SPARTACIST

NUMBER 30 AUTUMN 1980 50 CENTS

A Workers Poland Yes! The Pope's Poland No!

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SEE PAGE 2

Polish Social Democrats Arm in Arm with Clerical Reaction

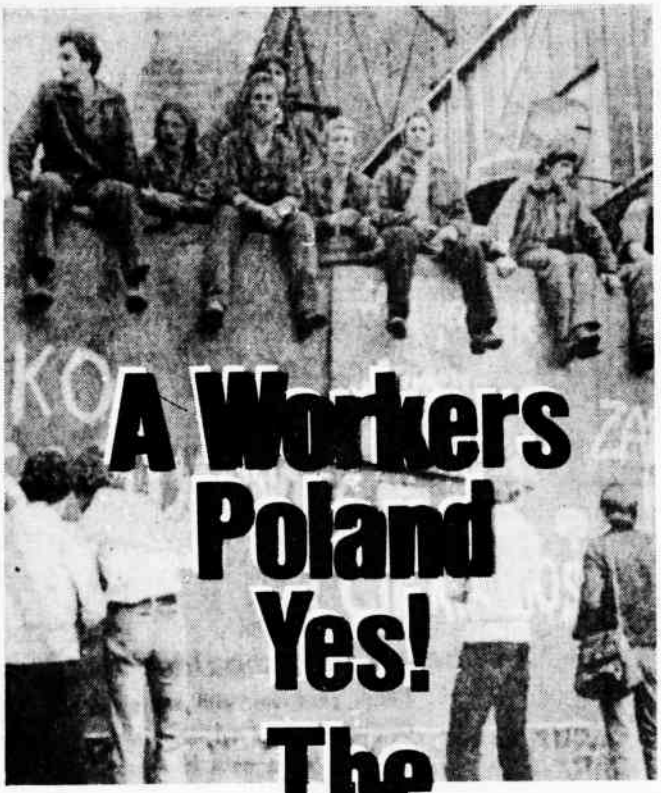
All the Pope's Dissidents 6

SWP 1956 vs. SWP 1980

"Pure Democracy" or Political Revolution in East Europe . . . 10

Revisionists on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Eurotrotskyist Mandel vs. Caudillo Moreno 17



A Workers Poland Yes! The Pope's Poland No!

Everyone predicted it was coming. A restive, combative working class, peasant strikes, massive foreign debt, chronic and widespread food shortages, a powerful and increasingly assertive Catholic church, the burgeoning of social-democratic and clerical-nationalist oppositional groupings. All the elements were there. Poland in the late '70s was locked in a deepening crisis heading toward explosion, *an explosion which could bring either proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy or capitalist counterrevolution led by Pope Wojtyla's church.*

And when it came it gripped world attention for two solid weeks. The Baltic coast general strike was the most powerful mobilization of the power *of* the working class since France May 1968. But was it a mobilization *for* the working class? That is the decisive question.

There is now a settlement *on paper*. The bureaucracy has agreed to allow "new, self-governing trade unions" with the pledge that these recognize "the leading role" of the Communist party and do not engage in political activities. Insofar as the settlement enhances the Polish workers' power to struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy, revolutionaries can support the strike and its outcome. But only a blind man could fail to see the gross influence of the Catholic church and also pro-Western sentiments among the striking workers. If the settlement strengthens the working class organizationally, it also strengthens the forces of reaction.

The Gdansk settlement *cannot last*. No Stalinist bureaucracy—a parasitic caste which must *monopolize* political power to preserve itself—can tolerate independent working-class opposition. And in Poland today the notion of such unions "staying out of politics" is plain ridiculous. The situation in Poland is one of cold dual power. On top of this, further clashes must come as the regime, massively in debt to Western financial institutions, cannot concede the enormous "free lunch" the workers are demanding. The big money wage increases will either fuel runaway inflation or even more severe shortages. Furthermore, the Kremlin has made disapproving noises about the settlement, and Soviet military intervention cannot be ruled out. The end of the Baltic general strike was only the beginning of the crisis of Stalinist Poland.

Workers Democracy or Clerical-Nationalist Reaction?

Certainly the workers are reacting against bureaucratic mismanagement, privilege and abuse. The Polish workers' grievances are real and they are just. The firing of an old militant, Anna Walentynwicz, a few months before her retirement, which reportedly sparked the Lenin Shipyard takeover in Gdansk, should infuriate every honest worker. The existence of special shops exclusive to party members and cops is an abomination, a rejection of the most basic principles of socialism.

What of the workers' positive allegiances and general political outlook? Early in the strike there were reports of singing the Internationale, which indicates some element of socialist consciousness. But while the imperialist media always plays up any support for anti-communist ideology in the Soviet bloc, there is no question that to a great degree the Baltic workers and their principal leaders identify with the powerful Catholic church opposition. It is not just the external signs—the daily singing of the national hymn, "Oh God, Who Has Defended Poland," the hundreds of strikers kneeling for mass, the ubiquitous pictures of Wojtyla-John Paul II, Lech Walesa tossing out pictures of the Virgin Mary. The outside advisers to the strike committee consisted of prominent figures in the Catholic ZNAK group and these continue to advise the "new, self-governing unions."

Even more ominous was the strike committee's demand for "access by all religious groups [read Catholic church] to the mass media." This is an *anti*-democratic demand which would legitimize the church in its present role as the recognized opposition to the Stalinist regime. In effect the Baltic shipbuilders are asking for a state church in a deformed workers state.

But that church is not loyal to the workers state. Far from it! The Polish Catholic church (virulently anti-Semitic) has been a bastion of reaction even within the framework of world Catholicism. Especially since 1976 the Polish church has become increasingly open and assertive in its anti-Communism. Early last year the *Wall Street Journal* (2 January 1979) observed: "Thus, the priesthood has become in effect an opposition party."

This article also pointed out that the cardinal of Krakow was especially responsible for the greater oppositional stance of the church. A few months earlier this Polish

Sygma

Lech Walesa is "a committed Catholic and nationalist" who "has not the least in common with communism," according to liberal West German Der Spiegel.

prelate had become the first non-Italian successor to the throne of St. Peter in four centuries. Karol Wojtyla is a dangerous reactionary working hand in glove with U.S. imperialism (especially his fellow countryman Zbigniew Brzezinski) to roll back "atheistic Communism," beginning in his homeland. As we wrote when this Polish anti-Communist was made pope: "... he now stands at the head of many millions of practicing Catholics in East Europe, a tremendous force for counterrevolution" ("The President's Pope?" *WV* No. 217, 30 October 1978).

The Polish episcopate, fearing both Russian military intervention and its inability to control a workers' uprising, took a cautious tack during the Baltic general strike. But whatever the hierarchy's present tactical calculations, in a power vacuum the church, well-organized with a mass base, will be a potent agency for social counterrevolution.

Poland presents the most combative working class in the Soviet bloc, with a history of struggling for independent organizations going back to the mid-1950s. It is also the one country in Eastern Europe with a mass, potentially counterrevolutionary mobilization around the Catholic church. Thus, unlike Hungary in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968, the alternatives in the present Polish crisis are not limited to proletarian political revolution or Stalinist restabilization. At the same time, it is not Afghanistan where the Soviet Red Army is playing a progressive role in crushing an imperialist-backed, clerical-reactionary uprising. In a sense Poland stands somewhere between Hungary in 1956 and Afghanistan.

Trotskyism and "Free Trade Unions"

The Baltic strike committee's main demand and gain was "free trade unions." This particular slogan, pushed for years by the CIA-backed Radio Free Europe, has acquired a definite anti-Communist and pro-Western connotation. Remember the 1921 Kronstadt mutiny's call for "free soviets"—free from Communists, that is.

An integral part of the Trotskyist program for proletarian political revolution in the degenerated/deformed workers states is the struggle for trade unions independent of bureaucratic control. Trade unions and the right to strike would be necessary even in a democratically governed workers state to guard against abuses and mistakes by administrators and managers. But it is far from clear that the "free trade unions" long envisioned by the dissidents would be free from the influence of pro-Catholic, pro-NATO elements who represent a mortal danger to the working class.

In any case, in the highly politicized situation in Poland today the "new, self-governing" trade unions cannot and will not limit themselves to questions of wage rates, working conditions, job security, etc. They will either be drawn into the powerful orbit of the Catholic church or have to oppose it in the name of socialist principle.

And in determining that outcome the presence of a revolutionary vanguard party would be critical. A central task for a Trotskyist organization in Poland would be to raise in these unions a series of demands that will *split* the clerical-nationalist forces from among the workers and separate them out. These unions must defend the socialized means of production and proletarian state power against Western imperialism. In Poland today the elementary democratic demand of the separation of church and state is a dividing line between the struggle for workers democracy and the deadly threat of capitalist restoration.

The nucleus of a Leninist-Trotskyist opposition in Poland would have nothing to do with the present dissident groups. It would denounce the social-democratic Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) for helping tie the workers to imperialism, the pope and Pilsudskiite anti-Soviet nationalists. But among the rebellious workers there must be elements that are fed up with the bureaucracy and look back to the traditions of Polish Marxism, while having no truck with bogus "democracy" in priests' cassocks. It is among this layer above all that revolutionaries must struggle to win the cadres to build a genuinely communist proletarian party, capable of opening the road

continued on next page

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Der Spiegel

Poles greet Red Army soldiers in 1945. Stalinist Russia carried out a bureaucratically-deformed social revolution.

to socialism by ousting the bureaucratic caste which falsely rules in the workers' name.

Break the Imperialist Economic Stranglehold!

The abandonment of agricultural collectivization in 1956 has played no small role in contributing to Poland's present economic and political crisis. It has saddled the country with a backward, smallholding rural economy grossly inefficient even by East European standards. And the strength of the Polish church is based on the social weight of the rural petty bourgeoisie. Today over a third of the labor force still toils in the fields, while 80 percent of farmland is privately owned. Only by eliminating their hideous poverty and rural isolation can the hold of religious obscurantism on the masses be broken. An immediate, key task for a revolutionary workers government in Poland is to promote the collectivization of agriculture.

Responding to the violent strikes/protests over food price increases in 1970-71, the new Gierek regime promised huge wage increases for the workers, higher procurement prices and state pensions for the peasants plus the rapid modernization of Polish industry. This "economic miracle" (a term actually used in official propaganda) was to be achieved through massive loans from the West and also the Soviet Union.

In an immediate sense this economic maneuver, aimed at transforming Poland into something like an East European Japan, was derailed by the 1974-75 world depression which sharply contracted the country's export markets. At a deeper level, Gierek's economic gamble failed because the Stalinist regime is incapable of mobilizing the enthusiasm and sense of sacrifice of the Polish working people. This

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Der Spiegel

Edward Gierek (left) placed Poland deeply in debt to Helmut Schmidt's (right) West Germany attempting to buy off a combative working class.

incompetence is endemic in a bureaucracy, more due to a lack of an effective feedback than to material privilege.

In 1978 over 50 percent of Poland's hard currency earnings were absorbed by debt service, in 1979 over 80 percent and today over 90 percent. Poland has avoided becoming the world's biggest bankrupt only by agreeing to austerity programs imposed by its imperialist creditors. At the same time, the Russian leadership, fearing a popular explosion if the Polish masses are pushed too hard, is paying a good part of Warsaw's foreign debt. In one sense Poland has become the intermediary through which Western finance capital sucks surplus out of the Soviet workers and peasants (whose living standards are substantially lower than those of the Poles).

While the Polish Stalinist regime's economic mismanagement is today glaring, the *historical superiority* of collectivized property and centralized planning, even when saddled with a parasitic bureaucracy, remains indisputable. Between 1950 and 1976 the advanced capitalist economies grew at an average annual rate of 4.4 percent, the backward capitalist economies at 5 percent and the centrally planned East European economies 7.7 percent (*Scientific American*, September 1980).

The Polish workers must not pay for the gross mismanagement of the Gierek regime nor should they have any confidence in the bureaucracy's "economic reforms." Egalitarian and rational economic planning is possible only under a government based on democratically-elected workers councils (soviets). As a revolutionary, transitional step toward that, Polish workers must struggle against the bureaucracy for control over production, prices, distribution and foreign trade.

A revolutionary workers government in Poland would *cancel the foreign debt*. Well, it might export comrade Edward Gierek to West Germany where he can work off *his* obligations in a Ruhr coal mine. A very good idea, some Polish worker might say, but will the bankers of Frankfurt write off $20 billion with a shrug? What of imperialist retaliation, economic or military? To this inevitable reaction the Polish proletariat must appeal to the workers of West Europe: We do not want to be the clients of your masters but your comrades in a new venture—international socialist planning in a Socialist United States of Europe!

For the Revolutionary Unity of the Polish and Russian Workers!

All organized forces in Polish political life—the Stalinist bureaucracy, the church and all wings of the dissident movement—each in their own way inculcate hostility to Russia as *the enemy* of the Polish people. A hallmark for a revolutionary party in Poland is a positive orientation to the Russian working class. And this is not simply a question of abstract internationalism, it is a matter of life and death.

Illusions about the good will of the Western capitalist powers common in East Europe do not extend to the Soviet Union. Having lost 20 million fighting Nazi Germany, the Soviet people understand that NATO's nuclear arsenal is targeted at them. The Soviet masses also know that the imperialist powers' war against their country, hot and cold, began with the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917.

The Soviet working people fear the transformation of East Europe into hostile, imperialist-allied states extending NATO to their own border. The Kremlin bureaucrats exploit this legitimate fear to crush popular unrest and democratic aspirations in East Europe, as in Czechoslovakia in 1968. There were numerous reports that Soviet soldiers were shaken when on occupying Prague they encountered not a bloody fascistic counterrevolution, as they had been told, but protests by Communist workers and left-wing students.

Revolutionary Polish workers cannot hope to appeal to Soviet soldiers unless they assure them that they will defend that part of the world against imperialist attack. And a proletarian political revolution in Poland must extend itself to the Soviet Union or, one way or another, it will be crushed.

- For trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on a program of defending socialized property!
- For the strict separation of church and state! Fight clerical-nationalist reaction! Guard against capitalist restorationism!
- Promote the collectivization of agriculture!
- For workers control of production, prices, distribution and foreign trade!
- For proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy—For a government based on democratically-elected workers councils (soviets)!
- Break the imperialist economic stranglehold—Cancel the foreign debt! Toward international socialist economic planning!
- For military defense of the USSR against imperialism! For the revolutionary unity of the Polish and Soviet working classes!
- For a Trotskyist Party in Poland, section of a reborn Fourth International! ■

Polish Social Democrats Arm in Arm with Clerical Reaction

All the Pope's Dissidents

"The strikes in Poland mark a significant turn in Eastern Europe because workers and dissident intellectuals have joined forces in a major conflict with the Government," noted a news analysis in the *New York Times* (23 August). As to the existence of the alliance there is no doubt. From the beginning of the Polish strike wave in early July and in the early stages of the shipyard occupations, dissident circles in Warsaw were the main source of information for the imperialist press. In addition, several of the key strike leaders have been publicly associated over the past several years with opposition defense groups, and they have drawn in prominent Catholic intellectuals as "expert advisers." So while the ruling bureaucracy has been reluctant to use force against workers in the Baltic ports, on August 20 police in the capital rounded up 14 well-known dissidents accused of illegal association.

Who are the Polish dissidents? Western commentators hail the appearance of a "worker-intellectual alliance." Yet the non-Stalinist left-wing press sounds the same theme. Thus we find favorable interviews with dissident leader Jacek Kuron being printed everywhere from the liberal *Le Monde* and *Der Spiegel* to publications of the ostensibly Trotskyist United Secretariat. Meanwhile, *New York Times* columnist Flora Lewis (whose articles often seem to reflect the views of the CIA) praises Kuron as "a responsible man, a moderate and a patriot." Is this the "new coalition" which sophisticated Western fomenters of counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc degenerated/deformed workers states have been looking for as their "captive nations" relics fade into oblivion? Or does it portend a movement for "socialist democracy," as some on the left would have us believe?

Certainly *none* of the prominent dissident groups and personalities has a good word to say about socialism, which is identified with the perversion of proletarian rule represented by the present Stalinist bureaucracy. The dissidents' role as a conduit to the capitalist media is nothing new—Sakharov has been at it for years in the Soviet Union. Nor are appeals to the imperialists via the UN, the Helsinki Agreements, etc. What is particularly ominous about the Polish dissidents, who range from social democrats to openly Pilsudskiite reactionary nationalists, is their active (and largely successful) effort to form an alliance with the Catholic hierarchy. For it is the church together with the land-holding peasantry which form the social basis for counterrevolution in Poland.

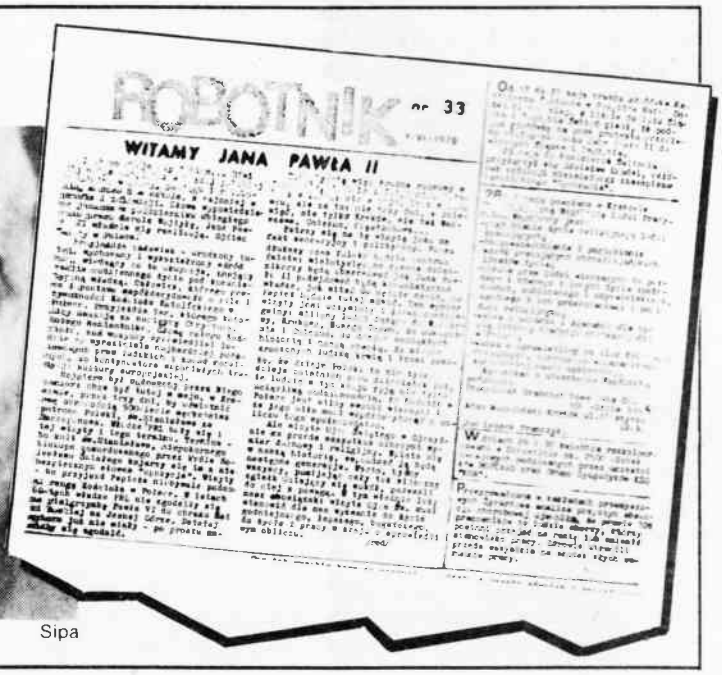
KSS-KOR: Social Democrats for Popery

The best-publicized Polish dissident group in the West is the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KSS), better known by its original name Workers Defense Committee (KOR). The leading spokesman for KSS-KOR is Jacek Kuron, and its newsletter *Robotnik* includes among its correspondents Lech Walesa, the leader of the Interfactory

Social-democratic KOR's Robotnik hails Pope Wojtyla-John Paul II in 1979 as "the defender of human rights."

Adam Michnik Sipa

Jacek Kuron Sipa



ROBOTNIK nr 33

WITAMY JANA PAWŁA II

Strike Committee centered on the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. The KOR was formed after the suppression of the June 1976 strikes at Radom and Ursus, and originally centered its activities on raising funds for and demanding release/reinstatement of the hundreds of workers arrested and fired at that time. After a general amnesty a year later it became the KSS and concentrated on building ties to key factories through *Robotnik*. Most of the pseudo-Trotskyist left in the West has come out in support of the KSS-KOR in varying degrees.

Because of its name and origins and the reputation of Kuron, KOR is sometimes referred to by superficial observers as "Marxist in orientation." Social-democratic is a far more accurate description, and even that does not do justice to some of the anti-Marxist elements around it. Of the original 24 founders of KOR, six are former members of the pre-war Polish Socialist Party (PSP), among them the prominent economist Edward Lipinski. (*Robotnik* was the name of the PSP paper as well.) The list also includes a former chairman of the Christian Democratic Party, a delegate of the World War II London exile government, various activists from the 1968 student movement (among them historian Adam Michnik), left Catholic writers (such as former party member Jerzy Andrzejewski, author of *Ashes and Diamonds*), several veterans of the 1944 Warsaw uprising and Rev. Jan Zieja ("Polish Army Chaplain in the 1920 and 1939 campaigns"—i.e., a died-in-the-wool Pilsudskiite priest who twice fought the Red Army).

Jacek Kuron was first known in the West for co-authoring (with Karol Modzelewski) an "Open Letter to Communist Party Members" in 1964; for this he became a victim of bureaucratic repression, spending six years in jail. The United Secretariat opportunistically hailed the Kuron-Modzelewski text, with its syndicalist program and fuzzy analysis (which called Poland a "bureaucratic state") as the "first revolutionary Marxist document" to come out of the post-war Soviet bloc. Since then, however, Kuron has moved far to the right, now posing the struggle in East Europe as one of "pluralism vs. totalitarianism." In his "Thoughts on an Action Program" Kuron supports peasant struggles for private property, claims "the Catholic movement is fighting to defend freedom of conscience and human dignity," and concludes with a call for the "Finlandization" of Poland:

> "We must strive for a status similar to Finland's: a parliamentary democracy with a limited independence in the field of foreign policy where it directly touches the interests of the USSR."

The Clerical Opposition

Marxism it ain't. But this social-democratic program for a peaceful restoration of capitalism represents the *left* wing of the dissident movement. The right wing is openly clerical-nationalist. There was a split in KOR in 1977 leading to the formation of ROPCIO, the Movement for the Defence of Human Rights. The latter is based on the founding declaration of the UN and the Helsinki accords and offers itself as an instrument to "cooperate with all international organizations which defend human rights...." Where KOR publishes *Robotnik*, ROPCIO puts out *Gospodarz* (The Peasant) and appeals to the Catholic rural population. And this is not the Catholicism of Vatican II, either. The *Economist* (9 September 1978) refers to this outfit as "the stronghold of more conservative, national and—with some of its members—traditional anti-semitic tendencies." To get ROPCIO's number, one only has to note that the first signer of its platform is General Borutz-Spiechowicz, the highest commanding officer of pre-World War II Poland, and that it distributes Pilsudski calendars.

ROPCIO, in turn, gave rise to an even more reactionary group, the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN), whose stated goal is to "end Soviet domination by liquidating the power of the Polish United Workers Party." Then there comes the Polish League for Independence (PPN), a clandestine group, and remnants of the pre-war ultra-rightist, anti-Semitic, fascistic National Democratic Party. All of them, of course, cover themselves with rhetoric about "democracy." This gives rise to the Polish dissident joke: "Question: What's a Polish nationalist? Answer: Someone who wants to drive the Jews out of Poland even though they aren't there any more." More respectable than these would-be pogromists is the liberal Catholic ZNAK movement, which has several representatives in parliament. While ZNAK leaves clandestine bravado for the fringe groups, their aims are no less counterrevolutionary: they are merely waiting until an

continued on next page

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explosion when they will step in as the only mass-based opposition.

The Dissidents' Pope

The core of the clerical opposition, of course, is the Catholic hierarchy, a disciplined army extending from the village priest right up to the Vatican. Stalin's famous remark, "How many divisions does the pope have?" indicates military realism. But in Catholic Poland, probably the most religious European country today (even the men go to mass!), the church is a powerful political force. Unlike Hungary's Cardinal Mindszenty, who was discredited by cooperation with the Horthy dictatorship, the Polish pope (who brags he once was a worker) could be an effective rallying point for counterrevolution. A revealing article by the former editor of the CIA's house organ, *Problems of Communism*, Abraham Brumberg, makes this crystal clear:

> "The Catholic Church has been crucial in the growth of a political opposition in Poland. Had it not been for the support of the Church, even the new alliance between 'the intelligentsia, village, and workers' to which Kuron refers would probably have failed to survive the hatred of the authorities."
>
> —*New York Review of Books*, 8 February 1979

Brumberg points out that the original KOR demands for amnestying workers arrested and fired in the June 1976 strikes were almost identical to those of the episcopate. "Since then, the parallels between statements by the Church—and especially by Cardinal Wyszinski, whom Michnik strongly, if not uncritically, admires—and those of the opposition have become even more conspicuous." He points out that supporters of the ZNAK group have participated in the "flying university" circles sponsored by KOR, which in Krakow used churches for its classes with the permission of then-Archbishop Wojtyla. Michnik described the new pope as one of the two "co-founders of the anti-totalitarian policy of the Polish Episcopate" (*Der Spiegel*, 23 October 1978). Michnik, a Jew, is so enamored of the new, "enlightened" Catholic primate that he wrote of the pope's visit last year:

> "It will be a powerful demonstration of the bond between the Polish people and the world of Christian culture, a demonstration of their solidarity with the Catholic Church, and a demonstration of their yearning for freedom, the champion of which they see as being their fellow countryman John Paul II, the defender of human rights."

For Polish Trotskyism!

This paean to the standardbearer of capitalist restoration in Poland was printed without comment in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* (July-August 1979), a joint publication of supporters of the USec and the "state-capitalist" British SWP of Tony Cliff. But these pseudo-Trotskyists are not satisfied with such a tepid brew. A subsequent issue of *Labour Focus* reprints an interview (by the French USec paper *Rouge*) with Leszek Moczulski, who was a member of the Moczar faction of the PUWP at the time it ran the 1968 anti-Semitic purge and now heads the KPN. The journal comments that Moczulski is more militantly anti-government than KOR, and hails the formation of his clerical-reactionary party as "an event almost without precedent in the history of Eastern Europe since the late 1940s"! Meanwhile, USec leader Ernest Mandel laments that the Stalinist bureaucracy in Poland has not "permitted a democratic and intense political life, including a legal Catholic party..." ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, October 1979).

This pandering to clerical reaction is a far cry from the revolutionary social democracy of a Rosa Luxemburg, who wrote in 1905:

> "The clergy, no less than the capitalist class, lives on the backs of the people, profits from the degradation, the ignorance and the oppression of the people. The clergy and the parasitic capitalists hate the organized working class, conscious of its rights, which fights for the conquest of its liberties."
>
> —"Socialism and the Churches"

In fact, in all the publications of the Polish dissidents which we have consulted, some hundreds of pages, there is *not one* reference to Luxemburg, Poland's greatest contribution to the Marxist movement. "Naturally," because she was a Jew and hardly a Polish nationalist. But neither is there a reference to other authentic Polish Communists, such as Julian Marchlewski, Leo Jogiches and Felix Dzerzhinsky. One of the greatest crimes of the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy is that it has discredited the name of communism among thinking workers.

Now the outcome of the strike has pushed the social-democratic dissidents further to the right, further toward clericism and toward the imperialists. A few days after the settlement KOR leader Jan Litynski waxed eloquent over the historic mission of the Polish church, in an interview with Brumberg:

> "In general it seems to me that the Catholic Church over the past thirty years has displayed so much wisdom, common sense and realism, that we are fully entitled to trust it. I'm absolutely convinced that the Church will never do anything that might prove harmful to the interests of the nation."
>
> —"After Gdansk: Two Interviews," *New York Review of Books*, 9 October

And writing in the prestigious West German *Der Spiegel* (15 September), Michnik calls for capitalist economic blackmail:

> "...I would like to repeat my counsel to Western public opinion: economic help to the new leadership in Poland should be made dependent on respecting the provisions of the Gdansk settlement."

The present crop of Polish dissidents are overwhelmingly *enemies* of the cause of proletarian socialism. They act as direct conduits to the church and the West. Today we do not see "dissident" Stalinists of the Titoist mold. On the contrary, the most left-wing are the East European equivalent of the "Eurocommunists." But where in the capitalist West this is but another variety of reformism, more closely tied to its "own" bourgeoisie, in the Soviet bloc countries passing from Stalinist to Eurocommunist means joining the camp of counterrevolution. Authentic Trotskyism stands not for the bogus "unity of all anti-Stalinist forces"—including disciples of Wojtyla and Brzezinski—but for a class-conscious communist opposition to the parasitic bureaucracy. And those would-be leftists who today follow the Kurons and Michniks should realize that if they are successful in bringing off a national revolt together with the clerical reactionaries, Kania & Co. will be the first to go, *but they will be next.* ■

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SWP 1956 vs. SWP 1980

"Pure Democracy" or Political Revolution in East Europe

Shane Mage's *The Hungarian Revolution* was published in 1959 as a pamphlet by the forerunner of the Young Socialist Alliance, youth group of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). (Mage became one of the founding leaders of the Spartacist tendency, though subsequently he abandoned Marxism.) The material in this pamphlet was a central element in the development of our tendency's understanding of proletarian political revolution and capitalist counterrevolution in the East European deformed workers states, and it is exceptionally prescient concerning the present crisis in Poland.

Classic symbol of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution: Stalin's statue toppled and dragged through the streets of Budapest.

The core of the pamphlet is a 1957 factional polemic against the right-wing majority of the Shachtmanite Independent Socialist League (ISL) and Young Socialist League (YSL). The right wing's advocacy of "general democratic aims" in the Hungarian Revolution was an important, final step in its liquidation into "the State Department socialism" of official American social democracy. The "Third Campist" Shachtmanites' unification with Norman Thomas' Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation (which they soon came to dominate) as well as the nature of the Hungarian Revolution itself pushed the left wing of the ISL/YSL, led by Mage, James Robertson and Tim Wohlforth, toward Trotskyism and a fusion with the then-revolutionary SWP in 1958. Thus, Mage's *The Hungarian Revolution* was an important polemical attack by the then-Trotskyist SWP on its principal social-democratic opponent.

The heart of Mage's argument (reprinted below) is that "pure democracy" in East Europe—a sovereign parliament based on free elections—would likely lead to the victory of a petty-bourgeois, clericalist party (such as the Hungarian Smallholders or Polish Peasant parties), which would in short order restore capitalism. Mage further pointed out that such counterrevolutionary parties need not call for nor effect the immediate denationalization of statified industry. Rather they would subordinate the nationalized industry to the interests of the domestic petty bourgeoisie and international capital. In this Mage was not expressing some peculiar, heterodox view, but was following Trotsky who in 1937 wrote: "Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon the nationalized economy" ("Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?," *Writings* [1937-38]).

At the same time, Mage insisted that such a counterrevolution was *not* what had occurred in Hungary in October-November 1956. The effective organs of power were the workers councils, which expressed an, albeit confused, *socialist* consciousness. The clerical-reactionary forces around Cardinal Mindszenty were relatively weak.

Reading this 1959 Young Socialist pamphlet today, the *reformist degeneration* of the SWP in the past two decades becomes strikingly visible. The *parallelism* between the Shactmanites' position on Stalinist-ruled East Europe in the 1950s and that of the SWP (and its bloc partner, the West European-centered followers of Ernest Mandel) today is remarkable, indeed almost uncanny. Both ignore or deny outright the counterrevolutionary potential of the Catholic church. And the Catholic church is *qualitatively more powerful* in Poland today than in Hungary in 1956. Both support organized social democracy in East Europe—the Shactmanites Anna Kethly's Hungarian Social-Democratic Party, the SWP/Mandelites Jacek Kuron's Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) in Poland. Both call for full "democratic" rights for *all* political formations, including counterrevolutionary ones.

The increasingly oppositional stance of Pope Wojtyla's church, in bloc with the social-democratic KOR, has forced the revisionist "Trotskyists" into the role of lawyers for clerical reaction in Poland. About a year ago Mandel came out for the legalization of a Catholic party in Poland. Today the SWP explicitly endorses the Polish strikers' *anti*-democratic demand to grant Cardinal Wyszinski's episcopate special access to the state-owned media. "I'd like to see a daily Wyszinski Hour on television," says *Militant*

staff writer Fred Feldman at a New York City forum on 30 August.

Yet one of the main programmatic conclusions of Mage's *The Hungarian Revolution* is the need to *restrict* the democratic rights of the Catholic church and clericalist political groups in East Europe and, if necessary, to suppress them. Mage's 1959 pamphlet was by no means the first nor the only time the SWP, when it was still Trotskyist, recognized the counterrevolutionary role of clerical-nationalist forces in Stalinist-ruled East Europe. The February 1947 issue of the SWP's *Fourth International* contains a scathing polemic against the Shachtmanites by Ernest Germain (Mandel) entitled "The Conflict in Poland." While this polemic is marred by Mandel's belief that the Stalinists were incapable of overturning capitalism in East Europe, it rightly savages Shachtman for defending the democratic rights of Polish bourgeois parties. Mandel singles out Stanislaw Mickolajczyk's mass Peasant Party as the main reactionary force in Poland. "Mickolajczyk, personally, is an ultra-reactionary politician," he writes, who serves "as a shield for the underground bourgeois opposition up to the moment when the latter will be able, given a different national and international conjuncture, to overthrow the present [Stalinist] regime." Mandel then goes on to state in capital letters:

> "WE COUNTERPOSE TO THE POLICE TERROR AND PROVOCATIONS OF THE STALINISTS THE *REVOLUTIONARY TERROR OF THE MASSES* as a thousand times more effective method of fighting fascism. We demand compete freedom of the *workers' movement* which includes... above all *the freedom to arm a powerful workers' militia*, which will eliminate the fascist bands.... Not for a moment, however, do we undertake the defense of our *main enemy*, the Polish bourgeoisie and all its political lackeys." [emphasis in original]

At one time Mandel and the SWP called for "REVOLUTIONARY TERROR" against the Mickolajczyks and Wyszinskis in Poland. Today, they, just like their Shachtmanite opponents of yore, defend the same Polish political lackeys of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Mage's pamphlet also contains a devastating attack on Herbert Aptheker's *The Truth About Hungary*, the principal American Stalinist defense of the Kremlin's crushing of the Hungarian Revolution. The leading historian of the CPUSA attempts to convince his readers that this vast popular, proletarian-centered uprising was all a result of a deep-laid imperialist plot. Mage has little difficulty and much evident polemical relish in exposing and demolishing Aptheker's endless lies and distortions.

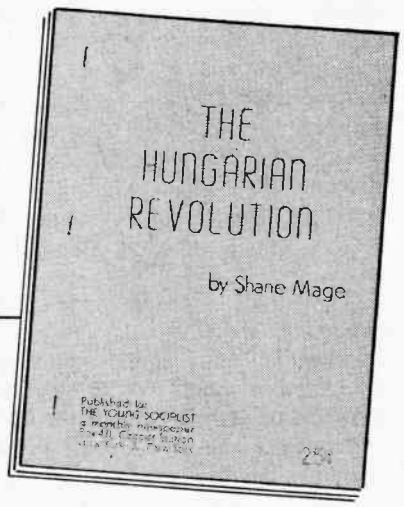
A more serious and sophisticated apology for the Soviet military intervention came from a pro-Stalinst faction in the SWP led by Sam Marcy. The Marcyites argued that, in the absence of Trotskyist leadership, the workers' bourgeois-democratic illusions would inevitably lead them to accept the restoration of capitalism. They further maintained that that was just what was happening in Hungary when the Russian Stalinists cut the process short.

Mage wasn't able to deal with the Marcyite position, then internal to the SWP. However, that section of his reply to Aptheker (reprinted below) explaining why the Hungarian uprising was in essence a proletarian political revolution stands as an answer to the Marcyites as well.

As Mage points out, the real power in the land were the workers councils, which were clearly *not* anti-communist. Indeed, they overwhelmingly supported the national-liberal Stalinist Imre Nagy. The Budapest revolutionary committees elected as co-leaders of the Revolutionary Military Committee a Communist, Colonel Pal Maleter, and General Bela Kiraly, former Communist who remained closely associated with the Nagy group. The Budapest Parliament of Workers Councils adopted as its first programmatic principles that "the factory belongs to the workers" and that "the supreme controlling body of the factory is the workers council" (reproduced in Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956* [1976]). While this is a syndicalist deviation from Marxian socialism, it is also incompatible with a capitalist order and parliamentary sovereignty over economic policy. On the available evidence, the Hungarian workers looked toward an idealized version of Titoist Yugoslavia—an independent "socialist" country with workers self-management.

Mage's writings on the Hungarian Revolution are not without weaknesses. As a subjective revolutionary in transition from Shachtmanism to Trotskyism, he at this point did not accept the deformed workers state theory and still retained a soft attitude toward undifferentiated "anti-Stalinism." Thus, he allowed neutralist protestations by the Hungarian dissidents to go uncriticized. More seriously, he maintained that even if capitalist restoration were a certain outcome of the upheaval, "the actual Russian intervention would still be an impermissible denial to the Hungarian people of the right to choose their own social system." Mage here is guilty of elevating the bourgeois-democratic right of national self-determination over defense of proletarian state power and of the USSR against capitalist-imperialism.

These questions are in a way more sharply posed in Poland today than in Hungary in 1956. Unlike the Hungarian working class in 1956, which expressed a partial and confused socialist consciousness, the Polish strikers and their main leaders clearly identify with the powerful Catholic church opposition and also exhibit pro-Western sentiments. The liberal West German newsweekly *Der Spiegel* (8 September) described the premier strike leader Lech Walesa as a "committed Catholic and nationalist" who "has not the least in common with communism." Thus, while Trotskyists could and did wholeheartedly support the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, in Poland today we must warn that the workers movement—especially the new "self-governing trade unions"—could become subordinated to the reactionary Catholic church and its imperialist backers.



From
The YSL Right Wing and the "Crisis of World Stalinism"

The Right Wing and "Democracy"

It is no accident that the key phrase in the analysis of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions is "democracy"—not

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"bourgeois democracy", not "workers democracy", not even "peasant democracy", but plain, unqualified "democracy", "democracy" *in general*. There may be some younger members of the YSL who see nothing wrong with this procedure. I advise all such comrades to study very carefully the writings of Lenin on this subject, notably "State and Revolution" and "Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky." The key thought, absolutely basic to the Marxist theory of the state, is that any form of government in a class society, including a democracy, essentially embodies the domination ("dictatorship") of one class over the others. This is especially true of workers democracy because the proletariat, inherently a propertyless class, cannot rule except directly and politically, i.e., through its own class organizations of the "soviet" type. Any form of "pure" "classless" democracy "in general" can only express the domination of the economically strongest class, i.e., is necessarily bourgeois democracy.

These basic considerations are well known to the members of the NAC [National Action Committee], and presumably these comrades accept them, at least formally. What the resolution does is simply to declare them inapplicable to the revolution under Stalinism, in the following way:

> "What must be remembered is that under Stalinism, the fight for democracy has a different social meaning than it does under capitalism, so long as it is limited to general democratic aims and demands no other change. Under capitalism, such a struggle represents a struggle for capitalist democracy. Under Stalinism, where the means of production are statified, the fight for democracy which calls for no other changes, and hence seeks the democratization of statified property, becomes the revolution for democratic socialism, even if it is not so consciously expressed."

What we have here is a schematic formula, rigidified into a fetish, used as a substitute for a concrete historical analysis. The leaders of the YSL have for a long time relied on the formula that Stalinism is not socialist because its nationalized property is not accompanied by political democracy. The obvious corollary to this is that nationalized property plus political democracy *is socialism*. And this is the theoretical essence of the quoted paragraph.

This is a good example of the dangers inherent in an agitational over-simplification. It's a lot easier and more effective for us to talk about "democracy" as a prerequisite for socialism than to use that nasty term "dictatorship of the proletariat." In the case of the YSL right wing, this has gone past a mere tactical adaptation of language and has become an adaptation of thought. The struggle for socialism under Stalinism ceases to be a struggle for workers power, and becomes a struggle for "general democratic aims."

The false, abstract, undialectical character of the methodology of the NAC majority is exemplified by the proposition that the struggle against Stalinism is the struggle for socialism "so long as it is limited to general democratic aims and demands no other change." But of course the reality of the revolution in Eastern Europe is not that of pure democracy and "no other change." A huge number of economic and social changes which are not necessarily those flowing from "general democratic aims" are the inseparable accompaniment to the popular revolution against Stalinism: to cite only the one change referred to by the resolution, the peasants have spontaneously eliminated collectivized agriculture, and restored private property on the land. It is exactly these *changes* that determine the actual character of the revolution against Stalinism, not an abstract formula about the relation of "democracy" to "socialism."

Jean-Claude Lattès

Horthyite Cardinal Mindszenty, U.S. imperialism's agent for counterrevolution in Hungary.

The formula nationalized property in industry plus political democracy equals socialism is not even true on an abstract level, no matter how useful agitationally. If it was true, Austria and Burma, both of whose industry is largely nationalized, and both of whom have relatively democratic political structures, would be socialist states. The essential prerequisite for development toward socialism is the raising of the working class to the position of a ruling class, or, in precise scientific terms, the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

Would the struggle for "general democratic aims" under Stalinism be sufficient to raise the working class to the level of a ruling class? The NAC resolution answers in the affirmative, on the basis of its formula.... A real answer, however, must rest on a concrete analysis of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions.

"Democracy" and Capitalist Restoration

The key question is this: *theoretically*, was it possible for the Polish and Hungarian revolutions to result in the restoration of capitalism? The NAC draft resolution precludes this, since it states that "democracy" is sufficient to define "the revolution for democratic socialism." This view, in my opinion, is possible only on the basis of a singular ignorance of the actual social and economic forces determining the evolution of Poland and Hungary, and the world context in which these revolutions took place.

What would have been the development in Poland or Hungary if the revolution had in fact achieved the establishment of formal democracy, of the Western type, with "no other change?" We here must abstract from the actual level of socialist consciousness attained by the Polish and Hungarian workers, since this is not a determining

factor in the argument of the NAC resolution. It should, however, be made clear that I believe this level of socialist consciousness was the decisive factor in the whole development, the key to the future of these countries.

The establishment of formal democracy, if it means anything at all, means free elections to a sovereign parliament. Free elections, in turn would mean the establishment of a government reflecting the numerically largest section of the population. In Poland and Hungary this majority is *not* the working class. It is the petty-bourgeoisie of town and country, the peasants, small shopkeepers, artisans, and the old middle classes.

Could free elections in Poland or Hungary result in fact in a government representing this petty-bourgeois majority? A majority cannot express its rule unless it is organized. Could this majority have been organized?

Here we come to one of the most shocking features of the NAC draft resolution. The authors of the draft have made the most stupid omission possible in a resolution on Poland and Hungary: *there is no mention whatever of the Catholic Church,* either as a religious institution or as a social force!

Yet, in both Poland and Hungary the Church is the *one* institution to emerge full blown from the Stalinist regime, with a highly organized and stable apparatus, a long tradition of continuity, and a high degree of popular prestige. The actual power of the Catholic Church is shown by the enormous extent to which religious education was reintroduced into the schools in Poland and Hungary (particularly in Poland, there have been frequent reports of the persecution of atheist and Jewish children by Catholic majorities). The power of the Church was shown most dramatically by Cardinal Wyszinski's intervention on behalf of Gomulka at the time of the recent Polish elections—an action which, according to all reports, played a major part in saving the Gomulka regime from what seemed likely to be a drastic setback. Can there be any doubt that in really free elections the candidates endorsed by the Church would have a huge advantage among the Catholic majority?

What role does the Church desire to play in these revolutions? The Draft Resolution states that in Poland and Hungary "forces which advocate capitalist restoration ... were extremely small and carried no weight." It is true that neither in Poland nor in Hungary did the Church present an openly capitalist program. But it is not necessary for it to do so. The Catholic Church, by its very nature as an international body completely controlled from the Vatican, plays a certain role in world politics—the role of an important ally of U.S. imperialism and of capitalist reaction in all countries. *If it felt free to do so,* what reason is there to think that the Church headed by a Mindszenty would act differently than does the Church in Italy, Spain, or Austria? And if free elections should return a parliament with a Catholic majority, reflecting the Catholic majority in the countryside, wouldn't the Church feel free?

There seems to me to be a high degree of probability that really free elections in both Poland and Hungary would return a petty-bourgeois, clerical majority. Free elections were never held in Poland after the war, but if they had been held, few except the Stalinists have denied that they would have been won by the Peasant Party of Mikolajczyk. Free elections *were* held in Hungary, and they resulted in a substantial majority for the Smallholders Party, led by the clerical reactionaries Ferenc Nagy and Msgr. (!) Bela Varga.

Would a government of Mindszenty-Ferenc Nagy or Mikolajczyk-Wyszinski have been able to restore capitalism? It is here irrelevant to argue that no such governments could, in fact, have been formed—because they obviously could have been *if the revolutions had remained within the bounds of formal parliamentary democracy* with full democratic rights for all parties and individuals, including clerics and emigrés. The question at issue is precisely the nature and role of such formal parliamentary democracy in East Europe—remember that the draft resolution considers this "democracy" *equivalent to socialism.*

I believe that a petty-bourgeois government in either Poland or Hungary, if allowed to stabilize itself and get a firm grip on the country, would be able to bring about a return to capitalism, and in very short order. The first step would be the absolutely necessary one, for any non-Stalinist government, of restoring capitalist relationships in agriculture and small production and retail trade. The NEP in Russia continually tended to develop restorationist tendencies, epitomized in the rise of the kulaks and Nepmen. Bukharin's policy of concessions to these capitalist elements would in fact have brought about this sort of capitalist restoration despite the subjective desire of the Bolshevik right wing to prevent it. NEP in a backward and exhausted country is a dangerous business at best—if placed in the hands of the political representatives of the kulaks and Nepmen (and the peasant and petty-bourgeois parties could be nothing else) it would certainly lead straight to capitalism.

Another decisive aspect of the return to capitalism under petty-bourgeois democratic leadership would be the ties of Poland and Hungary with the capitalist world market, most important, of course, with the gigantic economic strength of U.S. imperialism. It is no secret that the main positive political program of U.S. imperialism toward East Europe is based on massive economic aid, in the form of "loans" and outright gifts. This "aid" would have a dual effect: it would be a political ace of trumps in the hands of the bourgeois politicians who alone would have access to the American largess, and it would very rapidly serve to reorient the economies of Poland and Hungary back to their traditional dependence on Western capitalism. Lenin once remarked that he was far less afraid of the White Guard armies than of the cheap Western commodities they brought in their train. American commodities entering Eastern Europe under petty-bourgeois governments would not merely be *cheap*—they would be free!

And what would become of the nationalized industries? Their fate would serve the interests of the peasants and petty-bourgeoisie and the needs for trade with the Western capitalists. Hungary and Poland can be capitalist states without denationalizing a single large industrial plant; all that is necessary is to convert the industry, democratically of course, into an appendage of the peasant economy and the world economy.

What does this mean? An orientation entirely to consumer goods production, for the benefit of the peasants. A cessation of new investment and even repairs, since this would divert resources away from the petty-bourgeois sector. Abandonment of industries that could not compete on the world market—why should a Polish

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shopkeeper pay twice as much for a Zeran car as for a superior Volkswagen? Such investment and modernization as takes place to be financed by private Western capital, at no cost to the national economy.

And the consequences of this for the workers? Wages kept low, to keep down the cost of production. Workers councils would naturally not be allowed to interfere with the decisions of the democratic majority on questions concerning the management of the economy. The present grossly overexpanded work force would be sharply reduced as an obvious rationalization measure. And of course, the workers representatives would not hold power in the government and parliament; after all, in a democracy, doesn't the majority rule?

We should here re-emphasize that the above is *not* a picture of what I believe to have been the real perspective before Hungary and Poland, the real class nature of these revolutions. It *is* a picture of a real possibility of the evolution of these countries, *if the workers had restricted themselves to "general democratic aims."* The essential thing that it shows is that it is completely *false* to argue that the establishment of parliamentary democracy is sufficient to convert a Stalinist state into a Socialist one. Under Stalinism as under capitalism, there is no such thing as *democracy in general;* there is proletarian democracy, and there is bourgeois democracy. Nothing else. The "classless" parliamentary forms of democracy, in a country with a peasant and petty-bourgeois majority, *represent bourgeois democracy.*

The Socialist Alternative

If a formal and parliamentary democracy was likely to lead to a petty-bourgeois government and the restoration of capitalism in Poland and Hungary, what should have been the socialist alternative to these "general democratic aims?" The answer was given by the Russian Revolution, which also took place in a backward country in which free parliamentary elections would have necessarily resulted in a restoration of capitalism. That answer is the establishment of the *state power of the working class.*

In Hungary this solution was indicated perfectly by the course of the revolution itself, in which the decisive organs of revolutionary struggle were the *workers councils.* These councils were created in the course of the struggle by the spontaneous action of the workers themselves, and quickly proved themselves to be the political leadership of the entire nation.

The *workers council* or *soviet* represents the indicated form for the establishment of workers power in Hungary and, with slight difference of form, in every other country. In a country like Hungary, the creation of councils of working peasants, peasant soviets, would provide a means whereby the peasant majority could be represented in the government while preserving the state power of the proletariat through its class institutions. In scientific terminology, the *state* emerging from the revolution would be a *workers state*; the government would be a *workers and farmers government.*

Of course the mere establishment of a republic of workers councils in Poland or Hungary does not guarantee these countries against capitalist restoration. The proletarian regimes in East Europe would immediately be faced by the same sort of problems which beset the first soviet republic under NEP, and, if the revolution should fail to extend itself to the advanced countries of Western Europe, these states too would degenerate and eventually collapse. What the workers republic *would* guarantee is the *opportunity* of the working class at every point to impose its own conscious socialist direction on the nation.

It may be that some comrades who have never read Lenin or forgotten what they once learned will claim that this is "undemocratic", because a soviet type of state would mean the rule of a *minority*, the working class, over the majority of the population, mainly peasants. In reply to this objection, we point out the following basic facts:

1.) The peasantry, even where it is in the majority, is incapable of ruling in its own name. As a stratum of small commodity producers, i.e., a petty-bourgeois class, it tends to follow behind its natural leaders, the petty-bourgeois and "middle class" elements in the cities. In East Europe, this has been and is concretely expressed in the allegiance of the peasantry to the Catholic hierarchy. A government "representing" the East European peasantry would be dominated by clerical and pro-capitalist forces, which not only are a much smaller minority than the proletariat, but are of course a reactionary, inherently anti-democratic minority as well.

2.) The state of a soviet type, in terms of the actual rights and powers enjoyed by the masses of the people, including the poor peasants, is infinitely more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic, freely-elected parliament and all.

3.) In the actual revolution, the working class was the undisputed leader of the entire nation, and was the sole social force capable of an all-out struggle to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy. This fact gives it the highest democratic right to establish its own state. Historical experience shows that the working class is able to win support from large sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry only when it shows them that it is capable of acting to solve the problems of the entire society in a revolutionary fashion on its own, trusting only to its own class forces.

The question naturally arises: if the Russian counter-revolutionary intervention had not taken place, would the Hungarian revolution have, in fact, resulted in a republic of workers councils? Of course, we cannot answer this question definitively. But certain clear facts about the objective and subjective aspects of the Hungarian revolution indicate that an affirmative answer was highly probable.

The first and decisive thing about the Hungarian revolution is that it was a *workers* revolution, and the leading role of the workers was institutionally formulated by the establishment of *workers councils.* Except for the Russian army, there was in Hungary not the shadow of a social force capable of preventing the assumption of state power by the workers councils. Thus the objective conditions for the formation of a soviet republic, in the event of revolutionary victory of course, were entirely favorable.

The actual level of consciousness of the Hungarian workers, however, was not at the level indicated by the objective possibilities of the revolution. In this the Hungarian workers were like the Russian proletariat after the February revolution. The general demand was *not* for all power to the workers councils, but for "free elections" to

UPI
True face of Catholic reaction: Franco's troops occupy revolutionary Barcelona, 1939.

a sovereign parliament.

It would, however, be a disastrous mistake to take the level of consciousness corresponding to the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy as the permanent and ultimate political program of the Hungarian proletariat. The Hungarian workers wanted "free elections," but they also wanted to preserve their own councils and extend their powers. They wanted to move forward to socialism, not backward to capitalism.

If the revolution had been successful, the workers councils would have emerged with the decisive aspects of state power, de facto, in their hands. They would not be likely to surrender this power to the petty-bourgeois and clerical government resulting from "free elections." A state of dual power between parliament and soviets would tend to emerge. In this the Hungarian workers would, in their own way, be recapitulating the experience of the Russian working class. In Russia, as we all should know, the proletarian revolution was followed by free elections to a constituent assembly, the most democratic type of bourgeois parliament. Petty-bourgeois parties, of a far more "leftist" type than would be found in the Hungary of Mindszenty, dominated this constituent assembly. In Russia, it took only a day to make clear to the workers councils that they could not tolerate the existence of a bourgeois government by their side. The Russian workers acted in the right way; under the leadership of the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky they dispersed the parliament and made it clear to the entire world that the soviets were the only power in Russia. The Hungarian workers would eventually be faced with the same problem, and eventually would have to act in the same way, or see the conquests of their revolution seized from them by the restorationist elements.

The Need for a Revolutionary Party

The Russian workers were able to act as they did only because of the presence of a revolutionary Marxist party, capable of anticipating events, drawing the lessons of the proletarian struggles, and taking resolute revolutionary action. In Hungary too, the establishment of the power of the workers councils would require such a party. The absence of a bolshevik party was one of the main causes for the strength of bourgeois-democratic and even pro-western illusions among the workers. These illusions were the inevitable product of the situation of the Hungarian working class, of its experiences under the Stalinist dictatorship. They could be overcome only in the course of open political struggle after the destruction of the Stalinist regime. To do this, to raise its consciousness to a higher level, the Hungarian working class would have had to absorb the experience of a century of revolutionary socialist struggles, and most of all the experience of the last half-century of Marxist political thought, the body of theory developed best of all by Lenin and Trotsky.

For the Hungarian working class to learn these lessons would have been, at the same time, for it to construct a revolutionary Marxist party capable of leading the proletariat to the consolidation of its own power. Failure to reach this new level of class consciousness, failure to create a bolshévik party, would have meant that the working class would, sooner or later, let the state power slip out of its fingers and into the hands of the "democratic" majority representing the petty-bourgeoisie and the Church.

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From
"Truth" and Hungary—A Reply to Herbert Aptheker

The Hungarian working class was the central actor in the Hungarian drama—and the working class is totally omitted from Aptheker's version of the "truth" about Hungary! More exactly, Aptheker mentions the workers only to *deny* that they played any role. He asserts: "the workers of Budapest by and large adopted an apathetic or passive or neutral attitude."

It is surely not necessary to recapitulate here the great number of eyewitness accounts proving that the main fighting forces were made up of young workers, that the heaviest fighting took place in the working class districts (like Kobanya, Ujpest, —and "Red Csepel," the proletarian stronghold of Hungarian Communism and the *last* center of resistance against the second Russian intervention). It should be enough to cite the curious manner the Hungarian workers chose to show their "neutrality"—a complete general strike and the formation of Workers Councils!

The sequel to the second Russian intervention showed the real nature and strength of the contending social forces in Hungary so clearly as to remove any possible doubt on this score.... The fascistic groups vanished into thin air (or rather, into Austria and thence other countries of the "free world," to prepare for new adventures). Mindszenty hid in the United States embassy. [Smallholders Party leader] Bela Kovacs was invited to join the Kadar government, but refused and announced his "retirement" from politics. But the workers councils remained and carried on a fierce struggle against the Russian occupier and its Kadar puppet government. As late as December 12, all Hungary was gripped by a general strike. In the end, as we know, the Kadar government was able by the threat of starvation to break the strike. It proceeded to arrest the workers' leaders and destroy the Workers Councils, on the pretext that the Councils "have preoccupied themselves with exclusively political questions with the objective of organizing a sort of

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Lessing/Magnum

Hungarian "liberal-nationalist" Stalininst Imre Nagy.

second power, opposed to the State Power." [*France-Observateur*, 3 January 1957]

The bitter irony of a self-styled "Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Government" outlawing the only representative organs of the Hungarian working class should not blind us to the fact that with this declaration the Kadar government has definitively posed the *real* choice in Hungary. On the one hand, the "State Power" of the discredited Stalinist bureaucracy resting on Russian bayonets; and on the other, the "second power," the state power of the Hungarian working class exercised through its elected democratic bodies, the Workers Councils. The Hungarian Workers Councils of 1956 were the legitimate heirs of the Workers Councils (Soviets) of 1919. Aptheker thus is closer to the truth than he suspects when he claims that the heirs of Horthy played a decisive role in the Hungarian revolution!

The real spirit of the Hungarian workers revolution was eloquently expressed by Sandor Racz, a young worker 23 years old, who was elected chairman of the Budapest Central Workers Council. On December 8 Racz gave an interview to the correspondent of an Italian newspaper, to be published only if he was arrested. He declared:

> "I have a tranquil conscience because I have been the unfortunate spokesman for the will of the workers and for all those who have fought for the ideal of a free, independent, and neutral Hungary and for a socialist state.... All that has been refused to us. The government knows that the country is against it, and since it knows today that the single organized force which truly made the Revolution is the working class, it wishes to destroy the workers united front."
>
> —[*Il Giorno*, 14 December 1956]

As he had anticipated, Racz was arrested the moment he went to meet representatives of the Kadar government, who had promised to negotiate with the workers....

One of the most unfortunate aspects of Aptheker's book is that its preoccupation with a fictitious "White Terror" prevents us from coming to grips with the *real* restorationist danger. I earlier referred to the universally-held capitalist view that the Hungarian revolution was aimed at achieving "Western-style democracy." A brief discussion of this is necessary here.

The claim that the Hungarian revolution oriented toward "Western-style democracy" was more than a *theory*; it was a *political program*. The leaders of the "West" knew as well as the Russians that it would be impossible to impose a new Horthy on the Hungarian people. Therefore, capitalism could be restored in Hungary *only* in "democratic" guise. Certain aspects of Hungarian society make this more than a utopian dream.

A majority of the population of Hungary is rural, attached to private property (Stalinist "collectivizations" did not exactly weaken this attachment), and economically drawn to the West. Furthermore, the religious majority in Hungary is Catholic. The planners of "Liberation" had good grounds to hope that the establishment of a Western-style parliamentary system would result in a government reflecting these majorities, under the leadership of emigré politicians and the Catholic hierarchy. Especially since they had powerful extra-democratic means of pressure, in the form of economic "aid" and the activities of the fascistic fringe we met earlier.

Could capitalism have been restored in this way? Certainly if the Hungarian revolution had been allowed to develop freely, there is a *possibility* that this would have happened. (Of course, even if this development were *certain*, which is not at all the case, the actual Russian intervention would still be an impermissible denial to the Hungarian people of the right to choose their own social system.)

The danger of capitalist restoration thus really existed. But nothing at all justifies the Western claim that the revolution was essentially a struggle for the "democratic" return of "peoples capitalism." The Western version of the "counter-revolution" thesis, like the Stalinist one, is false because it ignores the key factor in the revolution—the working class.

The Hungarian working class, even though it may have been confused about many things, did not fight for "Western-style" democracy—it fought for *socialist* democracy. The workers of Gyor showed this when they suppressed the meeting in favor of [the right-wing emigré] Ferenc Nagy. The workers council of the 11th District of Budapest showed this when it demanded "free elections in which only those parties may participate that recognize and have always recognized the Socialist order, based on the principle that means of production belong to society." [quoted in Free Europe Committee, *Revolt in Hungary—A Documentary Chronology of Events* (1956)]

But the decisive refutation of the idea that Hungary was returning to "Western-style democracy" is the simple fact that the workers all over Hungary, in the heat of the revolution, created their own *Workers Councils* as organs of the political rule of the working class. What has this to do with capitalist "democracy"? To smash the threat of capitalist restoration, the Hungarian workers would merely have had to exert the power that already lay in their hands, to give all power to the workers councils and not, as in so many past revolutions, give up their power to a capitalist parliament.

To grasp the loathsome hypocrisy and mendacity of the capitalist "friends" of the Hungarian revolution, the reader need only ask this question: What would be the attitude of these Dulleses, Mollets, and Edens if the workers of Paris, London, or Detroit were to form *their own* workers councils and attempt to establish a "Socialist order, based on the principle that means of production belong to society"? ■

Revisionists on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Eurotrotskyist Mandel vs. Caudillo Moreno

With Carter's renewed Cold War offensive, we are once again bombarded with the rhetoric of "the free world versus Soviet totalitarianism." And certainly one of Stalinism's greatest services for the imperialist bourgeoisie has been the identification of Marxian socialism with a gray, bureaucratic police state. The brutal terror, crushing censorship and ludicrous frame-ups have dragged the liberating goals of Marxism through the mud. Every day the working people of the United States and West Europe have had pounded into them that they enjoy greater freedom under capitalist democracy than under the Soviet bloc's dictatorship of the proletariat.

The various "Trotskyist" revisionists have expectedly capitulated to the intense and growing anti-Communist ideological campaign in the imperialist West. They have used Trotsky's revolutionary opposition to Stalinist bureaucratic rule as a cover for an essentially social-democratic rejection of the proletarian dictatorship. This is precisely the function of the main resolution, "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," adopted by the majority tendency of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec) at its 11th World Congress in November of last year.

This document gives to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" a purely bourgeois-democratic content. Behind its for-the-ages abstractness, "Socialist Democracy ..." is a sustained polemic for granting to pro-imperialist forces within the Soviet bloc full political rights, including the right to win governmental power. In a defense of this document, Mandel, perhaps prophetically, explicitly comes out for the legalization of a Roman Catholic party in Poland, a clerical-nationalist party inspired by pope Wojtyla and Zbigniew Brzezinski! "Socialist Democracy ..." is nothing but an echo of Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign refracted through the Eurocommunist/social-democratic milieu.

When Mandel's draft of "Socialist Democracy..." first came out in 1977, the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) expressed general agreement with it, while the political adventurer Nahuel Moreno used it as a foil to pose as a leftist "anti-revisionist." However, at the 11th World Congress, after the Morenoite Bolshevik Faction had split, the SWP put up a counterresolution, "Socialism and Democracy" (*1979 World Congress of the Fourth International* [January 1980]).

The SWP is thoroughly reformist on its American terrain and prostitutes Marxism in the service of liberalism. While the inveterate impressionist Mandel tends to ride all the way on his latest hobbyhorse—not so long ago Guevarist guerrillaism, most recently Eurocommunism—the SWP sometimes tries to be less flagrantly revisionist in its formal, international documents.

"Socialism and Democracy" has the same key formulation as do the Mandelites: "...the workers must be free to organize groups, tendencies and parties without *a priori* ideological restrictions." Presumably then a proletarian political revolution in the USSR would enable a Sakharov or a Solzhenitsyn to contest for soviet delegate. Basically the SWP's "Socialism and Democracy" carefully *avoids* clearly stated positions on the central controversial issues. The adopted USec majority resolution explicitly states that pro-bourgeois *parties*, even if they support (though not yet violently) imperialist governments, should have the *same* political rights as proletarian socialist parties. That is the long and the short of it. The SWP document implicitly accepts this position, but doesn't express it so bluntly.

In one sense the Mandelite/SWP ultra-liberal pronouncements about socialist democracy are baloney. When they find it opportune to cheerlead for one or another Stalinist regime, these revisionists will defend the suppression not of pro-bourgeois tendencies, but of left oppositional groups, including their own "comrades." In the early 1950s Pablo, Mandel & Co. apologized for the Mao regime's imprisonment of the veteran Chinese Trotskyists, contemptuously dismissing them as "refugees from revolution." A decade later the Pabloites, now joined by the SWP, covered up and defended the Castro regime's persecution of the Cuban Trotskyists (followers of Juan Posadas), whose printing press was smashed for bringing out Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed*!

Recently these most democratic of "socialist democrats" have gone even further. In Nicaragua they have defended the suppression of the left not by a Stalinist regime of a deformed workers state (bad enough), but by the petty-bourgeois bonapartist government of a capitalist country! The petty-bourgeois radical Sandinista/bourgeois coalition in Managua imprisoned and expelled the followers of Nahuel Moreno and various Maoists, mainly for agitating the workers. The Mandelites apologized for the Sandinista crackdown, while the SWP actually endorsed and may even have inspired it! In a small-time way the Mandelites/SWP have demonstrated once again that the defenders of "democratic rights" for Hindenberg and Ludendorff will be lawyers for the murderers of Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

The difference between the SWP and Mandelites at the 11th World Congress was incidental friction. Moreno, on the other hand, used Mandel's social-democratism as the central rationale for an oppositional faction. Having spent most of his political career as a deep entrist in the Peronist movement, Moreno represents that tendency of ostensible Trotskyism closest to populist-nationalist bonapartism. Exiled from Argentina by the 1975 rightist coup, he adopted a new persona as the dynamic *jefe* of world Trotskyism. With the Mandelites tailing the Eurocommu-

continued on next page

nists and the SWP as usual tailing the liberals, Moreno decided a "left" oppositional posture would be advantageous.

But the Morenoites' "hard Bolshie" pose was as much a sham as the Mandelite/SWP ultra-democratism. On splitting from the USec last fall the Morenoites immediately blocked with Pierre Lambert's Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), which is to the right not only of the Mandelites but even of the Eurocommunists. The neo-Kautskyan and virulently Stalinophobic OCI has embraced the pro-Western Soviet-bloc dissidents even more fulsomely than has the USec. And raising the banner of anti-Soviet nationalism in *imperialist* Europe, the Lambertists call for the *unconditional* reunification of Germany through "a national constituent assembly East and West," a demand presumably adopted from the late Konrad Adenauer!

Mandel's ultra-democratism and Moreno's revolutionary Third Worldist bonapartism are each in their own way poses which can be dropped or even reversed tomorrow. Nonetheless, it is important to innoculate would-be revolutionaries against these symmetric revisionisms of the Marxist program of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Revolutionary Purpose of the Proletarian Dictatorship

> "...if our purpose is the abolition of private property in the means of production, the only road to its solution lies through the concentration of State power in its entirety in the hands of the proletariat, and the setting up for the transitional period of an exceptional regime—a regime in which the ruling class is guided, not by general principles calculated for a prolonged period, but by considerations of *revolutionary policy*." [our emphasis]
>
> —Leon Trotsky, *Terrorism and Communism* (1920)

This passage draws the fundamental line of demarcation between Bolshevism and the "democracy above all" revisionists from Kautsky to Mandel.

The proletarian revolution certainly liberates the creative political energies of the working masses and provides them with far greater real democratic rights and freedoms than they have under bourgeois parliamentarism. Without the active participation of the great majority of the population in political life, the transition to communism—where classes have disappeared and the state has withered away—is inconceivable. Nonetheless, workers democracy is a means to an end, not an end in itself. That end is the creation of the political, economic and cultural preconditions for communist society. The most fundamental of these preconditions is the maintenance of proletarian state power and collectivized property. Therefore, the forms and extent of workers democracy are *subordinate* to the defense of proletarian class rule against the forces of bourgeois counterrevolution.

El Socialista

El Caudillo Nahuel Moreno.

At this point the "pure democrats" pretending to be Marxists will argue that there can be no contradiction between granting bourgeois parties full democratic rights and preventing them from restoring capitalism. They will even argue that such democratic rights will expose the bourgeois forces before potential followers and so demoralize them. For the "pure democracy" revisionists the bourgeoisie, after it has been overthrown and expropriated, is reduced to either putschism or a harmless, quixotic ideological opposition.

Mandel's "Socialist Democracy..." projects the complete impotence of a bourgeois opposition as a rationale for granting it "freedom of political organization":

> "The workers have no need to fear as a mortal danger propaganda that 'incites' them to give the factories and banks back to private owners. There is little chance that a majority of them will be 'persuaded' by propaganda of that type."

Lenin's answer to this kind of argument in his *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918) expresses a fundamental difference between revolutionary Marxism and social-democratic revisionism:

> "...in every profound revolution, the *prolonged, stubborn* and *desperate* resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years retain important practical advantages over the exploited, is the *rule*." [emphasis in original]

Among these advantages Lenin lists superior education, managerial capacity, close connections with the higher technical personnel and incomparably greater experience in the art of war. He also points out that "a section of the exploited from the least advanced middle-peasant, artisan and similar groups of the population may, and indeed does, follow the exploiters." And furthermore:

> "If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is typical, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they *still* remain *stronger* than the exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters is enormous." [emphasis in original]

Lenin's reference to the *international* connections of the bourgeoisie particularly highlights the revisionism of

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Stern

Moreno's first "revolutionary" mentor, Juan Perón.

Mandel's "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Central to this document is a fundamental distinction between the exceptional condition of civil war and the supposedly normal, peaceful state of the proletarian dictatorship:

> "...the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat can be preceded by civil war or foreign military intervention, i.e., attempts by the former ruling classes and their international allies to overthrow workers power by force. Under such conditions, the rules of war apply. Restrictions on the political activities of the bourgeoisie may well be called for."

But for Mandel this can only be for the moment. In his reply to Moreno he ridicules the idea of "decades of civil war."

What a profoundly nationalistic view of proletarian revolution! We are here literally presented with the program of building "socialist democracy in one country" undisturbed and unconcerned by revolutions, civil wars and wars in the rest of the world. This is, of course, precisely the program of liberal Stalinism/Eurocommunism, of the Dubceks and Berlinguers.

While the imperialist bourgeoisie are not inverted Trotskyists, they instinctively understand that the key to restoring capitalism in the Soviet bloc (whether or not bureaucratically ruled) is isolating it or, to use an early Cold War term, "containing" it. The forces for capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and East Europe arise from the *interaction* of imperialist pressure, economic and military, from without and potentially counterrevolutionary social groupings from within—liberal intellectuals of the Sakharov type, the church, a section of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The Polish social democrat Jacek Kuron, who is lionized by the USec, calls for the Finlandization of his country and by extension all of East Europe:

> "We must strive for a status similar to Finland's: a parliamentary democracy with a limited independence in the field of foreign policy where it directly touches the interests of the USSR."
>
> —"The Political Opposition and the Threat of Intervention from Without" in Jiri Pelikan and Manfred Wilke, eds., *Menschenrechte: Ein Jahrbuch zu Osteuropa* (1977)

And when the Soviet army is now battling U.S.-backed feudalist reactionaries in Afghanistan, Andrei Sakharov calls on the United Nations (that den of imperialist thieves and their colonial victims) to pressure the Soviet government into withdrawing.

According to Mandel, pro-bourgeois groupings in a workers state have an inalienable right to call on international capital to use economic blackmail (as do Sakharov and Polish social democrat Adam Michnik, for example), to vocally support imperialist military buildups and interventions in backward countries and to agitate against aid to revolutions abroad (for example, to North Vietnam and the Vietcong fighting the United States). In other words, he advocates giving capitalist restorationist forces the fullest freedom of agitation and organization short of actual recourse to terrorism or armed insurrection. Any government of a workers state which followed such an ultra-liberal policy would insure that bourgeois counterrevolutionary forces were maximally prepared when they did risk insurrection.

To be sure, a revolutionary workers government would not deal with reactionary, pro-bourgeois tendencies as the Stalinist bureaucracy usually does. While the Stalinists can only combat such oppositionists through state terror, a revolutionary regime would have at its disposal a far more effective weapon: moral authority before the working masses and the perspective of world revolution.

In defending himself against Moreno's charges of revisionism, Mandel resorts to a highly *selective* citation of the Transitional Program. He bases his entire case on this one passage:

> "Democratization of the soviets is impossible without *legalization of* soviet parties. The workers and peasants by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognize as soviet parties." [emphasis in original]

Mandel latches onto the second sentence to argue for the legalization of *all, including bourgeois-restorationist, parties*. He projects that soviet democracy will encompass not only the social democrats and Stalinists, but also bourgeois-nationalists such as the Peronists in Argentina, PRI in Mexico, Congress Party in India, etc. ("First Comments on Nahuel Moreno's 'The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat'," [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* Vol. XVI No. 9, October 1979).

Trotsky was extremely precise in formulating the Transitional Program. Why did he call for the legalization

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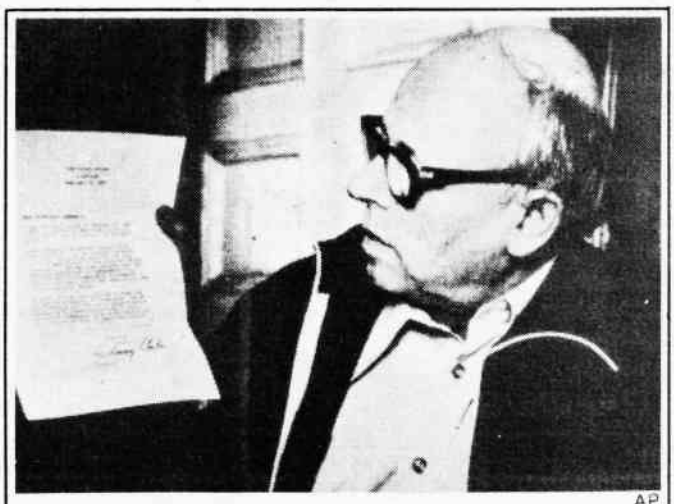
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Pro-Western dissident Andrei Sakharov waves letter from Jimmy Carter.

of "soviet" parties, not of all parties? Mandel chooses to interpret Trotsky's formulation as a meaningless tautology. For Mandel a soviet party is *any* party elected to the soviet. Moreover, since one cannot tell in advance which parties the workers and peasants will elect, any party that contests for soviet office is *ipso facto* a soviet party. Presumably if the fascists find it tactically expedient to run for soviet delegateship, the Mandelites would have to defend their legal right to do so.

Fortunately, to understand Trotsky's position, one is not reduced to logical inference. Mandel carefully *omits the immediately preceding passage*. Let us see why:

> "It is necessary to return to the soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and kulaks were not permitted to enter the soviets, so now *it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the soviets*. In the soviets there is room only for representatives of the workers, rank-and-file collective farmers, peasants and Red Army men." [emphasis in original]

Mandel now stands stark naked in his revisionism and no amount of terminological trickery can hide it. Trotsky not only regarded the exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the soviets as a matter of course, but also called for the expulsion of the Stalinist bureaucrats, who in part stand within the workers movement.

To summarize: soviet democracy should encompass those parties, chosen by the workers and their petty-bourgeois allies, which stand for and defend the socialist order. As a norm all groupings which do not actively work to overthrow the socialist revolution should have freedom of expression, which is not the same as the right to form soviet parties. How to deal with counterrevolutionary groupings is a *tactical* question to be determined by such factors as their particular nature and following, the international situation, etc.

Enter El Caudillo Moreno

Nahuel Moreno fancies himself the Lenin of today and he no doubt considers *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Bogotá, 1978) as the *State and Revolution* of today. This opus is presented both as a definitive attack on present-day revisionism (using Mandel as a foil) and as a grand strategy in the struggle for power.

The polemical exchange between Moreno and Mandel

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Mandel calls for legalization of a party led by pope Wojtyla in Poland.

has an odd quality. It is as if, for some reason, Juan Perón and Enrico Berlinguer were debating political first principles in Trotskyese. Both disputants are obviously uncomfortable arguing within the Trotskyist framework and resort to various improvisations, dodges and falsifications to break out of it.

Each is most effective making orthodox debating points against the other's symmetric revisionism. Moreno cannot be gainsaid when he asserts that the Mandelites/SWP have "foisted onto the dictatorship of the proletariat objectives and a program 90% similar to the Eurocommunist program and diametrically opposed to that of our teachers." In turn, Mandel condemns Moreno accurately enough for opposing workers democracy in the name of the uncontrolled rule of "the revolutionary party." He characterizes Moreno's book as "strewn with theoretical concessions to the [Stalinist] bureaucracy."

Actually Moreno expresses those elements of Stalinist ideology which are common to nationalist bonapartism in general. The adventurer-*caudillo* polemicizes against the Mandelite/SWP social-democratism not from the standpoint of a Lenin or Trotsky (or even that of a Stalin), but rather from that of a Juan Perón or Gamal Nasser.

Moreno devotes an entire section of his book to attacking "soviet fetishism," hardly a major deviation in the contemporary left. What Moreno is really opposing is not a fixation with a particular *form* of proletarian organization during an insurrection, but rather workers democracy *as such*. He constantly *counterposes* "the dictatorship of the revolutionary party" (that is, of Moreno and his gang) to soviet democracy:

> "... the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat *in the next decades* will be synonymous not with soviet organizations, but with revolutionary dictatorships of Trotskyist parties or parties becoming Trotskyist [?].... "The revolutionary dictatorship of proletarian parties, not soviet or multi-party soviet systems, is an objective necessity imposed by social reality, the existence of different sectors among the workers and toilers as well as the low political and cultural level of the majority of these sectors." [our emphasis]

Moreno's revisionism here is as blatant as Mandel's. The Transitional Program considers "it would hardly be

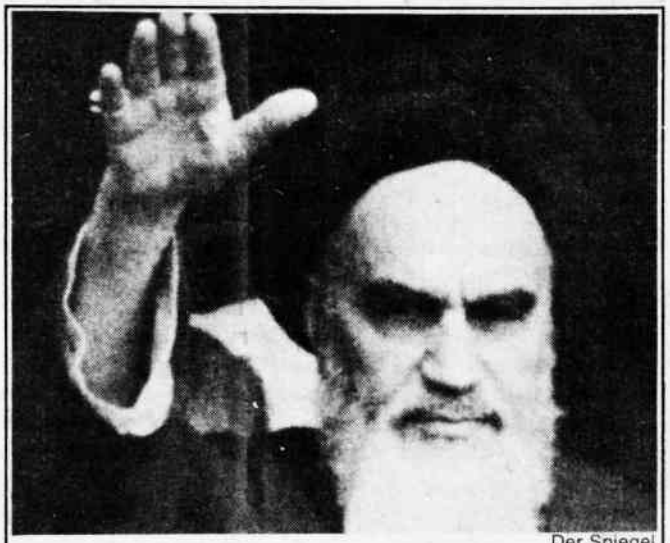
possible to think up a better" form of organization for proletarian revolution and that "the slogan of *soviets*, therefore, crowns the program of transitional demands."

It is true that Trotsky on occasion criticized soviet fetishism, for example, in his 1924 *The Lessons of October*. But he *always* maintained: a) that if the revolution is not organized on the basis of soviets, it must be organized on the basis of other inclusive *proletarian* organs (e.g., factory committees, trade unions); and b) that in any case soviets would be established on the morrow of victory as the governmental form of the proletarian dictatorship.

In one respect a consistent adventurer-bonapartist, Moreno not only rejects soviet democracy in a workers state, but proletarian organs *per se* as the basis for socialist revolution. As an alternative to soviets he offers the mass corporatist institutions of various bourgeois-nationalist regimes. For example, he maintains that at certain periods in Argentina a proletarian revolution was possible on the basis of the Peronist trade unions, semi-corporatist bodies subordinated to a wing of the bourgeois officer corps.

In Iran today the Morenoites have gone even further and call for "proletarian dictatorship" based on the Islamic Revolutionary Committees (*shoras*), the "popular" corporatist organs of a movement analogous to European clerico-fascism in the 1930s! Their "vanguard" Colombian section proclaims: "Our great task is to hold a Congress of Shoras in the whole country!!! And it should govern!" (International Supplement to *El Socialista*, 8 May 1980). In fact, the *actual* politics underlying *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat* is best revealed by the Morenoites' attitude toward Khomeini's Iran. While all the fake-Trotskyist groupings tailed the mass Islamic mobilization, the Morenoites' infatuation with Khomeini's regime went deeper and is more sinister.

What appeals to the Morenoite mentality about the "Iranian Revolution" is precisely its *anti*-democratic character, precisely the *faghi*'s (leader's) freedom from any form of representative government. The "Iranian Revolution" is what Khomeini says it is. How much the would-be "Trotskyist Imam" from Argentina must envy this man his charismatic power over the masses, his command of the unquestioning loyalty of thousands of militant youth. Here one recalls that Moreno's first "revolutionary" mentor, Juan Perón, learned his politics in Mussolini's Italy, though he applied it in the very different setting of a semi-colonial country dominated by a landed oligarchy.



Der Spiegel

Morenoites call for a government based on Khomeiniite Islamic Revolutionary committees in Iran.

Just as Moreno's criticism of soviet fetishism is but a cover for his bonapartist conceptions, so his opposition to Mandel's supposed European centeredness amounts to unabashed Third Worldism. He maintains that the West European (and North American) working classes are so corrupted by the crumbs from the imperialists' table and by bourgeois-democratic freedoms that they cannot become revolutionary until reduced to the wretched state of, say, the Chilean or Iranian masses:

> "We archio-Trotskyists believe that objective reality will destroy all the bourgeois-democratic expectations of the masses, and that as long as objective reality has not yet destroyed these expectations, no effort at demonstration can succeed. As long as the European workers have not experienced brutal economic crisis, annual inflation of 100 to 150%, the appearance of fascist bands, bonapartist and fascist *coups d'état*, their bourgeois-democratic illusions will not disappear. No one and nothing can destroy them."

In other words, proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries has been objectively impossible for the past three decades and continues to be so.

But this means that proletarian dictatorships can exist only in backward countries besieged by the imperialist powers, the very condition conducive to bureaucratic degeneration/deformation. This is, in fact, the heart of Moreno's theory. The Morenoites' profound contribution to Marxist theory is "the two-stage dictatorship of the proletariat." The first stage, which we are supposedly now in, is *defined* by the dominance of capitalist-imperialism on a world scale:

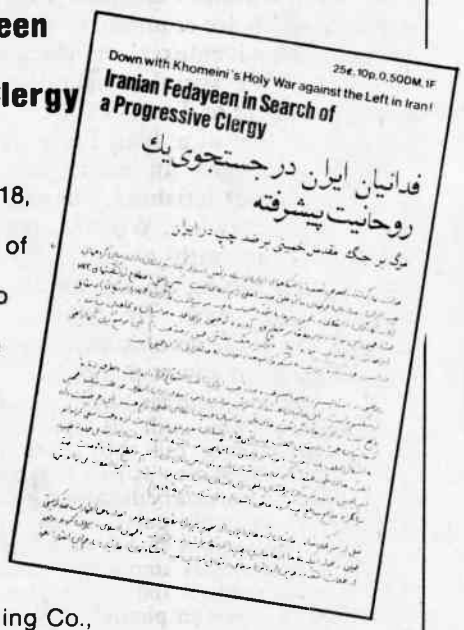
> "As a result of the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established in isolated and backward countries, it will not have just a single stage, as the

continued on next page

Down with Khomeini's Holy War Against the Left in Iran

Iranian Fedayeen in Search of a Progressive Clergy

Translated into Persian from *Le Bolchevik* No. 18, July 1980. A trenchant critique of the Iranian left's suicidal support to the "Islamic Revolution" in the name of all-class "anti-imperialist" unity.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> founders of Marxism believed. Rather than simply the stage of construction of socialism, today the dictatorship of the proletariat has two clearly defined stages.
> "What we are now seeing is the first stage, which is characterized by the confrontation with imperialism...."
> —"Declaration and Platform of the [Morenoite] Bolshevik Faction," [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* Vol. XVI, No.3, July 1979

This is recognizably the ideological outlook of the Stalinist bureaucracies as well as various Third World nationalist regimes pretending to "Marxism-Leninism." Stripped of its utopian gloss the essential content of "socialism in one country" is the impossibility of proletarian revolution in the imperialist centers for a lengthy and indefinite period (to use the Morenoite term, "a stage"). The Stalinist bureaucracies see themselves confronting an unshakable imperialist order for the foreseeable future and so resort to defensive military measures and diplomatic maneuvering (in practice, international class collaboration). In turn, the permanent threat from the "enemies of the socialist fatherland" serves as an ideological justification for bonapartist rule.

We can now summarize the 300 pages of *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat.* Moreno and his gang, disguising their "Trotskyism," infiltrate the mass corporatist institution of some bourgeois-nationalist regime, like the Peronist trade unions. At some point they take it over, while appealing to a section of the officer corps in the name of "anti-imperialist" nationalism. The unwashed masses are deemed too selfish, too short-sighted to be democratically entrusted with the decades-long defensive struggle against the imperialist powers. This requires the "revolutionary dictatorship" of...a "Trotskyist" *caudillo.*

This fantasy of a would-be Third World bonapartist, of course, has nothing in common with the Trotskyist permanent revolution. What separates Trotskyism from all manner of reformism and petty-bourgeois radicalism is the conviction that the overthrow of the world capitalist order is possible in the *present* historic period. The failure of the world revolution to date is *not* rooted in the objective conditions of contemporary capitalism, such as the division between economically advanced and backward countries, but rather in the reformist-bureaucratic misleadership of the working class.

The task of a revolutionary (Trotskyist) vanguard in a workers state is to provide political/organizational leadership (and possibly material/military support) for proletarian revolution internationally, *centrally within the imperialist powers.* Soviet democracy is integral to the international extension of the socialist revolution, inspiring especially the workers of the advanced (bourgeois-democratic) capitalist countries with a model of their self-liberation and control over their own future. ■

LTd'I Fusion...

(continued from page 24)

to candidates of the workers parties in the popular front: the bourgeois workers parties must break from their bourgeois partners.

(5) The LTd'I broke politically from the GBL in 1978, on the basis of the struggle waged by the iSt against the opportunist political and organizational conceptions of the GBL. The iSt continued engaging the LTd'I in clarifying political discussions, and at the August 1979 iSt International Conference the document approved with the agreement of the LTd'I observers said in part with reference to the LTd'I:

> "The comrades of the LTd'I have shown an inadequate grasp of the methodology of Leninism on the importance to the working class of the fight to defend democratic rights. This has led to disputes in the past... which must be expected to resurface in new forms."

A concrete expression of this was demonstrated later on at the Conference, during a discussion on the question of how to apply the Transitional Program to concrete trade-union struggles (the imminent bankruptcy of Chrysler). In that discussion some of the LTd'I leaders showed an inability to comprehend revolutionary Marxism, which centered on a semi-reformist approach to the question of nationalizations, under an ultra-left cover, and which was combined with a parochial worldview.

After several months of discussions with the I.S. [International Secretariat] of the iSt, a majority of comrades were convinced of the correctness of the iSt position, formulated in articles in *Workers Vanguard* (Nos. 238 and 247). The SL slogan, "Whatever Chrysler's worth, give it to the workers," is a powerful transitional demand for the specific situation posing class action against the sanctity of private property through such militant measures as factory seizures. While expressing the real felt needs of Chrysler workers, the slogan exposes the social democrats whose "nationalization" slogan is a cover for managing the capitalist economy "in the workers' interest" by having taxpayers assume the burden of subsidizing unprofitable enterprises.

In relation to the unprincipled behavior of some LTd'I members when questioned by the police early this year, the I.S. of the iSt wrote a letter pointing out that "when the LTI was raided by the police and its members held for interrogation, members of the LTI including comrade Moreno collaborated in this violation of your democratic rights.... To have gratuitously engaged in a 'dialogue' with the repressive organisms of the class enemy when you were

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not facing any charges brought against you and without insisting on your legal rights—and especially to have answered questions about the size and financial resources of the LTI!—shows criminal incomprehension of the most basic questions of the capitalist state and the class line."

In April 1980, around this question of the elementary conduct of a communist toward the state, a majority of the LTd'I—through the decisive intervention of the I.S. of the iSt—consolidated its programmatic agreement with the iSt, passing a motion "to condemn the improper and potentially terribly dangerous and destructive conduct of the LTd'I members in the course of police interrogation," whilst a tiny clique led by Moreno decided to split from the LTd'I and the iSt to pursue his Pabloite liquidationist orientation toward a particularly backward section of the Workers Autonomy, as shown by the support granted to the Mao-Stalinist "Struggle Slate" in the June 1980 elections in Rome.

(6) The LTd'I and the iSt recognize the burning need for Trotskyists today—particularly in the light of the USA/NATO's drive toward war over the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, a progressive intervention that revolutionists support, raising the slogans "Hail Red Army!" and "Extend the gains of October to the Afghan peoples!"—to strongly restate the principle of unconditional defense of the USSR and the deformed workers states against imperialism; ultimately this can be accomplished only be a proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucrats and by workers anti-capitalist revolutions in the West.

(7) Left-wing terrorism is born out of petty-bourgeois despair and lack of confidence in the ability of the organized working class to make a successful proletarian revolution; the Red Brigades share this despair and lack of confidence, at the same time that they claim some kind of ideological continuity with the Stalinist partisans' activities in 1943-45 and in the post-war period. Trotskyists categorically reject terrorism as a systematic political methodology. As Trotsky said, terrorists are bureaucrats in reverse. However, leftist terrorists believe that they are acting to overthrow capitalism and revolutionists must defend them against persecution by the bourgeois state for attacks on symbolic targets or direct agents of the capitalist system and call for freeing those militants imprisoned as a result of such persecution. At the same time, Trotskyists cannot defend those left-wing terrorists responsible for indiscriminate terrorist attacks on the civilian population or for terrorist attacks against other organizations on the left, just as we condemn violence within the workers movement.

The LTd'I and the iSt understand as Leninists the importance to the working class of the fight to defend democratic rights against every attempt by the bourgeois state to attack them, either directly with its uniformed goons or indirectly through the fascist gangs.

(8) Trotskyism has always been extremely weak in Italy, and systematically discredited for the past 30 years by its main "representative," Livio Maitan, in recent years with the help of the reformist LSR, Italian satellite of the Argentinian adventurer Nahuel Moreno. Thus, there is little of a Trotskyist tradition in Italy and the groups claiming to be Trotskyist are very weak: the far left is dominated by the New Left-Maoist, workerist, spontaneist and terrorist milieus. Thus, the LTd'I and the Italian far left have no real common language, nor references to accepted authorities and sources. At the same time, the accepted practices and norms of the Italian workers movement are Stalinist or Stalinist-derived, particularly the lack of a proletarian internationalist conception. The political and organizational development of the LTd'I as a Trotskyist organization can take place only in opposition to and through a critical reassessment of what is "generally accepted practice" on the Italian left, including on the most elementary level.

(9) The LTd'I is committed to recruiting Italian cadres and producing regular publications in Italian, engaging the centrist groups in political combat to regroup their best elements around the Trotskyist program: in this way we aim at establishing the Spartacist tendency in Italy as a stable propaganda group capable of fighting for the banner of Trotskyism and undertake exemplary work in selected working-class centers, offering to the militant Italian proletariat the road forward toward the building of the revolutionary leadership it needs to struggle and win.

Forward to an Italian Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist Party! Forward to the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

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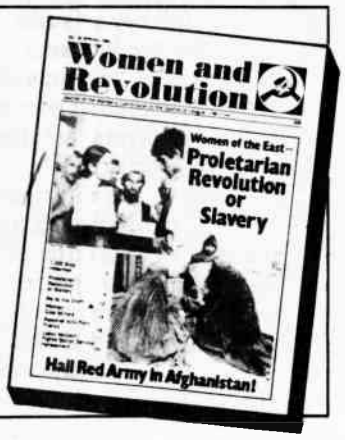

Italian LTd'I Joins Spartacist Tendency

We reprint below the fusion declaration adopted by the Lega Trotskista d'Italia (LTd'I) and the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) this summer which represents the culmination of over five years of strenuous efforts by the iSt to regroup a nucleus of cadre from the far left, particularly the ostensibly Trotskyist groups, in Italy. For the iSt the fusion with the LTd'I implies a commitment of significant resources to strengthen the LTd'I to carry out the political tasks before it.

The process of winning this small group of young comrades included hard fights against the macho "star" conception of leadership which dominates the Pabloite groups on the far left, especially in Italy. Those who have been unable or unwilling to translate formal political agreement into practical understanding of Leninist norms, for example on the woman question, have gone by the wayside. In the greetings of the LTd'I to the Sixth National Conference of the SL/U.S. the comrades spoke of the importance of collective leadership in the tradition of Lenin and James P. Cannon:

> "The fight to introduce Cannonism to Italy is essential for us. If in every country there is a tendency to national exceptionalism, this anti-Marxist attitude has always found a particularly fertile ground in parochial Italy. People should just ask themselves where else in the world is there another tendency which takes its national origins as a programmatic banner like the 'Italian left' does (i.e., the Bordigists)."

In opposition to centrists of all stripes, the iSt insists that the Trotskyist program is unitary—not merely the summation of individual political positions. Through a series of debates over programmatic questions such as Chrysler, the LTd'I comrades learned that apparently minor differences can have major political implications. The LTd'I greetings highlighted the rejection of "anti-imperialist" or "anti-fascist" rhetoric to conceal the class question:

> "Italian exceptionalism is also combined with a generalized anti-Americanism in the left, a reflection of a deeply ingrained popular-frontist view according to which all goes badly in this country because of its subordination to American imperialism. Or 'if only Italy were really independent!' is the rallying cry of all the 'anti-imperialists.' They all stop where it is the elementary duty for a communist to start: the main enemy of the Italian working class is the Italian bourgeoisie, and this is what our organization stands for loud and clear. The main enemy is at home!"

We look forward to the development of a fighting revolutionary propaganda group in Italy.

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(1) The international Spartacist tendency and the Lega Trotskista d'Italia agree to fuse—with the LTd'I becoming the Italian sympathizing section of the iSt—on the basis of the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Communist International, of Trotsky's struggle in the Left Opposition and for the Fourth International as codified in the Transitional Program, whose essential conclusions as well as its method retain their full validity today, and of the nine points for international Trotskyist regroupment of the iSt.

(2) Trotsky's Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, was destroyed by Pabloite revisionism in the period 1951-54, and the task of Trotskyists today is to struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International. We reject the pretenses of the unprincipled blocs claiming to be the Fourth International or to represent its political and organizational continuity (USec, OCRFI, Parity Committee, etc.) We also reject the erroneous conception of a "family of Trotskyism" according to which the solution to the world crisis of revolutionary leadership is represented by the reunification of the "world Trotskyist movement." The main pusher of this conception is the anti-Spartacist bloc that includes a British group (the WSL) whose main leader is a scab (Alan Thornett), an Italian group which supports the PCI's "Historic Compromise" (the GBL), and a Chilean group that would like to repeat once again the experience of the Popular Front led by Allende, which opened the way for the bloody regime of Pinochet (the LOB).

(3) The tactic of revolutionary regroupment—necessarily involving splits and fusions—will play a central role in the fight for the rebirth of the Fourth International, as illustrated by the regroupment of the iSt with the Trotskyist Faction of the WSL in 1978, of the SL/U.S. with the Red Flag Union (a left-wing homosexual group) in 1977, and of the SL/B and the Leninist Faction of the WSL in 1980. The need for a regroupment of the Trotskyists on the basis of a principled programmatic agreement has been illustrated also by the political differentiation which took place in Italy between the positions of the iSt and the FMR (1974-75), the GBL (1976-77) and Marcello Braccini (1975-77), as well as by the experience of the struggle to win the LTd'I to Trotskyism.

(4) The origins of the LTd'I lie in the expulsion of its central elements from the GCR/LCR (Italian section of the USec) as the result of their fight against the GCR's capitulation to popular frontism in the 1976 Italian elections. With Trotsky, the LTd'I and the iSt recognize the decisive character of the issue of the popular front today as in the 1930s. Revolutionists can give no electoral support to bourgeois workers parties (Stalinists or social democrats) tied to or who openly support an open or implicit popular front, since participation in the popular front temporarily suppresses the contradiction between the socialist aspirations of the masses of those parties and the class-collaborationist practice of their bureaucratic leaderships. In elections, revolutionists call for conditional opposition

continued on page 22