popular, working-class revolution.

This political vacuum, as Ovando once called it, was filled by the army, which began to operate like a political party.

In fact, the entire military establishment assumed the distinctive characteristics of a political organisation. All the officers, from generals to sergeants, received special political training, besides the anti-guerrilla and urban counter-insurgency training they received from Yankee technicians. And this training was tied to advantages and privileges of all kinds, well-paid administrative posts, and a 300% salary increase.

The general staff of the armed forces was converted into a political committee or central committee of the army-party. There was an important qualitative change in the armed forces: they were no longer the old armed forces and the old army. This special phenomenon consisted of a *politicalisation of the officers corps and the institutionalisation of its political character*. This in turn engendered a *militarisation of political activity*.

The party-army, or armed political party, has monopolised political power uninterruptedly since November 1964. It has governed the country in various forms—a military junta (Barrientos-Ovando), a constitutional government (Barrientos-Siles), and now a civilian-military junta (Ovando).

These various forms have been purely a matter of appearance and have been dictated by the tactical needs of the military's domestic and international relations. Whatever the form, the same military dictatorship propped up by armed force was still behind it. Never has the capitalist state looked so much like a simple armed body than now, covered at best by a pseudo-democratic bikini.

Having absorbed all powers, the military commanders can boast that "We are the state!"

At no point did the Siles Salinas government break the continuity of the military dictatorship. In practice Siles did not govern. He was a fictitious president lacking the power to name even subordinate officials in the local administrations (e.g. Valenzuela in Cochabamba).

His unusual talent for playing a front man's role led him to tolerate such a situation. The ruling force was always the army-party, which, with its regional divisions, its air and naval forces, controlled the country and carried out its decisions behind Siles' back.

Depending on its needs, the army-party has created and dissolved civilian political groups or hitched old mini-parties to its chariot, trying to give the impression that it had a base of support. They could not fool anybody this way.

The new civilian faces now in the cabinet, like Rolon Anaya, Quiroga Santa Cruz, Bailey and Ortiz, differ in no way from Fernando Diez de Medina, Ricardo Anaya, Walter Guevara, and the like.

The fact is that, like the decadent Spanish monarchs, the army-party is surrounding itself with a class of "arbitristas", as certain old royal counsellors in the Middle Ages were called who substituted acromancy for social analysis.

### 3. *The history and social character of the army-party.*

By our works we shall be known, General Ovando said. That is gospel truth. To be sure, we already know them by their works and we know what the Bolivian armed forces are capable of.

The statements of the generals would be enough to reveal what is behind the reorganisation of the government. In jurisprudence "the confession of the accused is full proof". But in politics this criterion is insufficient.

What is decisive here in understanding the essence of a state, in measuring a revolutionary process and gauging the potential of its leaders, is determining its social or class nature. Such an analysis prevents errors of judgement in face of at times contradictory and confused passing situations.

The armed forces are a component of the state. In our country they represent the ruling classes, which are tightly bound to imperialism. In this period of world war between socialism and imperialism, the Bolivian armed forces are actually part of the international army of imperialism, whose head is in the Pentagon. This truth is so elementary that even the children know it.

After it was routed by the armed people in 1952, the Bolivian army was rebuilt by imperialism. Its top military commanders as well as its middle-ranking officers have gone through special courses in Panama, where the Pentagon has its general headquarters for Latin America.

In the Miraflores fortress, alongside the Bolivian general staff offices, the American military commission carries on its work. Yankee advisers train the special anti-guerrilla and urban counter-insurgency units. The armed forces of Bolivia have been built up, trained militarily, technically and politically, and armed by the Pentagon. This is why the people say that the Bolivian army is "Made in the USA".

Because of its education and training, and its overbearing attitude deriving from its privileges, the Bolivian military caste has been conservative and a defender of the "established order", an enemy

of all reforms, however minimal. Bolivian military history is a history of massacres of workers and peasants and of coups d'etat to block the advances of the masses.

Just in the period since 1964, we have to note the two massacres in the Cutavi-Siglo Veinte mine in 1965, the massacre in Milluni and Alta La Paz in the same year, the Saint John's Day massacre in the Siglo Veinte in 1967, the occupations of the trade union headquarters, the destruction of the labour-owned radio stations, as well as other such incidents.

All of these actions were carried out under the command of General Ovando, who exercised the supreme authority over the army, and the present team of military rulers.

If this is the history of the armed forces, which today are the ruling party-army, it would be strange that in the twinkling of an eye, without debates or serious internal crises, this entire institutionalised body changed its mind, cast off its past, and became progressive, revolutionary and anti-imperialist.

I do not deny the possibility of change in sectors of the army, primarily among its young officers who are not compromised by its oligarchic past and are influenced by the technical, scientific and military triumphs of the socialist camp. The class struggle does not spare any organisation, however monolithic, and the army will not be an exception.

But only revolution, revolutionary struggle, will disintegrate the oppressor army, freeing sectors that will go over to the people and join a new liberation army emerging from the ranks of the people.

In the tradition of Lenin, I do not believe that the army and its commanders will make an about-face as the result of simple persuasion by "arbitristas" of the stripe of Rolon Anaya or Quiroga Santa Cruz. Nor do I think that it will make such a shift as the result of any awakening of "its conscience".

The force that will divide this army, demoralise it, and win for the people any progressive sector that might exist within it will be revolutionary struggle. That is the historic lesson of all revolutions.

The populist declarations and innumerable promises that have already been made in the last few hours represent manoeuvres to confuse and deceive the masses, and above all, they represent attempts to limit radicalisation of the masses so as to stop their generous support to armed struggle and the guerrillas.

An instrument such as the army-party is not qualified to head a revolution leading to the national and social liberation of Bolivia. In the present period in world history of transition between two systems and modes of production, revolution means a direct struggle for socialism. The road of civilisation and progress for the peoples leads through the overthrow of the capitalist classes holding power and the defeat of imperialism which is their underpinning.

In their "Mandato Revolucionario", the Bolivian armed forces do not propose putting another class in power or altering the existing structures to bring them closer to socialism. What they propose is to preserve the system of exploitation and defend it from a better tactical position.

The policy of massacres and the hangman's rope failed. This has obliged the armed forces to take up some popular slogans and present themselves as "left nationalists".

Let us remember that the triumph of the Cuban revolution forced Yankee imperialism to pose as a friend of development in the Latin American nations with its Alliance for Progress. As a result of this policy, it had to let go its grip on a few more dollars but it did not thereby change its imperialist, exploitive, and anti-popular oppressive character.

In certain circumstances, in order to defend their interests more effectively, the oppressor classes find themselves forced to grant some concessions, which are more formal than substantive. But, retaining power in their hands precisely because of this flexibility, these oppressor classes quickly recoup these concessions and even increase their profits once the moment of difficulty is past.

#### 4. The "Mandato Revolucionario" is a farce.

The sole significance of the programme launched by the armed forces under the name "Mandato Revolucionario" was to offer a few concessions from above to save the present situation. Using the brains of its current civilian employees, the party-army made an effort at political theory. However, this endeavour has produced only vulgar, shopworn theorising. The traditional and social character of the armed forces are reflected in this document despite its trashy populist phrasemongering.

In fact, the document begins by proposing a "system that would be neither exclusively capitalist nor exclusively socialist, in which various kinds of ownership would persist". It advocates a "social alliance", that is, a front of classes and, finally, it presents an assortment of highly contradictory slogans, all of which have been mouthed many times over the last twenty years.

We find an eagerness to show opposition to foreign domination followed immediately by the declaration of broad guarantees to foreign investment, which was conceded a role in social development.

The document stresses national sovereignty, but nothing is said about the network of Yankee missions and commissions that undermine this sovereignty and the right of the peoples to self-determination. The air-naval base of El Alto, known as "Little Guantanamo", is forgotten.

Finally, the "Mandato Revolucionario" offers nothing not trotted out before by Barrientos or proposed with greater verve by other bourgeois movements, with the already known results of defeat for the people and a greater colonialisation of the country.

In these past two decades, the Bolivian people have seen how the class struggle in its inexorable development has settled accounts with similar programmes, cruelly exposing the reformist false prophets. Under the pressure and manoeuvres of the monopolistic interests, soon nothing was left to these reformists but their anti-socialism. They rapidly forgot their fantasies about making capitalism and imperialism kind and benevolent.

Ovando's first two decrees, which were issued together with the "Mandato Revolucionario", and later complemented by broad declarations, illustrated the real range and potential of the military-civilian government.

The first decree repealed the Petroleum Code of 1955. But the principle adopted in regard to the one-sided and traitorous concessions was to negotiate an increase in royalties. It is possible that if no agreement is reached, the military rulers will find themselves forced to a nationalisation, paying full compensation for all of Gulf Oil's investments as well as damages—that is, what they propose is a kind of commercial transaction.



General Ovando

But this step, leaving intact the structure of imperialism, and still worse, opening the door to new foreign investment which they promise to respect, will be emasculated and truncated. When it was raised to power by the masses in 1952, the MNR nationalised the mines. But shortly afterwards it opened the oil fields for imperialist penetration. Who is to say whether or not this time, in return for the petroleum, they will not give radio-active materials or the iron of Mutun?

The other decree, which concerns the freedom of the trade unions, also has a deceptive character. In the new upsurge now occurring, the trade unions had begun in practice to ignore the corporative regulations decreed by Barrientos. The repeal of this law was aimed at arousing expectations among the workers.

But in time, measures will appear, limiting trade union operations. In the meantime, a new regulation banning politics in the unions and partisan activity in the labour movement is already being mentioned. Moreover, the trade union headquarters, independent radio stations, and union funds remain in government trusteeship.

A taste is enough to tell, according to popular wisdom. And these two decrees are the taste that enables us already to predict the Ovando government's future course. As for democratic and political freedoms, the jails will stay filled and any revolutionist who ventures to take the official promises seriously will end up behind bars as "a guerrilla contact" or "subversive".

The state security law may be repealed; but the courts, with their judges and prosecutors converted to police agents, will still deprive citizens of their liberties on the basis of the antiquated penal code. The tactical encirclement of the mines will be changed into a strategic encirclement, with the withdrawal of troops a few kilometres from where they are now.

There will be no reopening of the wage question and at most the miners will be given minor wage increases amounting to far less than the wage cuts imposed on them in May 1965. The private concerns will not be expelled from the low-grade ore deposits and

margins of the nationalised mines, etc. And if any companies leave, others will come in under the protection of the respect and guarantees for private foreign investment embodied in the "Mandato Revolucionario"

Thus, the programme of the armed forces is a farce and an attempt to mislead the masses and to sow illusions among the more backward sectors of the middle class. It is motivated by the anxiety of the military to isolate the guerrillas.

The guerrillas are fighting for good things, the military concede; they are not rebels without a cause. But they sow violence and death, and besides, they follow foreign commands. We will struggle for as good or better programme but without deaths and with liberty and social justice. Abandon the guerrillas and support the "Mandato Revolucionario" of the armed forces. This is the tactical shift represented by the September 26 manoeuvre. This is the thinking behind it.

#### 5. Alert the Bolivian people!

The revolutionary Marxists, the Marxists-Leninists, have the historic mission of making the revolution in order to build socialism. We do not fall into cunningly-laid snares like the present one nor do we encourage anyone's reformist illusions.

We are actors in the revolution and not simply spectators who criticise. Still less are we petitioners appealing for someone else to make a revolution that is ours by right and duty. Therefore, we draw a line of fire between ourselves and careerist opportunism and we do not abdicate our role of leading the people towards the socialist victory.

Furthermore, it is necessary to make very clear that socialism is not built with patches and crumbs begged from the imperialist oppressor. We tell any naive elements, who, dazzled by the official verbiage, might think they see an alternative road to liberation in Ovando's path, that the system of imperialist oppression, the power of the bourgeoisie, will never be destroyed by small conquests.

In order to break this power, a real revolution is needed, a violent and brutal upheaval. Armed violence is indispensable to destroy the bases or pillars on which the capitalist system rests.

If capitalist power is not broken and if the bourgeoisie is maintained, capitalism will always find ways and means to absorb reforms or small gains, integrating them into its workings in order later to pervert them, emasculate them, and liquidate them. Bolivian history is rich in examples that teach this lesson.

I repeat. What the present government is trying to do by ostentatiously mouthing the word "revolution" is to defuse the economic, social and political contradictions of the system in order to halt the revolutionary action of the masses.

The dismissal of parliament and the dissolution of political parties has left only one institution in place, the army-party-state, which holds an absolute monopoly of power. This development has pushed the militarisation of political activity to its ultimate extremes. In these conditions, class struggle and mass mobilisations can only take the road of armed struggle.

Against the army-party-government, which towers omnipotent, it is the duty of the revolutionists to erect a people's army, the concrete expression of the popular forces. We must not deceive ourselves. In order to overthrow the present regime and take power, we must forge an adequate instrument, which is the Revolutionary Army of the People.

Mobilisations of the workers, strikes, democratic action by the people, require such an instrument, which will be built in armed struggle, which is already being built in the guerrilla movement today. The first task of revolutionists is to rally around this developing people's army, to sustain it and defend it.

Stop this deception! Behind the pseudo-left verbiage and the civilian-military cabinet is the same "Made in the USA" army that massacred the workers and took power in 1964.  
29 September 1969

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# The crisis of Bourgeois Ideologists

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*The Universities* by V. H. H. Green. Penguin, 8/-.

*American Power and the New Mandarins* by Noam Chomsky. Penguin, 8/-.

These two books both deal with education and the academic community. However, they are written from such different viewpoints that they could easily be mistaken as dealing with totally separate subjects. Dr. Green writes from the insulated fastness of the Senior Common Room, Lincoln College, Oxford. His work purports to give a history of the universities, and the present role of higher education in British society. The history comprises a recital of most of the facts related to the universities. The dates of foundations, lists of major scholars, fees of various colleges at various times, are all there, heavily sprinkled with the traditional self-indulgent stories of Oxbridge eccentrics. But it is scarcely history.

An example that could be taken—this among many of such points that could be raised—is his history of science teaching in universities. We are told baldly that Durham established a department of engineering in 1838, while Oxford only managed to catch up in 1907. The whole struggle of the bourgeois to take over and control the universities which is implicit in those two dates, is ignored. If the history is inadequate, the analysis of contemporary universities is fatuous. The lack of classics, law and theology departments at the new universities is bemoaned. As for the students: "The higher proportion of girls to men at these universities ... possibly diminishes sexual frustration, but almost certainly limits intellectual discussion." Student violence, coupled with the names of Mods and Rockers, is touched on. Reference is made to the militants and the revolutionary movement: "It is basically totalitarian, anti-democratic and illiberal, even in its outward manifestation,

neo-fascist." The answer to the present problems of the universities is to repress the conservative function of education, and to go back to the rigour of the old academic disciplines that is being eroded by social sciences. His final message is: "... the British universities enjoy at present a degree of academic freedom which most of their contemporaries both lack and envy ... A British university is still, in Newman's words, 'an Alma Mater, knowing her children one by one, not a foundry, or a mint, or a treadmill' It is surely desirable that it shall remain so."

Chomsky writes with urgency and commitment about the academic community. His book reveals just how traumatic the Vietnam war has been. He begins by quoting Randolph Bourne, who warned that: "the old philosophy, the old radicalism ... has found a perfectly definite level, and there is no reason to think that it will not remain there. Its flowering appears in the technical organisation of the war, by an earnest group of young liberals, who direct their course by an opportunist programme of state socialism at home, and a league of benevolently imperialistic nations abroad."

And again: "The war has revealed a younger intelligentsia, trained up in the pragmatic dispensation, immensely ready for the executive ordering of events, pitifully unprepared for the intellectual interpretation or the idealistic focussing of ends ... What is significant is that it is the technical side of the war that appeals to them, not the interpretive or political side. The formulation of values and ideas, the production of articulate and suggestive thinking, had not, in their education, kept pace to any extent whatever with their technical aptitude."

The frisson comes when Chomsky points out that this was not written about the "rugged pragmatists" or "new mandarins" of contemporary America, but of the America of 1917.

The burden of Chomsky's essays is the defection of the liberal intelligentsia to the camp of technicism and the Vietnam war. The method of the new mandarins is simple: a ritualistic drumming-out of normative, unscientific values, followed by their replace-

ment with cool, liberal objectivity. The final solution of Hitler can be discussed rationally: "Is it technically feasible to dispose of millions of bodies? What is the evidence that the Slavs are inferior beings?"

The horrifying fact is that it is precisely this methodological fetishism that dominates orthodox discussions of the Vietnam war. Chomsky quotes Joseph Harsch on bombing tactics: "A bomb dropped into a leafy jungle produces no visible result. Even if it hits a truck carrying ammunition the pilot seldom has the satisfaction of knowing what he achieved. A hit on a big hydro-electric dam is another matter. There is a huge explosion, visible from anywhere above. The dam can be seen to fall. The waters can be seen to pour through the breach and drown out huge areas of farmland, and villages, in its path. The pilot who takes out a hydro-electric dam gets back home with a feeling of accomplishment."

The apotheosis of such seum is found in Hermann Kahn, much admired for his courage by the other pragmatic intellectuals. Here the "sophisticated" and "expert" aping of the scientific method is carried to its grotesque limits. Chomsky comments on *On Thermo-Nuclear War*: "... this is surely one of the empiricist works of our time ... Kahn proposes no theories, no explanations, no empirical assumptions that can be tested against their consequences as do the sciences he is attempting to mimic. He simply suggests a terminology and provides a facade of rationality."

If Chomsky bitingly analyses the American academics, his solutions are less compelling. In his essay "The Responsibility of Intellectuals" he urges the intellectuals to resist authority when it conflicts with their personal moral code. In "Some Thoughts on Intellectuals and the Schools", he proposes that the schools should teach their students to defend themselves from the government propaganda machine. Inconsistencies in such proposals are not too difficult to pick out. But the point is that Chomsky has started the voyage to discover how to avoid future Vietnams. Dr. Green merely struts around the docks, full of the old answers, none of the new problems, and occasionally shouting abuse at the departing explorers.

Julian Atkinson

Continued from page 4

in building mass opposition to the war. The January 25th demonstration presents the SLL, the KLYS, the WORKERS PRESS and all those who have previously participated in the anti-Vietnam war movement with this opportunity.

The working committee for the January 25th action is hoping for participation of a variety of groups and organisations. Colleges and universities will be posterred and leafleted for the demonstration. Every Saturday up to the demonstration the working committee will meet to iron out the plans and take care of the organisational work. Interested individuals and sponsoring organisations are invited to attend. The meetings will take place at 2 pm at the VSC office.

Further information, posters and leaflets can be obtained through VSC, Room 1, 13 Whites Row, London E.1. Telephone 247 9845.

## THE INCONSISTENCIES OF "STATE CAPITALISM"

by ERNEST MANDEL

46, p.p. from P.V.G. Publications,  
8, Toynbee St., London, E.1.

# A Future for British Miners?

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Following the recent "unconstitutional" strike in the coal industry, during which more than 100,000 men were involved, it is instructive to reflect on the history of the NUM. Since its formation, not a day has been lost in official strike action. Taken by itself, this may not be particularly meaningful, until it is realised that the recent eruption of militancy was the most significant since 1926, and it was not supported by the national leadership. Added to which, the strike was in support of NUM policy, and in the recent election for the General Secretary the victorious candidate advocated the use of strikes. It is in this situation that trade union militants, particularly inside the NUM, should begin to question the nature and function of the NUM. The authors of a recently produced pamphlet, *A Future For British Miners?*, attempt the task of questioning the role of the NUM leadership. They make a positive call for militant grass root organisation, and are using the pamphlet as a rallying point for this purpose. Because they produce an inaccurate analysis, their conclusions are nothing more than a restatement of "left reformist" views.

The fundamental fault in their reasoning is their inability to characterise the social nature of the NCB. Because they fail in this task they are incapable of developing a consistent attitude towards the NUM. What the NUM, and the authors of this pamphlet as well, should realise, is that the coal industry has a social role predetermined by its social and economic environment. This is a capitalist society and the function of the coal industry is to provide a cheap source of fuel for capitalism at large.

The NUM itself was formed in response to the structure of the NCB. Many of the new officials of the NCB had formerly been officials of the Miners'. Consequently the strong social ties, compounded by political allegiance to the Labour Government, were carried into the industrial relations field. The relations between labour and capital were successfully mystified. In these circumstances it is clearly no accident that the social role of the NUM has been one of diffusion of information and a transmission system of control.

To indicate the social role of the union, we only need to see the direction of their industrial activity. Offering solutions and attitudes on problems confronting the NCB, Lawrence Daly in his election pamphlet said, "By adopting more militant attitudes to *secure a change in fuel policy* we could save Britain from over-dependence on foreign fuel supplies" (my emphasis). What I am arguing is, not that such problems should be totally ignored, but that they should be of lower priority, and that representation of the men comes first. The authors of the pamphlet commit the same mistake, and consequently are incapable of offering any radical alternative to the existing leadership.

Their critique of the national leadership is summarised in a recognition of "the incompetence and lack of militancy of the National Executive". It clearly is not correct that the NEC is incompetent; within the structure in which they are working they are clearly very competent—if they were incompetent, the recent strike would have received official support. On the question of militancy, the above quote from L. Daly to some extent invalidates their second claim. However, surely the point is that there should be militancy for the correct objectives. Militancy for its own sake is often futile; militancy for the wrong objectives may be counter-productive.

In conclusion, bearing in mind my criticisms, I would support their call for the organisation of local committees. The development of a radical alternative to the bureaucratised NUM is of fundamental importance, particularly at the present time. It is of equal importance that the organisation should develop and discuss freely the ideas that will motivate its action. *A Future For British Miners?* is an initiative which should be welcomed. It does not, however, contain an analysis which is acceptable as a revolutionary alternative.

M. J. Ball (member of the NUM).

# Bernadette Devlin

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That the title of Bernadette Devlin's book\* is a wry comment on the system which produces such books, seems to have escaped the cover designer. Her name blares forth in loud red letters over a blurb which tells us: "The fighting Irish girl M.P. tells her personal story—and what is really happening inside Ulster ..."

This contradiction between the attempt of the communications industry to turn Bernadette, and the struggle in Northern Ireland, into a commodity, and the counter-attempt to filter through the media some facts about oppression in the province, runs through the whole book.

The inane way in which the press attempts to wear down a person who is in the news, and empty their activity of any real content so that they conform to some saleable "image" is vividly exposed;

as is their lack of genuine interest in the struggles in the six counties or in any of the ideas which Bernadette developed through the fight in the civil rights movement. For this exposure the book is valuable, as also for the sidelight shed on life in Ulster by its description of a girlhood in Cookstown, County Tyrone. However, on the level of information and interpretation there is more valuable material available than this hastily-written book.

But, like it or not, Bernadette Devlin is a phenomenon, and her influence has to be assessed. There are difficulties in the way of such an assessment; the relentless publicity surrounding her makes it only too easy either to accept her uncritically, or equally uncritically to reject her on the assumption that she has been bought over. A much more complex reality emerges from this book. The fact is that Bernadette Devlin's political development did not begin until just over one year ago, after the RUC riot on October 5th in Derry, the Queen's University demonstration, and the subsequent birth of People's Democracy. Like most of the PD militants, she moved rapidly to the left, from an

\**The Price of My Soul*, Bernadette Devlin, Pan Books, London, 6s.



Bernadette Devlin as she is escorted away after trial.

unthinking, hereditary Republicanism. The result is that her political ideas consist of emotional responses to the oppression she sees around her, mixed with some undigested chunks of Marxism, which she has taken from Mike Farrell and Eamonn McCann, for whom she expresses admiration.

This political inexperience shows clearly in a number of statements in the book. Referring to the difficulties encountered by PD due to the increasing influence of middle-class elements within the Civil Rights movement, who were purely interested in advancing the interests of the Catholics and not from a class viewpoint, she says:

"Where the PD made its mistake was in not seeing soon enough that identification with such policies was too high a price to pay for the unity of the civil rights movement. Just at the point when

we were breaking through as a socialist force, we back-pedalled on socialism to keep the movement together, and by losing our identity within what was regarded as a Catholic movement, we only made more difficult for ourselves the almost insuperable problem of enlisting the support of the Protestant working class."

This problem must be solved by Irish revolutionaries, but it is not simply a matter of not "back-pedalling" on socialism. Orangism is a tough nut to crack; it will never be cracked without a transitional programme for the Irish workers which tackles the religious divisions. The vacillations between absorption by the Catholic middle class and revolutionary socialism described here is a clear symptom of the lack of such a programme. There is also confusion in her references to communism—"The Cardinal (Conway) knew perfectly well the difference between communists and socialists, and the Marxist theory propagated in Northern Ireland had been strongly anti-communist." There is a hint here, not only of misunderstanding about Marxism, Stalinism and Communism, but also of some lingering Catholic anti-communism. The balance of evidence in the book, however, suggests a sincere attempt to grapple with the problems of the Irish workers, and to resist the pressures of the parliamentary system.

Whatever the verdict of history on Bernadette Devlin as an individual, history does give us some guide as to what she represents: essentially the type of populist politics which Ireland and America have shared. Lacking clear theory, based on an emotional appeal against oppression, and carried forward by spontaneous moods, they have usually been smashed, or degenerated into Anarchism or Liberalism.

James Connolly achieved that kind of populist appeal, but combined it with an incomparable theoretical grasp of the dialectics of the Irish revolution. That combination is needed today, but it cannot be achieved by an individual, only by a movement based on Marxism-Leninism. In building this movement and equipping it with an adequate theory British Marxists can play a role. It is to be hoped that Bernadette Devlin can also contribute.

Bob Purdie

## REPRESSION OF IRAN STUDENTS

WORLD CONFEDERATION OF IRANIAN STUDENTS (NATIONAL UNION)  
 Gerharty, 7 November 1969

The secret police of Iran, "Savak", commit new murders against the Iranian people every day. During the past year, the police terror has been intensified by the mass murder of Kurdish patriots in the western part of Iran, the arrest of several political groups and the arrangement of secret military trials. Savak has now extended its campaign of terror beyond the borders of Iran, intimidating members of Iranian student organisations around the world. The following is a list of the ways in which this new tactic is employed:

1. The arrest and questioning of students who return home from abroad during the summer vacation, and threatening them in various ways to stop them from engaging in political activities.
2. Oppression of the families of students who are active in the Iranian student movement outside Iran.
3. Imprisonment and trial of some students, who have been active in anti-government activities, upon their arrival in Iran.
4. Collaboration by the police of western countries with Savak to oppress Iranian students who are politically active in the country in which they reside.

The following are examples of this:

- a) An order by the Austrian police to close down the Iranian Students Association in Vienna.
- b) An order for the deportation of Bahman Niroumaei, a secretary of the Confederation, which was reversed.
- c) An order by the Austrian police for the deportation of Esmail Salem, an active member of the Viennese Students Union.
- d) Decision of Austrian police to deport three Iranian students because of their participation in a march against the war in Vietnam.
- e) Prosecution of several Iranian students who demonstrated against the Shah's visit to Germany in 1967.
- f) Prosecution of three Iranian students who participated in the protest against the Shah's visit to the U.S. in October 1969.
- g) Oppression of the members of the Iranian Students Association in the U.S. by immigration authorities.
- h) Renewal of student visas for three months, instead of the usual six, in Italy.

All these actions taken by the police and authorities in other countries have been within the framework of collaboration with the Iranian secret police, Savak. They are aimed at the further oppression of the Iranian people who are fighting against imperialism and feudalism in Iran. The Confederation of Iranian Students asks all progressive forces to join in the campaign to fight the reactionary attacks of the Iranian Government against its movement.

# TROTSKYIST INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE

At the end of October a meeting was held in Turin of European Fourth International activists engaged in the workers' struggles now developing in most of the countries in Western Europe.

Delegations from the following countries attended the meeting: France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and Belgium. The Italian delegation was composed of militants from a dozen cities. Many workers were present, either as members of the delegations or as invited guests.

The first part of the conference—which lasted two days—was devoted to six reports on the political situation and tendencies in the workers' struggle in the various countries at the present stage. The general picture presented was one of profound political and social crisis nearly everywhere on the continent.

In particular, the reporter on France, a member of the Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste [French section of the Fourth International], was strongly of the opinion that in his country tension has not decreased and that the combativity of the working class has in no way diminished.

The recent struggles in France have clearly demonstrated this. Although kept under control by the unions, they are the result of considerable pressure from below, and have often begun behind the backs of the union bureaucrats.

As for Italy, there exists a veritable prerevolutionary situation, as the reporter, Moscato, a member of the Political Bureau of the Italian section, brought out.

A symptomatic fact is that even in a country like Denmark, wildcat strikes have developed, according to the Danish reporter.

The German reporter, for his part, stressed the significance of the wildcat strikes in certain regions in recent months and the problem of the relations between the worker and student movements.

The reporter on Belgium spoke of the quiescence of the Belgian working class for several years. But at the same time he stressed some symptoms of a revival.

While noting that his country has still not emerged from a half century of social stability (the last strike was in 1918), the Swiss reporter analysed the economic contradictions in Switzerland in the present stage.

The second part of the conference was marked by reports on particular experiences. A member of the Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste spoke about the situation in the Renault plants, especially in Cleon and Le Mans, and described his organi-



sation's work there. Another French delegate reported on the experience at Rhodoceta.

A member of the Turin Trotskyist group, a young worker in the FIAT plant, gave a graphic sketch of the struggles in the big automobile factory during recent months. He explained the orientation adopted in the activities of the revolutionary Marxists who support the grouping *Iniziativa Operaia* [Workers' Initiative]. Other Italian comrades reported on the situation at Pirelli in Milan and in other industrial centres on the peninsula.

For Belgium there was one report on the orientation of the Walloon part of the country and another on the first experiences of this type in the activity of the revolutionary students in Flanders.

The third part of the conference consisted of an examination of the orientations followed by the various European sections, especially in France and Italy. In France the stress at this stage is on working through the Trotskyist organisation's factory nuclei and on the construction of *Rotte* [Ligue Communiste's weekly paper] fractions in the unions, essentially at the plant level.

In Italy, while staying in the unions and fighting the ultra-left conceptions equating the unions and the bosses, the Trotskyists operate independently of the unions and participate in the so-called movement of rank-and-file committees, which have recently begun to establish their first link-ups on a national scale (these were established by workers in several important plants in certain important working-class centres, including Turin, Milan, Rome, Venice, Bari-Taranto, etc.).

Worker members of the Fourth International are members of the coordinating committee. On this basis, there is collaboration between the Trotskyist current and some currents in *Potere Operaio* [Workers' Power]. Although these currents can in general be characterised as spontaneist, they understand the necessity of a serious organisation of the rank-and-file committees.

The conclusion that the delegates drew from this discussion was that existing tactical differences do not involve divergences in general conceptions but derive fundamentally from different objective situations and different relationships of forces at the organisational level.

The conference concluded with a summary by Comrade Livio Maitan, a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, which will be published shortly in an abridged form. This speech ended with an appeal for stepping up the campaign of solidarity and aid for the Bolivian Trotskyists, both for those imprisoned and those who are continuing their struggle in very difficult conditions.