

# LSA on Argentine kidnapping

The following is a statement of the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere.

On March 21 the general manager of the Argentine branch of Fiat Concorde was kidnapped by commandos of the ERP (Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo — Revolutionary People's Army). Their action has aroused wide attention across the world, including Canada where an action similar in many ways was carried out in October 1970 under the banner of the Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ).

The violence in Argentina today clearly originates from the repressive measures carried out against the masses by a dictatorial regime.

Argentina has been under military rule almost continually since 1955. The present military junta of General Alejandro Lanusse has crowded the jails with political prisoners. Union and student militants have been abducted and secretly killed by the police.

A worldwide solidarity campaign is now underway to protest torture and repression in Argentina and to aid its victims.

Under the influence of guerrilla strategies such as those carried out in other parts of Latin America by Che Guevara in Bolivia or the

Tupamaros in Uruguay, many revolutionary militants in Argentina have staked their hopes in dramatic actions by small groups. Such actions, they feel, can spark the masses into moving to overthrow the dictatorship and taking power into their own hands.

Similar thinking motivated the FLQ kidnappings of Pierre Laporte and James Cross in Quebec in October 1970.

Carried out by a handful of persons in the name of the FLQ, the two kidnappings were seen by many in the Quebec left as a spark which would ignite a revolutionary upsurge in Quebec. In the first days following the kidnappings, considerable sympathy was evident for the demand of the FLQ — liberation of political prisoners. But these actions by their very nature sought not the participation or mobilization of the masses but their applause.

The LSA-LSO said at the time that "the FLQ has substituted the isolated actions of a small handful for the mass political action of the working class, the only road for Quebec's liberation."

Reducing the masses to the role of spectators, the kidnappings created the conditions for a massive wave of government repression. Quebec was occupied with 7,000 troops; civil liberties were suspended; over 500 persons were jailed, including

leaders of the LSA-LSO.

It was only after months of concerted cross-country and international campaigns to defend civil liberties and to expose government sedition trials that the mass movement recovered in Quebec. It did so through a series of mass actions around the defense of political prisoners and through independentist demonstrations which expressed the deepening nationalist consciousness of the Quebecois.

This experience has been indeed "exemplary" for the entire left and nationalist movements in Quebec and Canada.

The ERP action, like that of the FLQ supporters in Quebec, reduces the masses to the role of spectators. It avoids the necessary consistent work of bringing the masses into struggles around a program linked to their most urgent economic, social and political needs.

Our recent experience in Quebec convinces us all the more that rather than involving the revolutionary forces in mass struggles, such actions separate the revolutionaries from the masses, thus posing a block on the path to building a revolutionary party. The task in Argentina as in Canada and Quebec is the construction of such a party capable of leading the working class in the struggle for power.