

IN THESE TIMES

Editorial

Democratic ideals and socialist realism

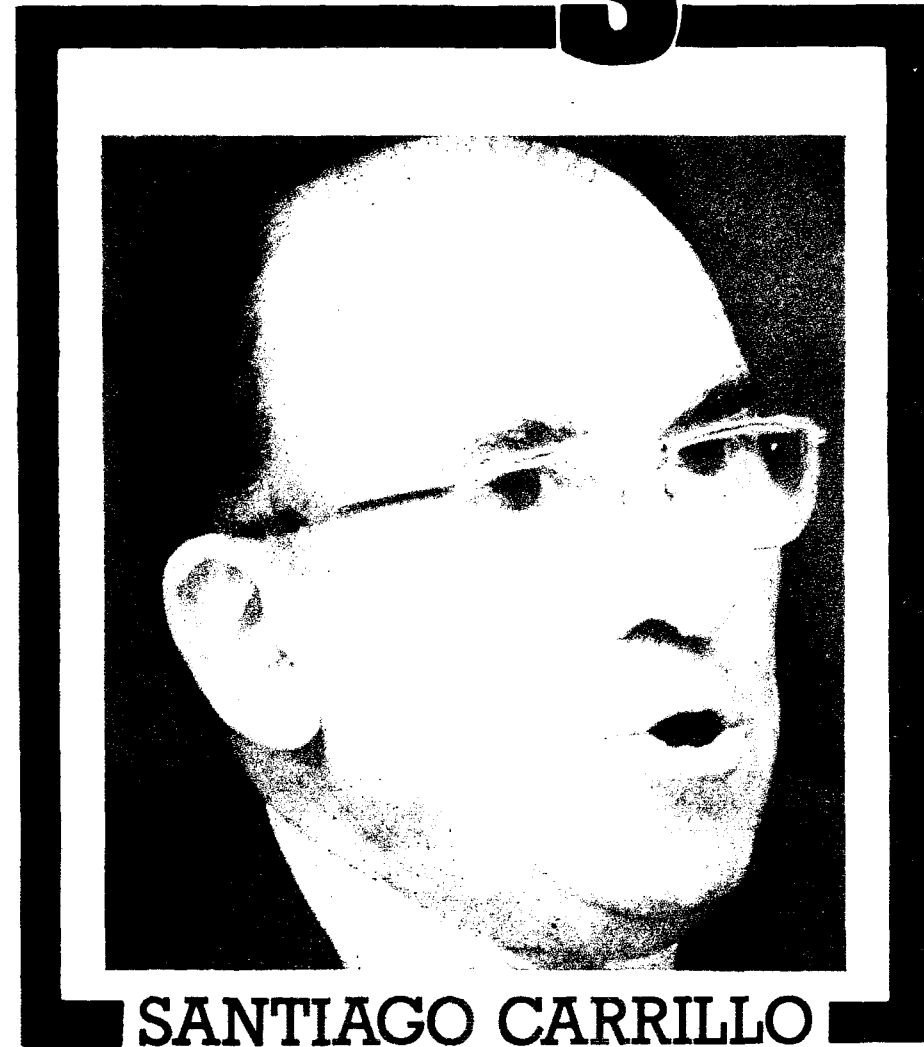
Santiago Carrillo, general secretary of the Communist party of Spain, is by his own admission a revisionist. In his life and thought he represents the revision of Cervantes by achieving a synthesis of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza—of principle and practical realism. In so doing, he also embodies the best in the legacy of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky, Castro, Mao, and all other great socialist revolutionaries: He can read history as a path to the future rather than as an antiquarian adulation of the past.

This alone would make him a significant political figure. But what augments his significance is that his thinking is not simply a personal testimony, but represents a broad trend of Marxian socialist thought in industrial capitalist nations. Further, this thinking is emerging not only from newcomers to the socialist movement, but also from those with 30 and 40 years' experience, whose courage, commitment, and thoughtful devotion to the cause of the working class and revolutionary socialism are not open to question.

The broad trend is most often called "Eurocommunism." But it is to be found also in non-European Marxian socialist thought, for example in Japan and, though with less organizational identity, in the U.S. As a part of modern socialist politics, the trend deserves critical assessment, which in turn requires that we attempt to understand what it is. In this brief space we wish to indicate its essential nature.

Carrillo does not speak for the entire trend of Eurocommunism because, in its essence, it affirms the diversity of socialist political outlooks corresponding with differences in historical development from nation to nation. But as Carrillo puts it in his book, *"Eurocommunism" and the State* (p. 110), the common weave in Eurocommunism is agreement "on the need to advance to socialism with democracy, a multi-party system, parliaments and representative institutions, sovereignty of the people regularly exercised through universal suffrage, trade unions independent of the State and of the parties, freedom for the opposition, human rights, religious freedom, freedom for cultural, scientific and artistic creation,

EUROCOMMUNISM and the STATE



SANTIAGO CARRILLO
General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain

and the development of the broadest forms of popular participation at all levels and in all branches of social activity."

This statement represents a recognition that the commitment to democratic principles as they have evolved in industrial capitalist societies is integral to the practical working class struggle for socialism in those societies. More specifically, the outlook represents the recognition that:

- The diversity of the working class and the socialist movement signifies its

revolutionary classes must—the representative of the interest of the whole society in progress and human freedom.

- Prolonged popular struggles for historical development to the point of representing society as a whole, as against capitalist interests, which are becoming smaller in number and less and less diverse in social composition.

- In championing democracy against the oligarchic power of corporate-capital the working class becomes—as all revo-

lutionary classes must—the representative of the interest of the whole society in progress and human freedom.

- In industrial society the working class is diverse, and the movement of the working class and its allies must, accordingly, express itself freely in diverse parties, movements, organizations and points of view, as the condition of popular unity around socialism.

- Parliamentary (or electoral) politics in its broadest sense is a decisively characteristic arena of class struggle over control and transformation of the state and the economy in industrial capitalist societies. Not to participate in them seriously is to leave the political and ideological field at its highest levels to the bourgeoisie. Serious participation means publicly formulating programs for social change and submitting them to the people's judgment and shaping, in the process of which the people freely consent not only to what they are against but also to what they are for. It prepares them for taking and exercising power in their own interests, not simply for protesting or sporadic rebelling.

These specifics by no means exhaust the elements of Eurocommunism but they are among its most important and essential aspects.

Many socialists will not consider them new. What is new is that socialist movements, in many countries with great popular bases, that in the past had rejected these views, have now come to adhere to them.

What is also new is that the broader adherence to these views makes it possible to overcome many long-standing antagonisms among socialists and hostility toward socialists by workers who validly distrusted socialists' underdeveloped ideas about democracy. And it opens the way to building, without obsolescent doctrinal qualms, a broadly based, diversified and multi-organizational movement for socialism and democracy in the industrial capitalist societies.

We hope American socialists will seriously consider and debate the meaning of this trend and its implications for the movement for socialism in the U.S. ■

Palestinian state key to durable peace

A Middle East peace settlement that does not provide for the national self-determination of the Arab Palestinian people can be neither just nor enduring. But that is the type of settlement that seems to be shaping up since Sadat's visit to Jerusalem.

An Israeli-Egyptian entente made at the expense of Palestinian nationhood will violate the Palestinians' rightful claim to justice and all the Arab people's sense of justice. It will also, on that account, fail to be the comprehensive and enduring peace that all sides claim to want, as it will perpetuate and intensify the sources of conflict between Israel and its neighbors.

Such conflict can be contained only by the application of force and more force, inflaming bitter hatreds and deepening mutual distrust. Not even Sadat's good will or his people's strong preference for peaceful development can assure Egypt's long-term fidelity to a peace agreement based on so blatant an injustice to the Palestinians. Such a "peace" will turn

out to be little more than another passing interlude before the next war.

Israeli Prime Minister Begin has shown greater flexibility than most experts anticipated, but as yet not nearly what is needed to put Israel and Egypt (let alone other Arab states) on the road to a lasting peace. He and Sadat agree that Palestinian self-determination means the right to statehood. Rather than negotiating toward that end within a framework of comprehensive arrangements for Israel's security, however, Begin has publicly rejected it.

Instead the Begin government has proposed what amounts to an Israeli colonial dominion over the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza. (See Yoav Peled's column, p. 17). It would permit continued Israeli settlement in the West Bank while retaining ultimate Israeli sovereignty there without offering genuine equality of rights or opportunities to Arabs either in Israel or in non-Israeli Palestine.

If that is the Begin government's final

position, continued conflict between Palestinian resistance and Israeli colonialist repression will be inevitable. The conflict could not long be contained. It must engulf Israel in more war with the Arab world, and more costlier war, while world opinion and support for Israel can be expected to diminish. The Begin government's publicly stated position is squandering an opportunity for a durable peace and real security for the Israeli people, out of a short-sighted fear of a Palestinian state or a grandiose and unrealistic vision of restoring a Biblical Israel ruling over all of Palestine. Probably it is a mixture of both.

While the Begin government seems bent upon a short-term peace that can be neither just nor durable, the PLO strategy appears suited to pushing Israel further into a rigid adherence to that policy. PLO leaders may believe that its strategy will lead to Israel's eventual isolation and ultimate defeat in war. But there is no guarantee

that such an outcome will lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state. A PLO recognition of Israeli statehood and a willingness to enter negotiations with Israel on that basis seems to be a more direct route to Palestinian statehood. It would encourage Israeli political movements ready to accept such an outcome to struggle more powerfully for change in their government's policy. It would make it difficult for Israel, Egypt, or the U.S. to ignore the PLO as they are now trying to do. It would restore to the PLO an initiative and degree of autonomy it is now in an accelerated process of losing.

Those of us who support a Middle East peace that respects and guarantees both Israeli and Palestinian national rights, should urge upon Israel and the PLO a policy of mutual recognition and good faith negotiation. And we should work for an American policy that does not encourage any arrangement that fails to provide for the establishment of a Palestinian state. A just and durable Middle East peace requires nothing short of that. ■

seen as against the Armed Forces Movement. The thing was that all of a sudden the left found itself with a whole armed forces at its disposal, waiting to go.

Could the Communist party and their allies on the left have taken power, pushed it to the point where they were on the ascendancy and the others on the defensive?

Well, that is more or less what the Communist party was aiming for. But to try any military stuff against the Armed Forces Movement would have been total folly.

I'd long to go back and chew it all over again. What really did go wrong and what was the element that made it go wrong.

A part of the element, obviously, was the United States. The U.S. was taken by surprise by the initial coup, but they moved in with a very strong and experienced CIA team—people who had worked in various areas of the world, Latin America, Brazil and Chile—and set to work.

But that needn't have been the decisive factor.

Certainly the Communists made errors. They all came out of prison or exile and they were out of touch with the modern situation and modern tactics. They came out thinking still in terms of the Bolshevik Revolution—all power to the Soviets was all power to the People's Committees, and setting up Soldiers Committees within the ranks of the armed forces. Which was all right, but they were thinking in terms of when they got to a certain point of seizing power.

On the other hand they had great prestige. They were strongly organized within the industrial working class, especially in what they call the "red Belt" around Lisbon, and in the south with its big absentee estates.

The Communists did a good job on the question of the internal debate on colonialization. Soares was absolutely against decolonization. He had all sorts of phony neo-colonialist type schemes. The Communist party was supported by the leadership of the Armed Forces Movement and opposed by the Socialists and everybody to the right of them. Those were the toughest battles.

And also they did a very good job in the drafting of the Constitution, getting all sorts of things into the Constitution, which are still there and can always be used in terms of reform.

Could you say that the problem with the Communist party in this case was not so much that they didn't pursue the traditional theoretical Communist position of armed struggle and insurrection, but that they were out maneuvered in the contemporary context of Portugal?

Yes, this is it. They were out maneuvered.

Eurocommunism

How do you see what happened in Portugal in relation to this thing called Eurocommunism? Was it a similar process to what is going on in France and Italy?

I don't think so. I think that Cunhal still takes a very rigid pro-Soviet line and regards Eurocommunism as the equivalent of something anti-Soviet. His position is diametrically opposite to that of [Spanish Communist leader Santiago] Carrillo, who regards Eurocommunism as a means of detaching Communist parties from the leadership of the Soviet Communist party.

Your base is in France right now. So you see developments at close hand. Do you think there is any future in the Eurocommunist strategy?

I want to have a much longer look at it. Until now I've only been looking into the background—how did this phenomena come about.

That in itself is quite interesting. Eurocommunism is an attempt to detach parties from the leadership of the Soviet Union. Not to set up any competing center, as the Soviet Union suspects, but to find their own road.

The hard fact is that all the Communist parties that are in power in Europe, except Yugoslavia, were put in power by the Soviet army. Communist parties are at an impasse as to how to go any farther. Eurocommunism is partly a product of that and partly disillusionment with the model that has been offered so far.

Do they have any choice? Could they continue along the Soviet model?

No, they can't mobilize any support. They can't mobilize new membership, for instance.

Now, since the French Communist party changed its line—it was much later than the Italian party, the change was only about a year ago—there has been a tremendous upsurge in adherents to the party. The Communist party has gained 135,000 new members since the beginning of 1977. This is the most rapid growth that it's probably ever had. And that shows that rank and file workers support this line of independence.

The Eurocommunist approach is not just in Europe.

Yes, it's a concept of independence and national Communist parties working out their own line independent of any other outside dictation.

I was recently in Eastern Europe, in Bulgaria and Hungary. I had thought of broaching the subject here and there, but I never had the opportunity. Everybody asked me what I thought about it.

It's already had a very important effect there. With a great deal of things in their day-to-day life and with the regime they are quite happy—all sorts of good positive things that are not unimportant, education, public health and all that. But I talked with an awful lot of people in those two countries who think that Eurocommunism can probably supply the defects, the things that are lacking—that is freedom of expression, more access to information, freedom to travel, all these sorts of things. And they are looking at it as sort of a bright new red star in the sky.

But it needs balancing out; it really needs looking into. *You wouldn't write it off though?*

Certainly not. There's no good sticking a label on it and saying throw it out. I'm a pragmatist, I suppose: Is

The hard fact is that all the Communist parties in power in Europe—except Yugoslavia—are there because of the Soviet army. The other parties are at an impasse as to how to go any farther. Eurocommunism comes from this disillusionment with the Soviet model.

it working or not? Is it benefiting people? Does it provide for advance and so forth? Is it going to bring revolutionary forces or progressive forces into power and provide—let me use the term—"human rights" someone is going to think that I've picked up Jimmy Carter's ticket—but in fact I am quite happy that he's launched this idea and made this an issue of confrontation between East and West. Personally, I think that this is positive. Fight it out on that issue, good, who can give the most human rights. In fact, socialist regimes should be able to provide far more human rights in the real sense than capitalist regimes.

But they don't always have a good record in that regard?

No, I agree, they don't.

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Burchett met by right-wing

By Gwenda Blair

In the midst of his first American speaking tour Wilfred Burchett has become the target of a concerted conservative attack.

It began in early November with strong editorials in the John Birch Society's *Review of the Week* and in the Hearst papers denouncing him as a KGB agent, an interrogator of POW's in Korea and a "Red" propagandist in Vietnam.

Two weeks later the potshots became a machine-gun volley. In a major four-part series the *New York Post*—owned by Burchett's fellow Australian, Rupert Murdoch—declared Burchett a "Communist newsman" and "Soviet KGB agent who interrogated and tortured American POW's in Korea and Vietnam." "In addition, *Post* reporter William Heffernan charged that there were irregularities in the visa granted to Burchett by the State department.

The *Post* staged and then reported on a confrontation between Burchett and Derek Kinne, a Korean war POW who had testified against Burchett in a 1974 libel trial in Australia. Kinne claimed that because of a heated prison camp debate—during which Kinne says Burchett said, "I think I will have you shot"—Kinne was tortured and kept in solitary confinement for 13 months.

"Gutter journalism," Burchett responded at a press conference. "If any reporter on any newspaper I ran had such disrespect for the facts as Heffernan, he'd be sacked."

Burchett denied being a member of the Communist party or a KGB agent, and denounced POW claims of interrogation and torture at his hands as perjury. He claims that he never saw Kinne before the 1974 libel trial and that he simply interviewed POW's who had already made published confessions.

The *Post* series was replete with errors in every paragraph, said Burchett. The *Post* claimed, for example, that in exchange for his support, Burchett received "unusual treatment from Communist countries, such as living in a Moscow building 'reserved for prominent Soviet citizens.'"

"It may have been nicer than the homes of some Russians," said Burchett, "but it was certainly shabbier than those given all the other Western correspondents, which they always pointed out when they came to visit."

Burchett also said that in the 1974 Australian libel case, allegations that he was a KGB agent were found defamatory (although not legally libelous because they originated in a parliamentary speech and were subject to parliamentary privilege). The charges were made by a Soviet defector named Yuri Krotkov who also, according to Burchett, named as KGB agents Jean-Paul Sartre, John K. Galbraith and various Canadian, French and Indian diplomats. (An appeals court subsequently found the parliamentary privilege defense untenable, but refused to order a new trial because of the expense of recalling foreign witnesses. This unprecedented decision has now been taken by Burchett to the Privy Council in London, the highest court of appeal for Commonwealth countries.)

Burchett's lawyer, Marshall Perlin, has announced plans to sue the *Post* for "publishing false, defamatory material in knowing and reckless disregard for the truth." A retraction, an apology, and a "very substantial amount" of damages will be sought.

There has been little support for the *Post*'s charges. Alexander Cockburn, writing in the *Village Voice*, called them "disgraceful," "deplorable," and "absurd," and noted that a State department spokesperson had declared that it had no evidence that Burchett mis-handled POW's or had any link to the KGB.

The *New York Times*, which earlier this year characterized Burchett as "a reporter of courage and exceptional ability," had not covered the Hearst/*Post* campaign, but long-time *Times* Asian correspondent Harrison Salisbury said in an interview that he thought there was no new substance to the charges.

Only *Post* writer Stephen Dunleavy, the Murdoch import from Australia whose "Son of Sam" stories helped create a wave of fear in New York, expressed support for the Heffernan series. "I'm totally anti-Burchett," he declared. "I applaud the series tremendously and so do most Australian journalists."

Other Australian journalists interviewed, including reporters for such well established papers as the *Financial Times of Australia* and Murdoch's own *Star*, however, expressed support for Burchett and respect for his journalistic career. "Dunleavy is somewhat to the right of Attila the Hun," said a *Star* staffer, who called Burchett "sort of the Australian I.F. Stone—someone I consider reliable even when I don't agree with him."

Several members of the Australian press core also recalled anti-Burchett coverage in the 1950s in the two Melbourne papers managed by Rupert Murdoch's father.

"Burchett first antagonized the Australian press when he covered World War II from a pro-Communist point of view," said Philip Fraser, former editor at Melbourne's *Digger*.

Fraser added, "When Burchett covered the Korean war from the North Korean side—after Australian troops had been sent to South Korea—he was bitterly attacked in most Australian papers, including the two managed by Murdoch's father. Rupert is just carrying on the tradition. It sold a lot of newspapers then, and it will do it now too."

When the Heffernan series was printed, Rupert Murdoch was on his way back to Australia, reportedly to help defeat former Labor party Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in parliamentary elections. A one-time Whitlam supporter, Murdoch was instrumental in Whitlam's defeat in 1975.

Fraser noted that since Whitlam's first act upon his election in 1972 was to restore Wilfred Burchett's Australian passport after a 17-year suspension, it may be that Murdoch's anti-Whitlam fervor spilled over onto Burchett. A reporter at the *Post* who declined to be identified told Burchett that Murdoch gave specific instructions for the series to be done. The charge is denied by Heffernan, who says that was merely a routine assignment by editor Bruce Rothwell. Rothwell was unavailable for comment.

Gwenda Blair is a former editor of *Liberation* and *Seven Days*.