

Third World Socialists Lead IDB Fight; Group of 77 Split

Feb. 14 (IPS) — Leading Third World socialist countries and political factions have decided to establish themselves as a core leadership group, for the first time breaking with the false unity of the agent-ridden Group of 77 nonaligned countries which has functioned haltingly for two years as the Third World's policy-making body. Although not yet completely consolidated nor entirely self-conscious of their role, the group is effectively working to ensure that ongoing development talks are serious, competent forums for establishing the International Development Bank.

A call by Iraq this week to convene an Arab summit meeting to plan the region-wide agricultural development of the Middle East, together with a parallel decision by the Group of 77 — taken at the initiative of Yugoslavia — to invite the Soviet bloc to take part in North-South talks currently going on in Paris, indicate that this coalition of leading Third World forces is linking up with both the socialist bloc and the pro-development forces in the West in the battle to establish the IDB.

Having just returned from the Group of 77 talks in Manila, an Indian diplomat, veteran of two years of negotiations with little concrete results, readily agreed that such forums had reached their limit of usefulness, and discussed with ICLC representatives the potential for more direct action within the framework of a smaller group of developing countries committed to debt moratoria. "The Group of 77 as such does not exist anymore," he stated, describing how the Manila talks had almost broken down several times. At one point, he asked: "What do you want me to do about the Italian situation?"

For almost a year, the entire developing sector has been saturated with material on the IDB and debt moratoria by Labor Committee representatives, with several governments already adopting an official policy of support for the IDB. Now, the opportunities presented by the pro-IDB outlook taken up by Italy's development forces has forced key developing-sector countries to consider the immediate potential for creating a functioning IDB.

The chief element that has shaped the current political attitude in the Third World is the realization that further dependence on inconclusive, drawn-out negotiations such as the recently concluded Group of 77 meeting in Manila, where agent governments and backward forces combined to produce an essentially impotent final document, cannot have any results. Instead, Iraq, Yugoslavia, left Congress Party and Communist elements in India, and the Algerian leadership — among others — have broken with the "Third World family" idea and are waging an open political fight inter-

nationally and against domestic reactionaries to build the much-talked-about new world economic order now.

For the Third World as a whole, the chief tactical objective is to provide the back-up critical for Italy's pro-development Andreotti-Cefis-Mancini axis to survive Atlanticist blackmail. For example, Italy's oil supplies, sharply down as a result of a boycott by the Rockefeller family's Seven Sisters oil cartel, require that such countries as Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Nigeria, and even Iran establish direct relations with Italy for the supply of oil over the heads of the Rockefeller cartel. In Rome and elsewhere, ICLC representatives have already contacted governments of oil-producing countries to foster such an arrangement.

Iraq Leads the Arabs

According to Handelsblatt, a West German economic daily, the government of Iraq has called for the convening of an Arab League summit meeting to discuss agricultural development of the Middle East and North Africa. In the clearest example of a country taking the necessary individual initiative to organize for a development perspective, the Iraqis demanded that the Arab states meet at the level of heads of state, since "it is not sufficient to turn the problem over to experts, because they do not have sufficient power to put these ideas into force." Two Egyptian diplomats contacted by IPS quickly endorsed the call by Iraq, which has also apparently been accepted in principle by the Arab League council.

The Iraqi initiative opens up immediate possibilities for setting up the sort of oil-for-technology and capital arrangements between the Arab sector, Western Europe and the Soviet bloc that form the core of the IDB proposal. Together with moves by anti-Atlanticist forces in Western Europe to break with the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund and the inflated U.S. dollar, Iraq's moves in the Arab world create a ready market for European exports of tractors, fertilizer, and farm machinery. Such capital equipment can be supplied to the developing countries on the basis of long-term credits issued by the IDB or a similar, transitional institution aimed at development of the Fertile Crescent, the Nile Valley, and other areas once both Western Europe and the developing sector have dumped their debt to the Dollar Empire.

The key to the importance of the Iraqi agricultural development proposal is that Iraq is willing to make a political fight on the issue of development. In the rest of the Arab sector, certain allies of the reactionary bastion of Saudi Arabia will move to block the Iraq move; a Jordanian diplomat in effect has told IPS that Jordan sees the proposal as "useless." But forceful Iraqi organizing for the proposal,

plus outside support, will line up progressive Arab countries behind the idea, split key countries like Egypt and Syria, and isolate the agents.

Future Negotiations

The Iraqi move to organize the crucial Arab sector behind a pro-development perspective is only an example of the method by which the relatively few conscious pro-IDB forces in the Third World can line up their potential allies for support. As many Third World diplomats are beginning to realize, the already bleak future for the developing sector threatens to become unspeakably hideous in coming months unless the forced collapse of advanced-sector production is halted. As the Labor Committees have repeatedly pointed out, the situation requires immediate, unilateral action. Debt moratoria and development programs are not negotiable — they must be declared and implemented, with negotiations to follow.

West are in endless, unproductive talks around the new world economic order, the Yugoslav delegation proposed that the Group of 77 invite the socialist countries to participate in the North-South talks — a proposal which was immediately accepted by the whole group of developing countries. Despite reported strong opposition to the move from French President Giscard d'Estaing, there are signs from the Czechs that the Soviet bloc favors inclusion in the talks.

The sharply limited nature of the present trade and development talks under various forums — the Paris talks, the United Nations, the Group of 77 — was noted by the Indians this week. The Indian leftist daily *The Patriot*,

reporting on the Manila meeting of the Group of 77, noted that the members of the Group had different "economic and social systems," and thus demoralized by the frustration of seeking to negotiate with agent governments like Saudi Arabia, Brazil, et al. — claimed that the Group "would do well to set its sights on the possible and not waste time and energy in working out quixotic plans to change the present international economic order at one stroke." In sharp contrast, an editorial in the same newspaper attacked "unrepentant World Bank economists within the (government) bureaucracy," thus stating the correct target for pro-development forces in India.

In similar fashion, an ambassador from a major Arab oil producing country told an ICLC organizer that his government is "highly interested" in the IDB proposal, and said that he would recommend that his government consider moving against the Rockefeller-organized oil boycott of Italy.

Such motion, which is certain to escalate in coming days and weeks, essentially solves the problem which faces Third World countries in development negotiations. Without immediate action on debt and trade, the long, drawn-out talks will last well into 1977, during which period the otherwise unavoidable necessity of implementing austerity through import cuts and wage-gouging will weaken regime after regime in the Third World, leading to a series of right-wing coups d'etat. Henry Kissinger's botched effort in Nigeria yesterday, which left the president of that West African country dead, is merely the first in a bloody series unless the process is overturned.