

# Intercontinental Press

combined with **imprecor**

Vol. 17, No. 37

© 1979 by Intercontinental Press

October 15, 1979

USA 85¢

UK 30p

## **PANAMA**

**250,000 Hail**

**Return of  
Canal Zone**

## **KAMPUCHEA**

**Eyewitness Report  
of Khmer Rouge  
Reign of Terror**

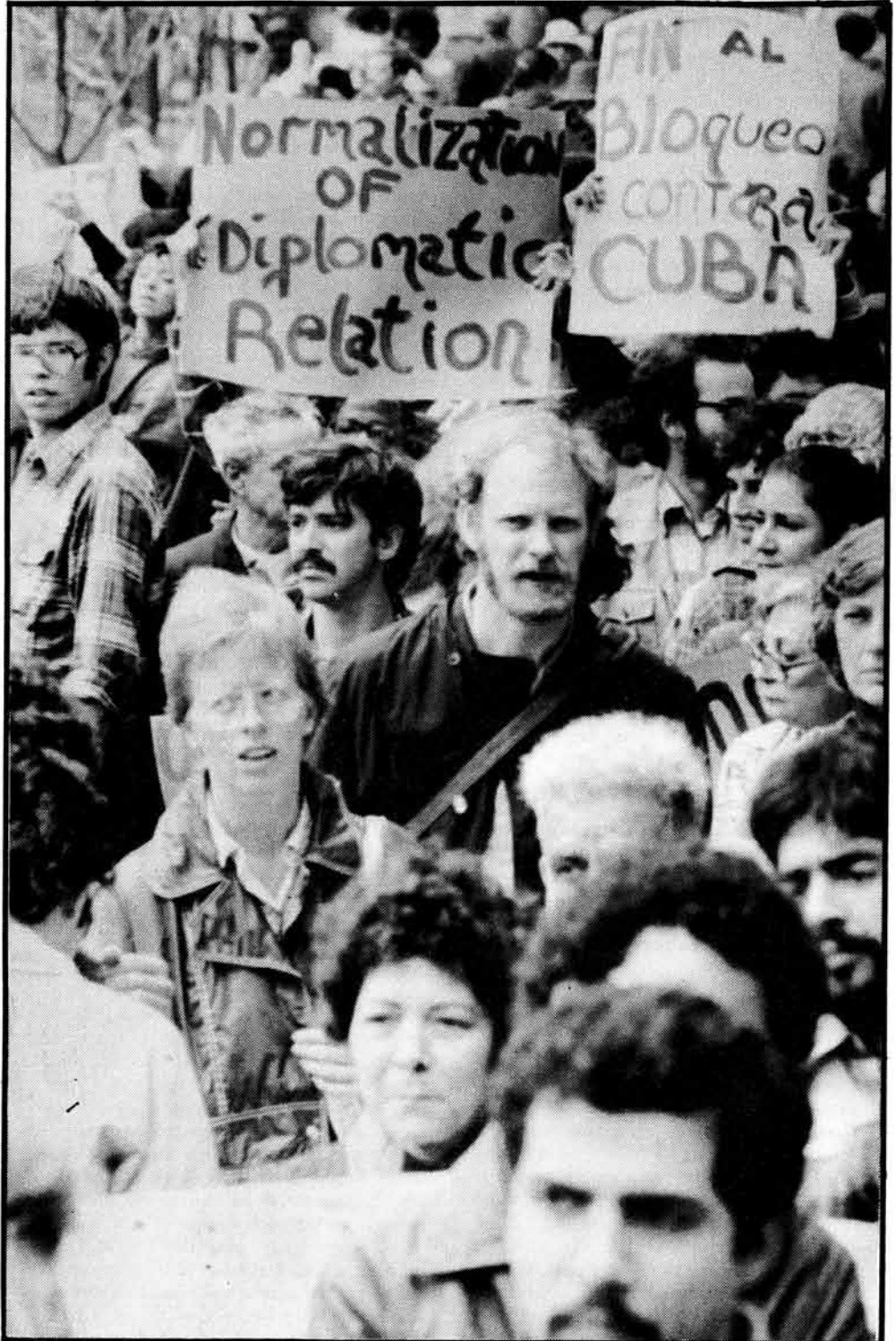
## **IRAN**

**Socialist Leader  
Answers Government  
Frame-up Charges**

## **CANADA**

**Recent Trends  
in Labor  
Movement**

**BEHIND THE  
'GOLD RUSH'  
OF 1979**



*Lou Howort/Militant*  
October 5 demonstration at United Nations answers Carter with call to end the blockade of Cuba.

## 250,000 Hail End to U.S. Rule Over Canal Zone

By Will Reissner

On October 1 an estimated 250,000 Panamanians surged through the once heavily guarded gates of the Canal Zone. They were celebrating the end of seventy-six years of direct U.S. rule over the 533-square mile zone that had previously cut their country in half.

The ceremony turning the Canal Zone over to Panama marked the first step in implementing two treaties signed by the governments of Panama and the United States on September 7, 1977. The return of Panamanian sovereignty over the Canal Zone was marked by huge celebrations throughout Panama.

The size and anti-imperialist militancy of these outpourings signalled the difficulties the U.S. rulers will face in maintaining the onerous concessions they extorted from the Panamanian government during the negotiations two years ago.

As Vice-president Walter Mondale addressed the October 1 ceremony, hailing the "success in the peaceful resolution of disputes and good relations between large and small nations," he was repeatedly interrupted by chants of demonstrators waving banners reading "Yankees Out of Panama" and "Sovereignty or Death."

"A climate of indescribable joy" reigned throughout Panama. Radio Havana reported October 2. "Popular fiestas began Saturday [September 29] and lasted until Monday night." Spontaneous street demonstrations erupted during the day October 1.

"The Canal Zone will be erased from the map," Panamanian President Aristides Royo told a cheering crowd of 100,000 at the ceremony where a giant Panamanian flag was raised over the zone. "All that has been off limits to us since 1903 has begun to be ours."

Reflecting the deepgoing popular support throughout Latin America for the struggle of the Panamanians to gain control over their greatest resource, the heads of state of seven Latin American countries attended the rally.

These included the presidents of Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, and Costa Rica. Nicaragua was represented by Violeta Chamorro and Daniel Ortega, two of the five members of the Junta of National Reconstruction.

Implementation of the first phase of the treaties gives Panama control over the cities of Cristobal and Balboa, as well as over the railroad that runs parallel to the canal. Control over operations of the canal itself, however, will not revert to Panama

until the last day of 1999.

The United States had ruled the Canal Zone since 1903, when a treaty with the newly independent Republic of Panama granted the U.S. control over the zone "in perpetuity." In return, Panama received a one-time cash payment of \$10 million.

Until the October 1 ceremony, the Canal Zone had been directly administered by Washington, subject to U.S. rather than Panamanian law. The Canal Zone had its own police force, laws, courts, and school system and was serviced by the U.S. postal system. Most jobs associated with the canal were reserved for U.S. citizens.

The U.S. continues to have a massive military presence in Panama. There are at present fourteen U.S. military bases in what was the Canal Zone.

Panamanian nationalists have long been struggling against the U.S. presence in their country. Large demonstrations and strikes in 1947 forced cancellation of an agreement granting the Pentagon a new lease on military bases *outside* the Canal Zone. The U.S. was forced to withdraw from those bases at the end of that year.

Throughout the 1950s Panamanians organized marches into the Canal Zone to try to fly the Panamanian flag alongside the U.S. flag as a symbol of Panamanian sovereignty over the zone. In one such march, on November 3, 1959, demonstrators were driven out of the zone by U.S. troops and some eighty persons were injured. The ensuing anger in Panama convinced U.S. President Eisenhower to allow the Panamanian flag to be flown symbolically in *one* place in the zone.

The bloodiest U.S. assault took place on January 9, 1964. More than twenty Panamanians were killed and some 500 were wounded when U.S. troops and Canal Zone police opened fire on thousands of unarmed people attempting to raise a Panamanian flag alongside the U.S. flag at Balboa High School in the zone. Since then demonstrations have taken place each year on the anniversary of the massacre. And President Royo read out the names of the slain protesters at the October 1 ceremony, as the crowd shouted "present" after each name.

U.S. sovereignty over the Canal Zone has been a hated symbol of U.S. imperialism to people throughout Latin America. President Carter hopes that the new treaties will improve Washington's image, while maintaining effective control over the canal itself.

Under the two treaties, the U.S. government retains the permanent right to intervene militarily in Panama to maintain the canal's "neutrality." U.S. warships will have the right to priority passage. The U.S. military can keep its bases through 1999 and maintains the right to use all lands and waters it deems necessary for the canal's defense.

In other words, the full U.S. military presence will remain in what had been the Canal Zone.

The U.S. also retains its control over operation of the canal itself, although under an altered form. Effective October 1, operations were transferred from the Panama Canal Company, which was exclusively controlled by the U.S. government, to a Panama Canal Commission made up of nine members—five Americans and four Panamanians—all of whom must be approved by the U.S. government.

The treaties stipulate that through 1990 the administrator of the canal will be an American, with a Panamanian deputy. In August President Carter named the first administrator of the new Panama Canal Commission. He is Gen. Dennis McAuliffe, who had until then been serving as the head of the U.S. Southern Command, headquartered in the Canal Zone.

As the October 1 celebrations in Panama dramatically showed, the Panamanian people value the concessions they have won but are not happy with the extensive control the U.S. still retains.

The victory over Somoza in Nicaragua and the rising tide of rebellion in El Salvador and other parts of Central America are likely to inspire the Panamanian masses to press forward for the withdrawal of all U.S. bases from Panama and for immediate, full Panamanian control over the canal. □

### Correction

A line was inadvertently dropped from the article "Worldwide Aid for Kampuchea Now!" in last week's *IP/I*. The ninth paragraph in column one on page 941 should read:

According to Chanda, "Vietnam so far has supplied 10,000 tons of rice seed, 20,000 tons of rice, 9,000 tons of fuel oil and 5,000 tons of consumer goods such as condensed milk, cloth and household utensils."

## Southern Africa: Bombs Behind the Talks

By Ernest Harsch

At the conference table and on the battlefield, the imperialists and their allies are stepping up pressure against the liberation struggles in southern Africa.

On September 5, just five days before the opening of British-sponsored negotiations in London with the Rhodesian government and the Patriotic Front liberation forces, Rhodesian warplanes and ground troops launched a major attack into neighboring Mozambique. It was the first time the regime in Salisbury admitted that its aim was to hit Mozambican targets, and not just Zimbabwean guerrilla and refugee camps.

A Rhodesian military communiqué claimed at the end of the three-day assault that its forces had killed 300 Mozambican and Zimbabwean troops.

According to the Mozambican government, however, the invasion was not confined to military targets, but was also meant "to destroy the means of production so as to destroy Mozambique's economy." It said that homes, schools, hospitals, and bridges had been bombed. A report in the September 24 *Christian Science Monitor*, revealed that Rhodesian bombs had destroyed part of the dam at Aldeia de Barragem, which could seriously affect next year's rice crop.

On September 27, Rhodesian forces again struck into Mozambique. After withdrawing five days later, they claimed to have killed "several hundred" Zimbabwean freedom fighters.

Washington and London, which have been increasing their support for the Rhodesian regime, conspicuously refrained from condemning the raids, thus giving a green light for further attacks.

These repeated invasions of Mozambique, as well as of Zambia and Angola, are designed to pressure the governments of those countries into lessening their aid to the Zimbabwean freedom fighters. The imperialists hope that such pressures will force the Patriotic Front to make significant concessions at the London conference.

The apartheid regime in South Africa is following a similar strategy, hoping to weaken the Angolan economy and undercut support for the Namibian liberation forces.

According to the Angolan government, South African planes bombed several areas of southern Angola on September 11. On September 26 they bombed factories, schools, homes, and markets in the towns of Lubango and Xangongo, killing sixty persons. This destruction, an Angolan defense communiqué stated, was "aimed at the destabilization of the political and social situation in our country." □

### In This Issue

Closing News Date: October 7, 1979

FEATURES	990	Behind the "Gold Rush" of 1979 —by Dick Roberts
USA	972	Supporters of Cuban Revolution March Terrorists Attack Cuban Film Showing
	983	Biggest Antinuclear Demonstration Ever in U.S.—by Cliff Conner
CUBA	973	Behind Talk About Carter's "Retreat" —by David Frankel
	974	FSLN Hits Carter's "Threat to Caribbean and Central America" Caribbean Governments Reject U.S. "Protection" Pulley Demands: "Dismantle U.S. Base at Guantánamo Bay!"
NICARAGUA	975	Right-wing Terror Grows—by Fred Murphy
	976	Ortega Urges Unconditional Aid for Reconstruction—by Aníbal Yáñez
	977	Education Minister Appeals for International Aid
	978	Worldwide Campaign for Aid
	980	Women Organize to Defend Revolution —by Lynn Silver
KAMPUCHEA	984	Eyewitness Report on Record of Khmer Rouge
THAILAND	985	Food to Kampuchea, Not Arms to Thailand! —by David Frankel
IRAN	986	Protests Demand Release of Socialists —by Janice Lynn
	987	Judge Tries to Justify Imprisonment of Socialists—by Janice Lynn
	987	Babak Zahraie Scores Frame-up Charges
CANADA	988	Socialists Discuss Trends in Labor Movement —by Dick Fidler
INDIA	996	Pressures That Blew Apart Desai Regime
MIDEAST	1000	Israel's Genocidal Policy in Lebanon —by Dave Dellinger
NEWS ANALYSIS	970	250,000 Hail End to U.S. Rule Over Canal Zone—by Will Reissner
	971	Southern Africa: Bombs Behind the Talks —by Ernest Harsch
SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT	982	Assessments of Nicaraguan Revolution
AROUND THE WORLD	994	Demand Release of Juan Mari Brás!
DOCUMENTS	998	For International Solidarity With Struggle in El Salvador
DRAWINGS	996	Morarji Desai; 997, Indira Gandhi; 997, Charan Singh—by Copain

Intercontinental Press (ISSN 0162-5594).  
Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village  
Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Pub-  
lished in New York each Monday except the  
first in January and third and fourth in  
August.

**Second-class postage paid at New York,  
N.Y.**

**Editor:** Mary-Alice Waters.  
**Contributing Editors:** Pierre Frank, Livio  
Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

**Managing Editor:** Michael Baumann.  
**Editorial Staff:** Dan Dickeson, Gerry Fo-  
ley, David Frankel, Ernest Harsch, Fred  
Murphy, Will Reissner.

**Business Manager:** Harvey McArthur.  
**Copy Editor:** David Martin.

**Technical Staff:** Paul Deveze, Larry In-  
gram, Arthur Lobman, Kevin McGuire,  
James M. Morgan, Sally Rhett.

Intercontinental Press specializes in politi-  
cal analysis and interpretation of events of  
particular interest to the labor, socialist,  
colonial independence, Black, and women's  
liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the  
authors, which may not necessarily coincide  
with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar  
as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned  
material stands on the program of the  
Fourth International.

**To Subscribe:** For one year send \$30.00 to  
Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village  
Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Write for  
rates on first class and airmail.

Subscription correspondence should be  
addressed to Intercontinental Press, Box  
116, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014.

For air-speeded subscriptions to Austra-  
lia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box  
K208, Haymarket 2000. In New Zealand:  
Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 3774,  
Auckland.

**European Subscribers:** For air-speeded  
subscriptions write to Intercontinental  
Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, Eng-  
land. Britain and Ireland, send £11.00 for  
one year. Continental Europe and Scandina-  
via, send £15.00 for one year. For airmail  
from London send £22.00. Address sub-  
scription correspondence to Intercontinen-  
tal Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP,  
England.

Please allow five weeks for change of  
address. Include your old address, and, if  
possible, an address label from a recent  
issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the  
408 Printing and Publishing Corporation,  
408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.  
Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.

Copyright © 1979 by Intercontinental  
Press.

## Supporters of Cuban Revolution March in New York

By Dan Dickeson

NEW YORK—In a spirited response to Washington's new attacks against Cuba, nearly 500 people demonstrated October 5 in front of the United Nations. The first such action since the days of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the early 1960s, it marked a successful beginning of a new campaign in the United States to defend the Cuban revolution.

Despite threats of violence by counterrevolutionary Cuban exile gangs, the demonstrators picketed for more than three hours without incident.

The protest had been organized in less than a week by the Ad Hoc Committee to End the Blockade Against Cuba. It called for the normalization of diplomatic and trade relations between the United States and Cuba and for the withdrawal of American military forces from the naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Pickers summed up these demands in two popular chants: "Cuba sí, bloqueo no!" and "No a la agresión, queremos relación!"

A statement of solidarity was read to the rally from Roberto López, an international representative of the United Auto Workers. He pointed out that the UAW was the first major U.S. trade union to come out for an end to the blockade and the establishment of diplomatic relations. A UAW representative participated in the first round of talks between representatives of the Cuban government and the Cuban community abroad, held in Havana in December 1978.

Greetings to the October 5 rally were also sent by the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union and by two members of the New York City Council, one member of Congress, and prominent religious figures.

A key role in organizing the rally had been played by the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group of young Cubans in the United States, Puerto Rico, and several other countries who support the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba. (See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, September 24, 1979, p. 907.) The Brigade is projecting an ongoing campaign throughout the U.S. to force Washington to end its blockade.

Other organizations involved in building the rally were Casa de las Américas, a social and political club for New York-area Cubans who support the revolution, along with the Socialist Workers Party, the U.S. branch of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, and the Communist Party. A busload of demonstrators came from Philadelphia and another from Boston.

The demonstrators were mainly young,

including many young Cubans. There was a sizable representation of older Cubans from the New York area, as well. One



Lou Howort/Militant

group of women proudly carried a Cuban flag.

The success of the October 5 rally stood in contrast to the dismal failure of an anti-Cuba demonstration held in New York earlier the same day by counterrevolution-

ary Cuban exile groups such as Alpha 66, Abdala, the Assault Brigade 2506, and the Cuban Nationalist Movement. Despite extensive publicity—including a campaign by the New York daily *El Diario/La Prensa*, big financial resources, and the anti-Cuba campaign being orchestrated by the American government and mass media—the right-wingers managed to assemble only 1,500 demonstrators, most of them older Cuban exiles. This was far from their projection of 20,000.

The small turnout highlighted the deepening isolation of the ultrarightists within the Cuban community in the U.S. Together with the success of the pro-Cuban protest, the events of October 5 did not augur well for Washington's efforts to prepare public opinion for U.S. military moves in the Caribbean.

This changing relationship of forces is in part a result of the dialog initiated late last year by the Castro leadership with the Cuban community abroad, its first major attempt to intervene in U.S. politics.

Another important factor is the deep antiwar sentiment among American workers. The antiblockade positions taken by the auto and longshoremen's unions show the potential for building support in the American labor movement of the Cuban revolution.

It was announced at the October 5 rally that committees to end the blockade have been formed in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Atlanta, Austin, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Seattle, and other U.S. cities in addition to New York. □

### Terrorists Attack Cuban Film Showing

A group of twenty right-wing terrorists, some armed, attacked a meeting sponsored by the Antonio Maceo Brigade in Miami, Florida, September 29, at which the highly acclaimed Cuban film *Memories of Underdevelopment* was to be shown. The attackers, members of the Cuban counterrevolutionary group Abdala, beat several people, smashed the film projector, and stole the receipts from the door. Shots were fired, but no one was hit.

Among the leaders of the attack were well-known public spokespersons for Abdala in Miami. Organizers of the meeting are demanding that Miami police arrest the ultrarightist hooligans

and provide protection for the rescheduled film showing. The Florida American Civil Liberties Union has condemned the attack along with a spectrum of individuals from the Miami area and its large Cuban community.

On October 5, the day of the pro- and anti-Cuba rallies at the United Nations, Abdala paid for a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. The ad portrayed Fidel Castro as a puppet of Brezhnev, and Cuba as a totalitarian police state. The ad featured a poem by Armando Valladares depicting an alleged 1975 incident of torture of political prisoners in Cuba.

### Behind Talk About Carter's 'Retreat' on Cuba

By David Frankel

Short of sending military forces into combat, the most threatening thing that can be done with them is to deploy them in readiness for such a move. That is what President Carter did October 1, using the pretext of Soviet troops in Cuba.

The big-business media, however, have been virtually unanimous in trying to minimize Carter's dangerous steps toward war.

The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* derided Carter's actions as "cosmetic," while the *New York Times* referred to his "trivial countermeasures."

"Having ineptly created a Cuba 'crisis' to begin with," the *Christian Science Monitor* commented, "President Carter probably did as well as he could to wind it down."

It called Carter's course "a low-key retreat."

Conservative columnist William Safire argued that Carter's television speech represented "a sorry spectacle of an American President in full retreat."

Liberal columnist Anthony Lewis complained about Carter's "foolishness over Soviet troops in Cuba," but praised him because "he resisted urgings to make this pipsqueak affair the occasion for a confrontation with Moscow."

Lewis, no less than Safire, heaped scorn on "such fearsome steps as the establishment of a new 60-man task force headquarters in Key West."

Unfortunately, the actions taken by Carter were not as harmless as these capitalist commentators would like us to believe. They included:

- Dispatch of a U.S. Marine battalion for military maneuvers on Cuban soil, at the Guantánamo Naval Base.
- Maneuvers off the coast of Puerto Rico by a sixteen-ship Navy task force, led by the aircraft carrier *Forrestal*: White House sources now say that the fleet may call at Guantánamo.
- Speeding up the creation of a 100,000-strong "Rapid Deployment Force."
- Increasing spy flights over Cuba.
- Setting up a permanent command post for military operations in the Caribbean.
- Renewal of efforts to get Latin American governments to cooperate in the establishment of a "regional military peace-keeping force"—an intervention force intended for use against revolutionary struggles such as the one in Nicaragua.

Taken together, these steps represent a sharp escalation of the U.S. military presence in the Caribbean.

By focusing on the phony issue of Soviet troops in Cuba, Carter and the capitalist media want to downplay the ominous significance of their military buildup. American working people, hardly in the mood for another Cuban missile crisis, are supposed to breathe easier—Carter is acting responsibly and is only sending some token forces to the Caribbean.

*The fact is that what the U.S. ruling class wanted to do all along was to beef up its forces in the Caribbean.* The issue of Soviet troops in Cuba was merely a convenient pretext. Carter himself admitted in



his October 1 speech that the Soviet force in Cuba "presents no direct threat to us."

Cuban President Fidel Castro, speaking on American television September 30, pointed out, "There has been no change. . . . neither in the nature nor the missions of the Soviet personnel in Cuba in the past seventeen years. That is the essence of things. The existence of this [Soviet brigade] was perfectly well known by Kennedy. It was known by Johnson. By Nixon. It was known by Ford. It had to be known to Carter. . . . Are they going to make believe, after seventeen years, that they ignored the existence of this facility?"

What Carter attempted with the phony issue of Soviet troops in Cuba is no different from Washington's propaganda around Indochina, southern Africa, Ethiopia, Iran, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Faced with rebellions by workers and peasants around the world, the U.S. ruling class tries to convince American workers that they must counter a growing Soviet threat.

Of course, the real threat to American imperialism is not Soviet troops. What the

imperialists fear is the extension of popular revolution such as the one in Nicaragua.

Washington's capacity to use its military muscle against these struggles, however, is limited by the antiwar attitudes and suspicions about U.S. foreign policy motives among American workers. Thus, the rulers have tried to package their aggressive moves against the workers and peasants of Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and elsewhere in Central America and the Caribbean as a moderate and low-key response to Soviet provocations.

An extensive report written by the former State Department under secretary for political affairs, Philip Habib, has detailed the problem of "economic and social instability" in the Caribbean.

*Washington Post* correspondent John M. Goshko reported October 6 that "reliable sources familiar with the still-secret Habib report said it is being used as the springboard for a new administration approach to the Caribbean. . . ."

Concern in Washington, according to Goshko, was aroused not only by the events in Nicaragua, but also by the "coup last March in the eastern Caribbean island of Grenada, which brought to power a government that has taken an increasingly pro-Cuban line. That triggered fears that what happened in Grenada could be repeated in the neighboring islands of Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua and St. Kitts-Nevis."

Far from retreating in Central America and the Caribbean, the imperialists are beefing up their military forces there in response to the threat of social revolution. As *Barricada*, the Sandinista newspaper, pointed out in an October 3 editorial, Carter's "'response to Cuba' is at bottom a concrete threat to the progressive forces of the Caribbean and Central America. . . ."

"The history of the United States is an unending history of pretexts to cover up aggression, expansion, and the defense of the interests of imperialism at all costs. A new chapter in that history is undoubtedly being written in this case."

Similarly, *Prensa Latina* reported October 3 on a front-page editorial in the Cuban daily *Granma*. The editorial "stated that Carter's speech is obviously a clear interventionist threat against the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. . . ."

It asserted that "Cuba's dignity and sovereignty, its right to defend itself by any means it regards as appropriate, as well as its internationalist policy, will remain unshakable."

Pointing out who the real aggressor in Latin America is, the editorial ended by saying that "the only nation which has intervened, invaded, and occupied Central American and Caribbean territory is not Cuba but the United States."

Bourgeois commentators may talk about Carter's "trivial countermeasures" and

"cosmetic" actions. Those who are in the path of the aggressors cannot afford such illusions.

And neither can the workers of the United States or the rest of the world. Our continued vigilance can help prevent the imperialists from putting their counterrevolutionary plans into action □

## FSLN Hits Carter's 'Threat to Caribbean and Central America'

[The following editorial appeared in the October 3 issue of *Barricada*, official daily newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

U.S. President James Carter's decision to reinforce the military forces of the United States in the Caribbean, Central America, and the hemisphere in general is of grave importance.

Carter takes as a pretext the supposed "discovery" of the presence of Soviet military advisers in Cuba, but he admits at the same time that their presence was detected almost twenty years ago. So it is clear that the pretext is nothing more than that—a pretext.

We must ask what the true motives are for this decision by President Carter. Without a doubt, the victory of the Nicaraguan war of liberation and the beginning of a revolutionary process that is giving independence to our country—as well as the victory of the Panamanian people in their struggle for sovereignty over the Canal Zone—has profoundly modified Central America's situation of dependence imposed by imperialism.

Those are the real concerns that worry Carter.

The most reactionary sectors in the United States can not even conceive of a process of democratization, independence, and sovereignty in Latin America. Much less can they understand the revolutionary will of our peoples and the concrete possibility that that will might be converted into a new dawn for Latin Americans.

The apparent "response to Cuba" is at bottom a concrete threat to the progressive forces of the Caribbean and Central America.

Carter has once again made plain the great contradiction between his words and the facts, between speeches and action, between the conciliatory gesture and the threat. In the name of peace he is endangering peace; in the name of freedom he is offering greater support to the dictatorships of the continent that deprive their peoples of freedom.

The history of the United States is an unending history of pretexts to cover up

aggression, expansion, and the defense of the interests of imperialism at all costs. A new chapter in that history is undoubtedly being written in this case.

On the other hand, the history of our nation has been and will continue to be the history of peoples who struggle for their liberation. Nothing will stop that struggle. No threat will make us renounce our independence.

In the face of danger we find strength in unity and revolutionary decisiveness. In the face of imperialism, just as in the past, we will always hold high the banners of our sovereignty and we will always be ready for battle, following the anti-imperialist example set by Sandino.

Halt the imperialist aggression! Death to the counterrevolution! □

## Caribbean Governments Reject U.S. 'Protection'

Responding to President Carter's October 1 speech and the threatening buildup of U.S. forces in the Caribbean, the governments of Jamaica, St. Lucia, Guyana, and Grenada issued a joint statement October 6.

The four governments "reaffirmed that no decision can be taken affecting the peoples of the Caribbean region without proper consultations with and full involvement of the sovereign Governments which represent the people of the region."



MICHAEL MANLEY

In a clear rebuff to U.S. imperialism's view of the Caribbean as its special preserve, the four governments "rejected any perception of the Caribbean region as a sphere of influence for any great power and stressed the need for respect for the sovereign equality and independence of all states and their right to freely choose their own politico-economic systems."

Previously, during a state visit to Venezuela October 4, Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley had declared that "the military advisers who have been in Cuba for seventeen years do not represent a threat to the security or sovereignty of any Caribbean country or America."

The following day, officials in Manley's government told United Press International that he was attempting to get the governments of the twelve English-speaking countries of the Caribbean Community—known as Caricom—to issue a joint declaration condemning President Carter's aggressive moves in the area.

According to the October 5 UPI dispatch, "The Jamaicans view President Carter's announcement of intensified intelligence, military, and political activity

around the issue of Soviet troops as a threat to the region. . . ."

Caricom consists of Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, St. Kitts-Nevis, Montserrat, Antigua, Dominica, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent, and Grenada.

## Pulley Demands: 'Dismantle U.S. Base at Guantánamo Bay!'

In a statement featured on the front page of the October 12 issue of the U.S. weekly *Militant*, Socialist Workers Party 1980 presidential candidate Andrew Pulley called President Carter's war moves in the Caribbean "ominous steps toward war."

"To keep Central America and the Caribbean 'safe' for plunder by U.S. corporations, Carter is threatening to drag this country into another Vietnam," Pulley said.



ANDREW PULLEY

"Cuba is no threat to the working people of the United States or of any other country," the socialist candidate explained. "Just the opposite—it is an example of what can be accomplished by getting rid of capitalism. Working people in Cuba have taken power into their own hands and are using it to build a new and better life."

Pointing to the giant strides in wiping out race and sex discrimination and eliminating unemployment, Pulley said: "Carter's claim that Cuba is an 'economic failure' is wishful thinking. Despite twenty years of U.S. blockade and aggression, the Cubans have greatly improved the standard of living and the quality of health care, education, and other social services."

In contrast to Washington's stalling on aid to Nicaragua, Pulley said, "Cuba has sent teachers, medical personnel, milk, and schoolbooks."

"In addition, when asked by sovereign governments, Cuban troops have been in the front lines of the fight against imperialist aggression in Africa and the Middle East. . . ."

Pulley explained that American workers and farmers "want genuine friendship and peace with all the people of Latin America, including the Cuban people."

The U.S. government "should immediately send emergency shipments of food and medicine to war-ravaged Nicaragua," Pulley demanded.

"The United States should grant independence to the island of Puerto Rico."

"The United States should dismantle its base at Guantánamo, lift the blockade against Cuba, and establish full diplomatic and trade relations."

"Hands off Cuba!"

## Right-Wing Terror Grows in Nicaragua

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Counterrevolutionary terrorists stepped up their attacks here in late September, preying on Sandinista patrols and public buildings. At the same time, there were two attempts at jailbreaks by Somocista prisoners.

The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) responded by launching a national campaign to tighten security and remove sympathizers of the Somoza regime from government ministries and mass organizations.

The most serious of the counterrevolutionary attacks occurred in the early morning of September 24 in the Monseñor Lezcano neighborhood of western Managua. Nineteen-year-old Oscar Rivas Gallard was killed when his militia patrol was ambushed by a group of well-armed individuals shouting pro-Somoza slogans.

The headquarters of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) was fired on by unknown gunmen in broad daylight on September 19, and on September 23 the offices of the Nicaraguan Film Institute came under attack.

On September 27, ex-National Guardsmen and other Somocistas being held at the Ajax Delgado Police Headquarters in Managua launched a riot, trying to escape and grabbing weapons from the Sandinista guards. At the same time, relatives of the prisoners blocked traffic in the street outside the jail and broke the windows of passing vehicles. None of the prisoners managed to escape, however.

On the night of September 28, another Somocista escape attempt took place at a prison in Chinandega, 135 miles north of here. The effort was apparently coordinated with armed groups on the outside—heavy barrages of diversionary gunfire broke out shortly beforehand. One of the terrorists, an ex-National Guardsman, was subsequently captured; he revealed that he and nine other men had been paid \$400 apiece to attack the prison.

There has also been a marked increase in the shooting that can be heard nightly in Managua. At times this reaches a level comparable to that of late July and early August when the revolutionary government was forced to declare a 7:00 p.m. to dawn curfew to protect residents of the city.

It is widely believed that the resurgence of Somocista terrorism is at least partially due to the release from jail of dozens of National Guardsmen and other Somocista suspects against whom no specific proof could be found. Interior Minister Tomás Borge has now ordered that there be no

more such releases until trials can be held. All individuals already released are being reinvestigated.

Speaking at the funeral of slain militiaman Oscar Rivas on September 25, Borge declared, "We are going to exchange our old slogan of 'Implacable in combat, generous in victory' for another: 'Implacable in combat and implacable in victory.'" Borge was referring to the Sandinistas' initial policy of countering imperialist propaganda by offering lenient treatment to National Guardsmen and Somoza supporters. The revolutionary leaders are still pledging not to carry out any executions, however.

On September 28 a march was held in Managua by about 1,000 representatives of Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS) to launch the FSLN's "Control Somocismo, Defend the Revolution" campaign. As the marchers reached their destination—army headquarters—many in the crowd were chanting "*Paredon!*"; that is, put the Somocista criminals against the wall. Army Commander Humberto Ortega explained to the demonstrators that the FSLN opposed such a measure.

"Our people in the Sandinistas will never resort to the bloody, cowardly methods the Somocistas used to repress us," Ortega said. "We are not vengeful. We are not vengeful, we are simply just—and revolutionary justice is also harsh. . . . We will be the first to demand severe sentences for all the Somocistas—twenty or thirty years' imprisonment for all those bandits. And the justice that will be applied to the Somocistas—deprivation for twenty or thirty years of all the material privileges they once enjoyed, of all possibility to go around robbing, raping, and living off the backs of our people—will be worse than death."

The "Control Somocismo" campaign involves identifying and gathering data on the whereabouts and activities of persons who may be involved in counterrevolutionary acts. This is being done in all the government ministries, in the trade unions, and in the neighborhoods through the Sandinista Defense Committees. The CDS, organized on a block-by-block basis in most cities and towns, are thus taking on a role similar to that played in Cuba by the Committees to Defend the Revolution, which were set up in 1960 in response to counterrevolutionary terrorism. A leaflet distributed to the CDS here in Managua outlines what is required to stop the Somocista gangs:

All members of the CDS must carry out tasks of vigilance. For this it is necessary to set up posts on each block. There should be vigilance by turns throughout the night. For each car that passes, note down its make, color, license plate number. Each time the dogs bark, watch who it is that passes by and note where they go. Take note of a neighbor who arrives home late, if he arrives with packages or with friends. Watch those houses where cars pull up at night and take down the information. When people outside the neighborhood arrive, watch them and find out what they have come for. We must not let a single movement pass us by, since it could involve counterrevolutionaries.

On September 28, the General Command of the Sandinista People's Army (EPS) issued an order calling on "all honest and revolutionary citizens" in Managua to turn in to the EPS all "arms, uniforms, and other military equipment." This is aimed at empowering the army and police to recover some of the large amounts of weapons and war materiel that were carried off when thousands of persons poured through military installations in the capital after the dictatorship fell on July 19. Much of this is thought to have fallen into the hands of pro-Somoza elements or persons involved in crime.

The order is also designed to help strengthen defense of the revolution by more clearly establishing who is a militia member and who is not. Problems have arisen with armed and uniformed individuals outside the FSLN's control carrying out street robberies, bank holdups, and other abuses.

At the same time, the militias are being pared down and reorganized. Many of the best fighters have already been integrated into the army or the new Sandinista National Police, while others have returned to school or work or have taken on other tasks in the reconstruction effort. Full-time militia duty is to be phased out, although the units will remain intact and members will report for training and drill at specified times.

The FSLN has made clear, however, that it will not hesitate to expand and remobilize the militias as the situation demands it. As Tomás Borge put it at the Oscar Rivas funeral, "Those who killed a militiaman do not know that the revolution gives concrete answers to each problem. . . . Instead of destroying the militias, we'll multiply them. So in three months there will be 300,000 militia in Nicaragua. The workers, the students, the high schools, and the neighborhoods should be prepared." □

## Nicaraguan Leader Urges Unconditional Aid for Reconstruction

By Aníbal Yáñez

[The following article is scheduled to appear in the October 22 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language news-magazine published fortnightly in New York. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

UNITED NATIONS—In an address to the General Assembly of the United Nations September 28, Comandante Daniel Ortega Saavedra, a leader of Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), denounced Somozaism and those who supported it, and made an appeal for unconditional aid for the reconstruction of the country of Augusto César Sandino.

"For thirty-one years Somozaism has usurped Nicaragua's representation at the UN," Ortega declared.

He pointed out that "Somoza found accomplices in the United Nations" among "those representatives who were also enemies of their own peoples."

Ortega saluted the "revolutionary governments, the progressive governments, and the democratic governments that sided with the Nicaraguan people." But he added that it had been the people of Nicaragua who defeated Somoza's U.S.-backed troops.

"In Nicaragua," he said, "Somoza and

his National Guard were always seen as the expression of the foreign intervention."

Ortega noted that the murderous Somoza regime had caused the total economic bankruptcy of the country, saddling Nicaragua with a huge debt in loans from international banks.

"Nicaragua cannot pay this debt nor will it indebt itself anew in order to pay it," he declared.

"Somoza has the money that was stolen from the people in foreign banks, and therefore Somoza and his accomplices should be sued by Nicaragua's creditors."

He pointed to the international banks, which share responsibility for Nicaragua's present situation through their financial support to Somoza.

The Sandinista leader stressed that the debt that Somoza left Nicaragua must be assumed "by the developed countries, by the economically powerful countries, and especially those that fed Somozaism with financing."

Later, a news conference was held here by Ortega and three other members of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction. Junta member Alfonso Robelo stated that the debts contracted by Somoza for arms purchases would not be paid, nor would Nicaragua repay fraudu-

lent loans that went directly to the dictator's foreign bank accounts.

The destroyed country does not have the ability to pay the remaining debts immediately, Robelo said, and a moratorium on repayment is required.

In his speech to the UN General Assembly, Ortega asked for "unconditional aid for the reconstruction of Nicaragua." He also spoke about the rising struggle in El Salvador.

Ortega stated that several members of the U.S. Congress say that they have reports from the dictatorship in El Salvador, as well as from businessmen from that country, that the Sandinistas are trying to precipitate the fall of the regime there.

Ortega commented: "Now it would appear that the Sandinistas are responsible for the murder of workers, peasants, religious figures, and students in El Salvador!"

These accusations about the FSLN and El Salvador are a provocation designed to justify economic, political, and even military pressures against Nicaragua, he said. The truth is that "we Nicaraguans cannot prevent the joy that our victory awakened in the people of El Salvador."

In addition, Ortega spoke in favor of Puerto Rico's right to independence. He said that the maintenance of U.S. military bases on the island of Vieques is a violation of human rights. Regarding the arrest of religious figures who oppose the U.S. presence on the island, Ortega stated: "We protest this repressive escalation against the patriots of Puerto Rico."

He also affirmed his support for the struggle of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Zimbabwe Patriotic Front, South-West Africa People's Organisation, and Polisario Front. Belize also has the right, he added, to independence from Great Britain.

Ortega condemned the usurpation of Kampuchea's UN seat by the deposed Pol Pot regime, which he described as "guilty of genocide." In addition he denounced the attacks by the Chinese leadership against Vietnam.

Nicaragua is decisively breaking with the past Somozaist servility to imperialism. As Ortega stated in his final remarks:

"We are struggling and we will continue to struggle without capitulation.

"We are struggling and we will continue to struggle for the advancement of our people.

"We are struggling and will continue to struggle for the defense of our revolution."



Aníbal Yáñez/Perspectiva Mundial

Members of the Nicaraguan junta at United Nations news conference. From left to right: Sergio Ramírez, Daniel Ortega, Alfonso Robelo, and Miguel D'Escoto.



## Nicaragua Education Minister Appeals For International Aid

[The following interview with Miguel de Castilla Urbina, Nicaragua's vice-minister of planning and education policy, was obtained in Managua September 6 by Gary Bridges.]

\* \* \*

*Question. What big problems face the educational system in Nicaragua today?*

*Answer.* We can divide the answer into two parts—the problems we retain from the past and those that have come up since the insurrection.

Before, we had an educational system that discriminated against the vast majority. A third of the children between the ages of six and twelve did not attend school. Almost 80 percent of those between twelve and eighteen did not attend classes. And almost 94 percent of those over the age of eighteen did not attend the university.

In other words, the school system was set up for a very small segment of the population.

Even among those who managed to get into the school system, only about half ever graduated to the next level. And those who did get through the system received an education that was completely Somozaist.

Our people rose up fighting against this not only because it was a product of the military dictatorship but also because it was so corrupt and inefficient. The Somocistas took for themselves the money that was collected in taxes and from foreign loans intended for the development of our country, denying the people of Nicaragua a satisfactory education.

*Q. What are the goals of the new education system?*

*A.* Right now we are focusing on goals on which there is broad agreement, such as the literacy campaign and making education free through the high-school level. More long-range decisions—such as the philosophy of our educational system—will be determined by a national conference to be held in October.

*Q. How do you propose to resolve the lack of education in the countryside?*

*A.* We have planned two major campaigns for 1980. One is a literacy program that will attempt to reach 700,000 illiterates in the countryside. We also intend to double the budget of the Ministry of Education, which this year is barely \$35 million. In this way we hope to open up 2,500 jobs for teachers and begin massive construction of schools in the countryside.

*Q. What role will the Cubans play in the literacy campaign?*

*A.* The Cuban compañeros will participate with technical aid based on all the experience they gained in implementing their own literacy program, which was one of the most effective in the world.

Our ministry will have the technical assistance of the Cuban Vice-Ministry of Adult Education. Also, a contingent of Cuban instructors will act as a training corps for our teacher, primarily in the rural areas and in the Atlantic coastal region, where we have the highest number of illiterates.

*Q. What other type of aid is needed?*

*A.* Fundamentally, I have to say dollars. We have to build new schools and enlarge the existing ones. We don't want schools like the ones that Somoza built—little empty rooms. We want schools that have their own cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and playing fields. This type of school is expensive.

The international organizations are not

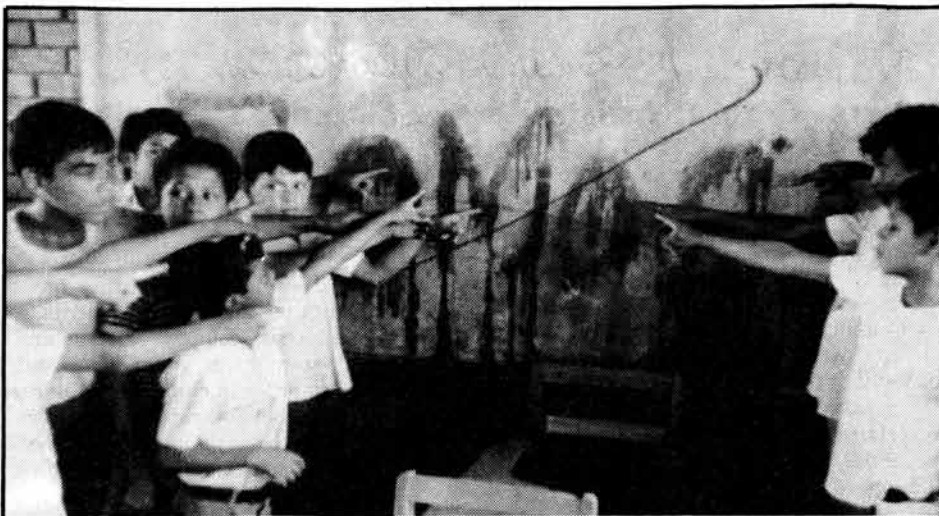
giving us all the necessary money. One area that we especially need funds for is the literacy campaign, which we expect will cost \$10 million. We need, for example, 1,500 tape recorders; 50,000 cassettes; and 650,000 exercise books, which we could print if we had the paper.

We need paper! A shipload of paper arriving from the United States for the Ministry of Education would be an extraordinary gift from the people of the United States. We would transform this paper into new Sandinista schoolbooks to replace the old texts written by the Somoza government.

*Q. Where should contributions be sent?*

*A.* They should be sent to Dr. Carlos Tunnermann Bernheim, Ministro de Educación Pública, Managua, Nicaragua.

Each contribution will be deposited in an account either for school construction or for the acquisition of school materials. All organizations making contributions will receive a letter explaining how the money was spent. □



MANAGUA—In Nicaragua today, you do not see the name of the hated dictator Somoza except on old maps or in newspaper articles.

But there is one place in Managua where his name still appears—in two-foot-high letters—written in blood.

A public school in the poor neighborhood of Loma Linda was used by the National Guard, during the last month of the insurrection, as a headquarters to police the area. One of the classrooms was used as a torture chamber.

A fifteen-year old girl was picked up by

the Guard for cursing them. She had committed a capital offense.

Dragged to the school, as her screams terrorized the neighbors the girl's arm was hacked off. At gunpoint she was then forced to write the name of Somoza on the blackboard in her own blood. Then, as the teacher recounting the horror told me, "they put a bullet through her head."

Today in that classroom, shown above, her blood remains as testimony of the willingness of so many people to die for their freedom.

—Gary Bridges

# WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR AID TO NICARAGUA



## Eyewitness Tour Builds Australian Solidarity Movement

[The following article by Bruce Marlowe appeared in the September 20 issue of *Direct Action*, the newspaper reflecting the views of the Socialist Workers Party of Australia.]

\* \* \*

The campaign to get the news about the Nicaraguan revolution out to Australian working people has had a big boost over the last week.

Not only has the SWP-sponsored tour of Ron Poulsen, eyewitness to the events in Nicaragua, attracted big audiences, but Nicaragua solidarity committees across Australia are being set up and future activities planned.

In Sydney, the Committee for the Reconstruction of Nicaragua has planned a

night of Nicaraguan films. This follows last month's very successful Festival for the Reconstruction of Nicaragua which raised \$1,600.

In Melbourne 120 attended the SWP forum on Nicaragua. It was the biggest left meeting in Melbourne for some time. Forty of those present were Latin Americans and many indicated after the meeting their willingness to work in the local solidarity committee.

In Perth meetings were held at Murdoch University, the University of Western Australia, and the Western Australian Institute of Technology. In all three venues the meetings were the largest political events for a long time.

Successful campus forums were also held

at Flinders and Adelaide universities in Adelaide, as well as a public forum which attracted an audience of 60.

In Sydney the Committee for the Reconstruction of Nicaragua has produced financial contribution forms which are available from the committee.

These forms are being distributed to unions and other organisations. They are an important way of attracting the financial support that is essential if the solidarity work is to grow.

The Sydney committee has also begun work on the production of a Nicaragua newsletter, which will provide essential information on the course of the struggle to construct a new Nicaragua, free from imperialist domination. □

## Writers, Actors, Artists Form Solidarity Committee

[The following article appeared in the September 15 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

A Committee of Solidarity with Nicaragua has just been set up, composed of outstanding world political and artistic personalities. Among them we can mention Hortencia Bussi de Allende, Alejo Carpentier, Shirley MacLaine, Martha Graham, James Taylor, James Brown, Butero, Sophia Loren, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Gabriel García Márquez, according to a report to *Barricada* from Blanca Pérez Macías [Blanca Jagger].

Blanca is one more Nicaraguan ready to make her contribution to the Sandinista People's Revolution. On being interviewed in the Plaza de la Revolución she indicated her surprise at the massive participation of the people.

"Even the language has changed. Previously it seemed to me that part of the people were resigned to the Somozas, but they later showed the opposite by fighting for their freedom. Due to the situation of poverty and illiteracy in Nicaragua freedom seemed an unattainable dream. But today, as Comandante Tomás Borge says,

it has ceased to be a dream," said Blanca who, in addition to being known on an international level, has a degree in Political Science.

"Today our people know that they have a country and they are ready to contribute to changing that country. Every one knows that they have contributed and participated in order to change the future. The Revolution has also raised the stature of women; their participation in the armed struggle, shoulder to shoulder with men, gave them this right," she said.

She pointed out that the International Committee of Solidarity with the Nicaraguan Revolution will be coordinated by Chancellor Bruno Kreisky of Austria and its first objective will be to provide surgical supplies for the Children's Hospital.

It will be remembered that after the earthquake Blanca, along with several artists, carried out activities to collect funds to help the victims in our country. At that time an argument took place with the Somoza government, and she refused to turn over the money to it. "Now we trust the Government of National Reconstruction and we feel that they are honest people," she pointed out.

Blanca feels that "the aid for Nicaragua

must be unconditional. This struggle was not just against the oppressor, but also to win self-determination, because each country must be master of its own destiny and no one has the right to refuse it."

She showed her sympathy for the true

### Aid from Peru, Panama

In a move reflecting the popularity of the Nicaraguan revolution among the masses of Latin America, the Peruvian government has opened a \$10 million line of credit to Nicaragua.

The \$10 million credit, announced September 20, will be channeled through SELA, the Latin American Economic System. The Peruvian regime also agreed to send seventeen tons of food and other supplies.

In addition, a \$20 million loan has been offered by Panama, according to a report in the October 2 *Wall Street Journal*, and the Dutch government has set aside \$11.7 million for aid to Nicaragua.

agrarian reform that is being carried out in Nicaragua, which she felt was the prerequisite for a deep-going change in our country. Blanca knows full well the cost our people paid for their freedom because during the time of the fighting she was working with the Red Cross providing food to the prisoners of Somozaism.

She told us that the British press supported our revolution. She arrived in Nicaragua two days after the death of Stuart, the ABC reporter. The Somozaist government, through Luis Pallais, tried to convince her that the people did not support the FSLN.

She has been having discussions with the Minister of Health Dr. César Amador Kuhl, with Miguel D'Escoto, and with Ernesto Cardenal. Regarding our Sandinista People's Revolution, she said that she considers it unique and that it is ridiculous to make comparisons.

She explained that her identification with the struggle of the Nicaraguan people is not the result of the victory, and that she always participated on the level of denunciation, but that the big press never wanted to tell the truth on Nicaragua and always kept a curtain around the real policy of Nicaragua.

## Medical Care Is Free, But Supplies Are Lacking

By Gary Bridges

MANAGUA—"Even though this hospital is crowded, partly destroyed, and suffering from shortages of every kind, medical attention and all hospital care are free to everyone," a head nurse told me at the Matagalpa regional hospital in the coffee-growing region of Nicaragua.

The health-care situation in Matagalpa is typical of what I saw in three other regional hospitals during a recent tour of the country. The hospitals are operating, but always with severe limitations.

Medical teams from Spain, Cuba, East Germany, Costa Rica, Panama, and other countries are providing important assistance, and donations of medical supplies have come from many sources.

Cuban aid has been by far the most important. Ninety-nine Cuban doctors are now working in Nicaragua, primarily in Matagalpa and the Atlantic Coast port of Bluefields.

The aid from abroad and the dedication of the Nicaraguan medical personnel who did not desert the country when Somoza fell have helped to prevent a catastrophe in medical care here. But this has not been sufficient to overcome the decades of neglect by the Somoza regime.

There is a critical shortage of qualified personnel and a depletion of supplies that has resulted from caring for approximately 100,000 wounded during the civil war.

All medical attention and medicine is now completely free in Nicaragua. Before the revolution what existed was a "pay or die" system—as peasants in Chinandega Province told me.

Opening the doors of the medical centers to the people has dramatically increased the demand for attention. But the initial steps toward organizing a national health plan have not been able to overcome the physical lack of a medical infrastructure capable of providing adequate care.

In addition, in the hospitals that do

exist, the lack of basic supplies has led to a critical situation. In the regional hospital in León, for example, the surgery unit has been closed for more than a week simply because the supply of surgical gloves has been exhausted. In the hospital in Matagalpa, with 200 occupied beds, there is no transfusion equipment or blood plasma. At Rivas, in the South, the hospital was bombed out of existence by Somoza's air force; 250 patients were killed. It is now operating out of temporary facilities.

To make matters even worse, the disruption of the war has brought about a resurgence of epidemic diseases. Malaria again is a major problem in Nicaragua. At the hospital in Masaya, south of Managua, an average of four children a day were dying of gastrointestinal infections and dehydration until a Cuban medical team arrived.

Nicaragua is also in the middle of a flu epidemic (known locally as "Somoza's embrace"). This has been made worse by seasonal rains that have caused heavy flooding. There are 320,000 children under the age of three who have never been vaccinated against tetanus, diphtheria, or measles.

Everywhere there is malnutrition, but particularly in the countryside and in indigenous communities such as Monimbó, where I saw many young children with the bloated stomachs typical of kwashiorkor disease.

All this points up the dramatic need that still exists in Nicaragua for massive medical aid. Supplies of antibiotics, antimalarials, and vaccines have been exhausted. Some hospitals I visited in outlying areas are functioning without proper X-ray equipment or such basics as disinfectants, patient gowns, bedpans, and sheets.

Medical volunteers are also needed—particularly nurses who are fluent in Spanish and are willing to work in the countryside. □

"The Revolution in Nicaragua is generous. Implacable in combat and generous in victory are the words of Carlos Fonseca Amador, which the leaders tirelessly repeat," Blanca pointed out. "We don't follow anyone. We follow Sandino who said a long time ago 'A Free Country Or Death,' struggling against U.S. oppression."

Finally she pointed out that "it is very gratifying to me as a Nicaraguan to see how this revolution is going about eradicating the false scale of values that Somozaism had implanted and uprooting the complex that foreign is better. Today it is different, we have a Free Country.

### Vietnam and Nicaragua: 'A Common Destiny'

One of the first heads of government to visit Nicaragua after the victory of the revolution was Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong. He spoke to a rally of 30,000 in the Plaza de la Revolución in Managua September 14, and his speech was reprinted the following day in the Sandinista newspaper, *Barricada*. He said in part:

"Dear brothers and sisters, all Nicaraguans:

"Although the geographic distance between our two countries is the immense Pacific Ocean, the Vietnamese people feel very close to you. Our common destiny in the indomitable tradition of struggle, the noble and valued qualities of our two peoples is what unites us in the great family of revolutionary peoples!

"Sharing the same disgrace of enslaved countries and having the same unconquerable and rebellious will, our two peoples have fought courageously and have triumphed gloriously. Now we are faced equally with very great tasks of stanching the wounds of war, reconstruction, building a new life, and at the same time always maintaining vigilance against the hostile intentions and actions of imperialism and international reaction.

"This situation demands that we intensify even more our solidarity—solidarity between Vietnam and Nicaragua, solidarity between our peoples and the rest of the peoples of Latin America, the peoples of the socialist countries, and the progressive peoples of the entire world.

## Nicaraguan Women Organize to Defend the Revolution

By Lynn Silver

MANAGUA—One of the outstanding features of the Nicaraguan revolution has been the immense participation of women. Every office in Nicaragua, from the government ministries to the Sandinista Defense Committees present in each neighborhood, have women in positions of responsibility.

The presence of women in all branches of the army is obvious. Every third or fourth soldier you see walking by is a woman carrying a Galil rifle or an M-16.

Nicaragua's main women's organization is AMPRONAC (Association of Women Concerned With the National Problem). The "national problem" was, of course, the Somoza dictatorship overthrown this July.

AMPRONAC was formed in September 1977. Sylvia Reyes, a twenty-eight-year-old mother of two children who is a leader of AMPRONAC, described the formation of the organization:

"It was born of the concerns of some of the compañeras of the Sandinista Front, supported by some women from the [opposition] bourgeoisie and the middle class. The presence of the latter brought us certain guarantees [of safety]. This was a tactic we used to form the organization."

The organization was started with about sixty members. Its purpose was to defend human rights in Nicaragua and to denounce the brutal crimes of the dictatorship.

From November 1977 to January 1978 it organized mass meetings of protest and demonstrations. In January 1978 a group of relatives of "disappeared" individuals occupied the offices of the United Nations in Managua. AMPRONAC participated in the occupation, which lasted two weeks. Then the occupiers were forcibly dislodged with tear gas and bullets.

"This action brought us a spurt of growth. Many working-class women sought to join AMPRONAC," Reyes said.

During the period from February to April 1978, AMPRONAC became a mass organization of women. It called for a national women's week in early March 1978—an action whose "emphasis was on the overall struggle to free our country. But this call responded to a necessity for Nicaraguan women, that of basing the pillars of the equality of her sex on her equal participation in the construction of a new Nicaragua." (From *Documentos de AMPRONAC*.)

The methods of struggle of AMPRONAC changed from petitions and visits to Somoza's ministries to mass meetings, demon-

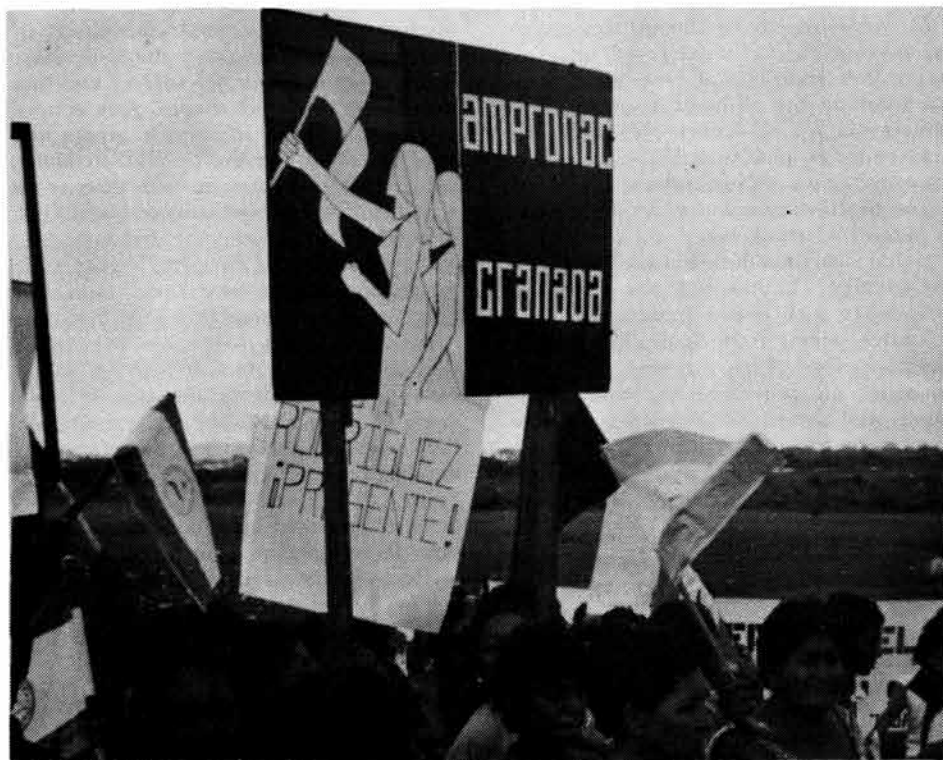
strations, building takeovers, and open air gatherings.

The program of the "new" AMPRONAC included: "Halt the repression!" "Freedom of organization!" "Freedom for the political prisoners!" "Punishment of those responsible for crimes and outrages!" "Halt the rising cost of living!" "End all discriminatory laws against women!" "Equal pay for equal work!" and "End the commercialization of women!"

Reyes added, "When the women in AMPRONAC from the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie realized that we were

selves to organizing the masses. These included AMPRONAC and the ATC (Association of Agricultural Workers), for example. These permitted us to reach the masses without calling ourselves the FSLN, since if we had they [the National Guard] would have killed us.

"These organizations permitted us to reach the masses, in our case specifically the masses of women—the women workers, peasants, and housewives. Our aim was to help them understand their exploitation and to make them conscious



AMPRONAC rally in Managua.

Gary Bridges/Militant

involved in the struggle for the people's interests, many of them left. But some of the compañeras from the middle class remained in our lines for the defense of human rights."

Reyes described the role played by the FSLN in AMPRONAC. "I am an activist in the Sandinista Front. Because of the orientation of the front I went into AMPRONAC together with a group of other compañeras. I have been in the FSLN for five years.

"But the FSLN, being a clandestine organization, could not organize the masses, so we had to create intermediate organizations that could devote them-

of the need for women to participate in the struggle.

"We were always an organization which supported the people's struggles. We supported the FSLN, but we couldn't say so publicly. Now we can say so. Our line continues to be one of support to the revolution."

A large number of women fought during the insurrection, Reyes said.

"About 30 percent of the guerrillas were women. Of these about half were involved in combat and half in other political and organizational tasks. . . .

"I for example participated in February in Monimbó as a member of the FSLN. I

was captured and imprisoned for three months, after which I returned to my mass work. I always worked both in health care and as a combatant. But when things got rough we had to drop the syringes and pick up the gun."

One of AMPRONAC's important projects had been setting up first-aid stations or clinics in the different barrios to treat the wounded, or in quieter moments to treat the residents of the barrio.

Gloria Carrión, another leader of AMPRONAC, was asked if she thought that the massive presence of women in the army is just a response to the emergency situation or if they would be integrated into its permanent structure.

"Women have a big role to play in society," she said, "and they should be integrated into all aspects of the society. For us the military is one of these aspects. Women should be there as long as they want to be there."

Later on, this question was asked of some women soldiers here. Their answer was that in no way would they leave the army. They had fought, some for years in the mountains, and they intended to continue to be responsible for the defense of the revolution.

When asked about the role of women's organizations today, Reyes replied:

"We need to be much more active than in the past because today we are in a process of reconstruction, of consolidating the revolution. We need to integrate women into the production process. Today there is a tremendous need for everybody to be organized.

"In the past many people remained unorganized for fear of repression, for lack of political clarity, or many other factors. Today in Nicaragua we believe that everyone should be organized, even children. Because the dangers are not over. On the contrary, they are multiplying. We are conscious of the fact that every revolution is accompanied by counterrevolution, and we have to be well prepared.

"In the insurrection there was total participation on the part of the masses, but only in the final stage. We are trying to create a situation where, in the event of a counterrevolution, these same people who fought in a spontaneous way during the insurrection will fight with true political and revolutionary consciousness.

"As a women's organization we have several specific projects. We realize that the economic problems of the country don't allow the government to take on responsibilities such as the lack of hospitals, schools, and child-care centers.

"Those of us in the Solidarity Commission of AMPRONAC are asking for continued support from the friends of Nicaragua who helped us in the struggle to overthrow the dictatorship. We are hoping to create child-care centers in the countryside and health centers in the working-class neighborhoods.



Lars Palmgren/Internationales

"In the country, the peasant goes to harvest the coffee and his wife and children go too. The children from age eight on help to harvest the coffee, the younger children run around the coffee plantation.

"Together with the ministries of Social Welfare, Public Health, and Education we want to build day-care centers in these rural areas, so that these children will be cared for, educated and have access to medical care.

"For these types of projects we need technical solidarity, especially in the training of our people. You realize that all of us are just learning. We are taking on tasks of high responsibility, but we have neither experience nor technical knowledge. Right now the international aid is insufficient."

Carrión added: "One thing our Social Work Commission will be doing is raising the question of the objective things that women need in order to participate more actively in all areas of society. For example, child-care centers and public laundries are the most important. Another thing we think will be important is people's food centers, but that's a little complicated for

right now."

Article 37 of the "Statute on the Rights of Nicaraguans" decreed by the revolutionary government August 21 assures working women maternity leave with pay, and declares, "The working mother shall have the right to have her minor children cared for by the state while she is at her place of work."

Carrión pointed out that "the Sandinista movement has had as part of its activity initiating and participating in women's organizations.

"The way has been cleared for our work, but we need resources, we need aid. Much more than before and in a much more urgent way, we need international solidarity in order to accomplish our objectives."

The immense number of tasks facing the women of AMPRONAC has not caused them to forget its past as a human-rights organization. Barely one month after the overthrow of the Nicaraguan dictatorship, AMPRONAC has already launched a massive petitioning campaign of Nicaraguan women for freedom for Chilean political prisoners. □

# Selections From the Left

[We continue this week with initial assessments of the revolution in Nicaragua.]

\* \* \*

## INFORMATIONS OUVRIERES

"Workers News," open forum for the class struggle. Published weekly in Paris.

The first three issues published after the fall of Somoza hail the Nicaraguan revolution as a defeat for imperialism but express grave doubts about the leadership of the revolution and the new government.

The Junta of National Reconstruction, the July 25-August 8 issue states, "is simply the manifestation of the FSLN leadership's desire for conciliation . . . with the local bourgeoisie, the church, and all the forces responsible for the poverty and exploitation of the masses. . . ."

"Expropriation of imperialism, a moratorium on the foreign debt? Out of the question. The provisional government has hastened to assure imperialism that foreign investment would be protected and the foreign debt of \$1.3 billion left by Somoza would be paid."

The following week's article, "Nicaragua After the Fall of Somoza," quotes an interview with a militiawoman, taken from the Colombian Trotskyist weekly *El Socialista*, as indicating that mistrust of the "bourgeois government" extends to the "ranks of the Sandinista army."

In the August 22-29 issue, a "Letter from Managua" signed by "A." states that the revolution "genuinely marks the beginning of the end of imperialist domination in our region." However, the scope of the land reform and the intent of the bank nationalizations are called into question:

"In a number of cases the Sandinistas have taken it upon themselves to return land to its 'legitimate' owners, removing the peasants who occupied it to land formerly owned by the Somoza family. . . ."

"The government has decided to nationalize the banking sector, but in point of fact this amounts to simply coming to the aid of establishments facing bankruptcy."

An accompanying article has this to say about the role of Cuba:

"The stooges and functionaries of imperialism are brandishing the specter of a new Cuba, in this Latin America that remains Washington's private game preserve."

"But it is not the policy of Castro that is bothering them. For Castro has recently—prior to the Mexican elections, for example—publicly made clear his support to López Portillo, whose crisis-ridden bonapartist regime cannot have missed the

significance of the revolution against Somoza."

## Bandera Socialista

"Socialist Flag," newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT). Published weekly in Mexico City.

Under the headline "Imperialist Propaganda Against Nicaragua Escalates," the September 10 issue publishes the article by Barry Sheppard and Mary-Alice Waters that appeared in the September 3 issue of *IP/I*. Also printed is the statement by the delegation of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to the FSLN that appears in the September 24 *IP/I*.

An eyewitness report from Managua by PRT leader Manuel Aguilar is featured in the September 17 issue.

"September 1 in Managua, in the Plaza of the Revolution beside the ruined cathedral," Aguilar writes, "we saw pass and applauded enthusiastically, together with thousands of workers and students, the orderly ranks of the youngest army in the world, and also one of the most revolutionary—the army destined to be the defender of the Nicaraguan revolutionary process."

Aguilar notes that "in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras the tyrants . . . only wait for Washington's signal to escalate the political (and military?) campaign against revolutionary Nicaragua."

"But confronting them there is a people and an army that cannot easily be isolated."

In the same issue, excerpts from a statement by the PRT Political Bureau on the expulsion of the Simón Bolívar Brigade from Nicaragua appear. According to the PRT statement:

"The imperialist press has tried to use the recent expulsion of the Simón Bolívar Brigade to play a double game. On the one hand, it tries to separate the Sandinista National Liberation Front from other revolutionary forces by presenting the FSLN as a group that supposedly wishes to stabilize capitalism in Nicaragua. On the other hand, it seeks to show through this expulsion that democratic rights are lacking in Nicaragua. . . ."

"In regard to the Simón Bolívar Brigade, the PRT reiterates that the formation and policy of that brigade were contrary to the political line of the Fourth International."

While noting that it had favored the formation of brigades of internationalist fighters to aid the FSLN, the PRT said: "If the FSLN had considered it inconvenient to form such brigades at any particular time, the PRT would have accepted that decision. This policy is part of the implicit recognition of who was and who is the

vanguard of the Nicaraguan revolutionary process, and that for us the FSLN is a revolutionary organization. . . ."

"We also continue to think that the duty of revolutionaries is to mobilize their own working class in support of the revolutionary movements of other countries. . . ."

"We think that today, more than ever, it is important to continue fighting for immediate and unconditional aid to Nicaragua from various countries—especially the United States."

## Internationalen

"The International," central organ of the Communist Workers League (Swedish section of the Fourth International). Published weekly in Stockholm.

In the September 7 issue Lars Palmgren writes:

"The revolution in Nicaragua is a challenge."

"It is a challenge for imperialism, which has already done what it could to stop it."

"It is a challenge for the international workers movement above all."

"The revolution in Nicaragua must be defended."

"And it is the workers of the world who have to defend it. It is they who must offer the solidarity and the concrete aid that Nicaragua needs today."

"Nicaragua can be the turning point in a long period of counterrevolutionary advance in Latin America."

"It is the duty of the international workers movement to assure that it becomes such a turning point."

## klassen strijd

REVOLUTIONAIR SOCIALISTISCH BLAD

"Class Struggle," revolutionary socialist paper, published fortnightly in Amsterdam by the International Communist League.

In the September 1 issue, Herman Pieter-son writes:

"The decision of the Nicaraguan leaders to expel the Simón Bolívar International Brigade might not seem significant. But it is symptomatic. When the IMF is demanding safeguards for profits, the bourgeois section of the leadership in Nicaragua is giving a token of its good faith: 'Look, we want to keep our revolution within limits, and disarm the radical groups.' You should remember here that the bourgeoisie as such has no power in Nicaragua. The real power is constituted by the armed workers and peasants, who place their faith in the Sandinists."

"It would take no more than a flick of the finger to abolish capitalism. It is necessary to repudiate the foreign debt and expropriate all the capitalists in order to begin socialist reconstruction."



Part of crowd of at least 200,000 at antinuclear rally in New York City September 23.

Lou Howort/Militant

## Biggest Nuclear Protest Ever in United States

By Cliff Conner

[The following has been excerpted from an article in the October 5 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist news-weekly published in New York.]

\* \* \*

NEW YORK CITY—It was the largest antinuclear rally ever held in the United States. People started gathering at 9:00 a.m. and at 3:00 p.m. they were still streaming in by the hundreds. Estimates by the rally organizers, the media, and the police all agreed that more than 200,000 people—maybe a quarter of a million—had taken part in the September 23 action.

Like the May 6 antinuclear march on Washington, this action had been called on short notice. Like May 6, the protesters were overwhelmingly young. But this time the crowd was roughly twice as large, a sign that public outrage over the disastrous nuclear policies of the government and industry continues to deepen in every section of the population.

A giant banner on the platform here read "Phase out and shut down nuclear power plants" and another said simply "No Nukes." When Ralph Nader declared, "There is not one nuclear power plant in the country today that should not be shut down immediately," the crowd roared its approval.

The action sprang from a group of rock musicians called MUSE (Musicians United for Safe Energy), which has been organizing benefit antinuclear concerts for a couple of years. MUSE decided to put on a mammoth benefit at New York's Madison Square Garden. The September 23 rally/concert grew out of the benefit.

Much of the organizational staff for the rally was provided by the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), part of the nationwide organization begun by Ralph Nader.

The Madison Square Garden concerts—four nights' worth—were sellouts each night, raising some \$500,000 for the antinuclear movement.

Some of the musicians who donated their time for the rally were Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, Holly Near, Tom Paxton, Graham Nash, and Sweet Honey in the Rock, a group of Black women.

This was not a march and there were no organized contingents. The growing involvement of the unions in the antinuclear movement, however, was evident on the stage. Among the speakers were Ed Gray, director of United Auto Workers Region 9 for New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and David Livingston, president of District 65 of the United Auto Workers.

In their speeches, both stressed the importance of the antiwar movement, which forced Washington out of Vietnam, and the fact that organized labor is more involved in the antinuclear movement than it had been at a comparable stage in the struggle against the war.

"You are not alone," Livingston told the demonstrators. "There are growing forces in the labor movement ready to join hands in this fight against nuclear power." At a news conference later, Livingston stressed that he had not spoken as an individual but as a representative of his union.

Ed Gray announced that the UAW and the International Association of Machinists were sponsoring a teach-in against nuclear power in Washington, D.C., later this year. One of the main goals of this educational effort, Gray said, is to refute the claim that shutting down nuclear power plants would throw workers out of their jobs.

Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda both spoke. Hayden said antinuclear sentiment "is now rapidly becoming the majority sentiment in America." Environmentalist Barry Commoner also spoke.

A number of speakers denounced Democratic and Republican politicians and the big corporations. This received a good response from the crowd. □

## Eyewitness Report on Record of the Khmer Rouge

[London *Daily Mirror* reporter John Pilger and photographer Eric Piper are the only Western journalists who have traveled extensively in Kampuchea since April 1975. Pilger's report on what they saw was published in the September 12 and 13 issues of the *Daily Mirror*, from which the following has been excerpted.]

\* \* \*

The plane flies low, following the Mekong river west from Vietnam.

There is nobody, no movement, not even an animal, as if the great population of Asia stopped at the border. Whole towns and villages on the river bank stand empty; the doors of houses flapping open, cars on their sides, mangled bicycles in a heap, chairs and beds in the street.

... what has happened here ... has no parallel in modern times.

That may sound a sweeping claim, but it is true. Coming here is like happening on something unimaginable: a human catastrophe and crime without measure. For even Hitler's demonry did not involve the enslavement of the *entire* population and the systematic slaughter of all those "touched and corrupted by the twentieth century."

The statistics are numbing. Cambodia's population in 1975 was roughly seven million. Today between a million and a half and three million people are "missing," presumed dead.

... few of those born during the period of terror appear to have survived.

Young adults are equally difficult to find; a generation has gone. Indeed, this is now a nation of mostly children, isolated from the world and facing starvation of such intensity that not even a comparison with Biafra is adequate.

Who did this? How could it happen?

In the spring of 1970, Cambodia's tranquility was terminated by the greatest saturation of bombing in history.

This was the secret war launched by President Nixon and Dr. Henry Kissinger in violation of American constitutional law and in defiance of Congress. Pilots were sworn to secrecy and their operational logs were falsified or destroyed. For three years the American public knew nothing about it.

By 1973 the equivalent, in tons of bombs, of five Hiroshimas had fallen on neutral Cambodia.

At 7:30 on the morning of April 17, 1975 the Khmer Rouge entered the capital. At one o'clock they ordered the city to be abandoned.

There were to be no exceptions. The

hospitals were emptied at gunpoint; doctors were forced to stop in mid-operation. Dying patients were wheeled onto the streets in their beds.

"I was in my classroom when they burst in," says Mr. Prak Sarinn, a former teacher. "They put their guns on us and told us to march north into the countryside."

"The children were crying. I asked if we could go home to join our families. They said no. So we just walked away, and most



Kampuchean child.

of the little ones died of exhaustion or hunger. I never saw my family again."

The haemorrhage of people lasted two days and two nights. When the Vietnamese army drove into Phnom Penh last January, ending four and a half years of terror, they found the city almost exactly as it had been abandoned on the first day of "Year Zero."

Past the evaporated cathedral [dismantled by the Khmer Rouge] walk a man and a boy, striding with a rhythm of fear that all the survivors have. The boy is fifteen and looks nine, and he is starving.

His father balances a load on his head and an arm on his son's shoulder. He is blind and terribly scarred with smallpox.

He is a carpenter and his name is Khim Kon. "This boy," he says, patting his son, "is my only one left. Because we came from the city we were classified 'new people,' and we had to work from three in the morning until eleven at night: the children too. My wife and three other boys are all dead."

"How did you lose your sight?" I ask him.

"I was always blind in one eye," he

replies. "When my family began to die, I cried, so they took out the other eye with a whip."

My notebook is filled with similar horrific stories, which come directly from simple people who have no reason to lie: I have yet to find a family that has not been decimated.

"If you want to live," the Khmer Rouge cadres told the townspeople, "you must surround your lives with silence. Hear nothing, know nothing, understand nothing."

The rulers were explicit. People would live in collective farms, in straw-roofed barracks without walls, so that they could be watched all the time. They would be fed according to how "productive" they were, and this usually meant a tin of rice—the size of a small Nescafe tin—twice a week.

An opaque-eyed woman, her grief locked inside her, tells me that she was forced to go into the fields at night leaving behind her six-month-old baby without a roof or food or care of any kind; in two days she returned to find the baby dead.

"Can you imagine they take away friendship?" says a young woman of twenty-five called Sophak, who has become my interpreter and who was about to be thrown into a well on the day the Vietnamese soldiers liberated her camp. "A young boy, a student who tried to disguise himself as a peasant, was taken away and beaten to death because he smiled at me while we husked the rice. We never even talked ..."

As the price of extra food and life, young boys were recruited as spies and listened from the rafters for laughter or sorrow. Anybody falling asleep during a midnight "ideological" lecture was denied a week's rations, or killed. Even the word itself—sleep—was banned; from Year Zero there would be only "rest."

Much of the work was mindless. While many fields and paddies fell fallow, forests were cleared for "strategic" reasons. The Khmer Rouge leaders were obsessed with the prospect of a Vietnamese invasion, even though they constantly extended their killing in attacks on border villages in Vietnam.

In a valley nearby the ancient temples of Angkor Wat in western Cambodia, one of the wonders of the world, there is a ribbon of tall grass that gives way to trenches which have been recently excavated. They are crammed with skeletons, with evidence of terrible head wounds: the hammer being the most common instrument of death. So far, the remains of 9,000 people have been found here.



During the past three weeks photographer Eric Piper and I have seen many sights like this and at times we have felt like those who, in 1945, first came upon Belsen and Auschwitz. Last June, we both saw Auschwitz itself during the Pope's visit to Poland. The other day we saw a place so similar that it might have been copied from the original: and perhaps the following description may help to gain international recognition of the enormity of what has happened in Cambodia.

It was once a school and was re-named the "Tuol Sleng extermination centre." Like Auschwitz, it has a fence of double barbed wire. Like the victims of Auschwitz, many of the prisoners were brought by train, 150 to a carriage, and the weak seldom survived.

It was run by a gestapo called "S 21" which was divided into an "interrogation unit" and a "torture and massacre unit." In the former classrooms, where people were mutilated on iron beds, their blood and tufts of their hair are on the floor: so much of it.

Between December, 1975, and June, 1977, some 12,000 people died slow deaths here: a fact easy to confirm because the killers, like the Nazis, were pedantic in their sadism. They photographed people before and after they were killed.

They recorded their names, ages, even their height and weight. And, like at Auschwitz, there is a room filled to the ceiling with their clothes and shoes, many of them children's.

When the Vietnamese army discovered this place, they found among the corpses eight survivors, including four children and a month-old baby. Eam Chan was a sculptor and Van Nath was a painter and they survived because they were put to work making busts and painting heroic pictures of Pol Pot.

That is the news from Cambodia, delayed for four and a half years. Today, the "government" that committed this crime still enjoys the respectability of recognition at the United Nations, and its leader, the mass murderer Pol Pot, has been given refuge in China.

Two men remain directly responsible for bombing Cambodia into the chaos that contributed to the rise of the Khmer Rouge; indeed, they bombed this land and its people literally back to the Stone Age. One of them, Richard Nixon, was disgraced in 1974 for domestic crookedness. The other, Henry Kissinger, received the Nobel Peace Prize and is still feted as a statesman.

The legacy of them all is a famine so severe that, in the words of one of the few relief officials here, "we have just six months to save three million people."

The truth is that no substantial relief is reaching the most ravaged country on earth, a country stricken by the most intense famine in memory. The majority of the population of Cambodia are children, many of them infants. Their parents have

## Food to Kampuchea, not Arms to Thailand!

Although the Carter administration has not lifted a finger to help save millions of Kampuchean facing death by starvation, it is continuing its lavish support of the military dictatorship in Thailand and the Pol Pot forces still fighting in Kampuchea.

"Washington's arms sales to Bangkok add up to \$400 million so far this year, about four times the average of recent years," *Newsweek* reported October 8. "The Pentagon is jumping Thailand to the head of the line for deliveries of M-48 Patton tanks, anti-tank missiles, mortars and M-16 rifles. Within a few weeks, the Thais will receive their first F-5 fighter jets equipped with Sidewinder air-to-air missiles."

Reporting from Bangkok in the September 26 issue of *Le Monde*, Patrice de Beer says that "the Thai press and government continue to announce, with great fanfare, the arrival of new American military hardware and armaments. Giant cargo planes loaded with artillery and a shipment of tanks are expected momentarily. . . ."

"New American 'advisers' have also begun to show up here to train Thai troops in the use of the new weapons, some of which, such as the TOW anti-tank missile, are extremely sophisticated."

The pretext for this military buildup is a supposed threat of a Vietnamese invasion of Thailand. But there has not been a single incident of Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea crossing the Thai border, despite the open intervention of the Thai army on the side of the Khmer Rouge forces in the war in Kampuchea.

In fact, in an October 4 dispatch filed from the headquarters of a company of Thai marines in Ban Laem, Thailand, *New York Times* correspondent Henry Kamm described how he interviewed

"the leader of a group of about 15 male and 10 female Pol Pot soldiers who had come to the marine post to pick up rice, fish sauce, peppers and blankets that they carried back to their base across the border."

However, Washington's miserable game in Indochina is beginning to arouse indignation around the world. "The seating of the Pol Pot regime at the UN, with the assistance of the West, including the United States and Britain, underlines the whole immoral nature of great power maneuvering over Cambodia," the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* declared on its front page September 30.

The editors of the British weekly pointed out that "much of the debate over the aid 'framework' springs out of the desire of the interested parties to use it as a means of building up the legitimacy or the military strength of the side they favor.

"This wrangling must surely stop. The West should not have supported Pol Pot at the UN. It should not now compound this mistake by trying to structure aid to Cambodia in such a way as to give minimum legitimacy to Heng Samrin and maximum help to Pol Pot. Nor should it pursue the unrealistic aim of using an army of aid officials in Cambodia as a means of 'internationalising' that country and opening it up to [Prince Norodom] Sihanouk."

By using mass starvation as a weapon against the spread of a social revolution in Indochina, the imperialist governments are committing a crime that is just as great as their original destruction of Kampuchea. The international labor movement must expose this murderous policy and demand immediate and unconditional aid for Kampuchea, and an end to U.S. arms shipments to Thailand.

—David Frankel

been killed and they cannot plant the rice because they are too small and too weak from hunger and disease.

Why are these children being allowed to die?

The Western governments and their dependents have mounted a campaign to blockade and punish the Vietnamese. One of the reasons given for this campaign is Vietnam's "aggression" in Cambodia—that is, its overthrow of the murderous Khmer Rouge regime.

*Every Cambodian I have met regards this "aggression" as having saved their nation from slavery and extinction.*

Mrs. Thatcher's Government and the EEC have gone as far as cutting off food aid to Vietnam, the *only* country attempting to hold back the famine in Cambodia

with supplies of food and drugs that it badly needs to combat its own critical shortages.

Whitehall [British Foreign Ministry] officials have privately told the relief agencies that there may be "political obstacles" to getting relief here. That is untrue. The plane that brought [Oxfam representative] Jim Howard and his drugs was a private charter that flew directly here. *Any* relief plane can come, without conditions.

America's Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, said recently: "We are aware there is a severe famine in Cambodia, caused by past events. But what can we do in the circumstances?" Six years ago America sent more of its most lethal bombers to Cambodia than it has sent anywhere. It has not sent one relief plane. □

## Iran Judge Tries to Justify Imprisonment of Socialists

By Janice Lynn

The international outcry against the arrests and sentencing of fourteen members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (Hezb-e Kargar-e Sosialist—HKS) has forced the Khomeini-Bazargan government into a public debate in the pages of *Baamdad*, one of Tehran's major dailies.

Twelve of the HKS members were sentenced to death in a secret tribunal on August 26. Two women members were given life imprisonment.

Amidst the world protests against the sentences, Iran's Vice-premier Sadeq Tabatabai issued a statement accusing the socialist prisoners of being connected to armed actions and explosions of oil pipelines. These false charges were answered in a widely publicized statement by HKS leader Babak Zahraie (see box).

The latest government statement on the case was reported in the September 15 issue of *Baamdad*, which published the text of a letter by Ahmad Janati, judge of the Islamic Revolutionary Court in Khuzestan Province, where the socialists are imprisoned. The letter, addressed to Prosecutor General Ghodosi, demonstrates that the government has no evidence whatsoever of crimes committed by the HKS. The charges focus solely on the party's political views.

In his letter, Janati admits that the two women HKS prisoners, Fatima Fallahi and Mahsa Hashemi, were tried in secret. "... the socialist girls in no way cooperated with the investigation, refusing to accept the court's ruling, and they stubbornly refused to stand trial," he claims. "For this reason they were tried in absentia."

Janati denies the twelve men were sentenced to death. "... six of the boys were summoned to stand trial," he writes. "It was an open trial, and was recorded by the radio and television stations. The trial lasted four hours, and the next session of the trial has not yet been set. The others have not yet been summoned to stand trial."

But if it was an "open" trial, recorded by the media, why wasn't it broadcast on radio and TV to the Iranian people? Why weren't the defendants allowed attorneys, witnesses, and observers? In fact, the news of the trials was announced to the media by the HKS. Only then did the government admit a portion of the real facts.

The bulk of Janati's letter is an attempt to prove the fourteen socialists are guilty of "counterrevolutionary instigation in Kurdistan, Turkman Sahra, and Khuzestan." But he is unable to present a single example of illegal activity. His entire

"proof" rests on the political ideas of the HKS.

"It is not a difficult task to prove they were involved in instigation," the letter states. "It is enough to read their written statements to understand their aims. It is precisely written that their goals are: 'freedom, support for the workers and toilers, Kurds, Baluchis, Arabs. . . .'"

These *are* major goals of the HKS. Far from being counterrevolutionary or illegal, however, they are the aims for which the Iranian masses by the millions fought in their heroic overthrow of the shah last February.

Janati goes on to attack the political stands of the HKS, citing articles in the Trotskyists' newspaper *Kargar* (Worker). The socialists are accused of:

- Defending agrarian reform and other progressive measures taken by the government in Afghanistan and opposing the right-wing guerrilla movement there.
- Printing an article by an oil worker who states the masses will look for alternatives if the Khomeini-Bazargan government fails to meet their demands.

• Defending the Kurdish struggle and condemning in *Kargar* the "Western-built Phantom jets and armed helicopters that are bombing and killing children, women, and defenseless men in Kurdistan. . . ."

• Stating that "the Arabs are armed in self-defense and to protect the gains of the revolution."

• Publishing a statement by the Ninety-second Armored Division in Ahwaz, which said that "some people are consciously trying to provoke us soldiers, by distorting the facts, and to use us to smash the Arab nationalist movement."

Such political views, Janati charges, will result in "a government that is communist in appearance, and pro-American in reality."

He concludes by threatening new charges against the prisoners: "By considering the above points, and others that may be announced at a later date, there should be no objections to their being in prison."

The lives of the fourteen socialist prisoners thus remain in the gravest danger. International protests must continue to force the Iranian government to free them.

### Zahraie Scores Frame-up Charges

In response to Janati's letter, HKS leader Babak Zahraie wrote a letter to Ghodosi, prosecutor general of the Revolutionary Islamic Republic. The full text was published in the September 20 issue of the Tehran daily *Baamdad* under the headline, "Babak Zahraie Wants Permission for a Political Defense of the Imprisoned Socialists."

Zahraie explains how Janati's letter confirms that the arrests, imprisonment, and conviction of the fourteen socialists is solely for their political ideas and their membership in the HKS.

Referring to articles from *Kargar* which are cited by Janati, Zahraie explains that some of the quotes are taken out of context, and others bear no relation to either the HKS, *Kargar*, or the socialist prisoners. There are others that are, in fact, the HKS's various proposals for the constitution, proposals for solving many of Iran's problems.

Zahraie writes, "Mr. Janati says that socialists 'incite' the workers. . . . In fact, socialists believe that the workers

themselves must take the initiative in every problem in the country."

Zahraie explains how it was the participation of the masses that brought about the successful February insurrection which, in turn, now makes possible mass participation in overcoming the country's problems.

He writes, "This is the true strength of our revolution and reminding people of this fact is not, in the slightest, a conspiracy. . . . Putting opinions on trial threatens the most basic accomplishments of the revolution."

Zahraie requests that the prisoners be transferred to Tehran in order to conduct a fair inquiry to establish their complete innocence, and that defense attorneys be allowed to represent them.

He further requests permission to act as their political attorney. "Since this is a trial of their ideas—opinions which have been heard on radio and television, in debates, and in the national press—it is necessary that I have the right to represent the opinions and program of the HKS in a public trial," Zahraie states.

# Protests Demand Release of Iranian Socialists

By Janice Lynn

Support continues to grow for the release of fourteen members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (Hezb-e Kargaran-e Sosialist—HKS) who have been imprisoned in Khuzestan Province for four months. Their only crime has been expressing their political views.

The international outcry over the sentences of death for twelve of the socialists and life imprisonment for the two women has been unprecedented. It is this mass pressure which has so far saved their lives.

In light of recent reports from Iran that eight Arabs in Khuzestan Province were executed for "sabotage and rebellion" October 4, the defense effort takes on added urgency.

Unrest among Arab and other workers in the oil fields of Khuzestan Province was reflected September 28 when the Khomeini-Bazargan government dismissed Hassan Nazih, chairman of the National Iranian Oil Company. Nazih has been one of the outspoken critics of the government's attacks on human rights. Khomeini has threatened to try Nazih on charges of acting against Iran's "national and Islamic interests."

New support for the release of the fourteen HKS members has come from Colombia, Japan, Sri Lanka, and India.

From Colombia, telegrams were sent by professors, attorneys, union leaders, and other members of Firmes, a national opposition movement; the president of the National Federation of Graphics Workers; Carlos Bustes of the executive committee of the General Workers Federation (CGT); several representatives to the Chamber of Deputies; and the national executive committee of the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

In Japan, a protest took place September 19 in front of the Iranian embassy in Tokyo. Members of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International, delivered a protest statement signed by prominent persons from Amnesty International, and by church and labor movement figures in Japan. Signers included, Kozo Inomata,

adviser emeritus to Amnesty International; Tokuzo Higuchi, editor of *Labor Information*; and Ryuichi Hirokawa, journalist and specialist on Palestine.

A protest letter was signed by seventeen leaders of major trade union federations in Sri Lanka. The Revolutionary Marxist League, Sri Lankan section of the Fourth International, reports that among the organizations sending a protest letter against the death sentences imposed on the Iranian socialists are: Ceylon Mercantile Union; Central Council of Ceylon Trade Unions; Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions; Ceylon Teachers' Union; Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation; Ceylon Federation of Labour; and others.

The Communist League of India, Indian section of the Fourth International, has also telegraphed its opposition to Iran.

In Australia, forty-two union leaders and delegates at the recent congress of the Australian Council of Trade Unions signed a telegram to Prime Minister Bazargan demanding "that you save the lives of these Iranian socialists." Signers included Bob Hawke and Bill Richardson, the president and assistant secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions; Jim Roulston, national vice-president of the Australian Labor Party; and John Halfpenny, Victorian state secretary of the Australian Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union.

From Britain, recent support has come from seventeen members of Parliament who signed an appeal sponsored by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

From Canada, telegrams were sent by the Canadian Labour Congress; the president of the Canadian Association of University Teachers; thirty-four participants at the convention of the Manitoba Federation of Labour; and twenty-five railroad workers in Winnipeg.

New U.S. labor support includes fifty Milwaukee, Wisconsin autoworkers; forty-steelworkers from U.S. Steel's Texas Works in Baytown, Texas; Barbara Harris, president of the Newark Teachers Associa-

tion; and the Executive Board of the Contra Costa County, California, chapter of the Service Employees International Union, Local 535.

A group of Iranian students living in America and Europe sent a lengthy appeal to Prime Minister Bazargan on behalf of the fourteen socialists. They declared:

"The Iranian people did not make a revolution so that socialists could be imprisoned and tortured. . . . The people of Iran made the revolution so that, once and for all, a person won't spend the best years of his or her life in prison for his or her ideas. The people of Iran made the revolution so that the gates of freedom might be open to all." □

## Unemployed March In Tehran

A crowd of 1,500 unemployed workers and high-school graduates demonstrated October 2 outside the office of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan demanding jobs. They were dispersed when guards began firing their rifles into the air and beating some protesters.

Demonstrators shouted "Death to the fascist regime!" and "Death to the Islamic Government!" as the guards opened fire.

At least two of the protesters were arrested, as were six others at a similar demonstration the day before.

A government official quoted in the October 3 *New York Times* complained that "Every day several hundred gather outside the Prime Minister's office demanding jobs. We have decided not to speak to them on the orders of the Imam Ayatollah Khomeini. . . ."

"We can't provide jobs for these people on the spot. . . . The request of the Prime Minister is that these jobless people should not gather and waste their time and the time of Government forces and employees."

## Mkhwanazi Detained In South Africa

Thami Mkhwanazi, a prominent Black journalist, was detained June 1 under the Terrorism Act, which provides for indefinite detention without charge or trial. The apartheid regime has still not given any reasons for his four months' imprisonment, nor has it revealed where he is being detained.

Mkhwanazi is a reporter for the Johannesburg *Post*, a Black-staffed newspaper. He is also regional secretary for the Writers Association of South Africa, an organization of Black writers and journalists.

Amnesty International has expressed concern that Mkhwanazi may be ill treated during his detention, as many other political prisoners have been while being held under the Terrorism Act.

## How You Can Help

Telegrams protesting the death sentences given the twelve HKS prisoners in Ahwaz and demanding the immediate release of all fourteen socialists should be sent to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Qum, Iran; and to Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Tehran, Iran.

Copies should be sent to the Tehran daily *Baamdad*, Hafez Avenue, 24, Zartoshtian Alley, Tehran, Iran; to *Ettela'at*, Khayam Avenue, Tehran, Iran; and *Keyhan*, Ferdowsi Avenue, Tehran, Iran.

Copies should also be sent to *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

## Canadian Working Class Moving to the Left

By Dick Fidler

[The following article appeared in the September 10 issue of *Socialist Voice*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Montréal.]

\* \* \*

Growing attacks on wages, working conditions, and rights of working people. Rising combativity in the unions, especially the key industrial unions. Openings for socialists to win a hearing for their ideas in the labor movement. These were some of the things discussed by members of industrial fractions of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), when they met in Toronto July 14-15.

Most of the 60 participants were members of the Steelworkers, Auto Workers, Machinists, and Woodworkers.

It was the first cross-country gathering of the RWL's new industrial union fractions. It was also the first gathering of a large section of the union militants and leadership of the RWL since the League's April convention. The convention voted to continue the campaign initiated in January by the Central Committee to get the overwhelming majority of the RWL membership into the unions, with the focus on the powerful unions in industry, transport, and communications.

John Steele, a member of the RWL Political Committee, reported that some 28 percent of RWL members now have industrial jobs, and a further 8 percent are actively looking for jobs in industry. This compares with 11 percent in industry in September 1978. The meeting debated how to continue this campaign to strengthen the RWL's presence in the industrial unions. In addition, the meeting registered a new stage of the turn, as members evaluated their experiences and observations on the job, and discussed how socialists can most effectively explain their views to other working people and participate in their struggles.

### Heightening Class Conflict

Steve Penner, a member of the Political Committee, opened the meeting with a report analyzing the pattern of increasing class polarization in this country as the bosses and their governments move to take away the rights and economic gains won by workers in the previous period.

As unemployment and inflation mount in the coming recession, he said, workers will find it even more difficult to attain their goals through isolated struggles. They will need coordinated all-out solidar-

ity by the entire labor movement. And labor in English Canada will have a particular responsibility to defend the national rights of the Québécois in the face of the federalist offensive during the referendum campaign.

In a supplementary report, Art Young of the Political Committee noted how the recent Inco strike demonstrated current trends throughout the industrial unions. The strike by the 11,000 Steelworkers of Local 6500 won broad solidarity in unions across the country; it mobilized almost the whole community in Sudbury, especially women who were among the most militant supporters of the strike.

The democratic rights of the rank and file were a key issue—not only through the union's fight to defend on-the-job-site processing of grievances, but also through mass membership meetings that forced the leadership to go back for a better settlement at a crucial turning point in the strike.

The Inco strike had a powerful impact in the New Democratic Party, Young noted. The union is the backbone of the NDP in the Sudbury area. Local 6500's demand for nationalization of Inco pointed to the need for workers to struggle to throw out the capitalist parties and establish their own government.

### Political Action

A major topic of discussion was the Canadian Labor Congress's (CLC) campaign in support of the NDP in the recent federal election. Analyzing the increase in the NDP's vote across English Canada, Steve Penner explained how unions in Québec should launch a "parallel campaign" around the need for a labor party.

While the CLC helped found the NDP and has always supported it, this time it went directly to the union ranks on an unprecedented scale, said Dennis Lomas, an aircraft worker in Toronto. "The unions are playing a bigger role in the NDP now," Lomas said. "It's not just a one-shot affair." He noted the Toronto Labor Council's active sponsorship of an NDP slate of candidates in the 1978 Toronto municipal elections.

This view was challenged by Bret Smiley, a Hamilton Steelworker and RWL Central Committee member. The unions have always been solidly identified with the NDP, Smiley said. Dramatic increases in the NDP vote in areas like the Maritimes, he said, were a "breakthrough for Social Democracy," but "how much was

this the result of the CLC campaign?" Smiley noted that overall, the NDP vote was no larger than its previous high point of 18 percent in 1972.

Most of the industrial unions in English Canada are highly integrated into the NDP said Gary Kettner of Vancouver, a member of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA).

This identification of the unions with the NDP "helps socialists to discuss broader political questions within the union itself," he said. "The more we become involved in the union, the more we find ourselves becoming involved in the NDP as well. And in both we find a growing response to our ideas."

Several workers from IAM Lodge 1953 in Winnipeg described the impact of the pro-NDP campaign at Motor Coach. "I've never seen such intense campaigning in that plant as for the NDP," said Helen Nelson. "By the time election day came, people not voting for the NDP were simply not talked to in the plant."

"When we phoned the list of union members," said Gary Watson, "some 60 percent said yes, they were going to vote NDP. This is quite significant, since participation in the union is usually very low in our plant; the local suffered a major defeat just a few years ago. In the previous federal election, the local's business manager nominated James Richardson, the Liberal candidate."

The RWL members at Motor Coach are proposing that their local affiliate to the NDP now. As part of the NDP, the membership will be able to participate in the struggle to make the party more responsive to workers' needs.

### Workers Debate Politics

While workers—not just trade unionists but all working people, women, immigrants, etc.—look increasingly to the labor movement and its party to defend their interests, the policies of the union leadership and the NDP are increasingly tested and found wanting.

"A classic example," said Art Young, was the Inco strike. Initially, the Steelworkers' international leadership publicly opposed the strike, as did Stephen Lewis, former Ontario NDP leader.

"Lewis said the local had fallen into the hands of irresponsible elements, radicals," Young noted. "He was exactly wrong. The local had fallen to a greater degree into the hands of the members. The decisive proof came when the members corrected even

their local leadership, forcing them to go back for a better offer."

The top leadership of the unions and the NDP "feel the pressure of the ruling class, and transmit it to the working class," Young said. "They don't feel confident of the power of the workers; they're not oriented to them. In response to the capitalist offensive, these 'leaders' are moving to the right. But society is not moving rightwards. It's the very opposite. The working class is starting to move to the left. Class consciousness is increasing. . . ."

"People come to the NDP in this period in a more critical frame of mind, more open to radical ideas. Few are really convinced that [NDP leader] Ed Broadbent's economic nationalism will solve economic problems, that higher tariffs will create more jobs—just as few trade unionists were convinced that CLC leader Dennis McDermott's tripartism was an effective answer to wage controls.

"This critical mood, combined with the reinforcement of the unions and the NDP, and the workers' determination to fight the capitalist offensive, offers big opportunities for socialists—especially if we're in the factories and unions where these issues are coming to the fore."

A big topic of discussion among many workers is the energy crisis. "No one thinks the oil companies are really running short," said a Hamilton Steelworker.

A related issue is nuclear power. A growing number of unions are adopting "no-nukes" positions, and it's a big question in the NDP, notably in Saskatchewan and B.C.

Nationalization as a step toward countering the anarchy of capitalist economy is an increasingly popular demand. It was raised in the Inco strike. It is posed by the Chrysler crisis, and will inevitably be raised in the problem-plagued aerospace industry, said a member of UAW Local 1967 at Douglas Aircraft, Toronto.

Several speakers emphasized the vital need for unions in English Canada to defend Québec's national rights. In a report outlining key tasks facing the RWL in coming months, Michel Prairie, a member of the Political Committee, emphasized the importance of binational campaigns in the labor movement. As examples, he cited the defense of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and its leaders, who face jail terms; defense of Québec self-determination during the coming referendum campaign; solidarity with key labor struggles in both nations—such as the public sector Common Front in Québec, and the auto workers' struggle.

Campaigns of international solidarity—with the revolution in Nicaragua, for example—are also means of deepening internationalist consciousness among workers, Prairie said.

Joe Young, a member of the IAM local at Dominion Engineering in Montreal, de-



Ken Mersel

### Wives of strikers picket in solidarity during 1978 INCO strike.

scribed how workers in Québec experience national oppression. Discrimination against the French language remains a particularly pressing issue, he said. Workers are now insisting that foremen speak French to them, and that they not have to speak English in any aspect of their work. There is a lot of concern about the rumored "flight of capital." Many workers support the idea of nationalizing companies that threaten to leave Québec because of "separatism."

At the top of the list in virtually every plant, of course, are immediate issues like the cost of living and the pace of work.

Workers at Versatile Manufacturing in Winnipeg have special insight into capitalist economics, one of them reported. "Many are working farmers, with some land not far from the city. We produce tractors. A lot of the guys find themselves asking how come they don't make enough money making tractors to be able to buy the tractors that they've built with their own hands!"

John Riddell, a member of Steel local 2900 at John Inglis, Ltd., Toronto, described how workers in his department try to control the process of production through shop-floor action against unsafe rates and overlapping shifts.

It is the younger workers, often in their late teens or early twenties, who usually lead in such on-the-job actions. As a Hamilton Steelworker put it, "They resent the authoritarianism of the bosses, and the whole regime inside the factory." It's these younger workers, with no experience in left-wing political groups but eager to fight for better conditions, who will be the central core of the class-struggle left wing that must be built in the unions.

It is the rank-and-file militants—youth, feminists, immigrant workers, the *ranks*—that socialists must orient to in the unions, said John Steele in a report on the progress of the RWL's jobs campaign.

"We need to be in the ranks, participating in today's defensive struggles. By gaining the ear of workers, by winning respect for our ideas, we are building our Trotskyist tendency in the unions and the

NDP and laying the basis for the mass class-struggle left wing of the future."

Of course, it is not enough to have substantial forces in industry. "The Communist Party, for example, has far greater weight in the unions today than does the RWL," Steele said, "but their orientation, in line with their class-collaborationist outlook, is to link up with so-called left wing sectors of the bureaucracy. They operate as little more than a loyal opposition to McDermott.

"Our approach has to be fundamentally different. We have to center our attention on the *ranks* of the unions."

The immediate goal of the RWL is to build strong fractions of revolutionary socialist in some key unions. The whole activity of the RWL is increasingly structured with this in mind, from the content of its political discussions to the composition of its leadership bodies at all levels, from local branch executive committees to the Central Committee. (Close to one half of the CC is already in industry or preparing to take industrial jobs.)

Most of the major industrial unions in this country are international unions, with the bulk of their membership in the United States. RWL militants are already beginning the work of building international fractions in these unions with their co-thinkers in the Socialist Workers Party, the U.S. Trotskyist party. In recent months RWL union members have participated in SWP fraction meetings in the Auto, Steel, Machinists, and Rail unions.

Malik Miah, a leader of the SWP, presented greetings to the RWL fraction meeting on behalf of a substantial delegation of SWP trade union members who attended the fraction as fraternal guests.

A highlight of the weekend was a slide-show presentation on the Newport News strike at the Saturday night social. Jeff Powers and Glen Arnodo, members of Local 451 of the UAW in Cleveland, put together the show for their local's educational committee, and have been presenting it in other union locals as a means of building support for this historic organizing struggle in the U.S. South. □

# Behind the Gold Rush of 1979

By Dick Roberts

An unprecedented buying of metallic commodities hit international money markets in late September and early October. On October 2 the price of gold in London soared as high as \$437 an ounce. It was \$283.50 an ounce in the first week of July, just three months earlier.

There were wild gyrations in the prices of gold, silver, copper, and platinum across the capitalist world. In commodity markets, goods are bought and sold through contracts to deliver them or purchase them at future dates. Gold future contracts on the Chicago Commodity Exchange rose as high as \$441 on the morning of October 2, fell to \$398 in midafternoon, and ended at \$411 by the close. A normal day's trading in gold contracts sees price variations of one or two dollars—not forty-three dollars!

Meanwhile the dollar fell sharply against strong European currencies, especially the German mark. By the first week in October the dollar had approached an exchange rate with the mark only fractionally higher than October a year earlier. At that time, a similar panicky flight from the dollar forced Washington to intervene in world money markets to defend its currency.

This frenzied speculation testifies to deepgoing problems in the international monetary system. It reflects widespread uncertainties about the international ramifications of the recession now deepening in the United States. Perhaps most important of all, it is a new reminder that only through a massive depression in the United States could imperialist finance restore even a semblance of the equilibrium it achieved for nearly a quarter century following World War II.

The U.S. recession takes place in the context of a sharp acceleration of credit and continued inflation of the dollar (producer prices shot up at a yearly rate of nearly 17 percent in September). The recession in the United States could lead to a generalized capitalist downturn. And all this occurs in a world of freely floating currencies, encouraging rapid and massive shifts from one currency to another.

### 'Classic Pattern'

If we begin this analysis by briefly reviewing the "classic" pre-Second World War pattern of capitalist recessions, it will be easier to understand the special factors behind the present speculative fever.

A "credit crunch" is an inevitable mo-

ment of the capitalist business cycle, occurring just as a downturn begins.

During the previous upswing of the cycle, with rapidly expanding markets, prices also rise rapidly. As profits and paper values rise, they become the basis for more borrowing, more spending, and further price rises. Paper-money values come to far exceed the real values of the commodities that have been produced.\*

When sales begin to fall, however, there is an even more urgent demand for credit. Corporations do not maintain sufficient liquid reserves to cover all their week-to-week expenditures on a regular basis. Sales may fluctuate so that the inflow of funds is temporarily insufficient to meet the needed outflow. But wages do have to be paid on a regular basis every week or every two weeks, and bills come due from suppliers every month.

So, corporations borrow short-term, that is, on a less-than-six-month basis, to tide them over.

But when a recession begins and sales begin to contract, there is a sharp increase in the demand for such short-term funds. The banks respond by raising their interest rates in order to reap increased profits from this greater demand.

### Credit Crunch

Precisely such a credit crunch has been taking place in the United States since mid-1979. The recession was precipitated by a sudden slump of automobile sales. By August the auto companies had slashed production 27 percent compared to a year earlier. More than 80,000 autoworkers had been laid off indefinitely.

Chrysler, the third largest U.S. automobile producer and tenth largest U.S. industrial corporation, hovers on the verge of bankruptcy.

Beginning with a sharp demand for increased credit from the auto companies themselves, the demand for loans has been

\*Under capitalism commodities have a real value corresponding to the average amount of labor time socially necessary for their production. As this time decreases with the advance of productivity, the value of commodities falls, along with the profit rates in manufacturing them. But the expression of value in paper money can disguise this fall in real values. Prices—the money amounts at which the commodities are exchanged—diverge widely from values. Herein lies a fundamental contradiction caused by the permanent inflation of world capitalist economies: Rising prices hide a drastic fall in real profit rates.

surging. "Nationally," *Business Week* reported October 1, "... loans have grown at an incredible 33% annual rate over the past 15 weeks."

The prime interest rate, which is the short-term rate that banks charge to their most profit-worthy customers, has risen from roughly 9.7 percent in the first week of July to 13.5 percent in early October, a whopping 39 percent increase.

Smaller, less profitable corporations have to pay much higher interest than the "prime."

Increasing demand for credit feeds back on itself. Borrowing costs become too high for some corporations, and they are forced into bankruptcy. But their default shrinks bank funds—don't forget that all corporations owe the banks money!—just when the demand for loans elsewhere is sharply increased. Interest rates are driven upwards. The ultimate danger is that this can precipitate bankruptcies of the biggest corporations, which could then trigger chain-reaction closings.

The collapse of a Chrysler, for example, could bring down some of the bigger banks that are its major creditors. The closing of these banks would choke off funds to other corporations that have deposits in the same banks. Precisely such a chain-reaction closing of banks and corporations did spread across the capitalist world in 1931-33. It came close to recurring in 1974.

### Depression

But this "normal" functioning of the capitalist business cycle would ultimately correct the inflated prices and paper values that preceded the run on the banks. Debt deflation, as more and more bank windows are slammed down on borrowers, falling commodity prices, and the collapse of the stock market all help bring paper values into line with real values. The way is prepared for the next upturn.

But this "correction" occurs at the cost of stagnant production and soaring unemployment for however many months or years.

With the Great Depression of the 1930s, however, the imperialist countries embarked on a course that would permanently change this self-correcting "model." That social catastrophe risked anticapitalist revolution in country after country. Henceforward, the advice of John Maynard Keynes would be followed: In order to fend off deep cyclical downturns, the government would deficit spend. That is, it would borrow money in order to pump

more money back into circulation than it took out in taxes. The additional purchasing power thus created would inflate prices and profits. Credit would be expanded.

### Inflation

Such Keynesian policies helped to mollify recessions, especially in the United States, for the first two decades following the Second World War. They have increasingly failed to work since the onset of the 1970s.

For one thing, as Keynes's actual model anticipated, deficit spending to relieve downturns would only work in the long run if during the upturn of the cycle the government ran a budget surplus to drain "excess" funds from the system. It would take more money in taxes than it spent and prices would be brought into line.

But the U.S. government has not run a budgetary surplus in the last decade!

Year after year, Washington's bloated military budget causes it to borrow, and on ever more immense scales. At the same time, corporations and consumers (plagued by rising prices and shrinking buying power) fall ever deeper into debt. The total government, corporate, and consumer debt in the United States has reached astronomical levels. In October 1978, as the dollar slipped precipitously and the stock market virtually crashed, *Business Week* reported:

Overall, for every \$3 owed in 1974, the U.S. now owes \$4, a growth in debt far faster than the growth of the U.S. economy, even when inflation is counted in economic growth. What is so worrisome is that the biggest borrowers now are consumers whose ability to repay has been stretched razor-thin, and the federal government whose borrowing is the most inflationary of all. And now business is joining in, again borrowing heaps of short-term money. . . .

Credit expansion is not limited to the United States. With the end of the European and Japanese postwar "booms," these countries were also increasingly forced to deficit spend in order to prop up their economies. Increasingly saturated world markets and the resulting sharp intensification of inter-imperialist competition were accompanied by a vast expansion of world paper money.

### Gold

Permanent inflation in the United States unhinged the fixed relationships between the dollar and other world currencies and between the dollar and gold. The Bretton Woods agreement in 1944 had established the price of gold at \$35 an ounce; international currencies were exchanged in terms of fixed amounts of dollars.

Since business cycles take place at different times and uneven tempos from one nation to the next, there is a clear advantage to basing international trade on a money commodity with real value rather than on paper monies.

A nation exporting goods from a country

where the currency is stable, for example, to another country where the currency is greatly overvalued would take big losses of real capital. Tying currencies to fixed exchange rates with gold, on the other hand, tended to soften wild oscillations in currency values and to make world trade possible in a framework of fairly predictable exchange rates.

Let us imagine West German Volkswagen manufacturers selling their autos in the United States. For a long stretch of the postwar period a dollar was fixed to exchange at four West German marks. Under the terms of Bretton Woods that would mean that a 10,000 mark Volkswagen would sell in the United States for \$2,500. If the West German manufacturer then turned the \$2,500 obtained from this sale into the West German Central Bank, the \$2,500 could be traded for its equivalent in gold, priced at \$35 an ounce. This would be 71.43 ounces of gold.

### Fixed Rates Break

But inflation in the United States constantly drove dollar prices further above real values. The official price of gold became ever more artificially low, and at the same time imposed artificial restraints on other currencies, like the mark, where the inflation rate was considerably less.

As this article is being written, gold reached a point where our West German manufacturer's 71.43 ounces of gold would be worth \$28,572! Let us imagine a tremendously exaggerated situation in order to underline the points: Suppose we were in a situation where the price of gold itself was not fixed to any currencies (as is now the case), but where the old relationship between the mark and the dollar was still four marks to the dollar. Let us further imagine that—unlike the galloping inflation in the United States—there had been no inflation of the West German economy whatsoever and that the value of gold had not changed either.

In this imaginary world market, the West German manufacturer could still produce the same Volkswagen for 10,000 marks. It would still be sold in the United States for only \$2,500. But since we are assuming no inflation in West Germany, the dollar-price in gold of the Volkswagen would be \$28,572. Surely the West German capitalist would prefer the gold equivalent of the car to the dollars it would fetch in the United States—an amount that could be exchanged for only a bit more than 6 oz. of gold.

This situation would lead to a total breakdown of world trade; the West German manufacturer would stop selling cars in the United States.

This is an exaggerated example, of course. But inflation did run much higher in the United States than in Germany and some other major capitalist industrial nations. Before anything approaching the above example ensued, however, these

differing inflation rates tore apart fixed relations between all paper money and gold. Today it takes only 1.75 marks to purchase one dollar, and the owners of Volkswagen have opted to take advantage of their appreciated marks to build auto plants in the United States and manufacture their cars there.

### Floating currencies

We are leaving aside for the moment real relations of production in order to focus attention on the international money market. The free float of currencies and gold seemed to restore a rationality to the system that had been suppressed by artificial exchange rates with inflated dollars. So Washington argued.

The old shibboleth of supply and demand was raised: If a currency is overpriced, people will sell it and the overvaluation will be corrected; similarly, the purchasing of undervalued currencies would raise them to their proper value. Gold "will settle at its real value. . . ."

There were further considerations. The slide of the dollar would make U.S. goods cheaper and more competitive abroad; it would force more expensive foreign-made goods out of the U.S. market. (Recalling our highly imaginary example: Under the free float, but again assuming absolutely no inflation in West Germany, the 10,000 mark Volkswagen would be prohibitively expensive in the United States, at \$28,000 plus. But a \$28,000 plus luxury auto produced in the United States could sell in West Germany for the price of a VW.)

Because of this tendency, foreign governments would be forced to intervene to prop up the dollar in order to defend their own export- and import-oriented commodities. In order to prevent the dollar falling drastically against the mark, thereby increasing the price of German exports relative to U.S. exports, the West German Central Bank would be forced to purchase billions of dollars. These dollars, in turn, would be traded for U.S. government bonds. The foreign governments consequently would also be forced to hold an increasing amount of the U.S. government debt. And this increase of "money supplies" in the foreign nations would end up inflating their currencies, tending to restore a balance between the inflating dollar and other foreign currencies.

### Speculation

Finally, the world was awash in dollars. The United States comprises roughly one-half of the capitalist world market. It purchases billions of dollars worth of commodities abroad every year, especially the oil of the Middle East and Africa. The March 10 *London Economist* estimated that from 1971, when Nixon severed the dollar and gold, to 1977, the official foreign exchange reserves of dollars had actually risen from 78 percent of paper currencies to 81 percent. (See graph on p. 993.)

There were severe flaws in these arguments, which apologized for Washington's policy of "benign neglect" of the falling dollar. To begin with, they ignored the inflationary effect of the falling dollar on the U.S. market itself. True, foreign commodities would be made more expensive in the United States. But the U.S. monopolies would respond precisely by raising the prices of their own products in the American market. To the extent that imported car prices did rise, the U.S. auto makers raised the prices of their own comparably sized cars. Inflation did not abate in the United States, it accelerated.

But there were more fundamental errors grounded in real relations of production and exchange, not the vagaries of world finance. Overlooked was the stagnant production and saturated world markets that necessitated inflationary policies to begin with. Markets are increasingly glutted. Productive outlets for investment are increasingly hard to find.

In such a situation, there is a sharp intensification of the scramble for any kind of paper profit in the centralization of capital through mergers, in speculation in hard commodities including gold, and in paper currencies. The temptation to sell dollars proved insurmountable. By October 1978, when the U.S. recession was still only on the dim horizon of the future, the sale of dollars plunged international markets into bedlam. The United States was forced to abandon the policy of benign neglect.

The graphs vividly capture the critical problems the capitalist world faces, where a continuously inflating dollar is de facto world currency.

#### **Carter's Austerity Moves**

There can be no way out of the capitalist world monetary crisis short of a drastic slowing of the U.S. economy. A temporary stabilization of the dollar was brought about in 1974-75 only through the deepest depression in the United States since the 1930s.

In November 1978, faced with the massive dollar slide, President Carter promised capitalists around the world that he would tighten the economy once more.

To prop up the dollar, the Federal Reserve Board began to undertake massive dollar-purchasing in money markets—which it had previously refused to do. More than \$6-billion were sopped up in a short period.

The more important factor was Carter's commitment to "tight money" policies in order to attempt to restrict the growth of credit in the United States.

In fact, this was not entirely a new policy.

A portentous article by the influential *New York Times* columnist James Reston appeared in April 1977, a week before Carter announced his first "energy program." Reston asked what Carter and

James Schlesinger, Carter's newly appointed energy chief, have in common: "Philosophically," said Reston, "they are very much the same: They are troubled by the slackness of American life, and want the American people to face up and shape up. Both of them are talking, not merely about a higher price for gas but a new austere way of life."

#### **Energy crisis**

The American Trotskyist newsweekly *The Militant* wrote in its May 6, 1977, issue "What the Carter administration is really after is not merely higher prices and higher profits for the energy trust. Its goal is to make working people tighten their belts: to accept less gas, less heat, less pay.

"Above all the energy program that Carter proposed is part of the softening up process that the American ruling class wants to put working people through—softening us up for more inflation, fewer jobs, and less economic growth."

The president and the U.S. ruling class were also committed to decontrol of oil and gas prices in the United States. At first sight this seems in contradiction with the other goal. Higher energy prices would mean a sharp increase in the U.S. rate of inflation; this monstrous profit grab by the strongest sector of U.S. finance capital would utterly wreck any attempts to stabilize the dollar.

There can be little question that one of the most important precipitating factors in the current flight from the dollar was precisely the 70 percent increase in oil and gas prices that has taken place in the United States since April. The trumped-up "oil shortage," gasoline lines, and propaganda against the Arab and Iranian "oil sheikhs" gave Carter the cover to shove through the decontrol policies. This helped to drive consumer prices into the double-digit inflationary level.

High gasoline prices, in turn, became a precipitating factor in the onset of the recession. While recessions are inevitable under capitalism and there is no truth whatever to the slander that "OPEC is causing a world depression," each recession nevertheless does have its own precipitating factors. High gasoline prices, making the larger U.S. autos economically untenable for increasing numbers of consumers, is one of the reasons for the slump in automobile sales.

The reckless profit drive of the oil trusts consequently threatened not only to capsize the dollar in international finance but to help plunge the United States into another recession.

#### **'Combating Inflation'**

But we are back to the tactical goal of the American ruling class we started out with: a recession, in which the rulers of this country hope to all-the-more escalate their attack on the wages and standard of living of American workers.

We should pause to distinguish between what "combating inflation" means in the rhetoric of politicians and what it sounds like it ought to mean.

There is no thought among the rulers of the United States to end inflation. Military, economic, and political considerations preclude such a course. Washington's gigantic nuclear arsenal and global military forces are a strategic necessity to world imperialism. Far from reducing the military budget, the Carter administration has pushed it up from one annual budget to the next. It hasn't frozen any levels of strategic nuclear arms, but has introduced whole new generations of ever deadlier atomic weapons.

The expenditure of increasing hundreds of billions of dollars each year on the Pentagon virtually precludes eliminating the inflationary deficits of the United States government.

Furthermore, there is no thought in Washington or any other imperialist capital of risking a depression of the depth of the 1930s in this epoch of a much more advanced social and political consciousness of the world working class. Keynesianism remains the watchword of capitalist financial policy.

What the capitalists are seeking to do is to extract the maximum concessions possible from the working class within this permanently inflationary context.

#### **Attack on workers**

In short, "combating inflation" does not mean bringing spiralling prices under control. It does not mean making it easier to buy the necessities of life. It means attacking workers.

On the one side this consists of the permanent attempt to hold down wage increases: presidential guidelines, payboards to regulate contracts, freezing of federal and state workers' wages, or regulated minimal wage increases for these municipal workers.

On the other side it consists of permanent speed-up, of the drive to get more production out of each worker for less, under more dangerous working conditions and increasing freedom from any regulation on corporate pollution or other dangers to the natural environment.

This is how the American ruling class hopes to strengthen its hand in international monopoly competition. Producing more goods more cheaply and more profitably, seeking to drive foreign goods out of the U.S. market, and carving out larger markets for U.S. products abroad—this is the basic program of U.S. imperialism to stabilize the dollar.

But this profit drive rests above everything else on dealing massive blows against American workers. Nothing like that has been achieved.

#### **Gold Rush**

We can now review the main factors that underlay the "gold rush" of September and



- An accelerating credit crunch in the United States under the jolts of recession, with the possibility, at least, of a credit collapse.

- Accelerating U.S. inflation, partially as a result of the expansion of credit itself, partially caused by the profit grab of the energy trusts, but most fundamentally rooted in the necessity of U.S. imperialism to permanently shore up the economy through federal deficits and to finance its massive military arsenal.

- The danger that these two factors together can throw the United States into a deep recession that would drag down the rest of the world as in 1974-75. That depression was also preceded by an inflationary upsurge, soaring short-term interest rates, and the near-collapse of world credit that doubled the price of gold.

- The increasingly speculative character of international finance. Floating currencies themselves encourage sudden huge transfers of money from one nation to the next, to make quick profits on different inflation rates and different governmental monetary policies. Moreover, there is always the possibility of purchasing gold, whose price is sure to rise with the next whiff of danger.

In addition, we should not forget that in the preceding weeks the Carter administration was stepping up its war threats against OPEC and Cuba; the White House was rocked by an unprecedented loss of confidence in the presidency; and there were signs of new oil production cutbacks in the Middle East and Africa.

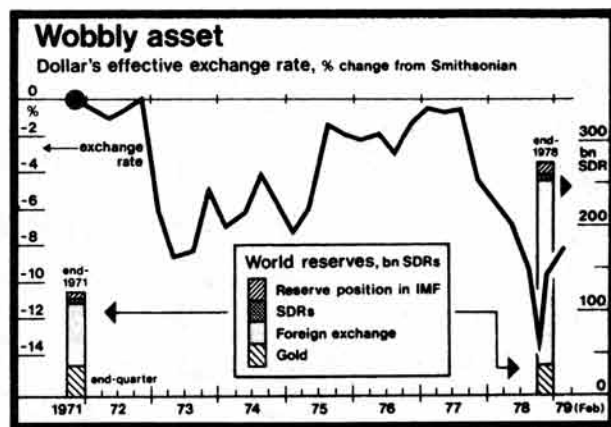
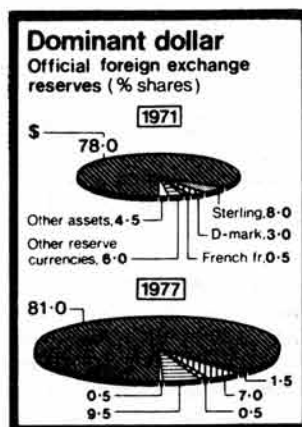
#### Tug-of-war

We should further consider the fact, however, that initially this year's panic did not spread to Wall Street. This is quite different from a year earlier. In October 1978 the New York Stock Exchange was hit by one of the sharpest drops in the recorded history of the ticker tape.

In the first week of October 1979, Wall Street has been shaken but has not plummeted. There is a veritable tug-of-war between the New York Stock Exchange and international money markets.

Stock prices in New York appear to be boosted by the following four considerations:

1. The dollar-support actions undertaken by the Federal Reserve Board in 1978 did work for awhile. There was considerable risk. No one knew how many billions of dollars the Federal Reserve might have to purchase to stop the slide, or even whether the slide could be halted at all. Further, any increase in the U.S. debt that was undertaken to provide these billions would make the international credit balloon all that much more vulnerable.



Economist

By March 1979, however, the dollar had been sufficiently stabilized to allow the Federal Reserve to recoup most of the \$6.86 billion that it had pumped out in November, December, and January. A similar dollar-support program is anticipated in this crisis.

2. Inflation rates were beginning to pick up in West Germany and Japan. While the new dollar crisis saw it decline to near its October 1978 low against the mark, the dollar continued to appreciate against the Japanese yen. In 1978 it had fallen as low as 180 yen to the dollar. It is now about 225 yen, a 25 percent increase that severely threatens Japan's export-oriented economy.

3. The oil stocks on Wall Street have been on a profit rampage. Literally tens of billions of dollars in paper values have piled up as the shares of oil companies celebrated their price-rise and deregulation successes. A long-run decline of the dollar overseas is unlikely in the face of a strongly rising market in New York.

Many of the dollar assets held abroad are nothing else but stocks and bonds in U.S. corporations, whose rising values would ultimately discourage their overseas owners from dumping them.

4. The assessment of the Carter administration in money markets abroad seems to differ from the assessment on Wall Street. Abroad Carter has consistently been portrayed as a weak and vacillating president who will surely bend towards big tax cuts and other inflationary pump-priming devices as the November 1980 vote approaches.

A significant sector of the American ruling class, however, has been persuaded that Carter means what he promises them behind closed doors. He is going to continue to squeeze American workers. He has already risked his presidency for the oil companies; he isn't going to step out of line with sudden injections of deficit finances in order to win the 1980 elections.

If these indeed are the considerations behind the relatively greater optimism on Wall Street this year than last, the least

that can be said is that the basis for such optimism is tenuous.

#### Conclusion

A stock market rally cannot survive a world collapse of the dollar. That would imperil the entire imperialist financial system and bring about a 1929-31-style collapse of world trade and ultimately world banking.

The most telling comparison between 1978 and 1979 is that whatever intermediate successes bankers had in stemming the 1978 slide, a year later they faced renewed panic. A recession is under way in the United States. None of the fundamental problems have been solved. Rival imperialist nations confront saturated markets and stubbornly resistant working classes.

Nor have the problems of the international monetary system been resolved. In the Fall 1979 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, U.S. Citibank officials complain, "Today . . . for the first time in modern history, there is no objective regulator to discipline money creation." Even U.S. bankers in the most prestigious organ of imperialist foreign policy complain about the end of the gold standard.

But they cannot resurrect gold to its regulatory role, which depended on a stable dollar. Permanent U.S. inflation and the de facto dominance of the dollar as international reserve currency remain insurmountable obstacles.

Finally, it is one thing for Carter to stick to his antilabor program. It is another for the American ruling class to score major successes against its mighty opponent. The American working class is showing no signs whatever of willingness to make the deepgoing sacrifices that would be necessary to restore the glory of the dollar. On the contrary, there is new combativity, new unwillingness on the part of U.S. workers to accept the dictates of monopoly capitalism. Carter's declining popularity is telling in this respect. On the gas lines last summer, tens of millions of people said to each other, "We do not believe the oil companies and we do not believe the government that is fronting for them." □

# AROUND THE WORLD

## Demand Release of Juan Mari Brás!

The U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) has called for worldwide protests against the arrests of two leaders of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) in Puerto Rico.



Juan Mari Brás, general secretary of the PSP, and Pedro Baigés Chapel, also a leader of the party, were arrested on September 24 and 25 for contempt of court.

The contempt charges stem from recent protests against the U.S. Navy occupation of Vieques, an island used for target practice by the U.S. military. Chapel was arrested when he sailed, along with Puerto Rican fishermen, into a restricted zone. Mari Brás was acting as his attorney. Both have refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the U.S. courts in Puerto Rico.

What especially incensed U.S. authorities when the two failed to appear at their hearing was that they had gone to the Summit Meeting of Nonaligned Countries in Havana instead.

In Havana, Mari Brás presented the case for Puerto Rican independence and denounced the U.S. Navy presence on Vieques. The Nonaligned conference subsequently adopted a position along these lines.

The USLA statement called the arrests "an attempt to harass these two leaders of the Puerto Rican independence movement and intimidate others who would join that cause." USLA urged supporters of democratic rights around the world to heed the call of the PSP to send messages of protest to President Carter and the U.S. Justice Department in Washington, D.C. Copies of all such protests should be sent to USLA, 200 Park Avenue South, Room 812, New York, New York 10003.

### CP Leaders Murdered by Paraguayan Police

In testimony submitted to the Supreme Court of Paraguay in September, Amnesty International revealed that three leaders of the Paraguayan Communist Party had died under torture in police custody following their arrest in November 1975.

The three, Miguel Angel Soler, Derliz Villagra, and Rubén Octavio Gonzales Acosta, had been listed as "disappeared" by Paraguayan authorities, who consist-

ently denied having arrested them.

But on the basis of testimony compiled from guards and other prisoners, it was established that the three were murdered in Police Headquarters in the capital city of Asunción after hours of brutal torture.

The evidence submitted by Amnesty International includes the names of Pastor Coronel, Director of Investigations, and several of the other police agents responsible for the murders.

### General Strike in New Zealand

A twenty-four-hour general strike called by the New Zealand Federation of Labour closed down bus, train, air, and ferry service and cut postal service and newspaper publication on September 20. Hundreds of thousands of workers participated.

The strike was in response to Prime Minister Muldoon's decision to arbitrarily veto a wage settlement won by the Drivers Federation. Muldoon attacked the 11 percent increase, which would have brought take-home pay to \$114 per week, as "too high."

New Zealand workers have suffered a steady decline in their standard of living for the past six years. Between 1973 and 1976 individual real income fell 15 percent. Per capita gross domestic product has fallen from fourth in the world to twentieth.

The deepgoing economic crisis has led to large-scale emigration from the country, with 120,000 people leaving between June 1976 and June 1978. That amounts to more than one person out of every thirty in New Zealand.

### Murderers of Orlando Letelier Freed by Chilean Regime

In September 1976, former Chilean Foreign Minister Orlando Letelier and his American assistant, Ronni Moffitt, were assassinated in Washington, D.C., by a bomb planted in their car. The assassination plot led to the highest circles of the Chilean dictatorship, including Gen. Manuel Contreras Sepúlveda, former head of the Chilean secret police.

On October 1 the Chilean Supreme Court ruled against the extradition of Contreras and two of his top aides to the United States, where further details of the plot might have been uncovered. Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, who never bothered with trials, appeals, or other trappings of legality when he ordered the torture and



murder of thousands upon thousands of trade union and socialist activists, virtuously asserted that he had "always been ready to accept what the courts decided."

Washington claimed it was angry, saying that "the deplorable result of the court's decision is that the three terrorists have been released from custody and are now free on the streets of Chile."

The U.S. ambassador was recalled for discussions.

But Washington's real attitude was expressed by the enthusiasm of U.S. corporate investors for the Pinochet regime.

"I don't think we spent five minutes talking about human rights when the board made the decision to invest in Chile," Jack Carter, manager of Goodyear's \$34 million tire, battery, and rubber products plant, told *New York Times* correspondent Juan de Onis.

Anaconda copper, whose giant Chuquicamata mine was nationalized under the Allende regime in 1971, has just signed a contract that may lead to a \$1.5 billion investment in new copper fields. As he signed the contract, Anaconda President Ralph Cox declared that "this Government has created a climate of confidence for investment."

### Heng Samrin Government Recognized by Panama

The Panamanian regime announced September 15 that it now recognizes the Heng Samrin government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea as the sole legitimate government in that country.

According to a report in the September 16 issue of the *Managua* daily *Barricada*, the announcement came on the first day of an official visit to Panama by Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong.

This brings to twenty-nine the number of governments which recognize the new Kampuchean regime.

They are: Afghanistan, Angola, Benin, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Congo (Brazzaville), Cuba, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Ethiopia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary.

Also, Jamaica, Laos, Libya, Madagascar, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua,



HENG SAMRIN

Panama, Poland, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, South Yemen, Soviet Union, and Vietnam.

### Protests in Central Africa

#### Denounce Presence of French Troops

On September 26, less than a week after French troops ousted Emperor Bokassa and installed David Dacko as the new president of the Central African Republic, hundreds of persons demonstrated at the main airport near the capital of Bangui, shouting slogans against the French troops.

Specifically, they were protesting against French efforts to bar Ange Patasse, a former prime minister and the leader of the Central African People's Liberation Movement (MLPC), from returning to the country.

The same day, a rally organized by the teachers union denounced the Dacko regime, in particular for its retention in office of many officials who had served under Bokassa. "The struggle continues," the union leaders stated, "and will continue as long as real democracy has not been established." They called for "the establishment of democratic freedoms, legislative elections, and a purge of the army, party, and civil service." They also demanded the extradition of Bokassa from his place of exile in the Ivory Coast to stand trial for his crimes against the population.

In response to this pressure, Dacko announced the following day that several of Bokassa's closest collaborators had been arrested.

Meanwhile, French troops continued to tighten their control over the country. In the capital, they have been checking identification, imposing a curfew, and patrolling the streets. Units have been sent to other parts of the country, including to Bouar, the site of a former French military base that Paris aims to "reactivate."

### Argentine Regime Releases Timerman

In a move designed to salvage its badly tarnished image, the Argentine junta has released publisher Jacobo Timerman, the best-known political prisoner in the country. Eight days after a Supreme Court ruling that he should be freed, it was suddenly announced September 25 that Timerman had been stripped of his Argentine citizenship and deported to Israel.

Timerman had been the publisher of the daily *La Opinión*, which while not opposing the Videla regime had reported some of its worst repressive measures.

At the time of his arrest in April 1977, Timerman was accused of having ties with the Montonero guerrilla group. Although a military tribunal later acquitted him of those charges, he remained in jail or under house arrest "at the disposition of the executive power" for a total of twenty-nine months. According to a report in the

September 27 *Washington Post*, "such generals as Iberico Saint Jean and Benjamin Menendez argued that Timerman was responsible for creating a climate of social experimentation and free thought in which terrorism could flourish. . . ."

The arbitrary imprisonment of Timerman came amidst a wave of anti-Semitic attacks by the junta and its unofficial repressive forces. After his release, Timerman recalled that one member of the junta had remarked, "He's in prison because he is an arrogant Jew."

Timerman's case was taken up by Jewish groups and journalists' associations around the world. It was scheduled to be raised in a report by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission at the upcoming meeting of the Organization of American States in La Paz, Bolivia. In response to mounting protests, the U.S. government had publicly criticized Timerman's imprisonment.

The junta and its supporters in Washington and other capitals are now pointing to Timerman's release as evidence of enhanced respect for human rights in Argentina. But the facts give the lie to this.

By its own admission the junta still holds 1,434 political prisoners against whom no charges have been filed, and there are an estimated 15,000 who have "disappeared" after abduction by the authorities and right-wing terrorist groups.

Among those still in Argentine jails are dozens of members of the Socialist Workers Party (PST), including auto workers leader and former PST vice-presidential candidate José Francisco Páez.

### General Strike in Greece

An estimated 300,000 workers throughout Greece joined in a twenty-four hour general strike September 28 to protest the Caramanlis regime's austerity policies and attacks on trade-union rights.

The strike was called by the labor federa-

tion SADEO (United Democratic Fighting Workers Organization) to demand an end to government restrictions on wage raises and attacks on workers' right to organize, and for a forty-hour workweek and full trade-union rights.

On the day of the strike, the unions held mass meetings in Athens, Piraeus, Salonika, Arcadia, Melos, Thebes, and dozens of other regions, cities, and towns. In many cities workers marched to the local Labor Ministry office to press their demands.

Bank workers played a leading role in the strike. The Bank of Greece was totally shut down in Athens and most other cities. Participation by clerks and accountants ranged from 70 to 100 percent at major bank facilities throughout the country. As part of the building activities leading up to the general strike, bank workers had staged their own work stoppages September 21 and 25.

Among the industrial workers, construction, metal, and auto workers shut down or crippled operations at most major plants. Transit, leather, garment, printing, shoe, and confectionery unions also joined in the strike.

Government security forces and the courts attempted to intimidate workers with a major show of force in the streets, along with injunctions, harassment, and arrests of demonstrating workers. At least twenty persons were arrested under Law 330, a newly passed antilabor act that has been a focus of workers' protests.

Although the bourgeois media gave minimal coverage to the day's events, it admitted that in areas where the strike was organized between 70 and 100 percent of workers had participated.

This caused some problems for the political police. It was reported that cops who went to the Plectas factory in suburban Athens to get a list of names of workers who stayed home that day had to settle for taking the names of the seven scabs who showed up.



Rizospastis

Part of trade-union march in Athens. Banner reads "No to Austerity!"

## The Pressures That Blew Apart Desai Regime in India

[The following is an interview with a central leader of the Communist League, Indian section of the Fourth International.

[It was obtained in early August, shortly after Prime Minister Morarji Desai was forced to resign as a result of parliamentary defections and a split in the ruling Janata Party. Charan Singh established a new coalition government, although it too collapsed on August 20, less than three weeks after the interview. General elections have been called for the end of the year.]

\* \* \*

*Question. What lies behind the recent crisis in the Indian government?*

*Answer.* The reasons for the fall of Prime Minister Morarji Desai's government are rooted in the composition of the Janata Party.

The emergence of the Janata Party came about as a result of the state of emergency imposed by the Indira Gandhi regime. Leftist parties—like the Socialist Party—and regional bourgeois parties fell victim to the state of emergency. This brought them together to oppose the emergency.

When the state of emergency was withdrawn and elections were called, a number of parties were brought together under the flag of the Janata Party. This included the Congress (O), the conservative wing of the Indian National Congress; the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD) of present Prime Minister Charan Singh, which is the party of the rich peasants of northern India; the Jan Sangh, which I would call the liberal party of the Indian propertied class and bourgeoisie and which has the face of communalism;<sup>1</sup> and the Socialist Party, the Social Democrats of India.

Such diametrically opposed groups united on one program: anti-Indira and anti-emergency.

The moment they came to power, the process of in-fighting started. They began fighting over ministries and posts. The components of the Janata Party, the ministers, were simply concerned with their own personal interests, and this was coupled with general inefficiency and an inability to run their own departments and ministries. They were totally unable from the beginning to carry out the promises made to the electors, the voters.

In bourgeois elections you need votes and banknotes, money. So in India we talk about the vote-givers and the note-givers.

1. Communalism refers to the practice of employing Hindu chauvinism, particularly against Muslims or the peoples of southern India.—IP/I

Janata had made promises to the voters, and behind their backs they had also made promises to the note-givers, their financial backers. In carrying out their policies, preference was given to the banknote-givers.

All the groups in the Janata Party were in open competition to fulfill the promises made to their financial backers, the propertied classes. Now here is the important thing. The components of the Janata Party are not homogeneous. They are heterogeneous, and had to satisfy the different propertied strata in the villages, the rich peasants, merchants, moneylenders.

So there were many pressures on them. The pressures stemmed from the economic difficulties. And the pressures were reflected in the party, a party that from the



MORARJI DESAI

very beginning reflected an internal tug-of-war between its components.

There is the rural bourgeoisie—the kulaks, merchants, moneylenders, and big landowners in the villages. . . .

*Q. How do you use the term "kulaks" in India?*

*A.* They are rich peasants, capitalist landlords, not landlords in the feudal sense.

There are also marginal small farmers, who are identical to the landless laborers. They have a tiny plot of land. But they are not better off than the landless laborers. In the villages 80 percent of the agricultural laborers are *harijans*—untouchables.

So on the one side are the pressures of the different strata in the villages on the Janata Party.

On the other side are the different social strata in the cities: the big capitalists, the medium factory owners, merchants, shopkeepers, estate owners, contractors; and then the working people: industrial workers, life insurance workers, bank employees, employees of different sectors of business.

Working people, that is, employees and workers in the organized sectors, to whom the principle of a bonus as a right had been promised, found that this promise was not fulfilled. So since May 1977 there has been agitation and strikes around this question. Concessions were made that this year they would get the bonuses. But it is still not recognized as a right in law, as a form of delayed salary.

But when it comes to the urban propertied classes, they have gotten a lot of concessions. They opened the door wide to these classes. They created a free economy for the bourgeoisie. All the restrictions that had been imposed by the Indira Gandhi government, all restrictions applying to the propertied classes of India were removed lock, stock, and barrel.

All of these propertied classes that had the lid lifted wanted even more. Each wanted to get the biggest advantage from the new situation, and this had an impact in the Janata Party, it put different pressures on the different components of the Janata Party.

The only thing holding it together was the determination by all to hold onto power, to hold onto their privileges and their opportunities, in order to entrench themselves and their families and supporters and gain as much as they could for themselves. All the parties, including the Socialist Party, were doing this and were sinking deeper into the mire of inefficiency, inability, corruption, nepotism, and favoritism.

In fact the only component of the Janata that was not tainted by the corruption was the Jan Sangh. And this will have big repercussions for the future. The Jan Sangh party is no longer just a communal party. It is emerging as the party not only of the rich people in the villages, not only of the merchants and others, but also of the bourgeoisie.

It is now apparent that it is getting money from the big bourgeoisie, like the Tata and Birla monopolies. Up to now these monopolies used to give money to the Congress (I) or Congress (O). Now they have opened their purses to the Jan Sangh.

*Q. Does that mean that Jan Sangh is now beginning to play the role that the*

*Congress played in the past?*

A. Yes. Jan Sangh alone has emerged unscathed and unhurt in all this strife within the Janata Party. In fact, it has emerged with greater strength, more confidence, more agility, more solidity than it had before. Jan Sangh is growing and gaining allegiance throughout India. It has started to win allegiance in the southern states as well, in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka. My personal opinion is that Jan Sangh is on the way to becoming the all-India party of the bourgeoisie.

So the pursuit by the components of the Janata Party of diverse economic policies and political programs is one of the reasons for the downfall, disintegration, and derailment of the government.

This derailment was expressed in various fields, whether in its policy toward bank employees, toward oppressed nationalities, toward untouchables, toward educated people. It was not unanimous. As a result there was disillusionment among the ranks and supporters of the components of Janata.

Lastly, in the fall of the Desai government mass struggles did not play a crucial role. Mass struggles may have played a marginal role, but they were not the main factor. The fall of Desai's government will not particularly help to inspire the self-confidence of the masses. The masses see themselves on the margins of the process, as spectators. They have not contributed to the downfall; they are not the cause.



INDIRA GANDHI

*Q. From independence until the state of emergency the Congress Party ruled by itself. There was relatively stable capitalist rule in India. Since then, especially since the emergency and the downfall of Gandhi, there has been a lot of instability. Why has there been this shift in the mid-1970s to greater instability in capitalist*

*rule and how do you see it developing in the future?*

A. That's a big question. Let me take this up in three parts: 1947, 1967, 1977. These were crucial watersheds in the politics of India, in terms of bourgeois politics.

In 1947, the Congress Party enjoyed vast influence in all of India. It was politically and economically stable. From 1947 to 1967 there was massive planning and industrialization—of course in the interests of the rich people. In that period India emerged as one of the most important industrial powers in the Third World.

But a new situation began in 1967. For the first time regional parties emerged as a big force in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal. In the latter two the CPI and CPI(M)<sup>2</sup> became the major parties. In northern India the Swatantra Party ruled in one state. Then there was the Jan Sangh, which developed as a regional party in northern India. In the 1967 elections a whole gamut of political parties from right to left took office in the different states.

This was a new development in Indian politics, completely different from what had taken place from 1947 to 1966.

This continued from 1967 to perhaps 1972, and then again the phenomenon changed. Indira Gandhi ascended to power in the 1971 elections and steamrolled over the regional parties. The Indian masses down the line voted for Indira's Congress Party.

So for a short time again there was a single party enjoying mass support, but by 1973 and 1974 this was again disintegrating. With this process of the disintegration of the Congress (I) came the imposition of the state of emergency in 1975.

In 1977, again the phenomenon of the regional parties emerged. The result was that no single party emerged on a national level enjoying support throughout India.

Neither the Janata Party nor now Indira's Congress Party had a real following all over the country. This is a very significant aspect of Indian politics.

The disintegration of bourgeois parties, however, did not result in adding to the support of the leftist parties. They remain regional parties also.

In 1979 we see that the Janata Party is split up, the Congress Party is split from the Congress (I), and decomposition and recomposition is going on. But all the recomposition that is taking place is not resulting in the formation of an India-wide party.

India has entered, in my personal opinion, a period in which there is not a single party—bourgeois or non-bourgeois—that has a following throughout India. It is the era of the regional party.

We are entering a period of instability,

2. Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist).—IP/I

uncertainty, and unpredictability. This has great significance for the working people of India. The period of bourgeois-democratic stability is crumbling and cannot be reasserted. In fact it will be more and more under attack.

It means that the instability in the central government in India will have deep repercussions in terms of politics, in terms of economic development, in terms of struggles, and so on.



CHARAN SINGH

This economic and political crisis of the Indian bourgeoisie, of the Indian bourgeois parties, of bourgeois politics, is not taking place in a vacuum.

The Indian economy is not a stable economy. It is not a developing economy. It is in a blind alley. Sixty to 70 percent of the country's population has no purchasing power. The capitalists are forced to compete on the world market because there is no market in India. Thus the whole economy is geared up to export, not only industrial raw materials, not only agricultural goods, but also industrial finished products.

But the Indian economy is undergoing a big slump. If you think of the U.S. and European capitalist economies as a big ship and the Indian economy as a small boat, and the whole sea is in turmoil and uncertainty, then if the big ships are hit hard you can imagine the damage to the small boat.

In my personal opinion, the political crisis in India will coincide with a big economic crisis. The small boat of the Indian economy will not be able to withstand the storms of the economic sea. I don't see any possibility of stabilizing bourgeois democracy at all.

There is also deep discontent among the toiling people, the workers of India, people in Eastern India, the untouchables.

Under these circumstances the day-dream of a coalition government won't last long. □

## For International Solidarity With Struggle in El Salvador

[El Salvador today is going through a prerevolutionary period. Strikes and factory takeovers to demand a rise in wages and a halt to repression against the workers movement are occurring one after the other, as are street demonstrations, occupations of churches, and other actions in support of democratic rights—in particular freedom for the political prisoners. In the countryside, the masses are organizing to resist the terrorist activities of right-wing bands.]

[Throughout the country mobilizations are pressing toward greater confrontations with the dictatorship of General Carlos Humberto Romero. Despite brutal repression, the masses show no sign of faltering. To the contrary, on September 27 10,000 persons marched in the center of San Salvador in one of the biggest marches seen in the capital in years, chanting slogans against the government and in solidarity with the revolution in Nicaragua.]

[One of the organizations at the head of this upsurge is the Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR—Revolutionary People's Bloc). The BPR, founded in 1975, is a coalition of trade unionists, peasants, teachers, student organizations, and neighborhood organizations.]

[For the information of our readers we are publishing excerpts from a statement issued by the BPR in August of this year. We have taken the text from the September 1979 issue of the BPR's international bulletin, published in San Francisco, California. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

### I. Growing Poverty and Hunger

In El Salvador the contradictions inherent in the dependent capitalist system have developed to the point where the Salvadorean economy is locked into a state of permanent crisis.

As the crisis has intensified, Yankee imperialism has been increasing its domination by tightening the bonds of dependency that tie our country's economy to big imperialist capital.

With the accelerating collapse of the system, the weight of the situation has been piled on the shoulders of the working people. The great mass of the people face increasing impoverishment in the conditions of their lives.

- The number of unemployed workers is constantly growing. Unemployment is reaching serious proportions in the countryside, where access to the land is increasingly restricted. This is something the

present system cannot solve.

- The cost of basic necessities is rising. The cost of living is going up while real wages are falling and unemployment is increasing.

- Small producers are facing ruin.

### II. The Class Enemy's Attack

In the face of the rise of a vigorous mass revolutionary movement, Yankee imperialism is advising the enemy to carry out a strategy that combines *reformism, repression, and psychological warfare*.

#### 1. Reformism

Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero is trying to use his term in office (which began in 1977) to calm popular discontent by applying reformist measures. But these measures cannot solve the desperate hunger and poverty of the people of El Salvador. In this period he is putting forward a demagogic "National Plan of Well-Being for All," which, it has been shown in practice, is not suited to El Salvador's conditions of extreme poverty, although it will cost about 5 billion Salvadorean colones.

This program covers health, housing, education, work, security, and public works.

Along with this program, the government is aiming ideological diversions at the youth, teachers, and peasants (such as the Miss Universe Contest, the Scholastic Corps, and movies in the countryside).

This plan, which aims to build a social base of support within the population, is applied through the use of institutions and bodies that are manipulated by the government and are directed toward the shantytowns and the countryside and its villages.

One of these organizations is the well-known Acción Cívica Militar. It brings food, clothing, and medicines to regions in the Salvadorean countryside where the army has previously carried out massacres. The aim of the program is to persuade people that it is the "barbaric" activities of the revolutionary peasant organizations that provoke the arrival of the security forces.

On the other hand, the ruling classes respond to the people's demands with insolence. In the face of the revolutionary development taking place in the country, a section of the ruling class is demanding that the puppet government step up its repression.

In the factories:

Combative unionized workers are fired and given severance pay; the police and army are used to break strikes (for example at Embotelladoras Constanza y Tropi-

cal at the beginning of the year). By forcing people to pay a kickback to the boss in order to get a job, they get a work force that is likely to be submissive. The government and the bosses are carrying out a multisided policy that aims to:

- Encourage control of unions by populist and demagogic leaders who have always served the interests of the bosses.

- Encourage and control the unions of bookkeepers, secretaries, supervisors, nurses, public employees, and various professional layers, while simultaneously trying to neutralize the combative secondary school and university movement as well as the teachers movement, which the government does not control.

- Encourage the emigration of workers to other parts of the world such as Bolivia and Saudi Arabia (where they are building a military city in the desert for King Khalid).

In the countryside:

The landowners have blocked off any possibility of anyone but themselves getting access to the land. They don't rent land to the peasants because they reserve it for themselves in order to cultivate the crops they grow on a large scale: coffee, sugar cane, cotton, and fodder for livestock.

The prices of agricultural production are rising daily and the poor peasants are forced to work as day laborers during the few months when work can be found in the countryside of El Salvador. This increases unemployment in both the cities and the rural areas.

#### 2. Repression

For years the class enemy has been carrying out fierce attacks—including military attacks—on the towns where the fighting mass movement is strong.

The Salvadorean military dictatorship has tried to claim that its military offensives and every kind of repression are legal by arbitrarily changing the legal codes, using decree laws such as the unsuccessful "Public Order Law" and the current "State of Siege."

The results of the fascist-like military dictatorship's assassinations, murders, outrages, and pillage have been felt in every corner of the country. The cities and countryside in El Salvador are under a *permanent state of siege*; people's activities are tightly controlled everywhere.

In the Salvadorean countryside, military roadblocks that isolate hundreds of square kilometers are a daily occurrence. We might recall the military occupation of Aguilares, a town north of the capital,

which is remembered today as a heroic example of people's struggle. This operation by the Salvadorean army in May and June 1977 covered 250 square kilometers.

Early in 1978 the army militarily occupied over 1,000 square kilometers in the region of San Pedro Perulapán, Conjutepeque, Cabañas, and San Vicente (departments east of the capital).

The latest military operation, which included this same part of the country, has been going on from the end of 1978 to now. The inhabitants of entire towns fled into the ravines. Many were killed by bullets and many others died from hunger and cold in the mountains and ravines of our country.

In these repressive actions, which are part of the "war against the people" strategy being followed by the ruling classes and the puppet government of Gen. Romero, it is useful to point out the important role being played by the paramilitary organization called ORDEN (Organización Democrática Nacionalista).

ORDEN's role has been to inform on the population and to serve as an instrument of psychological terrorism by pointing out houses and people to the military. Because it is basically peasant in composition, this organization has provided a vital service to the army by guiding it along the twisting trails and roads while it was persecuting the peasants.

We should add that murder, torture, pillage, and the burning of the peasants' crops and humble huts are more and more frequently committed by these gangs in the service of the military dictatorship.

In addition, trade-union, teacher, and student leaders are being seized or are "disappearing" with increasing frequency. For example, the general-secretary of the Bloque Popular Revolucionario was seized as were other members of the leadership of our organization. According to Gen. Romero's government they have "disappeared."

In addition, there has been an increase in vicious massacres and bloody ambushes of mass and people's mobilizations. On May 8 more than twenty compañeros were brutally massacred on the steps of the Metropolitan Cathedral. More than fifty others were wounded and many were seized and "disappeared" in the dictatorship's prisons.

A similar coldblooded, brutal attack took place on May 22, 1979, in front of the Venezuelan embassy when there was an attempt to pass food and water in to the compañeros who were under siege by the criminal army and police of the Salvadorean government.

For a number of months a conflict has been brewing between the military dictatorship and the Catholic church. The current regime is trying to encourage control of the church by sectors within it that are reactionary and opposed to the people's struggle.

At the same time there has been a radicalization within the church as a result of the recent advances of the mass movement that is fighting for its immediate and basic interests. As a result, the most reactionary sectors of the native bourgeoisie have struck hard against those priests who in one way or another echoed the demands for freedom being raised by the workers, peasants, and students. (The assassinations of Rutilio Grande in 1977, Navarro Oviedo in 1977, and Ernesto Barrera Motto in 1978.)

#### *The opposition political parties.*

In recent years the elections have demonstrated that the fascist-like military dictatorship is not ready to see a change of faces in the positions of state power, not even within the framework that U.S. imperialism sponsors.

At this point parties like the Partido Demócrata Cristiano, the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario, and the Unión Democrática Nacional Opositora are neither mass organizations nor people's organizations.

These political parties have echoed the demagogic and counterrevolutionary "human rights" policy of U.S. president James Carter. That is why they are making so much noise about the dialogue that Gen. Romero is now proposing, noise that suits their reformism without raising the fundamental economic questions that concern the mass of people in El Salvador.

Moreover, we should note the fact that by amnestying the political exiles who belong to these parties, the dictatorship is trying to do two things. First it wants to set up a bourgeois "opposition"—one that will divert and confuse the struggle—to give the regime a degree of international credibility.

Secondly the regime wants to establish a whole movement to cut across the unstoppable growth in revolutionary consciousness of the exploited masses and their ongoing organization into the Bloque Popular Revolucionario.

In this way imperialism, the native bourgeoisie, the fascist-like military dictatorship, and the electoral parties are trying to divert the Salvadorean masses from the revolutionary process, from their immediate and historic interests, and suck them into reformist positions that are against the people's interests.

### **III. Irreversible Advance In the Struggle of Revolutionary Masses**

In recent months the fascist-like military dictatorship, functioning as the loyal representative of the interests of the ruling class, has embarked on a campaign of assassination, disappearances, massive searches, psychological warfare, and the like as part of the counterrevolutionary offensive that it is launching against the exploited and oppressed people who are daily joining the organizations of the

Bloque Popular Revolucionario in order to fight vigorously to satisfy their most basic needs and to achieve their final liberation.

It is a counterrevolutionary campaign that the government tries to cover with its cynically demagogic policy—carrying out milk distributions in the marginal zones (shantytowns), carrying out a multimillion dollar propaganda campaign around the land distributions, the abolition of the Public Order Law, and deceiving the masses with its supposed "Democratic Opening," which only satisfies the interests of imperialism and its allies—the native bourgeoisie and the military dictatorship headed by Gen. Romero.

In face of the escalating repression against the mass of people, the Salvadorean people, taking their orientation and leadership from the Bloque Popular Revolucionario, are responding firmly and valiantly in an uninterrupted and unified process of people's revolution toward socialism.

The Bloque Popular Revolucionario believes that international solidarity with the people's struggle now taking place in El Salvador is of vital importance. It asks the people of the world, and especially Salvadoreans outside the country and the exploited of the land, to form or join committees of international solidarity with the struggles of the Salvadorean people and the Bloque Popular Revolucionario. These committees should organizationally spur activities that increase the international isolation of the fascist-like military dictatorship and strengthen the revolutionary process in El Salvador.

These include activities such as:

1. Publicizing in every way possible the constant massacres of the Salvadorean people.

2. Demanding that the governments of the countries they reside in and international bodies call for:

- Freedom for the 189 political prisoners in El Salvador.

- Cessation of the repression against the people.

- Freedom for Oscar López, financial secretary of the Shantytown Residents Union; Numas Escobar, political affairs secretary of the Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR); Marciano Meléndez, member of the leadership of the Christian Federation of Peasants (FECCAS), all of whom are leaders of the people.

3. And, in general, to launch campaigns of solidarity with the struggles of the Salvadorean people and the Bloque Popular Revolucionario (BPR).

Halt the repression against the people!

In the face of the arrests, assassinations, and searches, the response is the people's repudiation!

Long live international solidarity!

To counter the fascist-like attacks, an organized struggle of the people!

*Bloque Popular Revolucionario*

El Salvador, August 1979

## Israel's Genocidal Policy in Lebanon

By Dave Dellinger

[Dave Dellinger was one of the central leaders in the movement against the Vietnam war in the United States. This August, in addition to traveling through Syria, Jordan, Israel, and the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Dellinger took part in a fact-finding tour of Lebanon.

[Yassir Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, told Dellinger in an interview on August 14 that "as a result of Israel's new policy of daily attacks on the villages and farms of south Lebanon, there are now close to 800,000 refugees. The majority are Lebanese; about a quarter of them are Christians, the rest Muslims. . . . We have managed to find shelter for about 500,000 but another 300,000 are without habitation."

[Israeli forces, Arafat declared, "are using American phosphorus bombs to burn the fruit trees, to destroy the gardens. It will take ten years before they are usable again. They are using American planes, tanks, guns, and CBUs (Cluster-bomb units) and antipersonnel weapons that violate the international laws of warfare. The American policy is a policy of collaboration in genocide."

[Dellinger described his own observations in an article in the September 28 issue of *Seven Days*, a radical magazine published in New York. He urged "an end to U.S. arms sales to both sides" in the Mideast conflict, and denounced "the one-sided war now raging in Lebanon."

[The following is taken from his article.]

\* \* \*

As we toured the war-ravaged villages of southern Lebanon, I was constantly reminded of destruction I had seen in Vietnam.

When I visited North Vietnam in 1966 the United States claimed to be bombing exclusively military targets. But what I saw was the widespread, systematic destruction of civilian targets—houses, schools, hospitals and churches. In the south, the sophisticated U.S. rationale was that since the guerrillas swam like fish in the sea of the peasantry, it was necessary to dry up the sea and rob them of their cover. In practice this came to mean burning, bombing, or bulldozing whole villages out of existence, killing the livestock, uprooting fruit and rubber trees, and saturating the soil with chemicals that will poison the Vietnamese soil for decades.

Like the U.S. in Vietnam, Israel justifies its raids on Lebanon in terms of military necessity—to crush the military command

posts of the PLO and centers from which terrorist raids are launched on Israel. In my view, such a limited goal would be at least understandable. Both before and during the trip south I made clear to the Palestinian leaders with whom I met my abhorrence of the PLO's terrorist attacks on civilians, which I consider morally offensive and politically counterproductive. (Nothing that I saw or heard in Lebanon lessened my opposition to the attacks on Qiryat Shemona, Maalot, Nahariya, and elsewhere, including the Lod [Tel Aviv] airport and the Munich Olympics.)

But, to my horror, what I observed was not a policy of selective military strikes, but a policy of massive Israeli terrorism against the population of Lebanon. I saw an extensive, systematic destruction of civilian targets—houses, schools, medical clinics, churches, and mosques. The kinds of targets, weapons used (including antipersonnel bombs outlawed by the Geneva and other international conventions of warfare) were painfully reminiscent of Vietnam—and so were the results. (Although as Colonel Yoram Hamuzrahi, chief liaison officer of the Israeli Defense Forces with Haddad's militia, did point out to me later, one tactic is different. Instead of all-out saturation bombing of a target area, the Israelis conduct persistent, smaller daily attacks on scattered civilian areas.) In the end, after four months, every village, town, and refugee camp south of Sidon (and many places north of it) have been hit many times, with catastrophic human results.

So far, the Israelis have driven an estimated 800,000 Lebanese and Palestinians from their homes, most of them since the signing of the Camp David accords. The editor of *An Nahar*, Lebanon's largest newspaper, told our group,

The United States presents the peace treaty as a constraint on Israel, but it has provided them with a license to kill. It serves as a cover for Israel to intensify and diversify its attacks on us, striking at will.

The Biblical city of Tyre is a ghost town. Like other towns and villages it has been attacked by land, sea, and air. In 1975 it had a population of 50,000, but subsequently swelled to nearly double that size because of fighting in and near Beirut. Now an estimated 4,000-5,000 remain, mostly the poor who have no money to travel and nowhere to go. We walked on Christian Street, a once privileged spot by

the sea, without seeing a person. The five monasteries, which gave it its name, are all closed now because of the shelling from Israeli ships.

In the Palestinian refugee camp at Rashadiye, we talked with a Swedish doctor, Gert Anderson, who serves in a clinic operated by the Scandinavian Palestine Solidarity Committee. Sitting on an outdoor bench, where the patients awaited their turn at the clinic, he reported:

Yesterday we were shelled. One person was killed and three wounded. Last week a fragmentation bomb exploded right here where we are sitting. Luckily no patients were sitting here at the time.

They shoot without warning. It is a form of terrorism. We think the purpose is to keep people tense and insecure, to keep the camps empty. They do the same in the villages. This week they have shelled Tyre [a few miles away] more than the camp.

I pointed out that the Israelis say they are attacking the camps because they are military headquarters for PLO units.

Anderson responded, "I have been here two-and-a-half months and have never seen any evidence of a significant military presence. There are no large concentrations of PLO military here. There are only a few militia who guard the beach to head off commando raids. Most of the people in the camp are families."

A nurse at the clinic told us that the camp originally housed 12,000 people but grew to about 17,500 during the civil war. Now there are about 2,000 people left. The number fluctuates in response to the frequency of the attacks, and the attacks increase with the refugee population. "When the camp is nearly empty, they are not interested in bombing," said Anderson, "although the planes fly over every day to scare people. When it has been relatively quiet for a while and more people are here, they bomb and shell more regularly."

The day following our visit to Rashadiye, we visited the Sabra refugee camp in Beirut. It was jammed with refugees from the south. One man whom we spoke with in a crowded alleyway told us excitedly, "I left Rashadiye yesterday, because the American planes came and attacked us."

We were startled: American planes? He explained, "I do not believe that they are Israeli planes because they are American made and American given." Others in the crowd that had gathered around us echoed his sentiments. "It is not Israel that is fighting us," one man said. "It is the United States." □