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## Bank of Hawaii Joins Right-Wing Chorus

By Danny Li

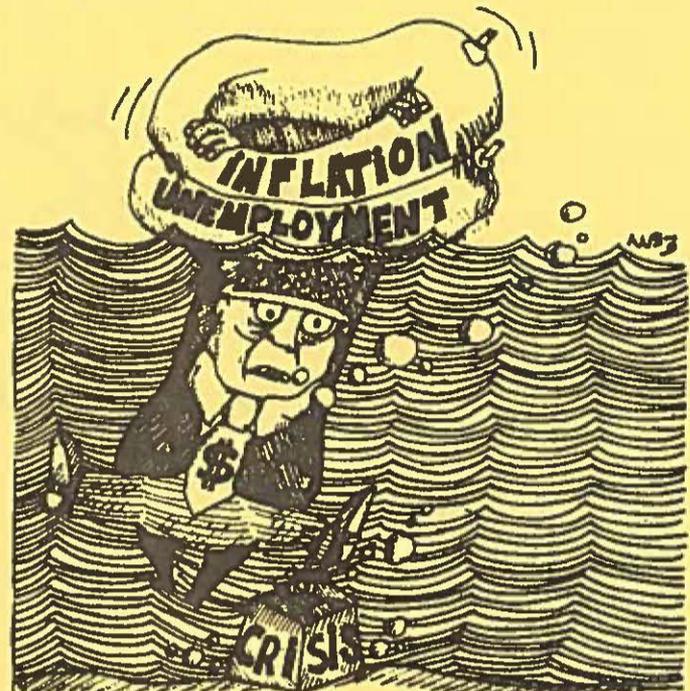
In its latest *Monthly Review* (September-October, 1977), the Bank of Hawaii has finally joined many other business giants in calling for a "restructuring" of the economy. Of course, the "restructuring" that is being called forth has nothing to do with cutting back on profits or giving a measure of economic control to workers; rather, it is another attempt by Hawaii's largest financial institution to orchestrate a right-wing symphony to sound off the "Big Government" alarm.

The latest concern of the business community over declining prospects for a continued economic recovery in 1978 has a real basis. For example, the *Review* mentions that combined "public and private debt has expanded five-fold over the last two decades and now stands at \$3.8 trillion." This is nearly three times the annual Gross National Product of the entire U.S. Moreover, "total interest paid . . . is approaching 20 per cent of personal income, some four times the share two decades ago." Translated into workers' language, that means if our weekly gross pay is \$150, nearly \$30 goes—directly or indirectly—to pay for bank interests alone!

Naturally, the *Review* neglects to remind us who's profiting from all these usurious transactions. Nevertheless, the Bank of Hawaii's "understanding" is quite correct to note that this mountain of debt will increasingly block business growth and profits. But how is the Bank of Hawaii—itsself a prime beneficiary of this "Rocky Mountain High"—to explain to its depositors the very evils of this debt/profit contradiction?

In a near stroke of genius, Wesley Hillendahl, Bank of Hawaii's Director of Business Research, attempts to channel his readers' concern to a scenario of growing governmental spending, going so far as to claim that "as the government burden encroaches on the private savings process (i.e., profits)," there is "an increasing need (for corporations) to borrow funds." However, Hillendahl's account is so bankrupt that careful readers of the *Review* must surely wonder how the average governmental spending—which has increased from 34.9 per cent of personal income in the '50's to 45.4 per cent in the '70's, or a rise of roughly 10 percentage points, according to the *Review's* own statistics—can cause corporate debts to increase six-fold since 1960?

The answer, of course, cannot be found in the pages of the Bank of Hawaii analysis, for the truth of the matter is that the post-War prosperity of worldwide monopoly capitalism is now over forever. Objectively, the real cause of the decline of U.S. monopoly capitalism is due to: 1) the wasteful and imperialist war in Southeast Asia which cost American taxpayers well over \$200 billion; 2) the increasing dependence of the U.S. economy on foreign energy and other material resources; and 3) the steadily declining value of the



dollar in the international markets due to the above reasons as well as the deepening U.S. trade deficits.

Our task as socialists, therefore, demands that we expose the real cause of the current "recession" to the working class, namely, the profit system and all of its irrationalities. As an article in the New York-based *Monthly Review*—a *Review* of a very different class stand—makes clear, "The ruling class will soon be sharply drawing the class issues with the hope of stabilizing their own affairs. Only by facing up militantly to the fundamental class nature of the impending struggle, which means challenging capitalism as such, does the working class have a chance to protect its true interests."

Hence, whether at next year's Constitutional Convention or the general elections in which the business spokesmen will undoubtedly push their reactionary "cut back Big Government" line, we will have to be prepared to tackle them head on—with clear analyses as well as thought-out programs—and give the working class a real choice to consider.

### A Banker's Viewpoint on Con Con and Government Spending

"As things stand now, our State Constitution is a pretty sound document. But when we re-examine it at the Constitutional Convention, one of our overriding concerns will have to be fiscal responsibility. To be sure, fiscal responsibility is always an imperative, but it's more urgent now in 1977, when the boom economy that came with Statehood is no longer with us. In the late 50s, all through the 60s, and into the early 70s, the average annual growth rate of the Hawaiian economy was nearly 7%, but in the last three years it hasn't been much better than 1%.

"In this kind of slow-growth situation, the government is of course caught in the worst kind of bind. On the one hand the demand for government services is increasing, and on the other hand the government's usable funds aren't increasing.

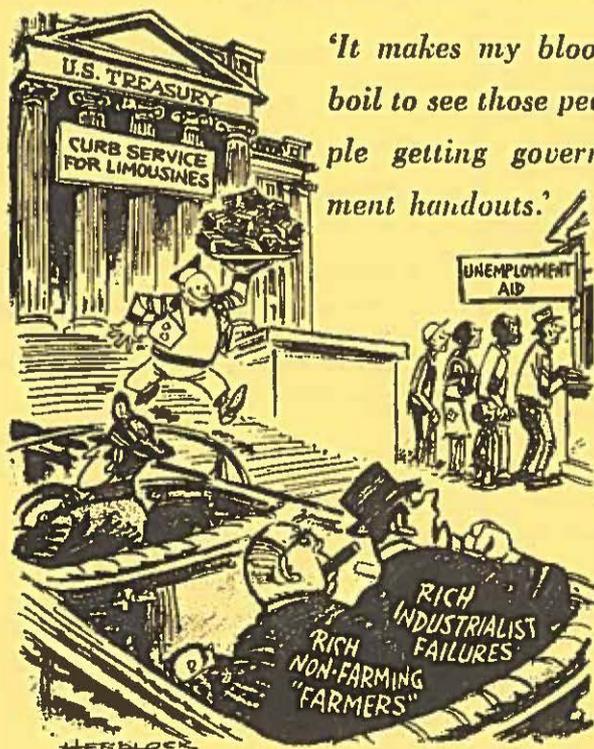
"What does a prudent family do in a case like this? Do they keep up the same expenditures and just go deeper into debt, or do they cut back on their spending?

"What does a prudent business do in a case like this? Suppose sales are down, or the market is weak, or debt-servicing has gotten astronomical? They hold the line. They trim where they have to. Government can do this, too . . .

"This conflict between the demand for services and the availability of funds is a critical situation for the government, and it's an area where the Constitutional Convention should help. It can strengthen government cost-control and it can do something about the ease with which the government can go into debt.

"I'm not criticizing the government. Rather, I'm taking the position of saying, let's all of us—the business community and the other sectors I've mentioned—help the government out of its dilemma. And one way to do it, perhaps one of the best ways, is to work through the Con Con."

—John D. Bellinger, President  
First Hawaiian Bank



"It makes my blood boil to see those people getting government handouts."

# Mao's, Bettelheim's Ideas Summarized in *Monthly Review* The Nature of the Soviet Union

by William Gurley, (reprinted from *The Guardian*)

The socialist journal *Monthly Review* (MR) has recently published two outstanding articles dealing with the nature of the Soviet Union.

The September issue contains an article by Mao Tsetung on the Soviet economy taken from a book *Monthly Review Press* will publish in December entitled, "A Critique of Soviet Economics." The book, authored by the late chairman in the latter 1960s and circulated at the time in China, will provide English-speaking readers with a number of Mao's more recent writings for the first time.

The article is a critique by Mao of the official Soviet publication, "Political Economy: A Textbook," and offers insights into models of socialist development and the nature of revisionism.

On the question of peaceful transition to socialism, Mao wrote: "The Communist Party and the revolutionary forces of every country must ready both hands, one for winning victory peacefully, one for taking power with violence. Neither may be dispensed with."

On mass struggle: "To regard the mass struggle as the Soviet book says as 'one important factor' flies in the face of the principle that the masses are the creators of history. Under no circumstances can history be regarded as something the planners rather than the masses create."

On the Soviet idea of an "international division of labor" among socialist countries: "This is not a good idea. We do not suggest this even with respect to our own provinces..."

The October MR contains an article summarizing some of main arguments made by Charles Bettelheim in his new book, "Class Struggle in the USSR, 1923-20," a followup to his previous volume dealing with the 1917-23 period. (MR Press will publish the second volume next year.) Bettelheim is a foremost exponent of the theory that capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union.

The article, entitled "Revolution From Above: The USSR in the 1920s," discusses the major problems faced by the

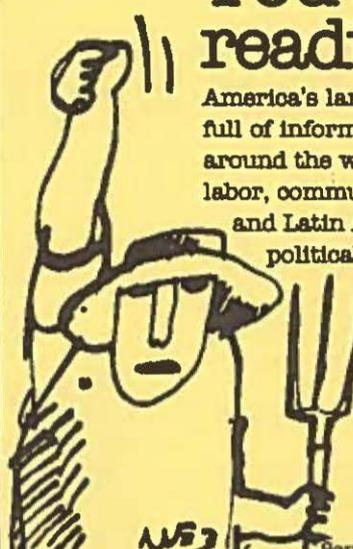
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Bolsheviks at the time—reversing the economic chaos which emerged from the civil war and the long-term problem of integrating the peasantry into the economy and eventually transforming it. In response to these problems, the Bolsheviks launched the New Economic Policy (NEP), a complex of measures allowing small producers and traders to operate and certain concessions to capitalist practices.

The heart of the article—and of Bettelheim's book—is that NEP represented a strategy for achieving socialism and was not merely a temporary maneuver designed to revive the economy.

Bettelheim says NEP was intended to restore the worker-peasant alliance (which had broken down) and to transform the peasantry to enable a successful transition to socialism.

The author says Lenin's view—and the function of NEP—was that the only way to socialism in the USSR was through

helping the peasants and convincing them that their best interests lay in developing cooperatives and working with the Bolsheviks. Bettelheim argues that NEP was not carried through; that after Lenin's death it was treated not as a strategy for achieving socialism but as a tactical retreat which was to be abandoned.

Lack of trust in the peasantry and a strong preference for the most rapid possible development of heavy industry—to the exclusion of the development of other kinds of industrial production—seriously weakened the worker-peasant alliance, Bettelheim argues. The crisis in the USSR during the later 1920s, he continues, had its origin not in agriculture (as commonly assumed), but in Soviet industrialization policies. As such, he posits, the problem was not a crisis of NEP, but rather the failure to carry NEP through to the end.

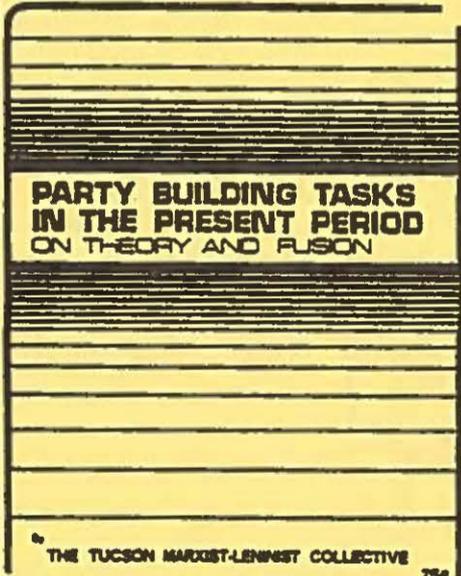
(Copies of the magazine are available at \$1 each from *Monthly Review*, 62 W. 14 St., New York, N.Y. 10011.)



### Oceania and the World System

A new, well-documented analytical paper on the importance of the Pacific region to imperialism (and some of the struggles against imperialist control) has been prepared by Walter Cohen of the Pacific Studies Center (867 W. Dana St., #204, Mountain View, Ca. 94041). *Modern Times* will be printing excerpts of this work in coming issues (hopefully), but you can order a complete copy now (50¢ apiece) from the Center.

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# Workers' Control of Industry?

(This article is the contribution of one of our readers and supporters: It is his own point of view and not necessarily the view of Modern Times or its editors. The same is true of other individuals' signed articles in our issues.—Ed.)

by Jeremiah Cahill

This article was written in response to the recent sugar workers' strike during which the ILWU drew criticism, particularly from its own membership. Gripes seemed to center around whether or not the leadership is moving in positive and creative directions. Granted, the union won a wage increase. Now, as the companies hike wholesale/retail prices, the cost of living moves upward. Are the unions engaged in a mere holding action against inflation? Sugar workers are concerned about more than just a few cents per hour over the next year—they're concerned about the very survival of their agricultural livelihood!

Regarding the future of sugar in Hawaii, let's consider whether the industry even has a future in the islands! There are mills faced with the threat of closing; long-term futures are bleak. Meanwhile, foreign competition gears up. Are there alternatives for sugar as a crop? Will conversion to methane or alcohol be feasible, and if so, how soon? What about other uses for sugar lands? Can different crops provide comparable returns? Behind these questions are others: What are the patterns of ownership and control in Hawaiian industry? Are there other forms of ownership and management which have not yet been explored?

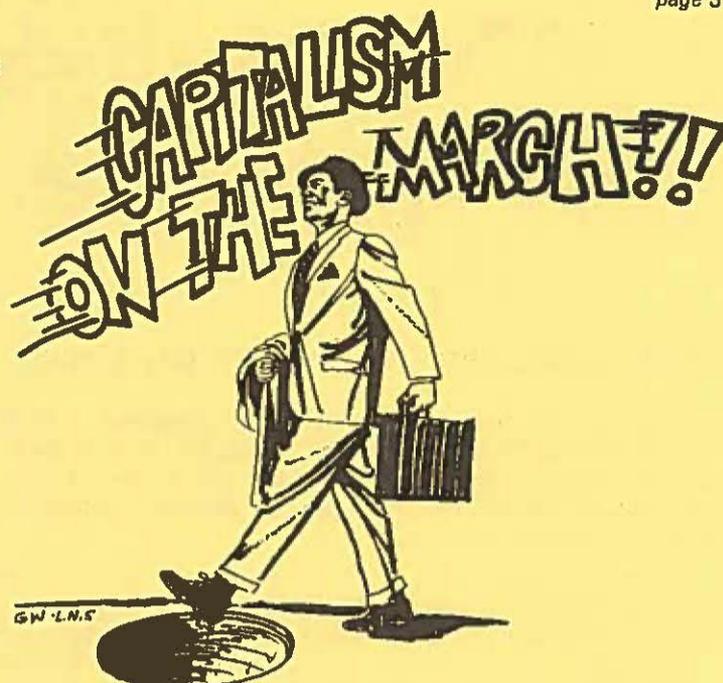
Let's pose one alternative to our present condition: **Workers' control of industry.** What shape might this take? A current trend is towards that form known as the "cooperative." This means an enterprise owned and operated by the workers themselves. Contrast this with private industry (investor owned, stockholders' main interest being profits in the form of dividends). A co-op is owned by the workforce. The goal is to maintain and improve production, thereby perpetuating jobs and supplying people's material needs. Along with this may go other values—preservation of lifestyles, a healthy environment, and similar benefits. Worker/owners set policy towards whatever ends are considered worthwhile. Profits may be plowed back in or distributed to members periodically.

Advantages to this arrangement are fairly obvious: Control is exercised at a local level, policies and operations may be quite responsive. This should affect production favorably. Attitudes among the workforce are transformed—they own it, they work towards its maximum betterment. Job stability is promoted; the antagonism between workers and owners is eliminated. Profits stay close to home to be used in a manner consistent with the goals of the operation.

Difficulties involved in such attempts at cooperation are also notable. First, what might be called "class antagonism"—why should privately chartered corporations agreeably hand over their property? Owners and managers, even union leaders may be less than enthused about changes threatening their status quo. However, the private sector may become willing to let go factories or facilities in the case of marginally profitable operations. It seems that when returns fall on investments, directors look elsewhere for higher income. In such situations corporate owners may be willing to cash out, for a price. A cooperative might be able to continue operations, accepting a smaller rate of return. The advantage is in keeping the plan open, preserving jobs and continuing operation.

Initially, the big problem would be in getting the capital to finance such a takeover. Likelihoods include low-cost government loans directed at potentially depressed areas. This has been done before, resulting in the formation of agricultural co-ops. Or, the union might play a role—perhaps the next time a contract expires, the members will advance a strategy to achieve ownership and control of the company. This could be accomplished thru shares purchased over a period of time. Research directed to the problem would certainly bring out other possibilities.

The idea isn't new; theories of cooperation have been around for



hundreds of years. Consumers' co-ops (selling retail goods, as distinct from producers co-ops) have enjoyed success in many countries. In the past, workers' ownership of productive apparatus has been strictly limited by unfavorable economic conditions, namely the relentless expansion of privately-owned commercial interest. Now, as monopoly capitalism falters, opportunities are presented which give cooperative efforts a distinct advantage.

To attempt anything along these lines will first and foremost require that people believe in it, share the vision, and be willing to strive towards the goal. The task of acquiring and managing industry will surely require effort and sacrifice. Working people must be psychologically prepared for control of their livelihoods and for participation in democratic management. The formation of workers' cooperatives may be viewed as one method by which socialist concepts can be realistically implemented in the here-and-now.

The concept of worker-owned industry should be considered, not only in sugar—it needs to be vigorously studied and applied to the entire range of industry. The number of functioning co-ops is increasing: here in the U.S., in both Western and Communist Europe and around the world. Let's learn from those that are operational, and apply this advanced form to industry here in Hawaii.

*Note: The author welcomes follow-up to this initial article, both to develop the idea further and to criticize it. There is a fair amount of written information on the subject of workers' cooperation; I am eager to assemble a reading list and share it with all interested. Please address your comments and questions in care of Modern Times.*

## Sugar Workers Settle

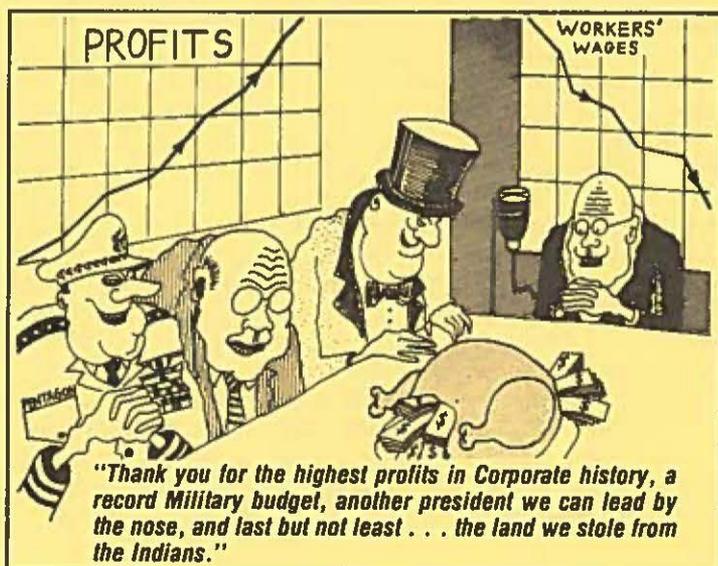
The 20-day strike by some 7,200 sugar workers at 15 plantations ended last Nov. 21, with modest gains won by the union, the ILWU. The strike, one of the shortest in the union's history, was compromised from the beginning by being waged after most of the harvesting was done. What minimal pressure resulted from the strike was further relieved by the union's agreement to allow some workers to irrigate fields where some harvested cane was dying. At Waialua, the union even sought to have the mill workers process some of the harvested cane during the strike, to show "good faith" to the employers—but the workers twice refused their union leaders' appeals to work during the strike.

Last March the union leadership had persuaded its members in sugar to accept a 9-month extension of their contract **with no wage increases**, in exchange for a guarantee from the employers that no plantations would be shut down.

The new 14-month contract continues these guarantees and provides modest gains in wages and pensions. The workers got a 30¢ pay hike effective last Nov. 19, with another 10¢ hike coming next July; the starting pay will now be \$4.49 an hour. The union had sought a 50¢-an-hour hike.

Effective next February, pensioners will get a monthly pension equal to \$8.50 multiplied by the number of years of service, up to a maximum of 33½ years (compared to the old rate of \$7 per year, up to 35 years). Pensioners and their spouses will, for the first time, get the same medical benefits as regular employees have. On contracting out of work, the new contract sets up a procedure for resolving disputes. The new contract was overwhelmingly ratified by the membership, who probably sensed the weakness of the strike and understandably dreaded a longer strike with little more to gain from it.

(For a fuller analysis of the strike and the issues it posed, see the article by John Witeck in the current issue of *The Guardian*—xerox copy available from *Modern Times* for 25¢.)



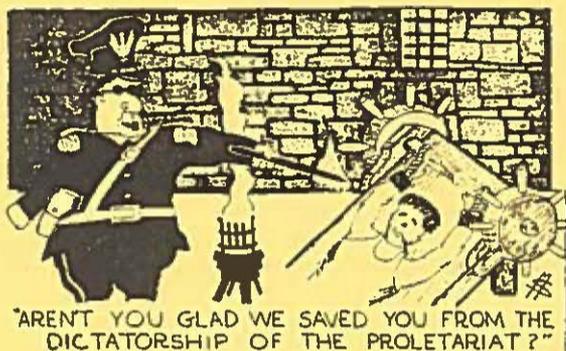


## Help Rescue Taiwan's Political Prisoners

Repression breeds resistance, and that's what's happening in Taiwan, which for 30 years has been under the martial law dictatorship of the Kuomintang (KMT). This past fall some 20 young intellectuals were arrested and face death sentences as "Communist agents" for writing letters of protest to U.S. firms exploiting Taiwanese labor (with an average wage of 25 cents an hour). Five Tasmui College students were secretly arrested for trying to expose Taiwan's officials' smuggling of capital out of Taiwan (to the U.S.) in their fear of an eventual Communist takeover.

Last Nov. 19, some 10,000 angry people in Chungli, Taiwan, attacked a police station and burned 8 police cars and army trucks to protest an election rigged by the KMT. This was the first such uprising in 11 years. This action led to mass arrests of citizens by the government.

The American Coalition Against Asian Dictatorships (2378 Univ. Ave., Hon. 96822) is appealing for people to write or cable Premier Chiang Ching-kuo, Executive Yuan, ROC Government, Taipei, Taiwan, to protest this repression and stop the arrests, imprisonment and execution of these and Taiwan's many other political prisoners. (A recent local film showing and forum conducted at the East-West Center by the KMT backfired on them and brought forth much criticism and revelations about this repressive regime.)



## Protect Kahoolawe Ohana News

### Voices From Jail

"I feel 6 months in prison reflects the attitude of society toward the makaainana (working class) Hawaiian trying to say something he feels is important. It's the same attitude which allowed the military to use live bombs when we were still unaccounted for on Kahoolawe; the same attitude which allowed military people to go free after being found guilty of murder of a part-Hawaiian in the Massie case; the same attitude which allowed our queen to be imprisoned by an illegal government and nothing to be done about it for 84 years. All this happened because the Hawaiians' aloha has been taken advantage of; as Hawaiians, we must stand up for our values as taught to us by our kupunas (elders)." —Walter Ritte, Halawa Jail

"The Hawaiian conscience has been smoldering on the grass-roots level of Hawaiian awareness much longer than most people realize. If the politicians on both the Federal and State level continue to ignore the plight of the aboriginal Hawaiian people and the wrongs done to them; if the tourist industry continues to crowd local people out of their peace of mind; if the attitudes of Big Business and the navy continue to disregard the value and the beauty of Hawaii by blatant desecration of Hawaiian land and culture by bombs and over-development; if working within the system continues to result in zero improvement of the situation of the Hawaiian environment and people—anything is possible!" —Richard Sawyer, Halawa Jail (From interviews with Ritte and Sawyer by Hawaii Observer writer Wayne Kaumualii Westlake, 11-17-77)

### Ohana Trials Slated for January

Ohana member Glen Davis' trial has been reset for January 10. He is being tried under the Youth Corrections Act and faces a possible sentence of zero to 6 years' imprisonment, if convicted. 19 other Ohana defendants will also come to trial sometime in January. Call the Ohana at 841-5961 to find out the exact dates and times. And come out and support these Ohana sisters and brothers who "trespassed" on their own land, the island of Kahoolawe.

### Albertini Jailed

Jim Albertini began his 2-month jail sentence at Halawa with a fast to discipline himself. He was jailed for kneeling down in front of the gate in a "secured area" of the Trident submarine base near Seattle, Washington. There he and another said the "Our Father" prayer, in protest against the construction of this huge, nuclear-armed first-strike submarine, capable of destroying over 400 cities and sites. The action was part of a mass campaign against Trident. Jim is also a strong supporter of the Ohana.

## Ohana Members and Micronesians Meet MICRONESIA STATUS TALKS

In an attempt to hide the Micronesia-US political status negotiations from Americans and national news media, the US picked the Sheraton-Molokai hotel on the west end of Molokai as the site for the talks in October, 1977.

But Molokai, despite its relative isolation, provided a number of unexpected benefits for the Micronesians. Before and during the formal negotiating sessions, members of the Kahoolawe Ohana and the Micronesian negotiators met and had a chance to learn about each others' activities.

In fact, Dr. Emmett Aluli tried to sit in on one of the negotiating sessions but was ordered to leave by the American delegation.

The negotiations between the US and Micronesia over the political status for the United Nations Trust Territory in the Western Pacific, have been going on for about 8 years.

Micronesia, made up of 2,200 strategically located islands, has been controlled by the US since it was won from the Japanese during World War II. Micronesia's strategic importance to the US has never been questioned. At the close of the war, Tinian island in the Marianas was used to stage the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Out of Guam more than 150 B-52 bombing raids were flown daily over Vietnam during the height of the war.

Since the US defeat in Indochina and the possible removal of US military bases from the Philippines, Okinawa and elsewhere, Pentagon planners now see Micronesia and Guam as the fall-back defense line for Asia and the key to continued US presence in the Pacific.

With US military plans for Micronesia playing a key role in the negotiations, there was much common ground between the Micronesians and the Ohana. Aluli and other Molokai residents said they were impressed by the Micronesians and could identify with their ultimate goal of independence from the US. Aluli said he particularly identified with the Micronesians' desire to retain their cultural identities, apart from the institutions being imposed by the American government. Both Hawaiians and Micronesians seemed to profit from their meetings on Molokai. "We learned a lot," Aluli commented. "They're really *akamai*."

The next round of negotiations had been set for early January, 1978 in Honolulu. But later the US claimed that CINCPAC could not get hotel reservations, and the talks have been moved to the west coast.

The major issue in the negotiations will be military land requirements. In the October round of negotiations, the Micronesians took a strong stand and demanded that the US pay Micronesia \$60 million a year for the right to deny the more than 3 million square miles of ocean area to any other nation for military purposes. A Micronesian negotiator described the "denial" concept as a "fence." "The Americans intend to build a fence around Micronesia to keep Micronesians in and other countries out. The value of this should not be ignored or hidden," he said.

The US negotiators at first rejected the demand for "denial" payments as "blackmail," but later apologized and said they would consider it.

Until the CIA bugging of the Micronesian negotiators was exposed a year ago, the previous status talks had been conducted with little, if any, national attention.

The Micronesians are 115,000 people up against the Pentagon, and they are struggling to gain control of their future. Hawaii and mainland peoples' support of their movement, in the long run, will be an important factor in determining who will control Micronesia: the Micronesians or the Pentagon.



## URGENT: Support Needed for Vanuaaku Independence Movement

Last November 28, British and French authorities in the New Hebrides, now called Vanuaaku by the people's forces, cancelled scheduled elections for a new Assembly, fearful of a resounding victory by independence forces led by the Vanuaaku Pati (National Party). In response, on November 29, the party declared independence and set up a Provisional Government. The British and French responded by bringing in some 300 French Troops from New Caledonia and convening their own parliament without the participation of the Vanuaaku Pati. A demonstration was held last December 13 at the French consulate in Honolulu (130 Merchant St.) to protest the French dispatch of troops and weapons and to support the Vanuaaku Pati's demands for free elections and independence. A letter from the "Friends of Vanuaaku" to the President of France was given to the consul. Support is being built throughout the Pacific region for the Vanuaaku people and party.

French settlers are reportedly well-armed against the independence movement, with arms caches located even at some Catholic churches and missions. A blood-bath of repression is possible. Write or cable the Chairman, Committee of 24, United Nations (New York) to send a fact finding mission to Vanuaaku (New Hebrides) to investigate the situation. Call 595-7362 for more information.

# BEHIND THE "INVASION" OF ZAIRE Zaire: Crucial Stakes Involved

by John Witeck

The spectacle of the People's Republic of China giving military aid to the Zaire dictatorship of General Mobutu last spring and summer raised the eyebrows of many progressives throughout the world. The aid came in response to the invasion and insurrection led by the Congo National Liberation Front (FLNC) in the Shaba province of Zaire against Mobutu's regime.

China went so far as to call Mobutu a "patriot" for defending his country against Soviet aggression." A decade earlier, the Chinese denounced Mobutu as a "U.S. puppet" (*Peking Review*, 4/28/67). The Chinese government also saluted other countries such as France, Belgium, the Sudan, Morocco, Egypt, Uganda and Saudi Arabia for committing troops and aid to the Mobutu regime. (Even South Africa pledged aid to Mobutu.)

The Chinese policy and aid flowed from the current Chinese position that the Soviet Union is the most aggressive and gravest danger to Africa's and the world's peoples. This same line had led the Chinese to view the MPLA's victory in Angola, won with substantial Soviet and Cuban aid, as a Soviet conquest and occupation of Angola. In the Chinese view, Angola had become a base for further Soviet aggression in Africa.

Some Marxist-Leninist "vanguard" groups in the U.S. and other countries adhered to the Chinese position. The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), for instance, claimed that in Angola, the Soviet Union now had "a potential base to attack and threaten other countries in Southern Africa." They quickly denounced the Congolese rebels against Mobutu's corrupt regime as "Soviet-led invaders and mercenaries," putting forward a kind of "falling dominoes" theory on events in southern Africa. These views, it should be noted, harmonized nicely with Mobutu's claims of a Soviet-Cuban-led invasion of Zaire. Reactionaries like Mobutu have always raised the "Red scare" to rally support for their repression of rebellions. Mobutu's claims, though never substantiated and denied by the rebels, the USSR and Cuba, laid the basis for millions of dollars of U.S. "non-lethal" aid being shipped to Mobutu's forces in Zaire.



Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Mennen William confirmed the Congo's importance to imperialism, writing in *Africa Report* (August, 1965):

"The first and possibly the most important basic fact about the Congo is that this country is the geographic as well as the strategic heart of Africa. What happens in the Congo has the greatest impact on the rest of Africa and all its neighbors. For this reason, added to the Congo's tremendous wealth, control over this country has been and remains sought for by many as a base area. The U.S. is interested in everything that happens in the Congo. They cannot tolerate communist control over this country."

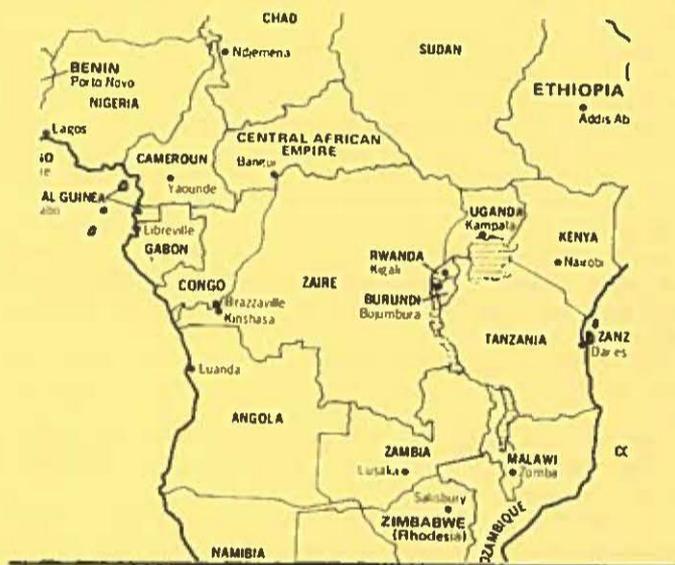
### How Mobutu Came to Power

The Congo was seized as a Belgian colony in 1908, after years of bloody wars of conquest and the decimating effects of the slave trade of earlier centuries. As Belgian power weakened, the Congolese won independence on June 30, 1960, though Belgium continued its plots for tighter control, encouraging the secession of mineral-rich Katanga (now Shaba) province.

The first Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, a genuine nationalist, sought aid from the U.S. against Belgium, but the price was too high. Lumumba commented after his trip to Washington, D.C.: "They wanted to buy the Congo; they wanted to bribe us with millions. But I refused. The Congolese people will never accept to move from one colonization to another." So the CIA, with help from European capitalists, had Lumumba assassinated.

The contention between U.S. and Belgian capitalists continued and intensified, and succeeding governments were set up and toppled. (See Kibwe Tcha-Malenge's booklet for a good analysis of the three contending imperialist circles.) Finally the "big finance" group, spearheaded by U.S. interests, got the upper hand and helped install General Mobutu by armed coup in 1965.

Congolese socialist writer Kibwe Tcha-Malenge describes what happened then: "Once in power, Mobutu started accomplishing his group's mission: to replace Belgian domination with Yankee domination. He began by attacking the Belgian mining corporations under the hoax of defending the Congo's economic independence." After Belgium responded by promoting a secessionist war in Kivu province, Mobutu backed down some, and "peace" was restored. Still, under Mobutu, the U.S. interests began to get the upper hand. For instance, until 1965 when Mobutu "arrived," 96% of the \$9 billion invested in the Congo belonged to Belgium; direct U.S. investments were only 1% of the total. But since 1970, U.S. investments have reached over \$1 billion, most of which are in the mining sector, and U.S. monopolies control the concessions for most of the rare metals needed for nuclear weapon production: 100% of cobalt, 90% of uranium, 87% of diamond, 79% of tantalum, 64% of manganese, 50% of tin, etc. (Kibwe Tcha-Malenge, pp. 19-20).

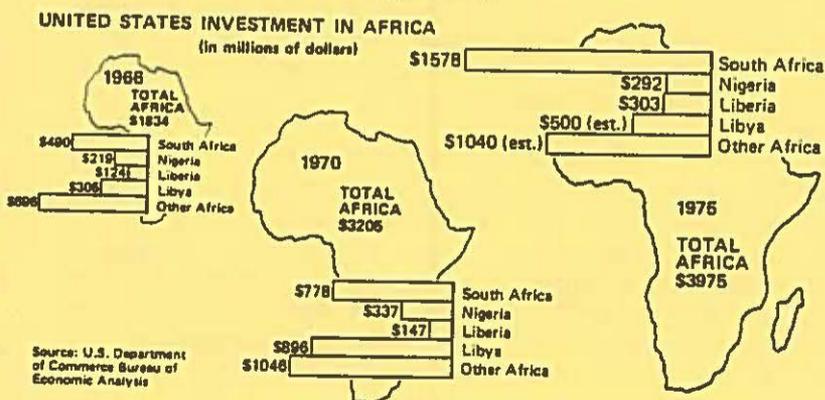


The Congo: Africa's Heartland

Before leaping to the "Soviet-led invasion" theory, it would be wise to look at the background. Zaire was formerly the Belgian Congo. The Congo occupies a vast territory five times the size of France, 80 times the size of Belgium. It is covered with fertile land, big mountains and gigantic forests, and possesses tremendous wealth, especially in minerals. It is the biggest producer of cobalt and diamonds in the world, and one of the largest producers of uranium, copper, tin, and lithium, while also yielding many other rare minerals. It is rich agriculturally, with cocoa, coffee, rubber, copal, cotton, bananas, peanuts, palm oil, and many fruits and vegetables. It has huge water resources, including the Congo River, 6th largest in the world and 2nd only to the Amazon in volume of flow, able to produce vast amounts of hydro-electric power (13% of the world capacity).

With its huge diversified resources, the Congo has been a prized object of imperialism for generations. Conversely, with a people's victory in the Congo, this country has the potential of being a reliable, strong base area for anti-imperialism and revolution. That is why the question of who controls the Congo is of worldwide significance. (Data cited from Kibwe Tcha-Malenge's "Who Will Win in Congo-Kinshasa?" Norman Bethune Institute, Canada, 1976).

Under imperialist control, the Congo has had an important counter-revolutionary role. Many coups in central Africa have been staged from the Congo, with funds provided by the foreign monopolies working with Mobutu and his cohorts. In 1970, for instance, counter-revolutionary commandos were sent into the People's Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) from Kinshasa (Zaire) to try to overthrow the leftist people's government there. This unsuccessful attempt came after the monopolies failed in their maneuvers to set up a United States of Central Africa under Mobutu's leadership. (Reported by Kibwe Tcha-Malenge, pp. 9-10). Five years later Zaire troops invaded Angola, in a joint action with South Africa, to try to install a neo-colonialist regime under two puppet liberation fronts, the FNLA and UNITA. Mobutu has clearly served as the arch-agent of U.S. imperialism in southern and central Africa and as the key leader in its neo-colonialist designs.



### On the Verge of Bankruptcy

Despite all this investment, or, more aptly, because of it, Zaire is a poor country. Less than 1% of its land area is cultivated although 20% is arable. Mobutu has placed his country in hock to Western banking interests to the tune of more than \$3 billion. Zaire's payment on its foreign debt took up 4.7% of its export income in 1970, but it is estimated that over 25% of its export income will be gobbled up by its creditors in 1977. (Diane Johnstone, *The Owl*, April, 1977, issue, reprinted in *RESIST*, 4/30/77) Zaire, in fact, has been on the verge of becoming the first nation to default completely on its debts.

Continued on page 7

## ZAIRE *continued*

The rising costs of petroleum and fertilizers and falling prices for its own exports (including copper), as well as Mobutu's extravagant spending and borrowing put Zaire's economy in deeper trouble. (Millions were spent on the Muhammed Ali-George Foreman heavyweight title fight, for instance, held in October, 1974—at 3 a.m.—in Zaire, for promoting Zaire to U.S. audiences.)

In response, Mobutu has gone in for P.R. and "show business socialism" which is "neither left nor right." After visiting the People's Republic of China in 1973 and again in 1974, Mobutu Sese Seko ("The Redeemer") declared his own version of what he thought Maoism was—a system of one-man rule he labelled "Mobutism" while "Zairizing" some companies, mainly Belgian interests. When his new order went nowhere but down and the economy was in shambles, in November, 1975, Mobutu accelerated his 1969 policy of throwing open his country even more to foreign investors. This increased the unhappiness and poverty of the people and did little to ease the uncertainty of the bankers and creditors about the "stability" of his regime.

### The Angola Connection

The decolonization of Angola after the 1974 coup in Portugal gave Mobutu added worries. Political developments in the Congo (Zaire) and Angola had been intertwined for decades. Holden Roberto, leader of the Angolan National Liberation Front (FNLA) with its base in Zaire, had married Mobutu's sister and was sponsored by Mobutu and the CIA since 1961 (see issues no. 2 & 3, *Modern Times*). Mobutu also promoted another "liberation group" in the oil-rich Angolan province of Cabinda; this group was FLEC (Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda), which sought to split Cabinda off from the MPLA and Angola and attach it to Zaire, mainly benefitting U.S. oil interests such as Gulf Oil.

In late 1975, in a well-funded attempt to make Angola a neo-colony of the U.S., Zaire troops openly invaded Angola on the side of FNLA and UNITA (a "liberation" group in southern Angola supported by South Africa). This intervention no doubt resulted from Mobutu's meeting with U.S. officials and (then) Portuguese President Spínola on the Cape Verde islands in Sept., 1974, to discuss ways of preventing MPLA rule in Angola. Mobutu was also concerned about the future status of some 4,000 former Katangese troops then serving with the Portuguese forces in Angola.

Even after the strategy worked out by Mobutu and the U.S. was defeated in Angola, Zaire has continued to sponsor raids into Angola and has plotted with the U.S. through plans like "Operation Cobra" (exposed by Angolan President Neto in early 1977) to disrupt Angola's economy and pave the way for massive foreign intervention and the overthrow of the MPLA government in Angola.

### The "Katangese Gendarmes"

Mobutu's concern about the former "Katangese gendarmes" in Angola proved justified. For in March, 1977, these troops went back into Katanga, now Shaba province, as the Congo National Liberation Front (FLNC), and inflicted serious defeats on Mobutu's army.

How did this FLNC come about? The story told by FLNC spokesmen in Europe is unusual but believable, especially in light of the similar radicalization of Portuguese officers and troops in Angola. Diana Johnstone's newsletter *The Owl*, published in Paris (4/77), gives this account. (See RESIST, 4/30/77).

The origins of the FLNC go back to the several thousand gendarmes who had served Moïse Tshombe's attempt in 1960-63 to break off Katanga as a separate nation from the Congo and to put it more at the service and mercy of Western European, particularly Belgian, mining interests. When Tshombe was defeated, the Katangese rebel forces went into exile in Angola and Zambia. In Angola, the Portuguese accepted them on the condition that they serve in their colonial army against the Angolan people's forces.

In 1967, they were joined by new recruits who left Congo-Kinshasa (Zaire) after differences with the Mobutu regime. One of these was a policeman, Nathanael Mbumba, educated by Methodist missionaries. Mbumba was placed in charge of the "Katanga gendarmes" by the Portuguese. By 1974 and 1975, General Mbumba commanded six to seven thousand men who were more than happy to fight against the Mobutu-backed forces of the FNLA, led by Roberto.

When Spínola was kicked out by more left-leaning military officers in Portugal, and the time-table for Angolan independence was set, the Katangese troops were given three options: accept Mobutu's offer of amnesty and return home to Zaire; fight black nationalists in South Africa; or join one of the Angolan liberation movements (MPLA, UNITA or FNLA). The political ferment in Angola at the time, plus the coming of new, more "intellectual" refugees from Zaire, began to affect the thinking of Mbumba's little army. The same politicization process that occurred with Portuguese troops through the Angolan war happened with the Katangese forces. They were far too politicized to fight for South Africa. They could relate to the **Armed Forces Movement** in Portugal, which returned from colonial wars in Africa and overthrew their fascist regime at home. Why shouldn't the Katangese troops do likewise? They chose to ally with the MPLA, since it was at odds with Mobutu's Roberto, who had spent much time, money and manpower warring against the MPLA.



When the MPLA declared the founding of the People's Republic of Angola in November, 1975, and was threatened by the FNLA and Zaire invasion from the North, Mbumba's army played a key role in halting the advance and earned the MPLA's gratitude and encouragement.

Last March 8 Mbumba's troops returned home as the "Congolese National Liberation Front," and by all reports were greeted warmly by the villagers in Shaba province.

The Congolese National Liberation Front (FLNC) stated clearly they were not aiming to break off Katanga (Shaba) from the Congo, but wanted to "liberate the whole country from Mobutu, not to take power but to free the people." They hoped to link up with existing opposition within Zaire, such as Lumumbist Antoine Gizenga's Fodelico (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo), located in the Kivu region.

A leading Zairese political exile, Cleophas Kamitatu, a close associate of Gizenga and founder of the revolutionary party, the African Socialist Front, stated in Paris he hoped to unite left opposition groups in Zaire to complement the military efforts of the FLNC.

Western news accounts universally reported that Mobutu's troops had fled in disarray and were demoralized before the FLNC advance. They told of the Shaba villagers' welcome of the rebel troops. Mobutu was compelled to turn to his friends abroad for aid to prevent his downfall, raising the cry of protection against communist invasion led by Soviet and Cuban troops.

Though no credible evidence was ever produced for his claim, Mobutu's appeal brought results (and incidentally helped shore up financial support for his crumbling regime). With thousands of crack foreign troops from Morocco, France, Belgium and other countries and massive foreign aid, and after heavy bombing and thousands of civilian casualties, Mobutu's forces were able to halt the FLNC offensive.

The FLNC fighters then adopted the protracted guerrilla war strategy, continuing to strive to link up their struggle with other anti-Mobutu people's forces in Zaire. If successful in unifying the movement against Mobutu and his foreign backers, these forces pose future headaches and final defeat for Mobutu and imperialism's strategy in the area. For, as Kibwe Tcha-Malenge sharply argues, the main contradiction in Zaire (Congo-Kinshasa) is between the people's forces and the corrupt, unpopular, squabbling forces of imperialism, and "it is the people who will win."

Our duty as socialists is to support the people's forces and not Mobutu's, to do our own analysis and investigation, to discern the main contending forces, and to reject theories which confuse reality and unite objectively with U.S. imperialism, which is the chief and main danger to the aspirations of the African peoples for liberation and revolution.

### FEED-BACK

Editor,

John Witeck's article in your October issue, "Angola and Zaire—Where the Vanguard Failed" was a good exposure of how China's anti-Soviet foreign policy serves the interests of U.S. imperialism and goes against the interests of revolutionary people.

To the list of publications and organizations that support the Angolan struggle should be added: the *Daily World* and *People's World* newspapers, and the Communist Party, U.S.A.

Sincerely,  
Linton Park

(Ed. note: The Black Panther Party also supported the MPLA and opposed U.S. imperialism in Angola.)

# Formulas kill third world infants

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By BARBARA MINER

On a child's grave near Lusaka, Zambia, a mother has placed empty cans of infant formula and baby bottles. The mother believed these were the baby's most valuable possessions, and she thought they would help her dead child in the afterlife.

Yet it was the infant formula and bottle feeding that killed the baby.

A number of studies have documented the dangers of bottle feeding in third world countries where conditions make safe use of the infant formulas all but impossible. In order to step up its campaign of what it calls unethical practices by multinational companies, the Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFACT) has launched a boycott of the Swiss-based Nestle Co.

INFACT charges that when the birth rate declined in developed countries, multinationals increased efforts to sell their baby formulas in developing countries. In most of the countries, however, many women are unable to read formula preparation instructions; there are few facilities for sterilizing the bottles; and there is little pure drinking water with which to mix the formula. In addition, the extremely high cost of the formula—costs between 30% and 60% of a family's monthly income—leads to an unhealthy diluting of the formula. As a result, babies are malnourished, prone to sickness and often die.

"In fact, for a majority of Africans, Latin Americans and Asians...bottle feeding is incredibly difficult and extremely bad," according to a report by two Cornell University nutritionists. "But the media onslaught is terrific, the messages are powerful and the profits are high. High also is the resultant human suffering."

INFACT is asking for a boycott of Nestle's products, in particular Taster's Choice, Nescafe, Nestle's Quik, Nestle's Crunch and Nestea. For further information: INFACT, c/o Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 566, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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We also will review some basic socialist writings to see how they can help us today. Key national and international issues will also be dealt with in *Modern Times*, as they also affect the positions, unity, and the work of the socialist movement in the U.S.

We will actively seek out different views on the vital questions and encourage real dialogue and a simple, easy-to-read style with good, factual content and analysis.

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