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## International VIEWPOINT

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**S**ATURDAY, June 3:  
Four people dead, killed by trucks. Unarmed soldiers on foot attack in the morning and at 2pm. They are surrounded by a crowd flowing towards the Great Hall of the People. The first violent attack, between the Assembly and the seat of the government, leaves 40 dead. Overturned vans and buses lie in the square. The crowd surrounds the Great Hall of the People.

In the afternoon and evening, students and a large crowd assemble in the square; very calm, inquisitive, but there is a strong feeling of a mobilized population, whole families, children asleep on the backs of bicycles, old people sitting at the side of the road, lemonade sellers. "Come back this evening, there will be a lot of people!" A young person walks about displaying a crash helmet. Embarrassed young soldiers are abused by the crowd.

**Saturday/Sunday night:**

The troops assembled around Beijing converge on Tiananmen Square, mainly from the West.

At all the city's main road junctions, the population has made barricades with trucks and buses to prevent the advance of the troops. Parachutists step in to push the students out of the square.

At the same time, the army — tanks and infantry — occupy the entire square, massacring the population.

The next day hospital staff estimate at least 1,500 dead and 10,000 wounded. The first to arrive are soldiers with minor bullet wounds; then there are civilians, seriously wounded or almost dead, some crushed by tanks, others shot by elite sharpshooters between the eyes or in the heart.

## Eyewitness in Beijing

**OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT in Beijing has been following the tragic events as they have unfolded. His reports, published below, show that despite the bureaucratic repression and terror, the people of China have not abandoned their aspirations for liberty and real democracy.**

**LAURENT CARASSO**

**Sunday, June 4:**

All day long people gather in Dongchang'an Avenue, which leads to the square. A continuous swirl of bicycles and hundreds of people maintain contact with the barricades facing the army. Elite army sharpshooters emerge from the shadows and fire on the crowd.

Several dead and wounded are taken to hospital on tricycles...but immediately afterwards people return to challenge the soldiers, and the bicycles resume their circuit around Dongchang'an Avenue. The serenity on their faces is incredible. No shouting or slogans, no armed demonstrators. Only a few shouts of "Li Peng, fascist!" Near the army barricade, people say to me in English: "They have gone mad, there are at least a thousand dead in the square!"

The situation at the hospital, where mattresses have been put on the floor for the wounded, is dramatic, nightmarish. The nurses weep as they tend the wounded. The unassuming director of the intensive care unit, a party member, expresses his disgust: "99% of the party is opposed to

what is happening. They are mad. I no longer believe in anything."

No statement, no official declaration until 7pm. For several days a rumour circulates that Deng is dead or dying (he has not been seen since Gorbachev's visit).

At the road junctions around Beijing, many barricades remain in place; several military vehicles have been abandoned and left to burn.

In every district, people assemble at street corners, discussing the situation and listening to accounts. Women cry. During the whole day yesterday the corpse of a 9-year-old girl killed by the army has been displayed. A soldier has been lynched at a street corner.

On the Sunday evening, in the university district, trucks have been stopped and some 20 soldiers with their arms and baggage taken into one of the faculties.

At midday a government statement instructs the population to release their grip on the city, stop assembling and free hostages. It seems that only Tiananmen Square was occupied by troops on Sunday. Except for the west and south of the city, there are no other places where troops have concentrated.

According to witnesses, 400 workers have been arrested as well as the leadership of the independent trade union at the steel centre at Shougang, which has 300,000 workers.

These workers, several groups of whom were with the students on Saturday night, expressed their solidarity with the students on the day after Gorbachev's arrival, despite a personal appeal from Li Peng and Zhao Ziyang calling on them to support the government. Despite this the communiqué, read out in an official tone on the television, talks only about "a tiny, tiny group of counter-revolutionaries



which has been dealt with."

### Sunday/Monday night:

The army has stepped up its pressure, taking up positions at several key road junctions controlling access to the city centre (a sort of ring road). Soldiers with troop transport vehicles (TTVs) have broken out of Tiananmen Square to clear Dongchang'an Avenue, as well as to free a military column trapped since the day before near the Friendship store. Judging from the barricades and the bullet holes the following day, the clearing-out was violent. Several bursts of machine-gun fire were heard.

From Sunday to Monday machine guns have continued to be used in several districts and 50 tanks have reinforced the square, which is the only central place where the army is concentrated. The population is massively mobilized and the army seems isolated. The city is covered in wall-posters and graffiti chalked on the ground or on walls.

Not a single top level leader has appeared on the television since Friday evening. The only thing there has been is a statement by the mayor of Beijing, Chen Xitong, who appeared in the form of a still photograph on the television.

### Monday, June 5:

Sporadic shooting and movements of tanks and TTVs continue. 1pm: an incredible sight. As a column of tanks advances along Dongchang'an Avenue, now empty of demonstrators, a lone man stands in front of a tank, preventing it from either continuing or bypassing him. He clambers on to the turret to talk to the driver,

bringing the column to a standstill for several minutes, before being forcibly pulled back onto the pavement, apparently by demonstrators.

Scattered bursts of firing continue, and two helicopters keep watch on the roads leading to the centre. Foreign students from Eastern bloc countries as well as from some Western countries have been assembled in their embassies.

It is clear on Monday that, despite clearing Tiananmen Square, martial law is not really in force in Beijing and the population does not feel crushed.

A few days after Gorbachev's arrival on May 15, various categories went on strike (bank workers, workers in ministries, teachers and so on), demonstrating in orderly columns with their banners. Afterwards, there was a mass outpouring, which gave some credence to a rumour that, at the time of Gorbachev's visit and before the declaration of martial law, Zhao Ziyang was giving covert support to the insurrection.

On Monday, as I rode around on a bicycle with the Chinese many people stopped me, some saying in English "help the Chinese!" It was the same in the little restaurants nearby, where everybody wanted to discuss the situation.

The embarrassment of the police towards foreigners was noticeable. When they came to confiscate the films in the room where I was staying in the Beijing Hotel with the team from TF1 [French TV channel], they did not dare to arrest or expel the journalists, confiscate material or really search the room, although taking photographs is an infringement of the martial law regulations.

On the other hand, there is still no news of the student leadership, which is some-

where in Haidan (the university district in north-west Beijing).

### Monday evening:

Towards the north of Beijing, on Andingmennei Daije, there are very few bicycles — in striking contrast to the scene on the evening of my arrival. Lowered curtains, doors half open, a few small groups discussing quietly.

In the restaurant where I am eating, a man sitting opposite me who knows a few words of English expresses his dismay — although I cannot talk to him in *putonghua* (mandarin Chinese)!

I want to change hotels (so as to pay 46 rather than 100 yuan per night) but the receptionist regretfully informs me that the cashier has not come to work, since she lives in the north of Beijing... I put my bag on the luggage rack of my bicycle and go out again to cross Beijing in a southerly direction. The junction of Dongchang'an Avenue is deserted and silent. On Chongmenmai Daije, there are more people on bicycles, people riding alongside describe the massacres and express their disapproval in gestures.

Riding past Tiantan Square (the Temple of Heaven), I see a burned out TTV, surrounded by rocks. In front of the railings of Tiantan, there is a crowd looking into the park, where military units have taken up position.

Further away, on Yongdingmen Bridge, there are shells of buses. Towards the railway and bus stations there are transport bicycles, the same that played the role of messengers and ambulances, carrying the wounded on their platforms, in the preceding days.

### Tuesday, June 6:

The roads and avenues are calm. The army keeps out of sight. Almost all the big clothing and grocery shops in the main streets, on the other hand, have lowered their curtains and the staff stand in front of the doors.

As on the day before, work remains at a standstill. The cranes on Beijing's many building sights stand idle, there is no underground or bus or open offices. Since Sunday, the students have been calling for a general strike, but it is clear that the standstill in Beijing is the result of a number of factors — a protest against the violence, mourning, shock and so on. On the burnt out buses that clutter up every crossroads, in the middle of the rubble, bunches of flowers in white paper have been hung in homage to the victims of the clashes.

I pass through the market streets near to Qianmun, where there is a certain amount of life around the food shops. Sometimes there are queues, but no interruption in the supply of food or any visible fear that there might be one. People are calm. Dongchang'an, under the guns of the more than 50 tanks which are occupying Tiananmen Square, is also quiet. The constant circulation of bicycles and crowds

### Declaration of the Beijing Independent Workers' Association

THE Permanent Secretariat of the Beijing Independent Workers' Association is calling an urgent meeting for this afternoon. In the present situation, the mission that we are going to carry out demands an especially urgent meeting. In the present situation, the members of the secretariat have perfected the leadership of the teams. They have created cells, a General Secretariat, a Propaganda Committee, a Supply Committee, and a Contact Committee.

In the first place, the Association is a spontaneous organization of workers in the capital, responding to the present situation. Its aim, along the lines of democracy and legality, is to correctly lead this patriotic and democratic movement. It welcomes every worker in the capital and each union in the *danwei* [production units] of the factories and mines into active membership in our union organization.

Secondly, as a result of what has happened, the general assembly has decided specifically that:

1. The task of the moment is for the teams of workers' inspectors to act in coordination with the autonomous associations of the students' union, in order to protect and defend the lives of the student comrades, and the stability of the social order in Beijing city.

2. While maintaining political and social peace, they will guarantee the despatch and transport of necessary products for the civil life of Beijing city, including vegetables and grain as well as everyday manufactured goods. ★

Special statement published by the Plenary Assembly of the Standing Committee of the Beijing Independent Workers' Association, May 21, 1989. [From October Review.]



tary truck by a small group of demonstrators, and the "chaos" reigning in Beijing, with its rock-strewn streets and gutted buses.

As a follow-up, the government spokesperson makes a long statement on what was for him, without doubt, the new "counter-revolutionary Tiananmen incident." [The previous one being the riot of April 5, 1979, after the memorial procession for Zhou Enlai which turned into a criticism of the Maoists.]

The casualty figures proffered by the government border on the obscene: a total of 400 dead (both soldiers and civilians) including 23 students, 5,000 soldiers wounded, 2,000 civilian wounded and 50 soldiers reported missing. The rumour about the death of Deng Xiaoping is firmly denied on the television.

Li Peng's name is no longer mentioned. It is Qiao Shi, member of the Standing Committee and in charge of security (controlling therefore the feared Gong'anju, the public order police force), who is congratulated by the Supreme Court. He is a "conservative", elected to the standing committee after the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) congress in 1987, along with Li Peng (responsible for the Disciplinary Commission). He has supposedly established a position between the main party factions and been promoted after the removal of Zhao Ziyang. This, at least, is the rumour circulating in Beijing on Wednesday. The government calls on the people of Beijing to help the army put a stop to corruption and chaos and drive out the members of the "tiny counter-revolutionary group".

These statements and reports are on the television on Tuesday evening and throughout the night, while cannon-fire can still be heard in the distance.

### Wednesday, June 7:

The shooting has stopped, but the movement of troops in Beijing has been stepped up. Hundreds of trucks head east from Tiananmen, followed by long columns of infantry. The trucks fill up the streets. Going back up to Yongdingmen, along with hundreds of other cyclists I am stopped by a long column of soldiers, firing occasional shots. Leaving them behind, and going towards Tiananmen, I see how the two lines of bicycles in front of me slip into nearby side-streets at the approach of a truck. The many deaths caused by trucks in recent days have awakened a caution at odds with the care-free attitude of a few days ago.

At least as prudent as they, I too take refuge in a side-street. Oddly, everybody is laughing, imitating machine guns in gestures. The danger passed, we all return to the main road. At once I am surrounded by 20 or so passers-by who point to the departing truck and make gestures to express their wish that what is happening should be filmed and told to the outside

around the soldiers, characteristic of the preceding days, is no longer to be seen. Going in the other direction, towards the east of the capital, Guanganmennei is still an obstacle course, with demolished barricades, rubble, burnt out buses. There is only one narrow way through for the silent procession of bicycles.

Further east, at Guanguomen, the bridge over the avenue that goes around the centre of Beijing is completely occupied by tanks and infantry, their kalashnikovs at the ready. The people who are impassively circulating around say nothing. Fear and resentment are the reason.

Meanwhile, the embassies are sounding the alarm for their citizens resident in Beijing. The foreign students at Beida, the University of Beijing, are obliged to leave their rooms and return to their respective countries. Strangely, it is the East Europeans who have taken the initiative in this respect.

The same embassies confirm the troop movements from Shanghai and Shanchun towards Beijing. The 38th Army, with 20,000 men (the army of the Korean

War) is reportedly approaching from the south-west of the capital, either to replace or to oppose the 27th army which occupied Beijing with 200,000 men.

### Tuesday afternoon:

On Tiananmen a few rare cyclists continue to circulate in an oppressive silence, broken only by the sound of the two helicopters which have stepped up their coming and going. They head off westwards, from where muffled cannon-fire can be heard.

Rumours about the death of Deng from cancer — and of Li Peng, supposedly executed on the spot with his family by a policeman — continue to proliferate. The walls are still covered with inscriptions reporting this "news", or even the disavowal of the military attack and bloodshed by a majority of members of the party.

Apart from the declaration by the Mayor of Beijing, the first government statement appears on the television at 7pm on Tuesday. It shows selected pictures of the clashes, playing up the stoning of a mili-

world. "Fascism" they repeat, making the machine-gunning gesture.

There are no more visible signs of confrontations or clashes between factions of the army in Beijing. The city police have reappeared and the wreckage of the vehicles is being cleared from the streets. The army is a lot more in evidence now, positioned at several crossroads and on patrol. People stand outside their doors and stare apprehensively at the soldiers.

Even in the side-streets, people are alert to noises and movements. For the first time in five days, the army is in real control of the main streets, on foot, on bicycles or in trucks.

The Beijing Hotel, three hundred metres from Tiananmen Square, seems to have gone into mourning for Deng's opening up policy. Half of its splendid battery of eight lifts are out of order, and its sumptuous corridors are deserted. The Americans and Japanese have disappeared. The only remaining guests are some teams of journalists who are in the process of moving to hotels less exposed to army pressure.

In any case, the hotel management has closed all the restaurants and catering services (the army is to move into the hotel on Thursday morning). Paradoxically, the newly preferred hotel for foreigners is now the Palace Hotel, a luxury establishment, and a "joint venture" of the Chinese army and the Philippines (since the middle of the 1980s a part of the army has been redeployed in directly economic activities).

In the late morning I watch a "patriotic

march" starting from Tiananmen Square. Surrounded by soldiers with machine-guns, militia in red arm-bands march past, symbolizing the famous unity between the army and people. Some Beijing residents look on anxiously, apprehensive that they will soon see these specialists in straightening things out in every *jiedao weiyuanhui* (local committee), or in the *danwei* (production unit) to which every worker is attached. These two bodies control the life of every Chinese person, especially in the cities.

Supposedly the basic cell of the people's political power, in reality the *danwei* are the transmission belts of the power of the party. At the same time, this network plays a social role in the spheres of education, health and every other aspect of its members' lives. It is the *danwei* that distribute ration coupons, particularly for grain and oil.

Thus this march inspires everyone with a fear of a repetition of 1976. At that time, the local committees were the scene of denunciations, while the *danwei* organized general assemblies in the workplaces to bring to book workers who had taken part in the demonstrations and in resistance. In practise, for the moment, the army is only clearing up the crossroads.

Various rumours circulate concerning the factional struggle at the top but, to paraphrase Deng, "It doesn't matter if the cat is white or black"... the people can expect nothing good from it!

### Thursday, June 8:

There is an apparent, but very limited resumption of work. There are a few bus-

es, and the cranes are working again. There are people in the streets; some big stores, mainly food shops, have re-opened. Others sell only from a table on the doorstep.

Many public buildings have been taken over by the army. Soldiers keep guard at several strategic junctions in the city, while the streets are being intensively patrolled. Light mobile detachments extruding machine guns continue to move around, although it is not possible to say what the purpose of their deployment is. Cannon-fire can still be heard.

It seems therefore that life is slowly getting back to normal, although most buses remain in their depots. The impression of reduced tension is increased by the fact that the overcast sky of recent days has cleared. But this impression is contradicted by the continuing big mobilization of the army and by the concentrations of soldiers at the road junctions. The authorities want to show that "order reigns" and that the time to clean up has come. In every sense of the term, since teams continue to unblock the main roads, notably around Tiananmen and along Dongchang'an, several parts of which are now re-opened to traffic. The television broadcasts pictures of the clean-up, proclaiming victory over "a tiny group of counter-revolutionary hooligans", while official communiqués announce the expulsion from the party of those who took part in the "counter-revolutionary incident".

### Friday, June 9:

Everything points to the fact that the conflicts at the top are sorting themselves out. The government's slogan now is the return to order, to normal life in Beijing. Even so, although some buses are running and queues have re-appeared at the bus stops, many remain in their garages, and the underground is still at a standstill. In the same way, only some of the shops have re-opened, often, in the case of the bigger ones, without completely removing their grills.

Many administrative buildings remain closed, although others, among them the Bank of China, have re-opened.

Life is returning to normal, but slowly, and it is not possible to make a precise assessment of the impact, on the one hand of the call for a general strike made on Sunday, and on the other of the determination of the authorities to take steps towards a resumption of routine. It is clear, in any case, that the authorities are taking things in stages, while the army — still present in large numbers in the city — remains tense. Fear of snipers and displays of resistance, even if they have not been confirmed by any spectacular deeds, shows the relationship of forces created by the mass movement and the fear this has put into the authorities.

Nonetheless, the army and the police are doing everything possible to show that normality has returned. Almost every-

### Proposals of the Beijing Independent Workers' Union

SINCE the middle of April, in the democratic movement of all the nationalities led by the students, many Chinese workers have shown their desire to participate in political life, while recognizing that, until now, they have lacked a truly representative workers' organization to express their opinions. For this reason we believe it necessary to set up an independent organization to speak in the name of the workers and take up the issues that concern them. To this end, we are preparing to organize an Independent Workers' Union in Beijing and are putting forward the following proposals for a programme:

1. This organization must be totally independent and it must be set up as the result of a democratic process in which workers take part of their own free will. It must not be under the control of other organizations and must have equal status with other mass organizations.

2. The basic aim of this organization must be to put forward the views of the greatest number of workers on political and economic questions, and not to be merely a welfare organization.

3. This organization must have a monitoring role over the Communist Party.

4. In firms and businesses which are the property of the whole people or under collective ownership, this organization must have the right to use all the appropriate and legal means to monitor the legal representatives and ensure that the workers are really the masters of the firms. In other firms and businesses, it must uphold the workers' interests through negotiation with the enterprise directors or through other legal means.

5. This organization must guarantee all the legal rights of its members in the constitutional and legal spheres. ★

Provisional Committee of the Beijing Independent Workers' Union,  
May 21, 1989. [From October Review.]

thing in the the city has been cleaned up. The burnt-out wrecks have been removed, while, symbolically, the big avenue that runs alongside Tiananmen is open to buses, if not to cyclists. This allows me to see that some 100 tanks and TTVs are still occupying the esplanade.

The army has been conspicuously delivering flour, oil and vegetables to the shops and moves around constantly. Many columns of soldiers march about in the city centre, and soldiers are still present at every important crossroads accompanied by militia to demonstrate the "support of the people for the army". To some extent it seems to achieve its aim, which is to appear friendly. The officers chat with passers-by, intending thereby to bury the memory of the butchery on Saturday evening. But they are not completely confident. Several times I saw soldiers looking anxiously at crowds of passers-by. Another, who had fallen behind, hurried to catch up with his patrol. Soldiers perched on trucks full of cabbages and flour, move around holding kalashnikovs.

Propaganda lorries are also moving around, while the tanks have become a lot less numerous and more discreet — although they are still to be seen lurking in the streets running off the main roads.

But it is clear that a reign of fear has begun for the workers and young people who took part in the clashes and demonstrations.

Many people have been arrested. Some arrests have been filmed by the television, presenting those arrested as "counter-revolutionary hooligans" responsible for the attacks on tanks and TTVs on which

the television has been dwelling throughout the day. As a counterpoint, the television interviews at length good citizens who welcome the "return to calm", and a woman taking food to the troops.

The determination to wipe out the memories of the "counter-revolutionary disturbances" is demonstrated by hours of reports, broadcast ten times since yesterday, showing acts of aggression committed by the "tiny counter-revolutionary" group. But the television is obliged to show hundreds of people opposing tanks and TTVs with sticks and stones. Martial law and the curfew are now backed up with machine guns.

In order to signal the resolution of the crisis at the top of the party, all the top-ranking leaders, apart from Zhao Ziyang and Hu Qili, have re-appeared on the television. These are Deng, who was rumoured to be dead; Li Peng, who made a brief television appearance yesterday evening; and Qiao Shi.

Although it is now obviously impossible to speak out in public, appeals continue to circulate, some of them talking about a new mobilization after the summer or next spring. Even actions against the army in the next few weeks are not ruled out. Mere hope, perhaps, but a sign of a will to continue the struggle despite the massacre.

#### Saturday, June 10:

In Shanghai, the government has already arrested a group of leaders of the independent workers' association. In Beijing, arrests multiply, along with innumerable street checks.

Although it is now impossible to oppose the army in the streets, the population has clearly not been subdued by Li Peng's bloodbath. The only visible form of opposition now is the passive resistance demonstrated by a total absence of enthusiasm to resume work. The martial law committee has issued posters appealing for

informers and giving several telephone

numbers. The whole question is what sort of relationship of forces the authorities enjoy for launching a more thoroughgoing repression.

A large number of members of the party, of the local committees and of the work units took part in the movement.

So, the possibilities — or even the will — to re-establish the networks necessary for the secret police to carry out the campaign of denunciations are not clear. As for the party regaining its grip, we will see within the next few days or weeks which leaders belong to the "very tiny number" who will be accused of supporting the "counter-revolutionary disorders". But it will be quite another matter to re-establish the foundations of the whole edifice. The level of organization in the districts of Beijing at the start of the martial law was incredible. In June it brought together thousands of people to stop the army, while the following day it enabled the construction of barricades in every district before the army could get to Tiananmen. Can it be continued today in clandestinity, at least for a while? Many people are saying today in Beijing "We have neither arms nor leaders..."

In any case, there are several signs to suggest that the grip of the authorities is still insecure, and that the movement will be able to re-emerge in one form or another.

Thus the economic and social causes of the movement are still there, and the muddled speeches of Deng, in which he thanks the police and army and weeps for those killed — without a word for the thousands of victims of the massacre — do not add up to a political and economic programme.

Eight days after the capture of Tiananmen, the regime has yet to re-establish a firm base. ★

#### Declaration of the workers

THE working class is the most advanced class; we must be the shock troops of the democratic movement.

The People's Republic of China is under the leadership of the working class, and we have the right to drive out every tyrant.

The workers have understood perfectly the need for knowledge and technology in production. This is why we absolutely reject the outrages suffered by the students and educated people.

We must not flinch from our duty to destroy tyranny and dictatorship and promote the democratization of the state.

Unity is our strength; our unshakeable conviction is the guarantee of our success.

In the democratic movement, "We have nothing to lose but our chains, and a world to win".

*Provisional Committee of the Beijing Independent Workers' Union, May 21, 1989. [From October Review.]*

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## The roots of the student movement

ON THE EVE of the Tiananmen massacre, *Combate*, the paper of the Revolutionary Communist League, Spanish state section of the Fourth International, interviewed G. Buster, who has followed events in China closely for a number of years.

In the following abridged version of the interview, he discusses the development of the student movement and its relations with other strata of the society.

**WHAT events or experiences were at the origin of the student mobilizations?**

The source of the student explosion in Peking has to be traced back to the failure of the economic reforms undertaken by the leading group. The most visible aspect of this failure is a surge of inflation due to the imbalance between agriculture and industry, which has always been the People's Republic of China's major problem. The social crisis produced by this was reflected in the workers' strikes in the winter of 1988, and more generally in a rise in social conflicts. The context was marked by deepgoing corruption, a moral crisis for the youth and growing ideological and economic pressure from the capitalist countries.

In this situation, at the beginning of the university year, a student movement started to develop, under the influence of professors who represented the more liberal wing of the reform current. At the outset, the problem of education was taken up, and that became a springboard for taking up the questions of inflation and the economic crisis as a whole.



All the debates going on in the party are reflected in measures that, as a result of a lack of funds for maintaining the present educational system, hit the students — that is, the children of the elite, who are certainly not without political training and who, because of their education, consider themselves responsible for the country's future.

■ It seems that of all the great student movements in 1987, only the Chinese managed to maintain continuity.

I would talk about a social movement rather than a political one. But in any case, there are reasons for this continuity. The students are concentrated on the campuses, in dormitory-type accommodation, and this favors the transmission of tradition and experience from one class to another. Moreover, the great student movement of 1986 marked a whole generation. It should be added that this movement was never stamped out, and the students remained the heirs of the general secretary of the Chinese CP, Hu Yaobang, who was ousted from power because he opposed repression of the student movement.

From that time on, the students considered themselves the vanguard of the reformers, who, after the Thirteen Congress, remained prisoners of the conservatives because of the system of balances in the party established by the statutes adopted at the congress. The situation can be summed up by saying that continuity was maintained because there was a collective experience of the movement. For example, the movement is now raising the question of representativeness again, as in 1987, although the student candidates in the previous elections were jailed.

■ How did the recent movement develop?

In September, a vanguard started to form. Its major concern was the work of the National People's Assembly, which was supposed to discuss the question of education and the educational budget. Just after the exams in January, there was an upsurge of student mobilizations. The most important date in the crystallization

of the movement came at the end of April.

On April 25, just as the year before, the students left Peking University during the night. They joined their comrades at the People's University (which is a sort of polytechnic), and marched down the big avenues singing the *International* and chanting their slogans. This was a torchlight demonstration and it made a big impression on the entire city.

■ Why did they sing the *International*?

Above all, to demonstrate that they were not an anti-party movement, but also to assert a symbolic value in which they believe. The *International* represents all the sacrifices that have been made in the name of socialism to modernize China. Any project for China's future outside the framework of socialism would lead to a break, or even a civil war.

That does not mean that there are not pro-capitalist tendencies among the students. But it is certain that they cannot express themselves openly because they would not be accepted by the students or by the population. That is why the students adopted the *International* as their anthem.

To go back to the facts: This big demonstration included 350,000 people. The total number of students [in Peking] can be estimated at 130,000, so the rest were people from Peking, essentially young workers, as well as what are called the "plebeian" sectors, which have arisen in recent years around the black market. They joined in the movement from the beginning.

On the night of April 25, the demonstrators were driven back brutally from the headquarters of the Central Committee, where they had massed. On the following day, the *People's Daily* published an editorial, emanating from Deng Xiaoping and the Political Committee, which characterized the student movement as "counter-revolutionary." This was a decisive turning point, because the movement found itself facing a very clear alternative — either assert its strength and accept the regime's challenge to defend itself as a people's revolutionary movement or retreat to the campuses and wait for a

wave of repression.

The previous student movement backed away from such a test. But this time the students stayed in the streets. This produced a split in the reform faction. Hu Yaobang resigned so as not to have to repress the students. But Zhao Ziyang was forced to face up to the conservatives because the students were advancing rather than retreating. The crisis thus continued into May, when big demonstrations were to be held to commemorate the May 4, 1919, movement, a reminder that People's China was born out of a big mobilization of Peking students for science and democracy.

However, at this point the movement found itself a prisoner of the argument between the conservatives and the reformers that was unfolding in the Central Committee. That led the vanguard to make its second fundamental choice: A thousand students started a prolonged hunger strike in the center of Tiananmen Square, facing the statue celebrating the heroes of the revolution and symbolically turning their backs on Mao's tomb.

This meant that the conflict would have to be resolved in the streets and not in the Central Committee. Or, in other words, that the conservatives and the reformers could continue their discussions, but that only a victory in the streets could enable the reformers, who seemed to be the political representatives of the movement, to assert themselves. In this context, the conservatives decided to put an end to the movement by declaring martial law.

### ■ Was that the point when accusations of corruption proliferated against the apparatus and especially Deng Xiaoping?

Accusations of corruption were raised from the start, and started to gather steam when it began clear that Deng was the main ideologue of the repression. For several years, he was the head of the reform faction. In 1985-86, he became the arbiter, while remaining chief of the reform faction. After the 1986 student movement he continued to play his arbiter's role, at the same time basing himself on the conservatives and pushing the economic reform. This time he repeated the phrase he used two years ago: "I don't like to shed blood, but I will not hesitate to do it if necessary."

At this time, Deng started being called to account. He was reminded that his son, who was a victim of the cultural revolution, subsequently enriched himself in a scandalous way. Several such cases were exposed.

The accusation of corruption thus became an answer to the charge of counter-revolution. "If we were counter-revolutionaries," the students said, "then we would be corrupt. But isn't it rather you who are both corrupt and counter-revolutionary?" ★

## "The regime is at the end of its rope"

**THE ENTHUSIASM that reigned in Tiananmen Square abruptly gave way to tragedy. On the night of June 3-4, the Chinese bureaucracy, or at least the dominant faction within it, decided to drown the mass movement in a bloodbath.**

**This is not the first time the bureaucrats have resorted to such methods. Deng in 1957 and Mao in 1967 already offered foretastes of this. But this is the first time the regime has sent the troops into the capital and massacred unarmed students.**

**How did the regime come to this, what were the underlying causes that engendered this crisis, what is the situation of the various classes and social strata in China after a decade of "liberal" reforms? These questions are taken up in the following interview with Roland Lew, a China specialist at the Free University of Brussels.**

### **W**HY DID the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) turn to reforms in 1978?

The reform was a response to the disastrous results of the cultural revolution, to its aspect of massive repression, to the total loss of legitimacy that the government and the system suffered at the end of the Maoist period. After Mao's death in 1976, it was necessary to regain a minimum of support from the population so that the government could run society.

The team that was then formed under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping — managed to establish a sort of initial consensus in 1978 for launching a reform process.

It is significant, moreover, that in this first stage of the reforms the moving forces in the party might be called the reformers of the 1950s — that is, those who had already at that time adopted a different profile from Maoism and advocated an adjusted version of "actually existing socialism" [the Soviet and East European model]. They were favorable to a more flexible sort of centralization and to introducing some market elements.

### ■ What were the stages of the reform?

The reform process very quickly took an unexpected direction. In the first period, between 1979 and 1984, the bulk of the reforms were in the countryside. They involved a process of de-collectivizing the land almost as rapid as the process of collectivization, which was carried out in a little more than a year, from 1955 to 1956, under the pressure of Mao Zedong.

In reality, the regime's objective was not this sort of de-collectivization. It only wanted to introduce a system of more responsibility for the peasants. Since the peasants had little motivation, they were told: "Since you don't want to work in overly large collectives, choose your base units of production for yourselves." It very quickly proved that the peasants preferred family farms, and this brought about a massive de-collectivization. The regime was content to accept this fact.

### ■ What is the proportion of landless laborers and small peasants?

At the outset, they were practically all small-holders. Even in the period of deteriorating conditions in the nineteenth century, you cannot talk about a domination of big landowners in China. Moreover, in the revolutionary process, the Communist Party was based especially in regions dominated by small-holders. Today, the situation is mixed. Some hold onto land but go to work in factories. Others, a small number, rent land. Wage labor has begun to develop in the countryside, but especially outside agriculture. However, it should also be noted that wage labor in agriculture exists, but we are only at the beginning of the process. The peasants are starting by exploiting their own families! A result is a substantial abandonment of schooling. Children are working from the age of 10.

The de-collectivization had surprising results, especially because of the prices peasants get for their products, especially cereals. From the moment these prices

1. See also "Zhao Ziyang's new clothes" by A. Maravér, *IVs* 150 & 151, October 31 & November 14, 1988.

were raised, production went up considerably.<sup>2</sup> All this created a climate of euphoria. The regime seemed to be able to reestablish its ties with the population so as to launch a reform of industry. Up until then, only a few timid attempts at that had been made in certain places.

These initial successes also bolstered the reform current and enabled it to get the support of Deng Xiaoping, whose weight was decisive in tipping the scales against the considerable pressures from certain sections of the apparatus — notably the 1950s' reformers, who now opposed the reform, thinking that it was going too far and threatening to cost the party some of its authority.

However, the following year problems re-emerged everywhere. In the countryside, for the first time, there was a slight drop in production. In order to cushion the impact of rising prices of agricultural products on workers that would create intolerable social tensions in the cities, the government decided to grant major subsidies to compensate for these rises. But this began to be a big burden on the state budget. The government then started to change the system.

One sector of production — necessities — was subjected to a quota system. A share had to be delivered at prices fixed by the state (generally low). Another share was left outside the quotas, so that a larger part of production would reach the free market. Subsequently, the prices of fertilizers and other things needed for production were sharply raised. In time producing cereals, and sometimes even meat, became much less profitable for the peasants. A good number of them began to leave the land to look for work in the nearby towns or even in the cities (although this is illegal). Those who remained in the countryside preferred to look toward creating small local industrial or semi-industrial enterprises to earn more money. This led to a drop in agricultural production, giving rise again to scarcities.

### ■ That must not have been very favorable for the success of the industrial reform?

In industry, all the problems that had appeared in the initial experiments from 1979 to 1984 became generalized. This is for the same reasons that it has proved impracticable in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to carry through a reform to establish real prices. The result, therefore, has been a two-tier price system — a free price and a quota price.

To give an example: The state central service decides to provide a certain quota of steel for a certain enterprise. To bridge the difference between that and its real needs, the enterprise will have to find the necessary quantity on the market itself. But since the state-set price is especially low, the enterprise will tend rather to

resell its own stock on the free market, making a fat profit, which will be shared between the manager, the workers and bribes to local party cadres.

Another pillar of the urban reform was the shift of authority in the enterprises to the managers. Party secretaries found themselves deprived of their power, and were thus implicitly charged with incompetence. In view of this, some secretaries tried to become factory managers themselves, which didn't solve the problem, since it didn't make them any more competent. Others tried instead to tie down the factory managers in order to hold onto a bit of power. In both cases, the reform was stymied, because in order for the managers to be able to do their allotted task they needed what had been promised them, real autonomy. But they did not have the means to influence wages, to fire workers or have a sufficient margin for maneuver in getting supplies.

Another perverse effect was that the decentralization transferred power from the ministries to the local functionaries. But the latter behaved exactly like the ministries and maintained tight control. Moreover, since the central authorities controlled less and less, and sometimes nothing, all the wheeling and dealing took place at the level of the local authorities. In other words, corruption spread. Moreover, this was not only on the basis of a parasitical rake-off but of services rendered and mutual interests. An example is taxation. In the absence of any real taxation organized at the national level, the local administrations lowered taxes on enterprises in return for bribes. So, the enterprise managers also gained.

Another important aspect of the reform was disrupted and thrown out of gear. The logic of a new form of management required transforming the labor process. It

aimed to break the famous "iron rice bowl" — that is, security of employment. But the workers resisted this fiercely.

The introduction of contracts for set periods and the payment of production bonuses failed totally. The workers managed to get into the production process as permanent workers, in much greater numbers than before. Bonuses were paid without any relation to productivity. Attempts by the managers to stop this, and they did try, were immediately thwarted by strikes and other forms of pressure, including physical threats from the workers. In particular, the celebrated "model workers" that the factory managers wanted to promote in order to increase productivity were physically assaulted by the workers and forced back into step.

It seems that the workers had the support of some sections of the local party apparatus, and even to some extent of the new managers, who had no desire to face a social explosion. After negotiations between the local authorities and factory managers on bank loans, financing funds and especially investment funds, sums allotted for infrastructure or updating technology were transferred to paying bonuses and wages.

For the workers, this was above all a way of improving their standard of living, which had stagnated. In fact, basic wages (in the strict sense of the term) were the same in 1979 as in 1952. In other words, they remained at the average level of the years preceding the revolution! However, the picture is changed somewhat by the considerable indirect gains of the working class — social security, health care, and the provision of housing for some of them through the factory. It has also to be remembered that production norms in China are very low, because the workers can do a lot of things in working hours — sports, study, siestas (a great innovation by Deng was the reduction of the siesta).

The factories run the workers' whole lives. They solve their housing problems, provide social security and so on. If the workers rebel, the enterprises have considerable means for retaliating. This is a real machine for regimenting people. But there are two sides to it. In order for it to be effective, the factories have to guarantee certain advantages for their workers. The workers themselves are quite aware of this, and know how to apply pressure to maintain their gains.

This is the great paradox. This massive, fundamental social group frightens the regime, blocks it from making real reforms in the factories, from cutting wages and bonuses and yet continues to be held down politically. Thus, the crucial question is how the working class can gain its independence and create real independent unions. Up until now, every



2. See also "A critique of the rural reform in China after 1978", by Xiao Dian, *IV* 153, December 12, 1988.



attempt has been broken by the regime.

### ■ Is there a real differentiation of wages?

In the present stage of things, we cannot talk about generalized social tensions in the factories over wage differences. In general, an "arrangement" has been made to freeze the situation. The managers maneuver to make the bonuses as high as possible and the workers close their eyes to embezzlement.

After October 1, 1986, the center decided to go further and generalize the contract system. Recent statistics are lacking, but apparently this was not an unqualified success. The system could only really be applied where people had no choice. China has not been able to grant all workers permanent status. Therefore, a not inconsiderable number of workers and peasants have not been able to get into the system of stable employment. One of the functions of the introduction of work contracts has been to create a sub-proletariat.

The contract labor system — which provides for a fixed wage, social security and even a sort of unemployment insurance — was supposed, despite everything, to be an "honorable" social status. But it has turned out quite differently — marginal jobs with the lowest wages, poor social protection and so on. So many of these contract workers have preferred to drop out of the labor circuit entirely and become small entrepreneurs (taxi drivers, for example), without any social insurance but getting three times or more their previous incomes. We have seen in the clashes of recent weeks that the most militant and embittered elements have been precisely these former workers who have become "small entrepreneurs."

### ■ What effect has the reform had on the gap between the cities and the countryside?

Until the early 1980s, only 20% of the Chinese population was urban, and even that figure is disputed. Today, the urban

population is estimated at 25% to 30%. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that a good number of those who are counted as rural live in small towns.

Despite all the legends of the Maoist period, the gulf between the cities and the countryside has persisted. The average standard of living is about three times higher in the cities. Moreover, while a certain egalitarianism prevailed in the cities (with the exception of the top party cadres who lived quite well), in the countryside situations were very disparate, with villages close to the cities being relatively prosperous while others wallowed in misery.

The initial effects of the reform were to reduce this gap between the cities and the countryside a little. But for some years now it has been widening again. This has produced a good deal of frustration in the countryside, even an outright hostility on the part of the peasants not only to the regime but also against city people in general.

Nonetheless, the situation in the country has changed considerably. The peasants' standard of living virtually doubled between 1979 and 1985, while, according to the figures provided by the regime, it had more or less stagnated between 1957 and 1977-78. Parallel to this, the non-agricultural rural sectors also experienced a prodigious boom.

Overall, the income of these non-agricultural activities exceeds the level of agricultural incomes. But once again the distribution is not even. Some 80% of these activities are concentrated in five coastal provinces. There, you can talk about real prosperity and access to consumer goods, such as color TVs or real estate. All this has been accompanied by a flourishing of small individual and family enterprises, subcontracting firms, real petty capitalism.

All these phenomena are producing a major rural exodus. The figure is given of 50 million peasants moving to the cities, driven by poverty, or, to the contrary, an

exodus of rich peasants who think that that they will be able to enrich themselves even more there.

### ■ What effects has the reform had on different strata of the bureaucracy?

After the trauma of the cultural revolution, the reform has played a considerable role in the evolution of the apparatus cadres. In the rural areas, the effect has been decisive. Even if the de-collectivization hit the absolute power that the local cadres had in the People's Communes, they were able nonetheless to hold onto parts of it. The little party bosses have thus conserved their means of putting pressure on the peasants and have used this to play a parasitic role, in the primary meaning of the term.

As the possibilities for enrichment opened up by the reform expanded, a section of the bureaucrats decided to set up their own enterprises, to become petty capitalists themselves, thanks in particular to income from corruption. In the urban setting, things were a bit more complicated. The apparatus that came out of the cultural revolution was often primitive, uncultured, authoritarian and corrupt, but to a lesser degree. The reform process brought modernization in every sense. New technocrats appeared, students joined the party. Even in the army, a new generation of officers appeared who did not come out of the revolution. This generation is rather attached to the idea of modernizing the society. It is more educated, more detached from the old men who are their historic chiefs.

It is clear that the interest of party secretaries in the enterprises was not the same as that of the young technocrats. In the unions, even if the apparatus did not favor real independent expression by the workers, it nonetheless put pressure on the management cadres to get advantages for the membership, in order to retain the greatest possible authority and defend its own privileges.

In the top echelons of the apparatus, much better educated young people have begun to be recruited: professors, technical cadres, advisors who have studied abroad. Nonetheless — and this has played an important role in the present events — the old leaders and cadres there since the revolution (or even from before, since the 1920s or 1930s) have held a grip on the party, both in the military and other sectors. Fierce factional battles made it possible to get rid of some of them, but they have never been totally pushed aside.

This can be seen in decisive moments. In 1987, Hu Yaobang was not ousted in an official body but in a meeting of the Political Bureau enlarged to include former members who had been pushed out. It was they who made it possible to get a majority for ousting Hu Yaobang. In the present

events, once again the "old timers" have

played a decisive role, this time with the support of Deng Xiaoping.

A major gap thus exists between the society and the top of the apparatus, which is made up of octogenarians — Peng Zhen was born in 1902; Deng in 1904; Chen Yun in 1905; the two marshalls left from the ten that there were in 1955 are over 85; the president of the republic, Yang Shangkun was born in 1907 and was one of the 28 old "Bolsheviks" (supporters of Stalin) who opposed Mao in the late 1920s.

Another feature is the monumental corruption at the top. As the average Chinese sees it, all the leaders are corrupt, either directly (this is not always true for the old cadres) or through nepotism. Every time an old chief agrees to resign, he gets a son put in the top apparatus. Worse still, many members of the immediate families of leaders are involved in business deals of the most sordid type, such as Yang Shangkun's son or Zhao Ziyang's.

So, we can talk about a real rotting of the regime through corruption. This, moreover, explains the brutality of the repression. Another dimension coincides with a prediction Trotsky made in 1936-37: that the apparatus or a section of it would be transformed into a sort of proto-capitalism. Some cadres are happy to go along with this process, and would fit in quite well with a state capitalism that they could parasitize. But others are choosing more and more to become capitalists themselves.

This said, the process is too recent and uncertain to draw definitive conclusions. In fact, the people involved are above all speculators aiming to get rich quick and get out as soon as the situation takes a bad turn.

### ■ How do you explain this corruption?

Despite all the successes of the reform, China remains a very poor country, and therefore the fight over the division of the meager resources is fierce. In the Maoist period, there were very few consumer goods, but a certain egalitarianism prevailed.

With the reform, new consumer goods and opportunities for enrichment arrived, but not for everyone and not everywhere. Access to all these riches was through the government. But, since the bureaucracy itself was poor and had no competence to exploit, it could only play a parasitic role.

It seems that most of the new enterprises were set up in partnership with, or with the support of, bureaucrats. Moreover, the model put forward is Hong Kong, Taiwan, the overseas Chinese, Japan, the West. This desire to get rich quick is impelling a colossal spread of corruption and illegal networks.

### ■ Can it be said that the ferocity of the repression in Tibet was already a sign of what the regime was prepared to do to defend its interests?

That is quite right. But at the same time, the population had the impression that it "was OK for Tibet"! Of course, some sections of the urban population might have been opposed to this repression, but the great majority remain quite chauvinist, hate the Tibetans, and approved of the bloody outcome in Tibet.

The idea that this might happen again in Beijing, and be even worse, seemed unimaginable.

### ■ Are all these differentiations in the bureaucracy reflected in the differences at the top?

The social cleavages in the bureaucracy are not reflected exactly at the top. The conflicting interests are too complex to be reflected simply in a clash between "conservatives" and "reformers." You now find every sort of position in the CCP apparatus. There are people who want to go back to capitalism and as soon as possible. Others behave like the reformers of the 1950s, and want to adjust the regime in an authoritarian way. Still others want to put an end to the process, while some champions of the reforms are disoriented because they have not been able to control them.

It is very difficult to guess what is going on at the top now. But it is clear that there is a general disarray. None of these currents has any clear and precise project.

### ■ How can you explain the gap between the boldness of the economic reforms and the absence of political reform?

In part because of the unexpectedly rapid success of the economic reforms. A part of the apparatus then judged that it could dispense with political reforms, concluding that the standard of living had increased everywhere and so there would be no massive discontent that would have to be channelled. As Deng said, with his customary cynicism, as long as stomachs are filled, minds will be calm.

### ■ What is the perspective for resolution of the crisis in the long term?

The regime is at the end of its rope. The process of the liquidation of this regime has begun. The timing cannot be predicted, but the process certainly seems irreversible. The break produced by the bloodbath in Beijing is irreparable.

For the moment, the apparatus has regained control of the situation. Systematic repression has begun. An oppressive climate prevails in Beijing, which is not unlike the grim days of the cultural revolution, in particular with campaigns calling for informing on people.

The Chinese population has lost a battle, but a new potential for struggle will re-emerge sooner or later. ★

## CHINA REACTIONS

# Fancy footwork in Pravda

**WHAT SEEMS to have been the main Soviet statement on the massacre on Tiananmen Square came in an article on the inside-back page of Pravda June 8, signed by Vsevolod Ovchinnikov. The article, which is published below, engages in some fancy footwork to meet two contradictory needs of the Kremlin: to maintain Gorbachev's democratic image and to continue the diplomatic rapprochement with the Deng regime. At the same time, in its own way it indicates that the Soviet bureaucracy has fears similar to those of the Peking rulers.**

**O**N TUESDAY [June 6], the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR issued a statement on the events in China. This was not a diplomatic note nor an act of foreign policy. It was a direct people-to-people statement embodying the feelings which now fill the hearts of the Soviet people.

In neighboring China, dramatic events have occurred. The situation has become particularly acute in the last few days. In the center of Beijing, clashes have occurred between the participants in the mass demonstrations of youth and the troops. Weapons have been used; there have been more than a few human losses.

It is impossible to read such reports, which are like war news, without disquiet and sorrow. Before our eyes rises the endless sea of young faces on Tiananmen Square. We remember their fervor, their self-sacrificing attitude. It is bitter to realize that this civic upsurge has led to a great misfortune, a tragedy, which has inflicted a deep trauma on Chinese society.

The processes of renewal going on today in the socialist countries are some-



times painful precisely because they are not superficial but deep and all-embracing in character. Unfortunately, economic and political reforms do not always go hand in hand. Sometimes a change in the political atmosphere precedes real changes in the economy. This is the case in our country. This is arousing a well-founded discontent among the Soviet people. In China, there is also an imbalance, but of another sort. There, the economic reforms, economic pluralism, have advanced a long way, while reform of the political system has lagged behind.

### "Democracy cannot be asserted by trampling on the law"

It can be said that the youth is a special sort of social barometer. In my opinion, the student upsurges that have shaken China this spring reflected social tension created in the first place by inflation and in the second place by corruption. Problems of growth that sharpened at the beginning of the second decade of the reform; an unprecedented jump in the cost of living that hits students, intellectuals and other sectors living on fixed incomes particularly hard; side-effects of the transition to a mixed economy — to put it more bluntly the sharp differentiation in people's incomes, and multiplying cases of misuse of official positions for private gain — all this made still more intolerable the corruption of the so-called *guandao*, (functionary-speculators). The need to combat this phenomenon with renewed force is a reminder of the timeliness of the reforms outlined by the Thirteen Congress of the CCP [Chinese Communist Party].

Beginning a hunger strike that lasted for many days on Tiananmen Square, the youth demanded an end to corruption and degeneration; consideration for education, which had been neglected; and a speed-up of the process of democratization of the society. The demonstrators tried to get the authorities to recognize the patriotic and democratic character of the student actions and enter into dialogue with those participating in them.

According to the statements of a series of Chinese leaders, these demands were well founded, and coincided with the aims of the party and the government. However, such problems can be solved only in conditions of stability based on democracy and in the framework of the law. In Beijing however, as the mayor of the city, Chen Xitun, has recently said, "the development of the events contradicted the initial patriotic aspirations of the students."

Here it should be remarked that in some socialist countries, among which I would include not only China but also the Soviet Union, a lack of political culture, of a tradition of pluralism under the supremacy of the law, has sometimes given the pro-

cess of democratization an unhealthy, distorted character that threatens social order.

The law must not fetter democracy. But democracy, on the other hand, cannot be asserted by trampling on the law. When events get out of control, even the initiators cannot influence them. Undirected crowds can become a weapon of alien, malevolent forces. We in the Soviet Union unfortunately are familiar with this from our own experience.

It seems to me that in connection with the tragic events on Tiananmen Square, none of us can really assume the role of either prosecutor or defense lawyer. This is not only because this is an internal affair of the Chinese people, but because the sight of armored troop carriers in city streets hits a raw nerve in our own concerns and worries. In the Congress of People's Deputies, there have been disputes about the correctness of using troops against unauthorized demonstrations in Tbilisi. It is said that in the Fergana district [Uzbekistan] troops are being used to impose elementary order. But there have been statements of a different sort, that in Sumgait the troops appeared too late to

prevent bloodshed.

I think that

using force in the name of preserving public order is as drastic a means as amputating a sick person's leg. It is always painful, always undesirable, but sometimes inevitable in order to save the person's life. The question of how necessary such a measure is rests on the conscience of the surgeon. It is the Chinese people themselves that have to judge what happened in Tiananmen Square.

"Regardless of how intense passions may have been at times, it is important to calmly seek adequate political solutions determined by the aims of consolidating the society," says the statement of the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR on the events in China. "We hope that wisdom, good sense, and a balanced approach will prevail, and that a way out of the situation will be found that is worthy of the great Chinese people."

Adding my voice to that of the people's elected representatives coming from the Kremlin, I sincerely hope that the Chinese people will turn this tragic page in their history as soon as possible. ★

## Norwegian Maoists break with Beijing

CHINA REACTIONS

**THE NORWEGIAN Maoist party, the AKP(m-l) is one of the few big Maoist groups left in Europe. The party arose when the overwhelming majority of the youth organization of the Socialist People's Party [a centrist party that broke from the Labor Party over the issue of membership in NATO] went over to Maoism in 1968.**

**S**INCE 1977, the party has managed to publish a daily, *Klassekampen*, with 8,000 subscribers. The party gets about 1% of the vote nationally and up to 4% in some districts.

It has no representatives in parliament but has a number of members of local government bodies. It has worked active-

ly in the trade union movement, in the anti-racist struggle, in international solidarity, and not least in the women's movement.

Up until 1980, the party was a traditional Maoist party. In subsequent years, it has undergone a gradual re-assessment of its old positions. The AKP has rid itself of many of its ultra-left mistakes. The hammer and sickle, red flags and "the Great Five" [Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao] have disappeared from *Klassekampen*. The party recognizes now that great abuses took place under Stalin. The AKP no longer believes that the defendants in the Moscow trials were spies and saboteurs.

*Klassekampen* has carried long articles about Bukharin, as well as articles by Roy Medvedev, and it has repeated all the exposures of Stalin's crimes that have been made under *glasnost*. But, at the same time, it has refused to draw the practical and programmatic consequences of this.

The party's congress in December took the position that Stalin was a Marxist, but not a "great" Marxist.

However, the AKP has been unwilling

to support the campaign for the rehabilitation of the victims of the purge trials. Its leadership has followed the line of trying to avoid "revolutions" in the party's political foundations and practice.

It has been settling accounts with Marxism/Leninism/Mao Zedong thought at a snail's pace. The leadership has managed to avoid splits or a total breakup of the organization of the kind many Maoist organizations in the rest of the world have suffered.

### Programmatic re-assessment of Mao's China

A good part of the membership has become passive. But a lot of them continue to subscribe to, and write for *Klassekampen*, and can still be mobilized in many circumstances.

A small dogmatic Maoist wing has broken away. It had support in particular in the leadership of the party's student organization. Many people in the party were unhappy about the leadership's refusal to take a position on the developments in China, even if they had no sympathy for their dogmatic Maoism.

In recent years, a debate on Stalinism has gone on in the columns of *Klassekampen*, in which revolutionary Marxists have been able to participate. It has been possible to discuss the experiences in the

Soviet Union, the Spanish civil war, the theory of the party and so on. But the AKP refused to take a position on China. Characteristically enough, the last congress adopted no position on the developments in China because no agreement could be reached on this decisive point. That is not surprising, because the party was founded on enthusiasm for China and the cultural revolution.

Many people defended Stalin only because the Chinese CP did. It is clear that the AKP could not forever avoid taking a position on China. Throughout this spring, there have been clear signals that a programmatic re-assessment of Mao's China was in the works. The party tried to work out its own theory about revolutions in backward countries. The demonstrations in Beijing and the bloody massacre of peaceful demonstrators have made it impossible for the AKP not to take a position on China.

What position the AKP will end up with and how far the party will be divided is still quite unpredictable. There is a danger that Deng will be condemned as a "capitalist roader," and they will return to Mao and the Gang of the Four.

But there is also a chance that the AKP, or large sections of it, will break with Maoism and go in the direction of democratic socialism.

Given the AKP's size and resources, they would represent a welcome reinforcement of the non-Stalinist revolutionary movement. ★

## CHINA REACTIONS

### DENMARK

**THE DAILY** paper of the Danish Communist Party, *Land og Folk*, wrote in an editorial June 6:

The massacre puts a bloody and shameful end to all the hopes that people could have had in recent weeks for a dialogue between the government and the demonstrators, who never questioned socialism or the legitimacy of the system. They only wanted to be *heard*...

The transition from the post-Maoist era, if the students had had their way, could have been carried out according to democratic principles. Instead, we got another one of these internal coups that are generally justified by talking about the "crimes" and "ideological deviations" of others.

It is precisely this form of decision making in a narrow circle of Stalinist bureaucrats that brought hundreds of thousands to demonstrate for democratic reforms.

In the long run the government cannot win a war against its own people. As earlier in the People's Republic's history, a scapegoat will be found. But that will not make any difference if Deng's successors do not involve the people who have given their name to the republic. Our support, therefore, must be given to those forces whose demand for reforms for the moment has been drowned in blood. ★

### BRITAIN

**THE June 5 Morning Star**, newspaper of the pro-Moscow traditionalist current in British Stalinism (generally known as the "tankies"), balked at the tanks in Tiananmen square:

...Coinciding, as it did, with the visit of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the students' action diverted attention from the historic rapprochement between the two largest socialist countries. But it is hard to believe assertions that the students were imbued with hatred of China's socialist system....

The students have not opposed socialism. They have opposed corruption and other negative phenomena associated with the policies of economic liberalization. They have also made clear their view that China's economic progress is bound up with an expansion of democratic rights.

The response of the working people of Beijing to the students' demonstrations in Tiananmen Square showed a great wave of support for their basic demands.... ★

### Editorial from the June issue of *Klassekampen*

#### FASCIST TERROR IN CHINA

The peaceful movement for democracy and against abuse of power and corruption in China was met on Sunday with bloody terror. Thousands of peaceful demonstrators were killed in an outright massacre. A progressive people's movement has been denounced by the rulers as "counter-revolutionary," and the bloody massacre is being called a "victory" for the "Chinese revolution".

In reality, this is fascist terror against the people. A little fascist clique has taken power in the party and the state, and the bloody actions against the people are a betrayal of the Chinese revolution and all oppressed people in the world. The People's Liberation Army has been set against the people, and the rulers are using pure police-state methods to try to prevent the world from finding out about what has happened.

The Chinese students have waged a peaceful struggle for greater democracy, against the misuse of power and corruption. The economic reforms have been necessary to extricate China from poverty. But the reforms have also led to great inequalities among the people and to a greater gap between the people and the leadership, between the people and the party. The development of democracy has lagged. It is a bloody irony that the Soviet Union, which Mao Zedong called a fascist dictatorship of the Hitler type, is opening up a discussion on democracy, while those who hold power in the CCP are responding to democratic expressions with fascist terror. The Chinese revolution can only be carried forward if those responsible for the terror, who have thrown history back ten years, are overthrown. The potential for this exists in the Chinese people and among the 48 million members of the Chinese Communist Party.

The AKP has broken off relations with the Chinese Communist Party. In this situation, this was the only thing we could do. What is happening in China is a profound tragedy, a great misfortune for the Chinese people. But the people resisted the armed forces heroically.

The Chinese leaders will pay dearly for their "victory." ★

# The swan song of Khomeinism

**T**HE IMPRESSIVE breadth of the mourning for Khomeini's death, nonetheless, evoked surprise. It was a resounding refutation of the claims by many Iranian oppositionists of both right and left that the "Islamic" regime had lost any mass base and was maintaining itself only by terror. This self-delusion was shared worldwide by many who — for good or bad reasons — were looking forward to the end of Khomeinism.

The outburst of feeling in Tehran was a bitter disappointment for all of them. Of course, the scenes of collective hysteria prompted by the Imam's funeral, indicate clearly that the event was in large measure a phenomenon of mass psychology.<sup>1</sup> But without falling into the primitive form of idealism represented by the psychological theory of history, you cannot attribute the grief expressed by a large part of the Iranian population simply to a fanaticism fostered by ignorance and backwardness.

Psychological, ideological and religious factors are quite real forces in determining history. However, they do not operate on masses that can be manipulated according to anyone's will, who are susceptible to any kind of "brain-washing." In order to fanaticize masses of people, you have to convince them that you represent a reliable road toward improving their fate and greater dignity for them. In order to fanaticize them in a lasting way, you have to be able to offer them tangible progress along that road.

## Victims of the Khomeini regime's terror

The most disturbing thing about the mass outbursts of June 4, 5 and 6 in Tehran is that they happened ten years after the extraordinary mobilization that greeted Khomeini on his return from exile on February 1, 1979. Ten years in which the Iranian population has been able to get an idea of what the "Islamic regime" represented in reality. Ten years in which hundreds of thousands of Iranians paid with their lives for the demented pigheadedness of the octogenarian of Qom (the holy city where he lived) in the war against Iraq, while almost two million people chose exile, and tens of thousands fell victim to the Khomeini regime's terror. And yet, ten years later, millions of Iranians were still ready to weep for the Imam.

The key to this paradox can be provided by a correct analysis of the process set in motion in Iran in 1979. In this respect, moreover, the ayatollah's funeral was highly revealing. It contradicted the interpretation that Khomeini was a usurper of the February 1979 revolution, the leader

**MILLIONS of Iranians, forming a vast human sea, took part in the funeral of Ayatollah Khomeini, the "guide of the Islamic revolution," who died on June 3. Adored by millions and loathed by millions, the "inspired" leader of the mullahs' regime has gone down in history as one of those personalities who have aroused violently conflicting passions during their lives.**

## SALAH JABER

of a Thermidorian reaction, or even a counter-revolution. According to this interpretation, the establishment of the "Islamic" dictatorship was a break, a turning back of the process initiated in 1979, to such a point that the situation under Khomeini became worse than under the shah for the Iranian population as a whole.

This view has been clearly refuted by the undeniable fact that the millions who poured out in Teheran this month are the same as those who formed the majority of the mass mobilizations ten years earlier,

especially in the capital. But it also confirms the interpretation that stressed the continuity of the Iranian process, the predictability of its course from the outset, the uninterrupted retrogression of a revolution that began with national-democratic demands, but was from the start led by a profoundly reactionary network of mullahs and fundamentalist activists — a sort of permanent revolution in reverse.<sup>2</sup>

## Brutal and distorted capitalist development

From this standpoint, there were of course a series of breaks in the Iranian process, as its leadership broke with one or another category that had converged with it in its twofold opposition to the shah and his American tutors. Nonetheless, the establishment of the "Islamic" dictatorship in no way constituted a break of the process itself, but was rather its natural outcome.

The shah's regime was hated as few regimes have ever been. It made its megalomaniac shows of conspicuous consumption before the eyes of pauperized masses whose numbers were constantly swelling as a result of the brutal and distorted capitalist development given impetus by the regime since the start of the 1960s. These masses, in particular the bottom layers of Teheran society, who come from the peasantry or the traditional petty-bourgeoisie (traders and artisans) in both the countryside and the towns, formed a gigantic, highly explosive, reservoir of forces ready to go into action against the regime.

The historic failure of modernist bourgeois Iranian nationalism, represented by Mossadegh and his fall in 1953, the discrediting of Stalinism represented by the Tudeh party in the wake of Mossadegh's fall, as well as the inadequacy of a revolutionary left following guerrilla-type models, left the field open for another candidate to overthrow the shah — the fundamentalist faction of the Shi'ite clergy headed up by Khomeini.

Through its social-welfare activity, helping the poor in the name of Islamic charity, the substantial network of the Iranian clergy — with 120,000 members in 1979 or 1/300 of the country's population! — indoctrinated the pauperized masses. It offered them the ideological refuge of a religion that, in its Shi'ite version in par-



1. Despite the sexist etymology of the word "hysteria" (which comes from *hysteria*, "uterus"), the most hysterical crowds were men.

2. See "The resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism" (1981), first published in English in *International Marxist Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3, Summer 1987.

ticular, exalts the oppressed, the *mustazafeen*, holding out the perspective of ideal social justice in the framework of an Islamic utopia.

Based on the idea of a return to a mythical early Islam, this utopia is essentially reactionary. Theocracy, patriarchy and obscurantism are the three pillars common to all varieties of Islamic fundamentalism. It can, however, serve to mobilize masses of people suffering the horrors of dependent capitalism and feeling nostalgia for the past. The more illiterate the masses are and the lower their level of politicization because of denial of freedom, the more vulnerable they are to this "opium of the people," which has the peculiar property of being capable of becoming a stimulant.

### War against Iraq a safety-valve for the regime

The *mustazafeen*, organized by the mullahs and the lay missionaries of Islamic fundamentalism and led by the "supreme guide," Ayatollah Khomeini, thus formed the spearhead of the Iranian revolution in 1979. Flocking in their hundreds of thousands into the various apparatuses and institutions of the new regime, they had the illusion, after toppling the throne of a seemingly all-powerful ruler, that they had overnight become a new ruling class. This fabulous psychological lift was reinforced at the time of the occupation of the US embassy in Tehran in 1979-80 by a feeling that the United States, the superpower that had dominated Iran and protected the shah, had been successfully challenged.

This twofold exaltation was reinforced again after September 1980 by Iranian patriotism, or even Persian chauvinism, in the war against the Iraqi invasion. For seven years, this war became the main theme for the mullahs' ideological mobilization of the population. Over this period, Iran stopped the invaders, pushed them back to the border in 1982, and then began a slow but real advance into Iraqi territory, with the declared aim of reaching Baghdad and overthrowing the Saddam Hussein regime.

After 1982, the war against Iraq became a safety-valve for the Khomeini regime. Without this, it would have been forced to confront grave socio-economic problems and the exacerbation of its internal dissent. The military mobilization and the slaughter caused by the war enabled it partially to absorb potentially enormous unemployment. The peremptory demands of the military effort justified the setbacks of the economy, and simplified choices. National unity against the enemy called for putting a damper on the differences in the regime, under Khomeini's tutelage.

At the same time, the "Islamic" regime continued to minister to the needs of its clientele — public housing, distribution of goods, food and other sorts of subsidies

were provided by institutions such as the Holy War for Reconstruction and the Martyrs' Foundation for the families of war victims. Thus, material interests combined with political and ideological mobilization and emotional excitement to offer the regime a rather comfortable popular base.

What enabled the regime of the Iranian mullahs to finance both its war and welfare for its social clientele was not manna from heaven but from beneath the earth: oil. Waging a war of a very low capital intensity, resorting to a large extent to "human waves," Iran managed to avoid going into debt. The oil revenues were sufficient, just barely to be sure, to keep the regime afloat. Without the oil factor the ten years of the Khomeini regime would have been impossible — the demands of capitalist economic rationality would have clashed with the economically "irresponsible" or "irrational" character of the Khomeini regime's social and political management. By financing the budget, oil gave the regime a wide margin of maneuver and autonomy.

Nonetheless, Iran is not a rich country, if you compare the oil revenues with the size of the population. So, oil has only cushioned the inexorable slide in the country's economic and social conditions, dragged down by the combined weight of the war and waste. Unemployment and poverty swelled, against a backdrop of rampant inflation, far exceeding the regime's potential for social assistance. These difficulties were compounded after 1987 by the bogging down of the Iranian forces in Iraq after four years of slow advance at a high cost in human life. The wind began to shift in Iran itself, where signs of growing disaffection with the regime by the population as a whole multiplied.

In 1988, Iraq regained the upper hand in the war. It managed, in its turn, not only to push the Iranian troops out of its territory but also to begin to nibble again at Iran's territory. Khomeini was forced to abandon his dream, and in July to accept the cease-fire proclaimed by the UN Security Council a year before. In his own words, this decision was "more painful than swallowing poison." It was the beginning of his political death agony.<sup>3</sup> He tried again to find a safety valve for the passions of his social base in the person of Salman Rushdie. But this time the target was too small and too far away to serve as a real incentive for mobilization.

### A million people slaughtered in senseless war

On June 3, Khomeini died at the age of 89 in his hospital bed, after sending a million teenagers and men in the prime of life to be slaughtered in a senseless war. In a final outburst, his social base mobilized for his funeral. But there should be no mistake. This last mobilization of fare-

well — which was equal to, if not greater than, the one for his return in 1979 — was the swan song of Khomeinism. The best evidence of this, paradoxically, is the very intensity of the grief and distress shown by the black-clad masses. Distress at the collapse of a fantasy world that is disappearing with the death of its inspirer. Distress of a population that has been left abandoned, facing a difficult present and a highly uncertain future. Distress at the great void left by Khomeini, which none of his epigones is able to fill.

The battle to determine the Imam's successor has already begun. With no-one to fill the role of arbiter that he played, it promises to be a stormy one. At this stage, the four main actors in this drama are the incumbent president of the republic (whose term expires in October), Hojat-oleslam Ali Khamenei, who was appointed on June 4 to succeed the Imam as "supreme guide" and promoted at the same time to the rank of ayatollah; Hojat-oleslam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the present speaker of the parliament, who has just announced his candidacy for the presidency of the republic in the elections scheduled for August; Ahmed Khomeini, the Imam's son, whose role up until now depended entirely on the fact that he controlled access to his father and seemed to exercise a growing influence on his decisions; and, finally, Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri, who was named in 1985 as the Imam's successor and then ousted on March 27 this year.

### Theological, clerical and political differences

In addition to these four figures, there is a gaggle of ayatollahs and mullahs who can claim power or who hold a piece of it, generally in the context of special alliances with one of the men cited above. The struggle for power in Iran revolves around theological and clerical differences as well as political ones. It takes on the aspect of competing personal ambitions, but nonetheless reflects differing socio-political projects.

In fact, while the Shi'ite clergy is definitely the backbone of the Iranian "Islamic" regime, it is not a homogeneous social layer. The Shi'ite clergy is an estate divided into ascending ranks and directly woven into the social fabric, on which it depends. It cannot be equated to a Bonapartist bureaucracy, whose special feature is precisely that it is detached from "civil society." Like the French clergy during the Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, for example, the Iranian clergy reflects the divisions in society. Within it you have to distinguish between the lower

3. On the 1987-88 period, see "Is the Gulf War over?" *IV* 148, October 3, 1988.

4. See the description of the clergy given in the excellent condensed book by Chapour Haguigat, *Iran, la révolution islamique*, Editions Complexe, Brussels, 1985.

and upper clergy, and in each category between various social attitudes and affiliations.<sup>4</sup>

The great majority of the clergy were welded together around Khomeini. All of them have profited from the "Islamic revolution," which put them in power. But once it came to exercising this power, the options were as manifold and divergent as the social and economic determining factors. A faction of the clergy, notably at the top, is linked to the traditional wealthy classes in the towns (the rich bazaar merchants) and in the countryside (the big landowners). But the greater part of the clergy, especially the lower strata, belongs socially and politically to a gamut of urban and rural petty-bourgeois layers ranging from the poorest to the most well off. Its political behavior corresponds to that of these layers, including their characteristic oscillation.

This is the source of the great confusion and heterogeneity, against a background of instability, that typifies the regime of the Iranian mullahs. The dominant fundamentalist ideology is too vague and imprecise with respect to the problems of modern society to be a source of cohesion and consensus. It is in fact moulded to suit the real social aspirations of the protagonists. This goes from a populist fundamentalism with radical anti-plutocratic tones to an ultra-conservative fundamentalism favoring unbridled free enterprise.

All of these positions are backed up with verses from the Koran and quotations from the Prophet and his cousin and son-in-law Ali (whom the Shi'ites, unlike the Sunnis, take as their example). Ayatollah Montazeri is the main figure in the populist fundamentalist current. In that sense, he is the most faithful to the Khomeinist tradition of 1979-80. Up until 1987, he enjoyed the confidence of the Imam, who designated him his successor. This was a natural choice, in particular since Montazeri alone among the politically active Khomeinist clerics had the theological qualifications necessary for the job according to the 1979 constitution.

Some people close to Montazeri provoked a break with Khomeini in 1986 by exposing Rafsanjani's secret dealings with Washington and setting off the Irangate scandal. The severe repression against those close to Montazeri in 1987 signaled the beginning of a series of blows against himself and his partisans. Clearly, the Imam was unhappy because, added by his desire to finish off Saddam Hussein, he had secretly given his green

light to Rafsanjani.

Ahmed, the Imam's son, who had previously been an ally of Montazeri, went over to the side of Rafsanjani. The latter, a notable opportunist, a great demagogue and a fabulously wealthy landowner, is the main representative of the supporters of stabilizing Iran on a course of capitalist development open to foreign participation, especially to the imperialist countries. Since 1987, he has constantly gained ground in his advance toward taking the central power. Appointed head of the regime's armed forces by the Imam in June 1988, he convinced Khomeini to accept the cease-fire in July. With Ahmed Khomeini's complicity, he managed to get the Imam to kick out Montazeri in



March and then to set up a commission to reform the constitution in two respects.

One was to limit the "religious guide's" temporal powers, this being a title to which Rafsanjani cannot pretend and which he does not covet. The second was, following the American model, to increase considerably the powers of the presidency of the republic, for which he intended to run.

The appointment after Khomeini's death of Ali Khamenei as the "supreme guide" was made possible by the alliance between Khomeini junior and Rafsanjani. Khamenei, a colorless figure and a weak

character, entirely suits the redefinition of the role of "guide" that the present speaker of the parliament wants. Of course, the new ayatollah may hold some surprises in store. But for the moment he is nothing more than the shadow of Rafsanjani, who has already launched the final phase of his conquest of power.

Montazeri himself, who is fully qualified to challenge the in fact unconstitutional appointment of Khamenei and claim the post for himself, also went into action after the Imam's death. He may choose to announce his candidacy for the presidency of the republic in opposition to his adversary, Rafsanjani. In this looming battle, Montazeri has the support of a major part of the regime's active base, including the *Pasdaran* or "Revolutionary Guards".

Since being put in a minority in the regime, he has allied himself with the liberals grouped around Bazargan and become a champion of restoring democratic rights and liberties, thereby gaining further popularity.

Rafsanjani, for his part, is counting on the aspiration for stability and an opening up to the outside world that he embodies. He is relying on the support of the technocratic and administrative apparatus, and of course the support of the possessing classes. Finally, and perhaps above all, he is relying on the military hierarchy, to which his appointment as interim chief of the armed forces in June 1988 has enabled him to develop ties.

However, the deceased ayatollah has left the parliamentary president a time bomb. His will sets out a foreign policy line directly opposite to Rafsanjani's, and calls for choosing a man of modest origin as leader of the country. The existence of several power centers has characterized Iran since 1979. Can a centralized and stable bourgeois regime around Rafsanjani come out of this? That is not very likely. Will the contention of the factions blow up the regime? Will it degenerate into civil war? Several scenarios are possible: notably, if there is a descent into chaos, intervention by the regular army in Tehran, or even the establishment of an "Islamic" military regime similar to that instituted in Pakistan by Zia ul-Haq.<sup>5</sup>

The Iranian left, unfortunately, is too weakened today to exert an influence on the situation in the country. It is to be hoped that Khomeini's death will offer it an opportunity to rebuild itself on new bases, drawing the lessons from its grave errors in the past. ★

5. On the role of the army, see "Imperialism and the Gulf War," *IV* 132, December 21, 1987.

# Bureaucracy left with barely a scrap of political cover

**IF THERE WERE** any need to point up once again the illegitimacy of the bureaucratic Polish regime, the June 4 election did so resoundingly. Not a single member of the PZPR [Polish United Workers' Party, the CP] was elected in the first round of the legislative elections! Out of the 261 seats they could hope to win in both houses, the candidates backed by Lech Walesa got 252 the first time around. The rate of abstention was nearly 38%.

CYRIL SMUGA

**O**UT OF 100 seats in the Senate, the "Lech Walesa slate" got 92 in the first round, while the regime's candidates rarely got more than 10%. So, the eight remaining seats should go to the opposition in the second round. In the Diet, 160 of Solidarnosc's 161 candidates won in the first round, while only two of the regime's candidates were elected — what is more, these two were not members of the PZPR.

In addition, while the electoral law provided for reserving 299 seats in the Diet for the government coalition, 35 of these were supposed to be elected on a central slate including the main leaders of the bureaucracy (with the exception of General Jaruzelski). These candidates had to win more than 50% of the votes in a single round in order to be elected, a provision that was designed to legitimize their Bonapartist role. However, only two of them managed to meet this condition! And this was despite Lech Walesa's appeal for a vote for the slate.

The stinging rebuke that the voters delivered to all the bureaucracy's candidates, and in particular those on the "central slate" supported by Walesa, make it impossible to interpret the vote for the

Solidarnosc slate as unqualified support for the program and compromise policy pursued by the union's apparatus.

This contradiction was pointed up also by the high rate of abstention. One of the main ideologues of compromise in Solidarnosc, Bronislaw Geremek, said:

"The high rate of abstention is an important indication of the mood. A section of the voters linked to the opposition did not take part in the poll, probably because they reject any idea of compromise with the government....The danger of an uncontrolled social explosion remains."<sup>1</sup>

## Distrust of Walesa leadership aggravated

In an editorial in the June 7 issue of Solidarnosc's daily, Jerzy Holzer warned: "It does not seem that Solidarnosc can go any further [along the road of compromise] without further increasing the numbers of those who are frustrated."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, rejection of the round-table [the talks between Solidarnosc and the regime] can also be seen in the factories.

Jacek Maziarski, editorialist of the main underground weekly that survives in Warsaw, wrote recently: "When we manage to find a third of our former members, that passes for a success, and it is not unusual for only a fifth of the personnel to fill in membership forms....People are simply afraid that in return for the legalization of the union, a certain number of elected positions and access to top union positions in the new establishment, we have abandoned demands important for the workers and their families. We see a suspicion appearing that the opposition camp's negotiators have given their go-head for a new operation to force the society to tighten its belt."

Distrust of the Walesa leadership of Solidarnosc has been aggravated by the fact that "the new leading apparatus of the union was created from above, by methods that have little in common with democracy."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, a codicil to the law legalizing the union that limits the right to strike has gone over very badly with worker activists.

The June 4 vote, therefore, shows not only that the vast majority of Poles are looking forward to putting an end once and for all to the bureaucratic regime, but

also that a good number of them took the opportunity to issue a strong notice to the bureaucracy: "Get out, now!" Adam Michnik talks about "a potentially revolutionary situation."<sup>4</sup>

The first election results from the "closed constituencies," where the military and police vote, indicate that the ferment is also affecting these pillars of the regime. In a military constituency in Lublin, the general commanding the military region got only a third of the vote, with two thirds going to the Solidarnosc candidates.

In Wroclaw, the riot police, the ZOMO, favored Alternative Orange's surrealist candidate, Waldemar Fydrych, who is known as "the major."<sup>5</sup>

## Bureaucracy tries to hold onto initiative

After an initial moment of surprise, the bureaucracy's mouthpieces have been trying to take advantage of the situation. To this end, they are attempting to hold onto the initiative. After letting it be known that the only alternative to the process set in motion by the round-table was "the Chinese solution," they recognized their defeat and pressed Solidarnosc to accept joint responsibility for the reforms that are underway. This in fact means sharing the responsibility not only for the political liberalization, of which the elections were the kingpin, but also for the economic policy, whose first effects threaten to touch off a wave of discontent among the workers.

Jan Bijak, editor of *Polityka*, the regime's principal weekly, wrote, for example: "The euphoria of victory, the pressure of the radicals, whose strength was shown by the election campaign, the belief that the election statistics reflect mechanically the real relationship of social forces and that the regime has been seriously shaken — all that may lead to dangerous conclusions."

## "Collaboration or civil war"

However, Bijak concluded: "The only good alternative for Poland today is collaboration of the two forces....Neither of them can govern the country by itself without an explosion and without the danger of a civil adventure....Precisely this plebiscitary victory of Solidarnosc can — and undoubtedly must — change the attitude of the opposition itself. I think that it should decide to take joint

1. Interview in *Le Figaro*, June 7, 1989.

2. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, June 7, 1989.

3. Article in *Przegląd Wiadomości Agencyjnych*, quoted from Radio Free Europe, June 8.

4. *Le Monde*, June 7, 1989.

5. Fydrych ran for the same seat as Karol Modzelewski, an official Solidarnosc candidate. He got an insignificant number of votes, less than 2%, but he campaigned rather for a boycott.

6. *Polityka*, June 10, 1989.

responsibility for running the country, for putting the economy right, for the fate of the reform."<sup>6</sup>

Such blackmail — either you collaborate or it's civil war — has been supported by all the imperialist leaderships. Meeting with Margaret Thatcher on June 12, General Jaruzelski was assured of the British government's support in renegotiating the Polish debt with the Paris Club and the IMF. President Mitterrand is on his way to Warsaw, and has already let it be understood that his government is not going to lag behind in offering aid to the economic transformations underway in Poland.

Mitterrand will also push to get the EEC to act in a concerted way in this area, as has been confirmed by [chair of the European Commission] Jacques Delors. The same noises have been coming from George Bush and Helmut Kohl.

For the imperialist leaders, the choice is in fact a simple one — leaving General Jaruzelski to his sad fate would mean taking the chance of lighting a revolutionary bonfire in Europe.

Helping him out of his straits on the other hand means not only avoiding the worst, but being able to dictate conditions for opening up the Polish market — and in time the other COMECON [Eastern bloc] markets — to imperialist products and capital.

### Financial dependence of union on Western backers

Even if this opening may be limited and conditional, the game is worth the candle in these times of capitalist crisis. The imperialists, moreover, are taking advantage of the influence they acquired over the Solidarnosc leadership during martial law — an influence owing at least partly to the financial dependence of the Solidarnosc apparatus on Western aid in those years — to push the union to insure the process of transformation against social risks.

The Solidarnosc leadership is walking backwards into the new political situation. In the spring and summer of 1988, it did everything possible to keep the strikes from spreading and then to stop them. Since then, it has tried to extinguish the social fires every time the wind of austerity revived them. The round-table accord that it signed in April has been seen by a good number of activists as a retreat.

In view of the extent of the defeat of the regime's candidates, the Solidarnosc leaders are trying to restore a bit of their legitimacy in the second round. On June 8, Henryk Wujec, secretary of Lech Walesa's Civic Committee, called for voting in the second round for the government candidates in order to choose the best. In a letter addressed to all the provincial committees, he said that this is a "matter of honor" and "civic duty." Solidarnosc will organize rallies to enable these candidates to get a hearing.

Another indication of the embarrassment of the Solidarnosc leaders is that already on June 5, Solidarnosc spokesperson Janusz Onyszkiewicz stressed that there could be no losers because "all the candidates had a common electoral program — the program of the round-table."

The Solidarnosc leadership's proposals in the crucial area of economic reform do not differ from the government's. In fact, this was one of the principal

problems of this election, and may, to some extent explain the high level of abstention. For example, the Civic Committee's electoral program stipulated: "We are going to demand a change in property relations. It is necessary to create the juridical bases for privatization or for a real socialization.

"State property must be in large measure transferred, sold or rented, to cities and local governments, to enterprises, through the creation of limited companies including cooperative and private capital. The state must not directly engage in economic activity."<sup>7</sup>

In the wake of the elections, Lech Walesa thanked George Bush for the aid that he had already given, and pressed him to step up economic and financial aid so as to make it possible to expand foreign investment in Poland and convert the Polish debt into shares in the country's industry. He asked an American millionaire of Polish origin, Barbara Piasecka-Johnson, who has offered to buy out the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk, now in liquidation, to deliver his letter to the American president.

Before the the vote, moreover, in his visits to Italy, Strasbourg and Brussels, Walesa launched into appeals to Western investors to come to Poland and make their profits there.

The fact remains that the Polish economy is going from bad to worse. Industrial production in the first quarter of 1989 nose-dived, as a result of bottlenecks that the economic reforms have multiplied instead of eliminating. Market supply has felt the impact of this. Inflation has already topped an annually adjusted average of 100%. The free-market exchange rate for the zloty has collapsed, and price rises of around 300% for food products are expected in the fall.

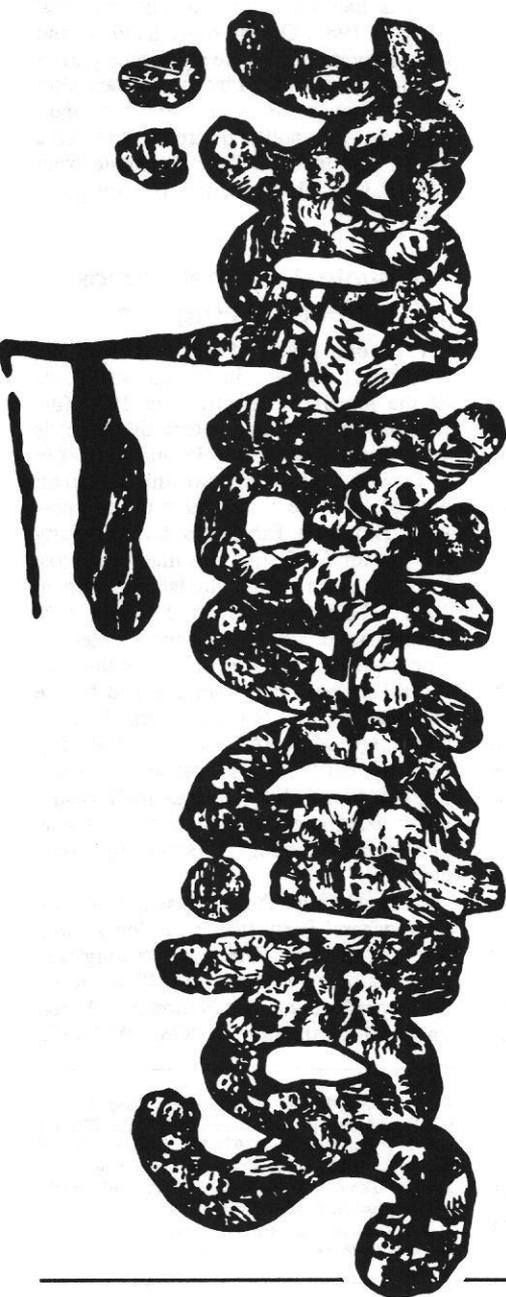
If they accept the scheme of a great coalition in the parliament, as they have said they are ready to, the Solidarnosc leaders will have to take responsibility for these unpopular measures.

### Decisive tests are on the horizon

The question of power is raising its head again in Poland. The Solidarnosc leaders are carefully holding back from seeking a solution to this question. Without anyone formulating it, the slogan of "all power to Solidarnosc" has emerged from the ballot boxes.

In trying to preserve the status quo at any price — and even appearing to be a crutch for the bureaucracy — the Solidarnosc apparatus is discrediting itself and helping to divide and disorient the workers. Nonetheless, the June 4 election indicates that decisive tests are on the horizon. ★

7. *Tygodnik Powszechny*, May 7, 1989.



# Beginning of the end for Özal regime

TURGUT ÖZAL's government finally yielded in early May to the massive mobilization of public sector workers that had been shaking Turkey since mid-April. It conceded a 140% wage increase. The trade-union federation Türk-İs had been demanding 170% (just to return to the 1986 level of living standards). This agreement is far from satisfactory for the 600,000 workers, who had shown their tenacity, ingenuity and combativity in the preceding weeks, fighting to recover wage levels that have halved in 10 years. Nevertheless, it is the first workers' victory after nine years of silence following the 1980 coup d'état.

The repression of the May 1 demonstration, which left one person dead in Istanbul, proved that the Özal government — extremely weakened by the economic crisis and its defeat in the March 26 municipal elections — was losing control of the situation.

An early general election has now become inevitable, and with it the probable fall of the present government, which will sound the death knell of the edifice built by the generals.

## FUAT ORÇUN

**F**ACING the erosion of its popularity, Turgut Özal's Motherland Party (ANAP) has already called one snap election, in October 1987, in order to forestall the worst. It was the second time in the history of the republic that the government had resorted to an early election. In spite of substantial losses, the regime nevertheless succeeded in getting two-thirds of the seats in parliament with only 36% of the vote (see *IV* 133, January 25, 1988).

Bolstered by this relative victory, and again for the same reasons, the ANAP held a referendum in September 1988 to bring forward the date of the municipal elections scheduled for March 1989 by four months (see *IV* 153, December 12, 1988). After being repudiated by a 65% "No" vote, Özal had to resign himself to holding the municipal elections on the date initially planned.

Of course, everyone expected a setback for ANAP. But, unlike what has happened in other countries during a transition from a military dictatorship to a parliamentary regime, Turkey had never seen a real radicalization or large-scale reactions either to human rights violations or to the nine years of austerity policies. So this year's March 26 municipal elections were a veritable earthquake (even if its scale is dis-

puted) by comparison with the extremely slow evolution of the political situation since the 1980 coup. With only 21.75% of the vote, the ANAP has become the third party, far behind the Social Democratic People's Party (SHP), with 28%; and the Party of the Just Road (DYP), with 26%.

So, barely one-and-a-half years after the 1987 general election, a new early election seems to have become inevitable, this time under pressure from the electorate. The political scene reflects a real crisis of representativeness. In spite of an electoral system that favours the big parties, none of those in the running seems to be capable of forming a majority by itself.

## ANAP loses 4 million votes in local elections

The striking thing about the municipal elections was ANAP's decline: the party has lost four million votes (or half of its electorate) since the 1987 election. This has pushed some people to wonder if ANAP is just a conjunctural party condemned to disappear, or if it really has a historic place on the political scene.

ANAP's loss of votes can be explained technically in the following way: On the one hand, voting was not compulsory, as it was in 1987. Even if the number of reg-



istered electors has grown by 1,750,000 since 1987 [at 21, all Turkish citizens are automatically counted as qualified voters], the number of votes cast went down by 1,850,000. It could be claimed that the vast majority of these apolitical abstentionists had voted for the governmental party in 1987. On the other hand — and most importantly — the right wing parties that had been banned by the military after the 1980 coup d'état have resumed their place in the political arena, and have begun to win back their electorate from ANAP, which had profited from the political vacuum.

## Islamic Party makes most electoral progress

The comparison of the results of the municipal elections in March with those of the legislative elections in 1977 (the last general elections before the coup) is very instructive. The SHP and the DYP<sup>1</sup> have won back nearly two-thirds of their electorate in the cities and in the countryside. But it is Erbakan's Islamic Party (RP), with 9.8%, that has made the most progress, even beating the Islamic score in 1977.<sup>2</sup> This result is close to the 10% needed nationally to get deputies elected. Consequently, at future elections, this party will be no longer handicapped by the "tactical voting" that has worked to the advantage of ANAP or the DYP. The Islamic Party exists mainly in some regions of Kurdistan (areas traditionally under Islamic influence), but it has also grown fairly rapidly in some big urban centres.

As for Colonel Türkeş' fascist Nationalist Workers' Party (MÇP), it "only" won 4.2% of the vote, and is still a long way from matching the score of 6.4% achieved by its predecessor, the Nationalist Action Party (MHP, the famous "Grey Wolves").

1. The SHP is the heir of the People's Republic Party (CHP) of former premier Bulent Ecevit. The CHP got almost 41% of the vote in 1977. The DYP is the heir of the Justice Party (AP) of former premier Süleyman Demirel. The AP got 36.9% in 1977. The CHP and the AP were banned by the military in 1981.

2. The RP is the successor of Erbakan's National Salvation Party (MSP), which won 8.6% in 1977.

The fascists are strongest in those areas where there are sharp confrontations of an ethnic/religious, Turk/Kurdish or Shi'ite/Sunni Muslim character.

And finally, the Party of the Democratic Left (DSP), led by former prime minister Bulent Ecevit<sup>3</sup>, won 9% of the vote and thus also came close to the 10% barrier. The DSP made progress in some regions (notably some working-class towns) where Ecevit's charisma still has a hold, but it lost ground in the rest of the country. This party's future depends on developments in the electoral system, because it is banking on a lowering of the 10% barrier and on forming a "left" coalition with the SHP.

### Possibility of future coalition government

So the electoral balance of forces is more or less the same as in 1977, which demonstrates that the pre-coup electoral scene was not accidental but had a real political and social basis that remains valid today.

The election results have therefore destroyed the political edifice built out of the coup d'état...but have put nothing in its place. It is probable that early elections will only exacerbate this confused situation. A coalition seems to be on the cards. Demirel is in the best position in parliament, with the possibility of going in either with the ANAP, or with the Islamists and fascists (as he did before in 1976).

As for the possibility of a coalition between the SHP and the DYP, even if this is the best solution on paper from the bourgeoisie's point of view, there is little chance of it happening. Even further electoral losses by the ANAP will not profit the SHP, but will help the DYP, which could easily narrow the gap of 3% that separates the two parties. The fact that the left is in the lead, as a result of the division on the right, is only accidental. In particular, the DYP is playing a much more active role on the ground as an opposition party than the SHP.

The fact is that some political parties, whose histories are tied up with that of the republic, have managed to keep going

despite a military coup every 10 years since the second world war aimed at neutralizing or dissolving them. It is therefore clear that there is no question of reorganizing society without having first succeeded in superceding these parties.

The political current embodied today by the DYP, which has been banned many times, has successfully restructured itself under different names and maintained its own tradition. The Islamic current has also successfully reappeared in a stronger form, in spite of — or even perhaps thanks to — a series of restrictions (written into the penal code and the constitution) aimed at wiping it from the political scene. In a country that is not as Western as all that, an openly fascist organization has managed to hang onto most of its positions in spite of heavy military repression.

The SHP, a party belonging to the Socialist International but dominated more by "nationalist/populist" features than by social-democratic ones, has not managed to become anything other than a state party (moreover, it was the SHP's predecessor, the CHP, that was the founder of the present Turkish state).

The political structure imposed by the military coup d'état has been piece by piece dismantled through the ballot box. In addition, both at the time of the coup and during the transition to a civilian regime, no mass political action took place. Given all these factors, it has to be admitted that Turkey has a very well-established and particular political tradition.

### Tendency for original political patterns to reemerge

Since 1977, the political situation has developed without explosions or major upheavals, and in the framework of the electoral process. Even if the coup d'état jumbled the points of reference for some time because of the banning of the traditional parties, the general tendency is towards a re-emergence of the original patterns.

Until recently, the effects of austerity policies on workers' buying power had been studied by comparing new figures

with those of January 1980. The austerity programme was begun in 1980 and already directed by Turgut Özal, who at that time was an "expert" in Demirel's cabinet. But the fall of workers' real income has been so rapid that even a comparison of the figures for recent years is revealing (see table).

### Fall in real wages despite industrial growth

It should be added that industrial production has risen somewhat in recent years (2.1% in 1988). Turkey is one of the rare countries to have had a fall in real wages in the midst of a period of growth in industrial production. However, it would be wrong to assume a real process of industrialization in the 1980s. It was primarily sectors of food production, alcohol, tobacco and textiles that increased their contributions to total production. Furthermore, even though agriculture's share of the Gross National Product (GNP) decreased, the number of workers engaged in this sector has remained stable. Consequently, all that can be said is that during the past few years, there have been some investments in the infrastructure. In addition, even the most optimistic bosses consider the 1980s to have been a "preparatory" period for a real industrialization effort.

Until the recent elections, the government were demanding that industrialists decrease production. Since March, they have asked them to get ready to increase their productive capacity. But the industrialists do not seem to have taken seriously this appeal, whose aim was to revive the internal market. This was on the one hand because of the government's weak position, and on the other because until now industry has been neglected in favour of financial and commercial sectors. In addition, the government proposed no concrete plan.

On top of this, the external debt of Turkey — which is one of the countries that pay up to the last penny — amounts to \$37.6 billion (62.4% of GNP). For 1989, interest on the debt is over \$7 billion. In other words, it will be increasingly difficult (and politically costly) to find new sources of finance. The higher interest rates on the debt will lead to a relative decrease in investments. Inflation has reached 80% (by official figures), and it will not come down in spite of the pleadings of the prime minister. In this situation, the expected progress in the rate of growth of the GNP (3.6% in 1988) will not happen. The country is not in a position to pursue an expansionist economic policy, and all the indicators show that the economic situation is in its most critical state since the coup d'état.

### Change in distribution of GNP (% of GNP)

Year	Agriculture	Wages	Profits, interest & income
1981	23.07	24.57	52.36
1982	21.87	24.62	53.55
1983	20.52	24.78	54.69
1984	20.44	21.57	57.99
1985	19.08	18.84	62.08
1986	18.09	17.70	64.20
1987	17.06	17.00	65.04
1988	14.00	15.80	70.20

(Research by Dr. Süleyman Özmucar, Cumhuriyet, April 14, 1989.)

3. Ecevit, the CHP's charismatic leader, broke with the party's cadres (which regrouped in İnönü's SHP) after the coup d'état, and founded a rival party, the DSP.

During the military regime, workers did not have the channels necessary for expressing their discontent: the coup d'état had destroyed accumulated union strength.<sup>4</sup> On the eve of the 1983 legislative elections that brought Özal to power, the legal restrictions contained in the new constitution and trade-union laws prevented workers from being able to conduct meaningful negotiations.

The attitude of the main trade-union federation, Türk-İs, was an important factor. Spared by the military, it took a conciliatory position vis-à-vis the junta (its general secretary was even a minister in the military government), and it has always made backroom deals with successive governments. The right dominated the union movement, with the exception of a social-democratic minority inside Türk-İs and some small independent unions.

But under Özal's rule, for the first time Türk-İs's traditional policies of class collaboration and "being above the parties" found itself up against a brick wall: the government no longer took it seriously. In spite of the permanent falls in income of workers in the public sector, where Türk-İs is strongest, the federation was unable to win the slightest concession.

Starting in 1987-88, after the strikes led by the left of Türk-İs and the independent unions achieved some — albeit partial — successes, the ranks began to put pressure on the federation. Centres of opposition began to organize themselves in some branches. It is also important to note that a good number of DISK members had had to join Türk-İs after their union was dissolved (see note 4).

The union bureaucracy felt increasingly squeezed between its grumbling ranks and an indifferent government. Türk-İs therefore had to oppose the government for the first time in its history. It called on people not to vote for the ANAP in the 1987 referendum<sup>5</sup> and in the recent elections. It even adopted an action programme to put pressure on the government, although that remained on paper with the exception of a few demonstrations and rallies. But, during the previous year, workers' protest actions beat all the records: 2.5 million workers participated in various actions of passive resistance.<sup>6</sup> Fear of repression was cancelled out by the threat of hunger.

As if they were carrying out a vast, well-worked out and centralized cam-

paign plan, groups of workers from different cities organized unusual actions that succeeded in getting around the restrictions on union rights and the right to strike. In some factories, they all decided to shave their heads; in others, that everyone would grow beards. In one sector, thousands of workers decided to all fall ill the same day and go collectively to the company doctors (who also supported them). In other factories, workers boycotted the canteen or the company buses, turning the walk to work into spontaneous demonstrations that left the police powerless. Recently, 1,500 workers decided to start divorce proceedings, explaining that their wages were inadequate for feeding their families, and that therefore they were no longer worthy to be "heads of families".

Coordination and communication bet-

— have now begun to challenge this argument.

This was the context to the build up to May Day, with workers adding on to their wage claims the demand that celebrations of the international festival be authorized. In Turkey, May 1 is traditionally the scene for actions and confrontations reflecting the balance of class forces.

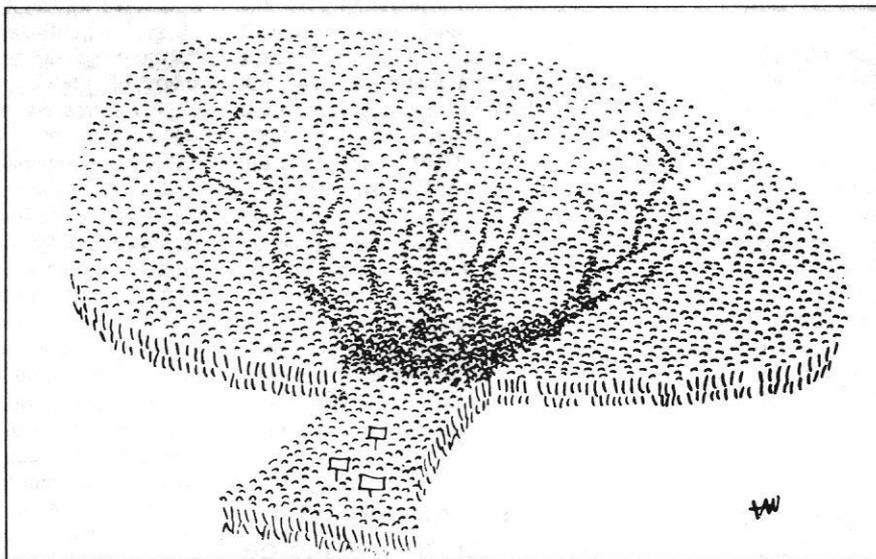
After a 50-year ban, May 1 was celebrated for the first time in 1976 in Istanbul, on the initiative of the DISK. It was a real demonstration of workers' strength, with a massive rally of more than 100,000 that was well-organized and inclusive of all the groups and sections of the left. The following year, participation was just as impressive, but the demonstration ended in a blood-bath. The pro-Moscow group (close to the Turkish Communist Party) that had taken over the leadership of the

DISK wanted to exclude the Maoist groups from the demonstration. In this fraught atmosphere, following a police provocation that has never really been cleared up, plain-clothes police hidden in surrounding buildings and in the demonstration fired on the crowd, causing generalized panic and a shoot-out (some extreme-left groups had come armed). The result: 37 dead and hundreds wounded.

Since this event, successive govern-

ments and the right wing have used the deaths of May 1, 1977, to try to ban new demonstrations. In 1979, Ecevit's "social-democratic" government decreed a curfew to prevent the May Day demonstration. On May 1, 1980, four months before the coup d'état, the army was already parading in the streets of Istanbul, and DISK leaders were arrested as a "preventive" measure. After the coup, the junta decreed that May 1 was no longer even a holiday (officially, it had been the "spring holiday") and that, of course, in the future all demonstrations were banned.

After the failure of some vague attempts to hold rallies in 1988, it was due to the initiative taken by workers in struggle that the May Day celebration was put back on the agenda this year, even before any of



between the centres of action did not go through the unions. The workers created their own network of informal communication. Here and there solidarity strikes even broke out, and workers held regular protest actions during worktime.

Workers no longer trust their trade union, and even less the government or even the opposition parties. One of the most popular slogans is: "Türk-İs can no longer betray us!". Local union offices are regularly occupied by angry workers. While this crisis of confidence regarding the established structures and institutions has become all pervasive, the workers on the other hand have regained confidence in themselves, and undoubtedly this will be the most important gain for this movement.

It is important to stress that neither the bosses nor the government have dared to directly confront the movement, which enjoys widespread legitimacy and recognition among the public at large. While at the outset the argument that wage rises aggravate inflation was used to reject the wage demands, some representatives of the bosses — and even of the government

4. The Confederation of Progressive Unions of Turkey (DISK), which had 400,000 members, was banned after the coup. DISK had led most of the union struggles. It was led by a left bureaucracy close to the Turkish Communist Party (TKP) up until 1977 and after that by the team of Abdullah Bastırık, which was close to the CHP. Left and far-left currents coexisted within it. See *IV* 143, December 26, 1983.

5. See *IV* 124, July 13, 1987.

6. See *IV* 153, December 12, 1988.

the unions launched an appeal. In the days running up to May 1, nearly all the press was unanimous in stressing the legitimacy of such a demand.

### Government chooses brutal confrontation over May Day

Even Demirel — who was prime minister at the time of the bloody May Day of 1977! — declared that he did not oppose the celebration of this “workers’ festival”. Some industrialists and right-wing politicians went one better, emphasizing that from the viewpoint of their interests it might even be harmful to persist in opposing it. Their argument was that the workers’ struggle was limited to the economic arena and was developing around “passive” actions, so it would be pointless to provoke a radicalization around this issue.

But the government chose the path of brutal confrontation, and began to make threats. Some of these were aimed at the SHP, whose leaders had declared that they would support and participate in a May Day demonstration. Intoxicated by its electoral success, and busy with pleading with the government and trying to convince it to go for early “peaceful” elections, the SHP was caught up short by the scale of the workers’ actions. Rather than supporting the workers’ demands, the SHP preferred to put itself to the fore on this May 1, which promised to reflect a consensus.

However, all that the government had to do to get the doughty social democrats to retreat was to raise the tone of its voice. The SHP’s turnaround caused a similar retreat by left trade unionists inside Türk-İs and the independent unions. The “Organizing Committee” that they had set up for this event and which, truth to tell, had not organized very much, decided the very morning of the demonstration to call everything off.

Thus, those who had come to demonstrate on May 1 found themselves alone facing the repressive forces. Two contingents of around 3,000 people were formed, composed mainly of students and sympathizers of extreme-left groups. The police were determined to prevent any movement towards Taksim Square (baptized “May 1 Square” by workers in 1976). For the first time they used “Israeli truncheons”, murderous weapons used by the Israelis in the occupied territories. In certain places, the police opened fire on unarmed demonstrators, killing one 18-year-old worker, wounding dozens of people and following this up with 500 arrests.

The results could certainly have been much worse and turned into a massacre. However, regardless of the figures, it is the meaning that this repression has taken on that is significant. This state terror was carried out directly against the workers’ movement, if not the entire opposition. The government’s aim was to terrorize the

population by raising the spectre of the terror that reigned before the coup d’état so as to be able to pose as the sole guarantor of stability and order. This theme also came up in Özal’s speeches. He accused the press of “exaggerating these incidents which, after all, had only left one dead”, and referred to secret plots aimed at liquidating him and his government.<sup>7</sup>

But this time it backfired. The workers’ actions had won such a level of legitimacy that in spite of the small number of demonstrators on May 1, and despite the fact that it was an “illegal” event, public opinion overwhelmingly laid the responsibility for what happened at the door of the government and the police. It was they who had broken the law. The incidents during the funeral of the young worker, notably the beating up of journalists by the police, aroused unanimous indignation. The next day, 500 journalists demonstrated against police and government brutality.

### Bourgeoisie loses confidence in the regime

After the political crisis and the workers’ challenge, the only additional thing that was needed to demonstrate the government’s incapacity to rule the country was the revival of street actions. Built up on the basis of the political vacuum created by the coup d’état, in a context where the entire opposition — both bourgeoisie and working class — was muzzled, the ANAP imagined that everything would go on forever as it wished. The return to the scene of the traditional bourgeois parties had already disturbed its peace, but then the streets were calm, and everything was confined to the parliamentary arena.

After the May Day events, it became clear that even the bourgeoisie no longer had confidence in such a government, which was incapable of managing the smallest conflict without putting into question the stability of the whole system. Özal’s imperialist promoters, notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, also began to consider the question of an alternative.

It can be said that, finally, the working class that failed to put up any resistance to the 1980 coup has put its mark on the liquidation of the vestiges of the military regime. Moreover, there have been some important changes inside the working class, trends which have accelerated during the past ten years.

Indeed, the working class has been largely rejuvenated: a large number of workers have been working for less than ten years. Paralleling the increasing youthfulness of the population, the working class has also become younger: most of the natural leaders coming out of this recent movement have an average age of thirty. In the public sector, 60% of workers are under 40.

Another important change is that the

level of education has risen. Nearly 30% of workers have gone to high school or university. In the public sector, only 2% to 3% of employees have not gone to school. Around 40% of workers are “second generation” — that is, their parents were also wage earners. In addition, 95% of them have no other income and no longer have any links with the countryside and the peasantry. This is an important point, because the number of landless peasants has also grown. Wage earners now make up 47% of the active population — as compared to 14% in 1955! — and this figure rises to 67% in the cities. (*Ekonomik Panorama*, May 7, 1989.)

Workers’ families are also changing. The only way of maintaining family income, even at a level of simply eating to survive, is for everyone in the family to go out to work. Men look for second jobs, while women find temporary work as maids, for example. Even the children do all sorts of odd jobs that can bring in a few pennies.

One of the results of these developments is a change of mentality, and an evolution in activities and propaganda. For example, workers use more and more sarcasm and irony to express their discontent. To have a go at the “American-style” politics introduced by Özal and to emphasize his collusion with imperialism, workers stick up slogans in English saying, “We are hungry!” or “We want *ekmek* [bread]!” To protest against censorship, they decided to have a “silent strike” — not speaking for a whole day in the workplaces. To show that wages are unfair, they have worked with just one arm. To show that they do not have enough money to buy shoes, they have gone to work barefooted.

### Radicalization expressed in the trade unions

The most recent actions have been concentrated in the public sector, where strikes were rare up until now. Türk-İs, which dominated this sector, made deals with the government to avoid conflicts. Now the workers are no longer accepting this system, and no longer want to let the union leadership handle things. The union congresses that are going to take place at the end of the year will be stormy. Leadership changes and reorganizations are likely.

The movement’s greatest weakness and limitation has been the fact that it has been confined to economic demands, failing to put forward political slogans other than general protests against the government. However, it has attacked basic problems that the Turkish union movement has faced since 1940s without solving.

DISK is always portrayed as an alternative model to Türk-İs. To be sure, DISK had a more militant profile. It broke from Türk-İs in 1967, on the basis of positions

7. Özal survived an assassination attempt in 1988.

further to the left. However, in terms of its structures and functioning, it never did anything more than copy Türk-Is's bureaucratic conceptions. It was also unable to put up any resistance to the military coups in 1971 and 1980. And, after it was banned, it has not even been able to exert any influence in raising the consciousness of workers. Its conception of a rhetorical sort of trade-unionism confining itself to getting better wage contracts and getting the workers to vote for the CHP is not unconnected to the passivity of the workers after the coup d'état.

### Continuing recomposition in socialist movement

The president of DISK, Abdullah Bastürk, and its general secretary, Hassan Fehmi Isiklar, are now SHP deputies. The former leaders of DISK sometimes meet together, participate in international trade-union forums and issue statements. But the discussions going on about relegalizing DISK or fusing it with Türk-Is have tended to be bypassed by developments.

The working class has clearly demonstrated its desire to control and orient its organizations itself. The new workers' leaders who have come out of the mobilizations, who are influential at the plant, industry and regional levels and have proved themselves in action, will not let themselves be manipulated so easily. Henceforth, it is they who will be able to claim to represent the ranks.

As for the socialist movement, it is been in the midst of recomposition for three years. This new process, however, is a laborious one and far from being crystallized. Paradoxically, the two main groups (out of the 80 into which the Turkish and Kurdish left was divided before 1980), that is, Dev Yol [Revolutionary Path] and Halkin Kurtulusu [People's Liberation] have been the last to reorganize. However, despite the very hard blows and splits that they have suffered, these two organizations have expanded their influence relatively rapidly since they reappeared on the political scene, basing themselves on nothing but their past gains.

It is hard to chart and classify the far-left groups in Turkey, not because of the large number of them but because of their present weakness and political confusion. The developments in the USSR and the all-embracing criticism of Stalinism have opened up new horizons. Some movements are experiencing real shake-ups and splits purely on the basis of such discussions. Aside from some unreconstructed Stalinists (some ultra-left Maoist or pro-Albanian currents), none of these groups seems to be hanging on firmly to its old programmatic identity.

Eurocommunism made little impact in Turkey before 1980. But the United Communist Party of Turkey (TBKP), which arose out of a recent fusion of the Turkish

CP and the Workers' Party of Turkey (TIP), finally lined up with this current. At the same time, it came up with a theoretical innovation calling for a third stage before the democratic and the socialist revolutions. The leaders of the TBKP were invited to the recent Italian CP congress, where they declared that the Italians' "new course" seemed to them to be an interesting model (see IV 163).

Unfortunately for this party, there is no social-democratic party in Turkey (like the Italian SP) with which it could hope to fuse! After the return of the TBKP's main leaders from exile and the publicity around their imprisonment<sup>8</sup>, this party gained greater prestige in the eyes of its sympathizers. Today, it is putting its bets above all on the government being good enough to grant it legal status, and it is proclaiming its readiness to pay the price for that.

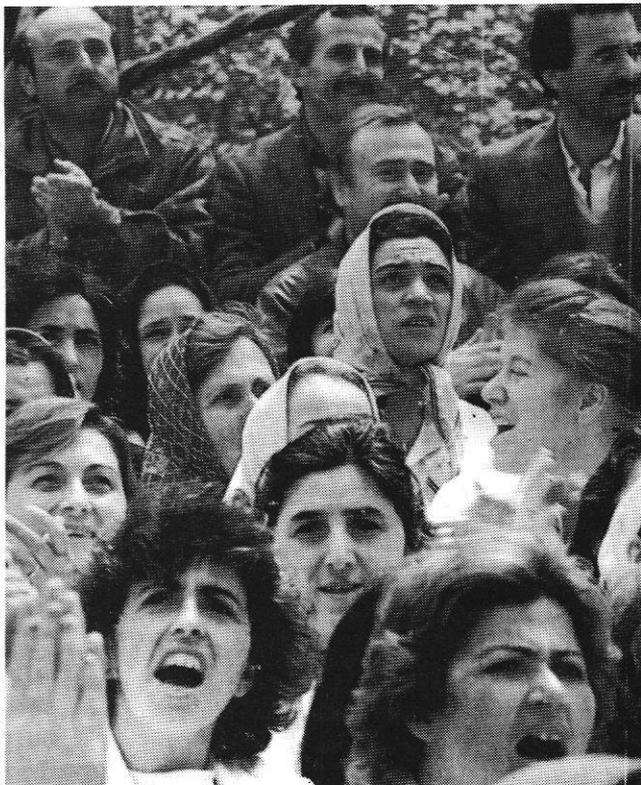
The pro-Chinese current, survivors of the Turkish Workers' and Peasants' Party (TIKP), have founded a legal party, the Socialist Party, claiming to have changed their line totally. It is true that in the past this current carried the theory of "three worlds" to the point of absurdity, arguing that it was necessary to reinforce the Turkish state and national unity against the Soviet threat. This position made them outcasts from the far left.

Despite a limited media breakthrough and the appeals they issued for the entire left to unite in the SP, they have not managed to go beyond the circle of their former sympathizers. Moreover, they have recently suffered a split, notably as a result of an internal debate over Stalinism.

### Programmatic discussion in the far left

The revolutionary currents (such as the forces around Dev Yol and the successive splits it has suffered) have largely broken with Stalinism. However, they have had a hard time defining a political identity.

The all-embracing programmatic discussions that have been going on in recent years have produced many changes and advances that would have been unimaginable in the 1970s. Only a fear of being accused by the others of becoming "Trotskyists" has limited wrenching reassessments. Despite everything, the evolution that these currents are experiencing is very encouraging for the possibility of



developing independent socialist politics.

In recent years revolutionary Marxists have been able to acquire an audience far greater than their organizational strength, benefitting from the slowness of the main currents of the far left to restructure themselves and make a comeback onto the political scene. As at the time of the 1987 parliamentary elections and the 1988 referendum, on the occasion of the latest elections they participated in forming common platforms of various far-left groups and in developing a joint campaign and candidacies.

### Major changes and recompositions underway

Discussions are continuing on the need for building a united socialist party. But they are still far from fruition. The socialist movement has enjoyed a certain upturn in activity, but its scope should not be exaggerated. The low level of politicization of the recent workers' mobilizations also indicates the weakness of the far left's base in the workers' movement.

Moreover, neither the common election campaign waged by nine far-left currents (culminating in a demonstration of 1,500 people) nor the May Day actions offer a sufficient basis for expecting a rapid growth of the socialist movement.

Major changes and recompositions are certainly in the making and some steps forward have been taken. But the road ahead is still long. ★

8. At the time of the 1987 legislative elections, Haydar Kulu and Nihat Sargin, the two main leaders of the TBKP, decided to come back and accept imprisonment in Turkey in order to force the hand of the government, which had been promising to legalize the CP. They are still in prison!

## OBITUARY

# CLR James, writer and revolutionary

**WITHIN the space of two months, death has removed from the scene two of the outstanding pioneers of Trotskyism in Britain — Harry Wicks in April [see p.26] and now CLR James. But while Harry remained a convinced Trotskyist all his life, James developed political and philosophical conceptions of his own which led him away from Trotskyism.**

**CHARLIE VAN GELDEREN**

**B**ORN in Trinidad in 1901, James' first interest was cricket — a sport once considered quintessentially English, but which his native Caribbean has long made its own. In the heated political debates that followed the First World War, James was caught up in the mounting criticism of the colonial regime. He was particularly drawn to the popular movement led by the Mayor of Port of Spain, Andre Cipriani. One of his earliest political writings was a biography of Cipriani, later published in a revised version as *The Case for West Indian Self-Government*.

## Lancashire workers were his educators

In 1932 James arrived in England, settling in Nelson, a Lancashire town [in the north of England] with strong radical traditions. The industrial disputes that were going on at the time were to leave a lasting impression. As he was to say later, the Lancashire workers were his educators in the class struggle.

It was in Lancashire that he read Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, which led him on to the study of Marx, Engels and Lenin. From then on, James identified himself with the socialist revolution. He joined the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in 1934, where he was active in the Trotskyist Marxist Workers' Group, becoming their foremost polemicist.

Those of us who were around in those days can still remember his tall, striking figure and his fiery denunciations of Stalinism. Only once did the Communist Party pluck up courage to engage him in debate. In Islington Library in North London, he devastated the CP Speaker, Pat Sloan, himself no mean orator.

James displayed his qualities as a speaker and writer to particular effect

after Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia. His articles in the ILP journal *New Leader*, cutting through all the cant of the League of Nations, were among the best agitational material that he ever wrote. At the ILP's annual conference in Keighley, he succeeded in winning support for the line of workers' sanctions.

In 1936 his *World Revolution 1917-1934* was published. This was the first comprehensive study of the rise of the Communist (Third) International under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky and its subsequent fall under Stalin. Trotsky commented that it was a good book but that the author did not understand dialectics. This rankled with James and led him to an intense study of Hegelian methodology. The result was his *Notes on Dialectics*, in which he argues that it was Trotsky who misunderstood the dialectic and that his philosophy of history was flawed.

With Harry Wicks, Reg Groves, Henry Sara and others, James played a prominent part in the Trotsky Defence Committee, which was set up to counter the avalanche of falsehoods coming out of the Moscow Trials. Although he continued to play a role in Trotskyist circles he increasingly concentrated on writing and research.

## A classic study of the first slave revolt in history

A novel about West Indian Barrack-yard life, *Minty Alley*, was published in 1936 and he was working on his magnum opus, his study of the first successful slave uprising in history, the Santo Domingo revolt.

*The Black Jacobins* is now acknowledged as the classic study of that epoch-making event. In 1938 he also published *A History of Negro Revolt*. After the unification of most of the British Trotskyist

grouplets in 1938, James was one of the delegates to the Founding Conference of the Fourth International and was elected onto the International Executive Committee. In 1938, James left Britain for the United States and immediately plunged into the work of the American Trotskyist organization, the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP), concentrating particularly on issues affecting Blacks. He spent some weeks with Trotsky in Mexico, where they discussed the question of an autonomous Black movement. Within the SWP he fought for a turn towards Black people.

## A living legend in his later years

The outbreak of World War II and the crisis in the SWP over its position on the Soviet Union led James to develop his differences with Trotsky. For James, the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact was the conclusive evidence that the Soviet Union was no longer a workers' state which had to be defended. In collaboration with Raya Dunayevskaya, he formed the Johnson-Forest tendency, which developed theoretical positions that took them further and further away from the positions of Trotsky and the Fourth International. They argued that the Stalinist parties outside the Soviet Union were not the "tools of the Kremlin" but were "an organic product of the mode of capitalism at this stage". The Soviet Union was not a deformed workers' state in which the bureaucracy had usurped state power but state capitalist. His break with Trotskyism was now complete.

James was also active in support of the growing revolt against colonial rule, especially in Africa. Kwame Nkrumah was a protege of his and he was hopeful that Nkrumah would head the fight for a free and socialist Africa. He did not hesitate to break with Nkrumah when he saw where he was going.

In his later years CLR — as he was universally called — became something of a living legend. His room in Brixton in South London became a place of pilgrimage for Black revolutionaries from all over the world. His interests were widespread and cosmopolitan. A passionate love for Shakespeare and Beethoven vied with his devotion to cricket and his continued interest in revolutionary politics.

He remained an optimist all his life. On his 80th birthday, he told a young audience in Chicago:

"I will live to see the South African revolution. I don't think I will live to see the American revolution, but when you make your revolution I will find some way of coming to join you."

That revolutionary optimism, that unshakeable belief in the future of humanity was the characteristic which best sums up CLR James — thinker, writer, revolutionary. ★

OBITUARY

# Harry Wicks

HARRY WICKS was one of the founding fathers of British Trotskyism. He was in many ways a personification of the historic continuity of our movement, a living link between the early Leninist Comintern and the Bolshevik Party and those who carry on these traditions today.

Harry became interested in working class politics at the early age of 16 when he joined the Daily Herald Group in 1921. The majority of this group participated in the founding of the Communist Party of Great Britain. He helped to form the Young Communist League, where his leadership qualities were immediately recognized. During the General Strike of 1926 he edited a rank-and-file journal, *The Signal*.

Harry was sent to Moscow for a three year course at the International Lenin School. He arrived a month or two before the 15th Congress of the CPSU, which voted for the final expulsion of Trotsky and the Left Opposition. The school became a platform where the issues that were tearing the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International into warring factions were thrashed out. This experience was to have a life-long influence on Harry, deepening his understanding of the fundamentals of Marxism and his internationalism. The sterile dogma of "socialism in one country" was anathema to him.

Back in Britain he soon found himself in conflict with the party bureaucracy. In Germany the threat of fascism was reaching menacing proportions. Stalinist policies could only lead the German working class — the most powerfully organized proletariat outside the Soviet Union — into the abyss of defeat. Joining with Reg Groves, Hugo Dewar, Henry Sara and others in the Balham Group, Harry fought for the principled Leninist positions championed by Trotsky. Their expulsion from the Communist Party followed. Harry remained true to these principles throughout his life. A high point in his life was when he shared a platform with Trotsky in Copenhagen in 1932, when Trotsky gave his memorable address "In Defence of the Russian Revolution".

Harry had many differences with the leadership of the Fourth International and with other British Trotskyists. Never a docile conformist, he did not hesitate to express these differences forcefully. But in a letter to me a few months before his death he re-affirmed his loyalty to the Fourth International and its programme.

We salute his memory and extend our sympathy to his wife and family. Our greatest tribute to Harry is to carry on his political work and to build the Fourth International. ★

Charlie van Gelderen

# AROUND THE WORLD



## SOUTH AFRICA

### Solidarity for Upington defendants

FOURTEEN of the Upington 26 have been sentenced to death. They have been convicted on the same basis of "common purpose" used against the Sharpeville 6. This means that people could hang for a murder they did not participate in. The same kind of massive international campaign that won a reprieve for the Sharpeville defendants is getting underway.

Of the 26 defendants, 25 were convicted of the 1985 murder of a municipal policeman in Paballelo township outside Upington, a town on the border with Namibia. Most of the accused were convicted on the basis that they were part of a crowd that stoned the home of the policeman before he was killed, also by a crowd of people.

In South Africa anti-apartheid organizations have launched an international campaign to reverse the death sentences. The South African Council of Churches called the death sentences "an outrage that only the apartheid system can produce".

The defence is now in the process of entering an appeal against the judgement — the process will take between 12-18 months. Those sentenced to death will wait the time on death row. All those convicted have been in prison since April 1988, and now their dependants are in dire financial need.

A "Friends of the Upington 26" committee has been set up in Britain to organize the solidarity campaign. At the same time the British Anti-Apartheid Movement has agreed to take up the campaign. A picket of the South African Embassy in London has already taken place, and defence of the Upington 26 was one of the themes of a demonstration outside Downing Street [the residence of the British Prime Minister] to mark the anniversary of the Soweto uprising on June 16.

In Holland the Women for Peace organization has taken up the campaign. A broad committee has been set up and has already gained 3,000 signatures. In France a picket of the South African Embassy has been held on the initiative of the JCR [youth organization in solidarity with the Fourth International] and steps are being taken to spread the solidarity. The campaign is also getting underway in Sweden and Belgium.

To get in touch with the support net-

work in South Africa itself contact: Upington 26, c/o The Rural Worker, SACHED, 5 Church Street, Mowbray 7700, South Africa. ★

## FRANCE

### "Debt, colonies, apartheid ...enough's enough!"



SINCE the start of 1989, France has been in the throes of the bicentenary celebrations of the French revolution. The French government has chosen July 14, the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, to host the annual summit of the heads of state of the seven richest countries in the world in Paris.

This could not go ahead unchallenged. Several months ago, the Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR), French section of the Fourth International, took the initiative in proposing a united protest against the summit on the weekend of July 8-9. Since then, the united appeal launched by the LCR has drawn the support of hundreds of personalities, political groups and organizations both in France and worldwide.

The meeting of the International Monetary Fund in Berlin in autumn 1988 was met by repeated demonstrations. This time also the masters of the world economy will not be able to meet undisturbed. Well over 300 well-known figures from 26 countries have responded to the appeal of Gilles Perrault, well-known writer and anti-imperialist militant, who issued a text which states:

"The Third World is the Third estate of today. We call on representatives of the peoples that have been bled dry to come together, in order that July 14 should keep its meaning, dignity and force...Presenting their case to public opinion, they will also do their accounting and will seek together for ways and means to tear down the Bastille of economic imperialism. We also

# 4 NEWS FROM THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

## SWEDEN

### Socialist Party congress

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY (SP), Swedish section of the Fourth International, held its Twelfth Congress May 13-16 in Södertälje, an industrial town south of Stockholm. It was attended by more than a hundred delegates and guests.**

**The following congress report appeared in the May 18 issue of *Internationalen*, the SP's weekly paper. The congress also featured an extensive report and discussion on the changes in the Soviet Union.**

This congress was extremely timely. It followed intensive work in the fall election campaign, the spring activity in the Dalarna revolt [a rebellion by trade-unionists against the effects of the class-collaborationist policy of the social-democratic union leaderships and government], the "No to the EEC Campaign," the campaign for press freedom [see *IV* 165], and work in solidarity movements.

In a period when discontent with the social democrats' right turn is growing among workers, no workers' alternative is coming to the fore. The SP has also experienced a gap between the growth of contacts and increasing possibilities for political collaboration, on the one hand, and the possibilities for recruiting directly to the party, on the other. In the elections, the party made many new contacts, but that has not led to much new recruitment.

### A positive assessment of party building

This situation in the society and in the process of party building was the background to the discussions at the congress. And against this background, the assessment of most participants was very positive.

The congress reflected the party's coming together around the demand for an ideological offensive for socialist ideals, against the purveyors of the market philosophy. The political resolution that was adopted talks about holding rallies, writing articles, organizing forums and reinforcing party propaganda in every way. The resolution pointed to two main themes for this propaganda effort — the breakdown of Stalinism in the USSR and the possibilities for a renaissance of socialism; the degeneration of the social democrats and the way to a new mass party of, and for, the workers. The document was adopted by a great majority of the delegates.

The question of unity among militant

groups and left forces was in the center of the debate. And the debate showed that something new has happened. Today, there is experience of united-front work. This is a modest but real experience, from the common campaign with the KPML(r) [a group of Maoist origin strong in the city of Göteborg] and the Apk [a split-off of traditionalists from the CP] against the prosecution [by the government for articles about the Palme investigation], from collaboration with other left forces in the Malmö Socialist Club and this year's much improved May Day demonstration in Göteborg.

The congress also adopted a manifesto that calls for unity against austerity and the government's right-wing policy. It approved a letter to the Apk responding positively to the proposal made by the latter's congress for a platform for unity in action.

### Political awakening of young people

Over the past year, we have seen signs of an awakening among the youth. The massive protests in the winter against the government's proposed appropriation for the schools is an example. But, at the same time, distrust of established politicians — and political solutions in general — is very widespread among young people. So one major discussion at the congress was over how young people could be won to socialist ideas and how the party should contribute to reinforce the work of the Young Socialists.

Some other tasks sketched out in the political resolution were the following: stepping up our work for democratic and militant trade unions; taking every possible initiative to defend social services; to organize women in the public sector; to step up our work for a six-hour day; to make the party multinational and strengthen the anti-racist movement; to build an independent solidarity movement that can defend popular revolutions and liberation movements even in a hardening ideological climate; to rally as broad as possible public opinion in defence of democratic rights; and to extend dialogue with other left forces.

The congress also adopted a resolution on the EEC that makes it clear that the party opposes the Common Market. It also stipulated that the SP will continue to work in the campaign against the accommodation to the EEC and concealed entry that is being set in motion in Sweden.

How can the unions be won to the fight to defend the environment? How can socialists combat the social democratic propaganda that says that the environment has to be sacrificed to maintain "growth" or to save jobs? These questions were taken up in the third major resolution before the congress, "Win the unions to the fight for the environment."★

call on the progressive forces of France and of Europe. We will be demonstrating in the streets of Paris, at the Bastille on July 8, 1989. We will give the platform to those who are fighting for the right of self-determination for the peoples; against the debt, against the last colonies, against apartheid in South Africa."

Signatories in France include six members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; elected representatives of the Socialist Party; the Communist Youth (JC); the Communist *rénovateurs* (MRC); the LCR; the New Left; the United Socialist Party (PSU); different anti-imperialist and anti-racist committees; figures from anti-colonialist organizations in the remaining French colonies; Harlem Désir of SOS-racisme; and militant Christian groups.

From other countries the appeal has been signed by, among others, Boris Kagarlitski from the Moscow People's Front; supporters of Charter 77 and other independent initiatives in Czechoslovakia; members of the Polish Socialist Party/Democratic Revolution (PPS/DR); Andras Hegedus, ex-Hungarian Prime minister; Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone and other British Labour MPs; MPs from the West German Greens; Bernadette McAliskey from the North of Ireland; Herri Batasuna, Euskadi (Basque country); leading members of Proletarian Democracy (DP) in Italy; Otelo de Carvalho from Portugal; Danish Euro-MP Else Hammerich; elected deputies from the Workers' Party (PT) of Brazil; Hugo Blanco from Peru; Rosario Ibarra from Mexico; the Chilean Socialist Party in exile; Johnny Clegg from South Africa; Ahmed Ben Bella from Algeria. And the list is growing every day!

An additional dimension to the events will be provided by singers Renaud, Johnny Clegg with Savuka and others who will give a free concert at the end of the demonstration in the Place de la Bastille. On Sunday, July 9, a symposium is being organized around the issue of the remaining colonies on the eve of their integration into "Europe"; on the need for a boycott of South Africa; and on the annulment of the debt of the dominated countries.

President François Mitterrand recently took the initiative to write off the debts owed by the 35 poorest countries to the French state. This has not however undermined the determination of those who want to see the whole of the debt annulled. Mitterrand's "present" only amounts to \$2.5 billion of a total of \$80bn owed to France, and a total of \$1,320bn owed to the industrialized countries as a whole. The recent riots in Argentina and Venezuela should serve to remind us of the depth of the crisis caused by the imperialist system.

The July 8-9 events will be the opportunity for us to denounce the scandal of the debt through an international mobilization.★

**T**HIS movement was the product both of the decades long crisis of the bureaucratic regime and of the economic and social measures embarked on at the end of the 1970s. It was characterized from the start by democratic and egalitarian demands that struck at the very roots of the bureaucratic regime.

From the outset it created new instruments that, in the best revolutionary tradition, met the movement's need for organization and assured the emergence of young leaders and the exercise of control over these leaders by the masses. From the first days, the working class took part in the mobilizations and began to establish nuclei of unions, independent of the old, ossified structures. Along with students, workers played an active role in the most significant and moving episode of the revolutionary days — the fraternization between the masses and young soldiers that prevented the application of martial law for ten days.

### **"Market socialism" and bloody repression**

In this crisis, the bureaucracy has revealed more than ever its intrinsic weakness: the narrowness of its social base; its isolation from those masses that it falsely claims to represent; its inability, as soon as the masses go into action, to get its mechanisms of domination and manipulation to function; its own divisions over how to deal with an ever worsening crisis and the challenge to its own power.

It was for such reasons that, after some weeks of hesitation and prevarication, the bureaucratic leaders decided that they had no choice but to unleash repression on a large scale, throwing overboard any concern for their "liberal" or "reformer" image. They have thus demonstrated that "market socialism" is no guarantee of democracy.

The only way that they could crush such a massive movement was by using the army, putting in the front line those sectors over which they had the tightest control.

It was the army that crushed the movement in Beijing, and it is the army, along with the police, the secret services, and all sorts of provocateurs and informers, that is carrying out the massive arrests that are now taking place. The Chinese army, which was born out of the flames of a popular and anti-imperialist war, has now perpetrated a massacre of those very popular masses who — despite all the contradictions — identified with it for dec-

# The bureaucratic counter-revolution

**THE EVENTS of April-June 1989 in China will go down in history as a milestone in the struggle of the masses against the domination of the bureaucratic caste.**

**A huge movement of students, workers, intellectuals and other sectors of the working population swept Beijing and other big cities, virtually paralyzing the country.**

**Statement of the United Secretariat Bureau of the Fourth International**

ades. These events, therefore, mark the culminating point of the historic degeneration of the army.

In order to justify their crimes, the sinister figures — in the first place that old super-bureaucrat Deng Xiaoping — who have been appearing on the Chinese television have resorted to the old Stalinist refrain. It was, they say, necessary to defend the "socialist" state against counter-revolutionaries who wanted to restore capitalism. It is impossible to imagine a more blatant lie! Aside from the occasional formulation or symbol, the basic demands of the movement were for elementary democratic rights and against the oppression by the bureaucratic caste.

### **A party that has no internal democracy**

The movement demanded an end to privileges and corruption and to the growing social inequalities. People nostalgic for capitalism do not struggle for these kinds of objectives nor adopt such forms of mass self-organization to obtain their ends! Nor do they raise their voices together to sing the *International!*

It is the bureaucrats of the ruling caste who are responsible for the Chinese tragedy. Forty years after the revolution, no democratic institutions have been established. The fate of the coun-

try depends on decisions by the leaders of a party that has no internal democracy whatsoever. It is these decisions that have led the Chinese economy from one crisis to another. The crisis, fur-

thermore, far from easing, is getting worse. It is the bureaucrats who explained that the solution lay in introducing a market economy, who have made concession after unprecedented concession to the multinationals of the capitalist countries and who have encouraged the development of a national private sector, in industry and commerce as well as in agriculture.

### **A revolutionary leadership is essential**

They are the ones who have dealt hard blows to the standard of living of the majority of workers and peasants and provoked the appearance for the first time since 1949 of the blight of unemployment. They are the ones who have conducted and are conducting a policy of compromise with US imperialism at the expense of revolutionary struggles, especially in Asia, and who have sung the praises of the West European bourgeoisies, including its most reactionary representatives.

The Fourth International, which has always vigorously denounced every crime committed by the bureaucratic caste, stands unreservedly on the side of the students, the workers, the peasants and intellectuals of China. It is on the side of all those who have given such a striking example of revolutionary initiative and combativity.

These militants, drawing the lessons of their dramatic experience, will make their contribution to the development of the revolutionary leadership whose necessity has been demonstrated yet again by the events in China.

Such a leadership is essential if the question of the replacement of the bureaucratic regime by revolutionary democratic institutions, designed to guarantee the self-organization of the masses and democratic planning of the economy, is to be posed concretely in the crises that Chinese society will inevitably experience in the future.

**For a united mobilization worldwide against the repression!**

**Support the struggles of the students, workers, intellectuals and peasants of China!**  
**Down with the bureaucratic dictatorship! ★**

June 10, 1989