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**Protests Shake
Korean Dictatorship**

**Morocco's Losing
War Against
Sahara Guerrillas**



**The Military Coup
in El Salvador**

Protests Shake Korean Dictatorship

By David Frankel

Blaming "hooligans" and "impure elements," South Korean dictator Park Chung Hee imposed martial law in Pusan October 17, the second day of antigovernment demonstrations there. But the protests by students and workers continued despite the troops, tanks, and armored cars that poured into the country's second-largest city.

On October 18 the protests—perhaps the biggest since the student-initiated upsurge of 1960 that brought down the government of President Syngman Rhee—spread to the industrial city of Masan. There, as in Pusan, troops were sent in, a curfew imposed, and universities closed. Nevertheless, demonstrations in both cities also took place October 19. According to a United Press International dispatch from Masan October 22, "many of the city's protesters were identified as factory workers."

Protest actions were reported as well in Seoul, Taegu, and Chongju.

The protests were a massive blow to the Park dictatorship and to its main backer—U.S. imperialism.

To Washington's embarrassment, U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown arrived in Korea October 17, shortly after the protests began. He pledged to maintain strong forces in Korea and throughout the Pacific and "to maintain stability in the region and deter acts of hostility or adventurism." But Brown had nothing to say about the struggle against the dictatorship.

While delivering a letter from President Carter on the human rights issue, Brown promised to upgrade U.S. artillery and air power in Korea and conveyed Carter's approval of a request by Park to allow the assembly of F-5 jet fighters in South Korean factories.

Carter's human rights charade was effectively exposed by opposition leader Kim Young Sam in an interview with *New York Times* correspondent Henry Scott Stokes published September 16.

Speaking of Carter's June visit to Korea,

Correction

In last week's issue, the introduction was inadvertently dropped from the statement on the Simón Bolívar Brigade (p. 1033). The statement was adopted October 1 by majority vote of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Kim said: "Carter gave a big present to Park by coming here. . . ."

"We asked him not to come, precisely because it could encourage Park to strengthen oppression, and all this came true. When I think about the trip, I cannot suppress my anger."

Kim complained that "whenever I tell American officials that only by public and direct pressure on Park can the U.S. bring him under control, they say that they cannot interfere in the domestic politics of South Korea.

"This is a phony theory. Doesn't the U.S. have 30,000 ground troops here. . . ? What is that if not interference in domestic affairs?"

The current protests were set off by Kim's expulsion from the National Assembly October 4. In response, the entire opposition bloc in the Assembly resigned October 13.

Kim himself told *Washington Post* correspondent William Chapman October 9 that he was urging the opposition delegation not to resign. After the deputies voted to resign, Chapman pointed out that "the opposition party's almost unanimous decision would not have occurred unless many members had felt pressure from constituents angered by the expulsion."

Particularly ominous for the Park regime was the participation of workers in the demonstrations in both Pusan and Masan.

With prices rising at the rate of 30

percent a year, with unemployment up to 8 percent, and with wages averaging only \$250 a month, South Korean workers have good cause for their anger.

Workers seeking to better their conditions face the same strong-arm tactics used by the Park regime against any other demonstrators. In August, for example, one worker was killed, 100 injured, and nearly 200 arrested when police broke up a protest against unemployment at the headquarters of the opposition New Democratic Party.

The Park regime has sought to minimize the seriousness of the clashes, the number of arrests, and the number of casualties. According to a report in the October 20 *New York Times* there have been 550 arrests in Pusan alone. Although the regime denies that there have been any deaths, an October 17 Reuters dispatch said "reports, some of which came from South Korean reporters and others from critics of Mr. Park's Government, said that five persons had been killed."

During his September interview, Kim compared the situation in South Korea to that of Iran under the shah. "Iran was America's supreme diplomatic disaster," he said. "I want the U.S. Embassy to avoid following the same track here."

However, as Brown's performance indicated, Washington sees little alternative to supporting Park's dictatorship. The whole history of Korea since World War II has been the history of U.S. support to one dictator after another. The imperialists are unable to maintain their grip through any other means, at least not for long.

And just as the imperialists have no choice but to support the dictator, the Korean people have no choice but to resist his tyranny. Despite Kim's warning, Korea will sooner or later follow Iran along the road to revolution. The latest protests indicate that it may be sooner. □

Imperialists Tighten Screws on Zimbabwe Fighters

By David Russell

Since September 10, when the latest conference on Rhodesia opened in London, the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe has been the victim of a coordinated military and diplomatic offensive by the imperialist powers.

Punishing military raids by Rhodesian and South African forces were carried out against Mozambique and Angola in hopes of pressuring those regimes to lean on the Patriotic Front, which relies on them for aid.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has made no secret of her desire to lift economic sanctions against the Rhodesian regime. With full U.S. backing, the British have been attempting to force the liberation fighters to either give up some of their key demands or else to walk

out of the conference. In either case, the sanctions would be lifted and the hand of the white minority strengthened.

Under relentless imperialist pressure, the Patriotic Front agreed October 18 to accept a draft constitution proposed by the British government.

Among the points in the British constitutional proposal are provisions that:

- Saddle any new government with the cost of paying pensions to all officials of the previous, illegal government;
- Ensure continued white control of the army and civil service by guaranteeing representation for people who "have held senior rank," i.e., whites.
- Prohibit any constitutional changes for a period of ten years, thus ensuring

disproportionate white representation in parliament of 20 out of 100 seats. Whites make up 3 percent of Zimbabwe's population.

- And assure the white settlers compensation for any land taken from them.

Lord Carrington, the British foreign secretary, presented the Patriotic Front and the white-minority-dominated government of Bishop Abel Muzorewa with an ultimatum October 3, telling both sides to accept the British draft or else withdraw from the conference. Not surprisingly, Muzorewa was quick to accept.

Representatives of the Patriotic Front were especially bitter over the provision on land tenure. Whites own nearly half of all the land in Rhodesia, and 86 percent of the farmland.

"Years ago, when the white men first came to our country, they took all the best land for themselves," Joshua Nkomo declared. "They removed the African people to areas where there was no water, where the soil was poor, where life was hard. Now the dispossessed want their land back. It's as simple as that."

However, the imperialists are determined to hold back the kind of radical social measures that would be necessary to reverse the economic deprivation of the Zimbabwean masses. "A State Department spokesman today reaffirmed U.S. support for the British approach," *Washington Post* correspondent Jay Ross reported in an October 15 dispatch.

On October 16, Carrington began meeting with Muzorewa on the implementation of the British plan. Two days later the Patriotic Front agreed to the British proposal on the condition that the cost of compensation not be borne by a newly established government in Zimbabwe.

But it is clear that the pressure for concessions by the liberation forces is far from over. On October 17 South African Foreign Minister Roelof Botha flew to London to meet with Carrington and Thatcher on the progress of their squeeze play against the Patriotic Front. The talks were officially described as "friendly."

As an added form of pressure against the liberation fighters, Botha reiterated the South African regime's threat that it would intervene against any government in Zimbabwe "installed by force."

Also on October 17, Carrington revealed some of the British proposals for a transition to a new government. A British governor would be sent into Rhodesia to take charge, and supposedly free elections would be supervised by the existing Rhodesian army and white-dominated administrative structure.

"It looks like the same kind of ultimatum is shaping up as we had over the constitution," one Patriotic Front official said according to a Reuters dispatch. "Carrington does not seem to realize that the war continues unless we agree to peace. He is not taking into account our views at all."

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Military Coup in El Salvador

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—In a move designed to head off a revolutionary explosion, a group of military officers in El Salvador ousted General Carlos Humberto Romero from the presidency on October 15.

The U.S. State Department gave the coup "an unusually friendly reception," according to the October 17 *New York Times*.

The new Salvadoran military junta, headed by colonels Jaime Abdul Gutiérrez and Adolfo Arnoldo Majano, issued a declaration pledging to "respect human rights."

But the first acts of the new regime were to declare a state of siege and suspend constitutional rights.

A 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew has been imposed for the next thirty days, and meetings of more than three people are prohibited. It is forbidden to express views that the new junta considers damaging to the republic.

Soon after the coup, police security forces in the capital, San Salvador, violently dislodged striking workers who had been occupying the Lido bread factory and the Arco construction company. The workers reportedly put up stiff resistance.

At the Duramás shoe factory and the Apex textile factory, which were under occupation by workers, fires broke out. The same for the Sherwin Williams paint factory, according to the correspondent for Mexican TV news, "24 Horas."

Clashes between military forces and protesters were also reported at churches in the town of Soyapango, nine kilometers from San Salvador, and in the Mexicanos and Cuzcataningo districts of the capital. The churches had been occupied by members of the February 28 People's League (LP-28), who demanded the release of political prisoners. Barricades were reportedly erected in the streets near the Mexicanos army barracks.

An October 16 UPI dispatch states that the National Guard attacked, armed with submachine guns and machetes, and supported by tanks. At least twenty persons were killed and dozens wounded in the first two days, according to news reports compiled by Pacifica radio today.

Mexican TV news "24 Horas" also reported that the new regime is carrying out roundups of persons suspected of belonging to rebel groups.

On October 16 armed members of the Revolutionary Peoples Army (ERP) seized several radio stations and broadcast statements denouncing the new military regime

and calling for continued armed struggle. The Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN) also declared their intention "to continue the struggle by means of arms until the liberation of the Salvadoran people."

According to a report in the October 19 *New York Times*, the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR) and the United People's Action Front (FAPU), the two largest workers and peasants organizations in the country, have also denounced the coup as a maneuver designed to undermine the struggle against military rule.

The new Salvadoran rulers say their intention is to fight against extremists of the left and right, and they have suggested that their coup was launched to head off a bid by the extreme right wing of the military.

With the ousted Romero regime so discredited, the new junta appears to be trying to give the armed forces a more progressive image. Upon taking power, it issued a declaration that included the following:

- A denunciation of the Romero regime for violating human rights, tolerating corruption, and causing the loss of prestige internationally for "the country and the noble armed institutions."

- A warning that Romero's rule had "provoked a loss of confidence on the part of the private sector," leading to a massive flight of capital from El Salvador.

- Pledges to halt "violence and corruption," "guarantee human rights," declare an amnesty for political prisoners, and bring about "an equitable distribution of the national wealth."

- Pledges that elections would be held in which all political forces—"regardless of ideology"—would be allowed to participate.

In a news conference October 18, the junta further sought to improve its image by declaring that it would seek to improve ties with the new government in Nicaragua and would move toward reestablishing diplomatic ties with Cuba.

Radio reports from El Salvador that were monitored here by the Sandinista daily *Barricada* said the new regime would order the dissolution of the hated right-wing paramilitary group ORDEN (which was organized and controlled by the Romero regime).

Support for the new regime was announced almost immediately by the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) and by the Catholic archbishop of El Salvador, Oscar

Arnulfo Romero. According to an Agence France Press dispatch from San Salvador, the archbishop "called on opposition groups to put down their arms and wait for solutions favorable to the diverse problems of the country." Archbishop Romero had been one of the most prominent and outspoken opponents of the previous regime's enormous violations of human rights.

The Christian Democrats have ties to the group of officers who led the coup. A former leader of that group, Colonel Ernesto Claramount, was the PDC candidate for president in 1977. He was deprived of victory only by a massive vote fraud organized by General Romero and his allies in the armed forces.

According to the October 16 *Barricada*, Claramount, now in exile in Costa Rica, "affirms that he was in contact with Colonel Gutiérrez."

President Carter's hand in the coup seems very clear. A U.S. State Department source told the *Washington Post* that the coup "certainly did not take us by surprise."

The White House has been particularly concerned about the situation in El Salvador, ever since the Sandinistas overthrew the Somoza dictatorship here in neighboring Nicaragua in July.

Fearing that the freedom struggle against Romero would be encouraged by the Sandinista victory, the Carter administration sent three top-level missions to El Salvador to discuss ways to dampen the mounting unrest.

But mass opposition to the Romero dictatorship continued to rise, and the U.S. officials, according to the October 17 *New York Times*, "had come to regard the situation as virtually hopeless."

The development that the U.S. government sought to avert, according to the *Times*, "was a coup by right-wing military leaders even more extreme than General Romero." This, the U.S. feared, would "have soon provoked a revolution, probably led by leftist elements."

However the situation develops over the next few weeks, one thing is clear. The ruling class in El Salvador, and its backers in Washington, are fearful that the example of Nicaragua will spread to El Salvador.

Here in Nicaragua the events in El Salvador are being watched with great interest. In recent days, solidarity actions with the struggle there have been held by the teachers union (ANDEN), by the Association of Nicaraguan Women, by the July 19 Sandinista Youth, and by a number of Sandinista Defense Committees. □

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Reporter Tries to Justify U.S. Drive Against Kampuchea

By Fred Feldman

Correspondents visiting Kampuchea have brought back harrowing tales of the crimes of the Pol Pot regime and the hunger and devastation haunting that country.

The increasing public awareness of Pol Pot's crimes is making it more difficult for the imperialists to justify supporting Pol Pot in the United Nations, arming his remaining troops along the Thai-Kampuchea border, and using starvation as a weapon to bring down the Heng Samrin regime that ousted Pol Pot in January.

From the standpoint of the imperialists, these articles called for a quick riposte. So *Washington Post* correspondent Elizabeth Becker recently wrote a series of articles attempting to fill this need.

Becker was one of a team of three reporters from the capitalist West who visited Kampuchea as guests of Pol Pot in December 1978. The others were St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* reporter Richard Dudman and British author Malcolm Caldwell, who was assassinated in Pnompenh.

The political purpose of their tour was to prepare the way for more open U.S. support to Pol Pot's military acts against Vietnam and against Kampuchean opponents of the regime. So, reports of atrocities by Pol Pot (a theme on which the Carter administration had earlier made many propaganda pronouncements) had to be played down.

'Material Gains'

Becker still claims that her observations disprove charges that Pol Pot's regime destroyed the Kampuchean economy; subjected the people to hunger, misery, and disease; and shattered the nation's cultural heritage. On the contrary, Becker says, Pol Pot's regime was characterized by "material gains"—although marred by severe repression that killed "tens of thousands."

"During my trip to Cambodia last year, just weeks before the Vietnamese invasion," she writes in an article published in the October 14 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, "I toured more than 10 factories from pharmaceutical to textile to rubber factories. On a long boat trip up the Mekong River I saw the fishermen casting their nets into the river and bringing up immense harvests of fish. In the early morning hours I walked through over a dozen clean streets in the capital."

The charge that Kampuchea's cultural heritage had been destroyed is effectively answered in her opinion, by the assertion that guides "took us on tours of the national museum, royal palace, and the Ang-

kor Wat complex, still filled with art treasures."

Becker's comparatively rosy picture of life in Kampuchea is readily understandable, given the circumstances of her visit.

In the December 29, 1978, *Washington Post*, Becker described her visit as "a very strictly supervised government tour." Guards accompanied the reporters at all times. They had little freedom of movement. No Kampuchean—aside from Khmer Rouge officials—could talk freely to them. And none did.

So Becker has no right to assume that she was observing an accurate slice of life in Kampuchea under Pol Pot. She has no way of knowing how much was staged solely for her benefit.

Despite having been shown the best Pol Pot had to offer, Richard Dudman commented in the December 28, 1978, *New York Daily News* that government claims of agricultural and industrial progress could not be verified:

The government refused access to any production or trade specialists for detailed questioning about claimed yields.

It likewise ignored repeated requests to take two visiting American reporters to any of the hospitals or small clinics that it says are operating by the score throughout the country. Nor would it permit an interview with any public health authority.

The reporters also ran into difficulty seeking hard information on public education.

In the December 26, 1978, *New York Daily News*, Dudman summed up Kampuchea under Pol Pot as a country with "no money, no mail system, no telephone service, no books, almost no individual property, no advanced education, little or no religion, and none of the freedoms accepted, or at least professed, by most of the rest of the world."

And Becker, who now dismisses charges that Pol Pot wrecked the nation's cultural foundations, wrote last December, "The price—the human and cultural cost—has been tremendous."

More Reliable Reports

Since the fall of Pol Pot, numerous reports from Kampuchea have contradicted Becker's claims. In addition to those from the International Red Cross, UNICEF, Oxfam, and other relief agencies, there have been articles by John Pilger in the *London Daily Mirror*; by James Matlack in the *Christian Science Monitor*; by Nayan Chanda in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*; and others. (Becker states

she was denied permission to return.)

These reporters were given far more freedom than Becker or Dudman to travel in Kampuchea and talk freely to Kampuchians. While each of them heard and repeated different particular stories, the overall picture of practices and policies under Pol Pot appear the same.

Nayan Chanda heard this from an unemployed worker now living in Pnompenh:

Along with 275 families, Mong had spent nearly three years in a cooperative in Battambang province. At the end, he believed, only some 80 families survived. The rest were either executed . . . or had died of disease and exhaustion. For months, he said, the meals consisted of rice soup with salt and *prohok* (fish sauce). Children under eight and men over 40 could not stand this diet very long. They ate leaves, roots and rats whenever they had a chance. This plus 12 hours of rigorous work and malaria and other diseases took a heavy toll. "If the Vietnamese had come a few months later," Mong said, "we would all have been dead."

James Matlock, in the October 17 *Christian Science Monitor*, tells of Chau Sa, a former teacher who now works in Pnompenh's only orphanage:

Back in April, 1975, Sa had celebrated his son's first birthday—and the next day carried his son and aided his wife as they were driven out of Phnom Penh into the countryside. They walked 90 kilometers in 20 days. After arriving in a rural village in Prey Veng province he was imprisoned for five months. Most of his associates from the city died but he survived and rejoined his family. . . .

His whole village was forced to move halfway across Cambodia to the west in 1978. Many more died on this trek or were later killed by the teenage cadre who ruled the lives of the people with absolute power. . . . He and his wife survived until liberation but their child did not.

And John Pilger emphasized, "Every Cambodian I have met regards this [Vietnamese] 'aggression' as having saved their nation from slavery and extinction."

These reports are consistent with the reports that refugees have been making since Pol Pot came to power—whether they emanated from Thailand, or from Vietnam where 330,000 Kampuchians took refuge from Pol Pot.

Becker relies on refugee evidence to support other points in her argument. But she does not quote a single Kampuchean to support her claim that Pol Pot's reign was marked by "material gains."

Under Pol Pot, rice production (especially for export) was maintained at the cost of fierce repression, extreme austerity, draconian overwork, near-elimination of health care, abolition of most public educa-

tion, suppression of skills and technical knowledge, and massive dislocation of the population. The same applies to production in the very few factories relaunched after 1976. Far from bringing material advances, these measures undermined the very foundations—not to mention the human purposes—of progress and assured deepening decay and economic crisis in Kampuchea.

Vietnamese Plunder?

Seeking to minimize the blows that Pol Pot struck to Kampuchea, Becker must find another culprit for Kampuchea's current devastation. She places heavy emphasis on allegations by two refugees in Thailand of "Vietnamese plunder" of Kampuchea. Her only hard evidence, however, is her claim to have seen some Kampuchean artifacts for sale in Vietnamese stores.

To strengthen her accusation—which is borne out by nobody who has visited Kampuchea—Becker omits mentioning the massive quantities of food, clothing, medical equipment, transportation and electrical equipment, doctors, and skilled workers that Vietnam has sent to Kampuchea.

Contrary to Becker, the famine and ruin in Kampuchea stems from the damage inflicted by U.S. saturation bombing during the 1970-75 civil war, compounded by the crimes of Pol Pot.

When Pol Pot fell, working people refused to stay in the regime's agricultural labor camps. Hundreds of thousands set off in search of their former homes and missing relatives.

And the retreating Khmer Rouge adopted a scorched earth policy, killing suspected opponents of Pol Pot and kidnapping thousands of peasants. This caused further migrations, as peasants sought refuge with the Vietnamese forces or in cities controlled by the Heng Samrin government.

Writing from the Thai-Kampuchea border, James Pringle wrote in the June 14 *Newsweek*:

As the Khmer Rouge retreat, they are evidently leaving behind one last bitter legacy. Civilians say Pol Pot's men are burning Cambodia's rice barns and sowing paddies with mines to prevent them from being planted. 'It is farming season, but no one can get into the fields to do anything,' said Cheam Ly Hour, 31. A few months from now, Cambodia may reap the final harvest of the Khmer Rouge—a nationwide famine.

Capitalists Back Pol Pot

Instead of providing massive aid to help the Kampuchean people recover from a decade of U.S. bombing, civil war, and tyranny, the Carter administration and other capitalist governments have thrown their support to Pol Pot. They are holding back aid in hopes of weakening or bringing down the Heng Samrin government.

The real purpose of Becker's brief for Pol Pot is shown by her accompanying report

from Vietnam. While Becker is enormously impressed with the material benefits of life under Pol Pot, she can find nothing good to say about the Hanoi regime. She even eagerly passes along such absurdities as the claim that more than half of the South Vietnamese people want to leave (that's more than 13 million people!).

In search of sages who can enlighten her about the cause of Vietnam's problems, Becker stumbles upon "a Western official." He explains that it is all due to the fact that the Vietnamese "cannot break their habits of war."

It isn't the Vietnamese who can't break

the habit. It's U.S. imperialism—which backed Pol Pot's attacks on Vietnam, which supports CIA-organized armies in Laos against the Pathet Lao regime, and which urges on the Peking rulers on Vietnam's northern border.

The comparison of Becker's reporting about Kampuchea—where any attack on Pol Pot is viewed with suspicion—with her readiness to accept any criticism of Hanoi as gospel, reveals her method. It is guided not by facts but by the hostility of the U.S. government to the Vietnamese revolution and the Heng Samrin government, and by Carter's desire to rehabilitate Pol Pot as a possible alternative to Heng Samrin. □

Blast U.S. Policy as 'Crime of Decade'

Socialists Demand Emergency Aid to Kampuchea

[The following statement was issued October 19 by Andrew Pulley, candidate of the Socialist Workers Party for president of the United States.]

* * *

The U.S. government's policy on aid to Kampuchea is the crime of the decade.

After years of bombing the workers and peasants of Kampuchea, in order to hold back the revolution there, the U.S. is now trying to accomplish the same sordid task by blackmail and starvation. Already hundreds of thousands of people have died as a result of the arrogance and cruelty of the U.S. capitalist class and its government.

The Red Cross and other relief agencies estimate that 165,000 tons of rice are necessary to keep 2.5 million Kampuchians from starving during the next six months. The U.S. Department of Agriculture currently has 400,000 tons of rice stockpiled. I say the government should immediately send Kampuchea the food it needs.

The relief agencies estimate that an airlift of 600 tons of food a day is needed right now. The U.S., whose air force flew 3,630 B-52 bombing raids over Kampuchea in 1969-70, has not sent a single plane to aid the starving Kampuchians. I say the government should immediately organize an airlift to bring food to Kampuchea.

Elementary humanity demands that these measures be carried out at once. But the Carter administration has done nothing to aid Kampuchea. Instead, the administration is withholding food from starving children to undermine the government of Heng Samrin. Because the U.S. opposes this government, it is demanding that political conditions be met before the aid can be sent.

The U.S. policy in Kampuchea is part of its drive to isolate and roll back the Vietnamese revolution. The U.S.-backed Chi-

nese invasion, the refusal to give aid, the economic blockade, the cynical campaign around the "boat people," and the support to Pol Pot in the U.N. are all part of a campaign to punish the Vietnamese for throwing out the American imperialists.

This brutal campaign is intended to discourage all peoples fighting to free themselves from American domination.

Under the phony cover of friendship the U.S. is withholding emergency aid from Nicaragua, and it is threatening to use the same tactics of blackmail and starvation against the revolution there.

And today, twenty years after the victory of the Cuban revolution, the U.S. persists in its economic blockade of Cuba.

Instead of this policy of war, blackmail, hypocrisy, and deceit, American workers and farmers need and want a policy of aid, friendship, and cooperation with the peoples of the world.

I agree with Fidel Castro, when he told the United Nations: "The time has therefore come for all of us to join in the task of drawing entire peoples, hundreds of millions of human beings, out of the backwardness, poverty, malnutrition, disease, and illiteracy that keep them from enjoying full human dignity and pride."

Send aid to Kampuchea now!

Send aid to Nicaragua now!

End the blockade of Cuba and Vietnam!

National Gay Rights March in U.S.

The first national march in the United States for lesbian and gay rights was held in Washington October 14. An estimated 75,000 participated, including a significant proportion of women, and many Black and Latino marchers.

The demonstrators demanded that Congress pass comprehensive legislation to protect the rights of lesbians and gays, and that all laws and government practices that discriminate against homosexuals be abolished.

Morocco's Losing War Against Sahara

By Ernest Harsch

Striking swiftly across hundreds of miles of barren desert, several thousand Western Saharan freedom fighters on October 5 attacked the Moroccan-occupied city of Smara, the third largest in Western Sahara. In several days of fierce fighting, the guerrilla forces claimed to have killed more than 1,200 Moroccan troops and captured considerable military equipment.

The battle of Smara is just one indication of the increasing strength and effectiveness of the Polisario Front,* which is fighting for the Western Sahara's independence. Under Polisario's leadership, the Sahraoui people have made significant advances in recent months in their struggle to regain control over their country.

They have forced the Mauritanian regime, which formerly occupied part of the Western Sahara, to pull out of the war. They have won growing international support for their right to national self-determination. And they have thrown the Moroccan army of King Hassan onto the defensive.

All of this is bad news for American imperialism.

Although Washington formally maintains that it is "neutral" in the conflict, it has backed Hassan's war against the Sahraoui people ever since the Spanish colonialists handed the territory over to Morocco and Mauritania in 1975. Now the Carter administration is considering dropping even this pretense of "neutrality."

On October 16, Carter and his key foreign policy advisers held a meeting in Washington to discuss U.S. policy toward Morocco and the Western Sahara. According to a report in the October 19 *New York Times*, three policy options were outlined. One option—which no one at the meeting supported—proposed retaining the guise of "neutrality," with arms sales to Hassan continuing at the present level.

The other two options proposed stepping up military backing to Hassan, to different degrees.

Like the U.S. interventions in Angola, Ethiopia, Zaïre, and other African countries, the White House's backing to the Moroccan monarchy in its war against the Sahraoui people represents a serious threat to African sovereignty. If not stopped, it could escalate into even greater direct imperialist aggression in the region.

Imperialist backing to Hassan had been building up well before the Carter adminis-

tration's recent moves. From 1974 to 1978, American arms exports to Hassan jumped dramatically from \$4.1 million to \$99.8 million—almost in step with the increase in fighting. American F-5A jet fighters, bombs, napalm, and other weapons have been used against the Sahraoui people.

For public relations purposes, the White House maintains that Hassan does not have U.S. permission to use these arms in the Sahara, but government officials now admit that they know Hassan is doing so.

American approval for Hassan's war effort was further underlined in February 1979, when Carter approved the sale of spare parts for the F-5As, armored vehicles, and other arms used by the Moroccan army in the Sahara. It also approved the sale of six Boeing CH-47C "Chinook" heavy-lift helicopters, a helicopter that was used by American forces in Vietnam. The helicopters were delivered in August.

Despite Washington's public pronouncements of "neutrality," a counselor to Hassan himself has noted that these arms sales underline "the exceptional character of the real position of the United States."

With American encouragement, President Sadat of Egypt has also sent arms to Hassan. French imperialism has likewise been an important backer of the Moroccan monarchy; the Moroccan air force used French-supplied Mirage jets in the battle of Smara.

Despite the considerable imperialist military aid to Hassan, and despite the Moroccan army's vastly greater resources and number of troops, Polisario has been able to register significant advances, thanks to the overwhelming support it has from the Sahraoui population.

Founded in 1973 to fight against Spanish colonial rule, Polisario continued its struggle for independence when the country was partitioned between Morocco and Mauritania.

Striking into Mauritania itself, Polisario was able to subject the Mauritanian forces to considerable pressure. Under the strains of the war—and growing antiwar sentiment among the Mauritanian population—the dictatorship of Moktar Ould Daddah was overthrown by a military coup in July 1978. A little more than a year later, in August 1979, the Mauritanian authorities signed a pact with Polisario agreeing to withdraw from "the unjust war in the Western Sahara" and recognizing Polisario as the "representatives of the Saharan people."

Fearful of the repercussions of this Polisario victory, Hassan further extended

Moroccan involvement in the war. As Mauritanian troops were pulling out of southern Western Sahara, Hassan annexed the area as a "province" of Morocco. He also increased Moroccan troop strength in the Western Sahara, recalling the 1,500 troops he had stationed in Zaïre (who were helping to prop up the Mobutu regime) for that purpose.

Washington provided assistance to Hassan in this operation by flying the Moroccan troops out of Zaïre on American planes. According to Polisario, they were flown directly into the Western Sahara.

Polisario's advances on the ground have been paralleled by political gains internationally. Several dozen governments have now recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, including twenty in Africa itself. The recent summit conference of Nonaligned countries, in its final declaration, recognized the right of the Sahraoui people to "self-determination and independence" and condemned Morocco's annexation of even more Saharan territory.

The Cuban government, which has backed the Saharan struggle for several years, has played an important role in rallying international support for the Sahraoui people.

Even before the Mauritania pullout from the war, Polisario forces had struck at Moroccan garrisons within Morocco itself. Since then they have escalated such attacks, hoping to make the war as costly for Hassan as possible.

Journalists traveling with Polisario forces have reported that the Moroccans have abandoned numerous small garrisons, falling back on the main centers. Increasingly, even those have come under Polisario attack. Such important Moroccan garrisons as Techla, Bou-Craa, and Bir Anzaran in the Western Sahara and Abetih, Tan-Tan and Lebuirate have suffered heavy losses. At times, even the Moroccan regime has admitted losing hundreds of troops.

The economic strains of the war have fostered rising discontent within Morocco itself. In early 1979, tens of thousands of workers went out on a series of strikes. Some demoralization has been noted among Moroccan troops as well.

If the war in the Western Sahara continues to drag on as it has, and Moroccan forces continue to suffer heavy losses, Hassan's throne will become increasingly shaky. Loss of this bulwark of reaction is one of the imperialists' greatest fears in the region, and has been an additional factor in their opposition to the Saharan freedom struggle. □

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Sandinista Defense Committees Formed

[The following article appeared in the September 23 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada* and reprints of it are being posted up throughout Nicaragua. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

What Are the CDSs?

They are broad and democratic organizations of the Nicaraguan people, formed to defend and consolidate the revolution. Through them, the broadest masses of the people carry out revolutionary changes, seek solutions to their needs, defend their interests, and prepare themselves to participate directly in the exercise of people's power.

They Are the Hands, Eyes, and Ears of the Revolution

The participation of the CDSs, led by the vanguard of the people, the FSLN, was very important for the victorious insurrection of the Sandinista people.

They arose prior to the insurrection out of the urgent necessity for defense against the dictatorship and support to the FSLN. The defense committees were the most effective guardians of the neighborhood, cleaning out the hired thugs; they ran the first-aid stations, the clandestine clinics, the secret printshops with broken-down people's mimeographs, the underground stores, etc. Through these actions the whole people prepared themselves to take part in and to win the struggle to the death that led us to overthrow the bloodiest dictatorship in the Americas.

The participation of the Defense Committees, led by the Sandinista Front, was very important for the victorious insurrection of the Sandinista people.

Today They Are More Necessary Than Ever.

The insurrectional struggle was won against an open enemy. Today the fight is against stealthy internal enemies who, through subterfuge and guile, hope to snatch away the people's victory. But the fight is also against the enemy of all peoples, imperialism. The struggle today must be directed toward the organized people resolving the grave economic and social problems that the corruption of the fallen regime left us. The struggle today must be directed toward the masses increasingly organizing themselves to be able to achieve their aspirations, to defend themselves against their enemies, and to consolidate the revolution.

In addition, the CDSs have the task of

developing true revolutionary values, respect among neighbors, and collective work.

To Promote Labor for the Community, the Country, and the Defense of the Sandinista Revolution!

In organizing the CDSs we are organizing *People's Power*. This means that the masses are creating their own means of resolving their political, social, and economic problems. The fact is that projects won't move forward, revolutionary changes won't move forward if the CDSs, led by their vanguard, the FSLN, don't participate, if they don't make them real.

This people's power will be what counts in making sure the masses achieve their political and economic demands. The masses won't just be asking or demanding it, but will be actively participating through this structure.

Today, to consolidate the revolution and maintain its gains, the tasks that the CDSs must advance and develop are:

1. To defend the Sandinista revolution, which was won through the blood and sacrifice of our people and its vanguard. Not to allow stealthy native and foreign enemies to snatch away the gains that have been won.

To maintain active support to the revolution by means of demonstrations and political mobilizations, letting the whole world see the combative spirit of our *Sandinista Revolution*.

The CDSs must continually make their defense of the revolution more effective, putting into practice the orientation of our vanguard.

We Defend Our Revolution . . . Death to the Counterrevolution!

2. To maintain the defense activities of the people's organization. As we have said, the CDSs are the eyes and ears of the revolution; the revolutionary vigilance of the people must be aimed at detecting and combating the enemies of the building of a new motherland. They must not permit the revival of hiding places for Somozaism, paramilitary units, sabotage, Somozaist infiltrators in the revolutionary and people's organs, in the ministries, etc.

We Must Control Somozaism, We Defend the Revolution!

3. To participate in solving the grave problems left us by the rotten dictatorship—a disastrous economy, deep social problems. We must find ways of continually increasing participation in the CDSs, which will give us the forces needed to raise the standard of living, to find solu-

tions in the field of health, and to translate the aspirations of the people into reality.

Revolution Is . . . Reconstruction.

4. To consolidate the organizations of the masses, the CDSs and others, in order to ensure the gains of the revolution, in order to continue developing people's power.

The Watchword Is: Organization, Organization, and More Organization!

Who Is Organized in the CDS?

For a people in revolution, the most important thing is to be organized. Because no matter how great a people's enthusiasm, morale, and fighting spirit, unless it is organized and united, unless its forces are coordinated, it will be unable to use them to combat the enemies of our revolution who lie in waiting, nor will it be able to translate all the revolution's aspirations into reality.

Each Man, Each Woman, Each Youth Must Be Organized Where they Work, Where they Study, Where they Live!

The People, the True People Are Organized to Defend and Build the Sandinista Revolution!

The revolution must be the great union of all who produce for the people, who work for the people. The revolution must not be represented by politicians, agents of Somozaism, climbers—these cannot be and must not be in the CDS.

The CDSs Are Bodies of Residents Determined to Defend the Revolution

How the CDSs Are Formed.

The CDSs are organized by block, street, section, or group of houses, according to the way the families in the neighborhood or district are distributed.

The CDS is made up of those residents of each block, street, square, or group of houses who are determined to defend the revolution. In each CDS a representative of this committee is democratically elected. This representative, elected by the residents, should be someone known for honesty and readiness to contribute to the work of the community. This *compañero* will cooperate with representatives of the other CDSs to carry out tasks, and must report to his CDS on all the resolutions and discussions that take place in the higher bodies. In addition to the representatives, there should be elected coordinators of health, propaganda, supplies, culture and sports, communal work, and any other task depending on the needs of the sector.

If there are less than fifteen CDSs in a neighborhood or district, the representatives of each of them will form a Sandinista Neighborhood Committee or a Sandinista District (community or village) Committee.

In districts where the houses are not arranged in any order CDSs should be formed by groups of fifteen to twenty-five houses, with each CDS composed of houses that are closest to each other.

The Councils of CDSs

If the neighborhood has more than fifteen CDSs, it is divided by groups or levels, each with its own Council of CDSs. For example, in a neighborhood divided into three groups there will be three CDS Councils. The Council of CDSs is in charge of coordinating all the activities of the CDSs in a group or level of the neighborhood or district.

The Council is made up of the representatives of each CDS in its respective group. The Council elects coordinators of health, supplies, propaganda, culture and sports, and communal work. These coordinators work closely with the coordinators of the same work in each committee. For example, if vaccinations are being organized, the person in charge of health for the Council of CDSs will meet with those in charge of health in each CDS.

Each Council of CDSs elects by popular vote one to four delegates (depending on the total number of Councils in the neighborhood or district) to constitute the Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committee.

The basic function of the Councils of CDSs is to report all the worries and suggestions of the CDSs to the Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committee, and at the same time, to inform all the CDSs in its group or level of the plans and policies that will be put into effect.

The Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committee

This is the highest representative body of each neighborhood or district. It is the democratically elected authority for the residents of a sector. It must faithfully reflect their will, and in the event that it doesn't represent the residents or stops representing their interests, it must be changed.

It is the intermediate body between the ministries and the residents for carrying out all the plans for raising the standard of living and putting the political program of the revolution into action. It provides political guidance for the CDSs for defense of the revolution, and is to be linked closely with the directors of the FSLN in the Regional Councils of Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committees.

Regional Councils of Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committees

These are set up in line with the regions of the city. It is important that no Council encompass more than twenty-five neighborhoods or communities. The Regional Councils of Sandinista Neighborhood Committees are made up of two representatives from each neighborhood, elected democratically in their respective Neighbor-

hood Committee. These two representatives are permanent and must carry out the task of raising at the Council the problems, positive experiences, and plans of their neighborhood or district. In addition, they have to report to their Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committee on all the decisions, policies, and discussions from the Council in order to achieve unity of agreement throughout the people's organization. Moreover, in this way effective coordination of all the forces in a region will be achieved.

The Regional Councils are decision-making bodies of a region and therefore represent a leadership body of the masses. With the formation of the Regional Councils the organizational basis of people's power is being established.

After the Regional Councils of the Neighborhood or District Committees, Municipal Councils will be formed, but not until the Regional Councils have been consolidated and are prepared to take this step.

Functioning

1. The Regional Council of the Sandinista Neighborhood Committees must meet once a week to carry out the general plans of each region, to find solutions for the problems. The Regional Councils must keep minutes of its meetings and each representative must report the discussions and decisions to the Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committees.

2. The Sandinista Neighborhood Committee must meet once a week, after the meeting of the Regional Councils. This

Committee also has to present minutes of its meetings to that Council.

3. The Councils of CDSs must meet once a week, within two days after the Sandinista Neighborhood Committees.

4. The CDSs must meet a minimum of once a week, and all the CDSs in the neighborhood or district must meet on the same day.

Note:

Within the Sandinista Neighborhood or District Committee two representatives to the Regional Council must be elected, and a coordinator of health, supplies, propaganda, culture and sports, communal work, and of other activity that is taking place in the area—housing, for example. These coordinators will work with those in charge of the various tasks from each Regional Council and each CDS.

For example, in the case of the vaccination campaign, the *compañero* in charge of health from the Neighborhood Committee must meet with all those in charge of health from each CDS in the neighborhood and plan a list of those to be vaccinated, how it is going to be set up, who will be in charge of making sure that all the children come, and so forth.

The Neighborhood Committee is in charge of administering all the money collected by the CDSs. This money will be utilized for the principal needs of propaganda, organization, and others that the committee considers necessary.

Whatever activity is carried out must be under the authorization and supervision of the Sandinista Neighborhood Committee.

Castro's UN Speech a Big Hit in Nicaragua

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Fidel Castro's appearance at the United Nations received wide coverage in the Sandinista communications media here. Stories on the Cuban leader's arrival in New York and on his speech to the General Assembly appeared under front-page banner headlines in the FSLN's daily *Barricada* on October 11 and 12.

Castro's UN speech was carried live by Radio Sandino. The following day television viewers were able to see the entire event broadcast on videotape by the Sandinista national network.

Finally, the full text of the speech was printed in *Barricada* in installments beginning October 13.

The close solidarity between the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutions has been visible here in other ways as well in recent days.

The imminent arrival of 1,000 Cuban teachers was announced October 14. These educators will be sent to areas where there is currently a shortage of teachers and will be paid for by the Cuban government, with the Nicaraguans responsible only for room and board.

President Carter's military threats against Cuba were the main topic of an October 10 speech by FSLN Comandante Tomás Borge at ceremonies marking the close of a training course for the Special Forces of the Sandinista People's Army.

"They have blamed Cuba for the revolutionary movements of Latin America," Borge said, "and now they are beginning to blame Nicaragua too. But what fault is it of ours that the peoples are hungry, that the masses live in unhealthy conditions?"

Speaking of the Latin American military dictatorships, Borge continued: "Neither Cuba nor Nicaragua is to blame for those tyrannies. The peasants do not have land, the workers do not have jobs, and the workers and peasants of those countries do not control their own destinies."

The example set by Nicaragua "cannot be controlled by Carter," Borge said, "and the U.S. fleet in the Caribbean cannot control the examples set by the revolutions of Cuba and Nicaragua. They can put controls on our border if they want, but what customs duties or controls can be put on the example of our revolution? . . .

1,200 in New York Cheer Leader of Grenada Revolution

By Osborne Hart

[The following article appeared in the October 2 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

BROOKLYN, New York—Interrupted repeatedly by applause and cheers, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop of Grenada addressed an enthusiastic rally of his Caribbean brothers and sisters here October 13.



"We are very happy to have the opportunity to explain what the Grenadian revolution has been all about," he told the overflow crowd. More than 1,200 turned out for the meeting at New York City Community College here.

Just seven months ago to the date, the thirty-four-year-old Bishop led the New Jewel (Joint Endeavor for Welfare, Education, and Liberation) Movement (NJM) in an insurrection that toppled the U.S.-backed dictator Sir Eric M. Gairy.

The tyrant Gairy ruled Grenada for more than twenty years. While the island was under British domination, Gairy was placed in power as Grenada's prime minister.

In 1974 the NJM organized a month-long general strike against the government.

Gairy answered his opponents with fierce repression. The secret police and political goon squads assaulted oppositionists. Bishop was beaten and arrested, and his father was assassinated.

Bishop explained how the Gairy government maintained a facade of democracy to the outside world.

"There were thousands and thousands of names on the voters list" in the 1976 elections, he said. "Names of people who were dead, names of people who had left our country. Yet somehow they managed to rise from the grave on election day to cast their vote. Everyone must know that the Gairy dictatorship remained in office, not as a result of a free vote and a fair election, but as a result of an electoral coup d'etat."

As Bishop catalogued the repressive nature of Grenadian society under Gairy, heads nodded throughout the auditorium. Many in the crowd were Grenadians who fled to the U.S. to escape the poverty and

lack of rights in their country.

"You know, sisters and brothers, that even the right to work, the right to form and join trade unions, we did not have in our own country," Bishop said. Up to a few months ago it was not possible to publish a newspaper without a \$20,000 advance to the government.

Nor, he added, was it "possible to address any kind of meeting without first getting police permission, which was never granted."

On March 13, Bishop and his movement organized an early morning raid on the army barracks while Gairy was in the United States.

Within a few hours, they had captured the barracks and moved on the island's only radio station. Once the radio station was secured, the NJM broadcast across the island.

"The response of the population was a massive response," Bishop said. "The workers in St. George's [the capital]—dock workers, electrical workers, telephone workers, commercial workers, civil servants—came out into the streets.

"What this does not fully explain," he added, "is the fact that, were not the party [NJM] fully rooted in the people of our country, we would have failed."

Bishop said the new government immediately appealed for arms and other assistance from several countries, including the U.S., "to be in a position to defend our revolution."

Only three countries responded—Jamaica, Guyana, and Cuba. The U.S. did not.

"But when a Cuban ship landed in Grenada bringing assistance for us, the U.S. ambassador said they would view with great displeasure the development of any relations between Grenada and Cuba," Bishop stated. "So we asked, who instructed you or your government to talk to us? Why do you think you can come down here and tell us what we must do in our own country?"

To the cheers of the audience, Bishop went on: "Having fought for our freedom, and tasted that freedom, we are not going to accept instructions from the United States or any other country."

Bishop spoke at length on Cuba.

"We have found nothing but the most principled relations with the Cubans. It is very interesting that the very people who you can't get arms from are the same people who [say] that those people willing to assist your country you shouldn't have relations with!"

Bishop's stay in New York coincided with Fidel Castro's visit.

The Grenadian leader attacked the U.S. media for criticizing his meetings with Castro. He said of Castro, "I say here tonight, I know nobody who is more honest, committed, sincere, and principled."

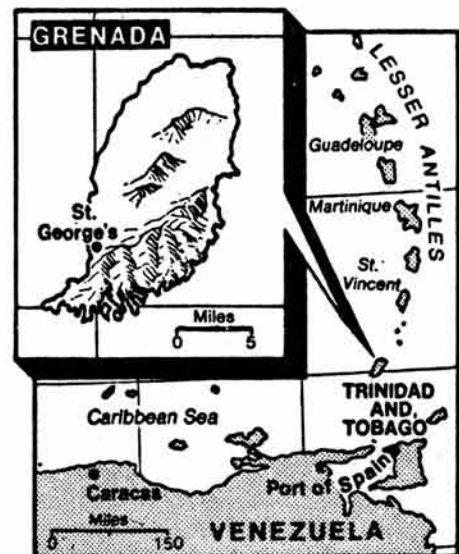
The audience broke out in a loud ovation and chants of "Viva Fidel!"

Since the insurrection, he said, the new government has reinstated and expanded democratic rights, instituted education reform, organized community brigades for rebuilding efforts, and strengthened the trade unions and farmer organizations.

"The specific stage that our struggle has reached is the stage of national reconstruction," he explained. "That is the first point in the journey that we have begun, aimed at revolutionizing our economy, our society, our country as a whole."

Although Grenada is a small country—120 square miles and little more than 100,000 inhabitants—the Grenadians don't see themselves isolated from international events. Bishop explained it is "our duty to support all just causes and contribute to all just causes around the world. Part of our debt to humanity is to support these struggles. A foreign policy should be an extension of an internal policy."

Grenada has recognized the revolutionary government in Nicaragua and has sent financial aid to that country. In addition, it has recognized the Palestinian Liberation Movement and the Heng Samrin government in Kampuchea and supported the liberation struggles in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and the Western Sahara.



In a special salute, Bishop paid tribute to the "heroic people of Vietnam, who fought for so many years against three sets of colonialists and imperialists." He intro-

duced a delegation present in the room from the People's Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Vietnamese were given a standing ovation by the meeting. □

occupation of Honduras, an El Salvadorian invasion of El Salvador, and so on. "Crikeys!" said the president. "The dominoes could fall even faster than we could withdraw our profits!"

As Viewed From the White House

The 'Cuban Provocation'

By Allen Myers

[The following article appeared in the October 11 issue of *Direct Action*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in Sydney, Australia.]

* * *

Few people thought Jimmy Carter had it in him, but the American president has demonstrated that he is made of stern stuff.

By standing firm at a crucial point, Carter has turned back the danger that 2000 Soviet troops might swim from Cuba to Florida, storm ashore, and sweep north to capture Washington before the US defenders realised what had hit them. Americans as far north as Ohio, who had begun evacuating their homes in fear of a Soviet advance, can once more sleep in peace.

Contrary to some impressions, the US president's decisive actions do not represent a change in character. He would have acted just as firmly two years ago if he had realised the threat. But after the Bay of Pigs and the 1962 missile crisis, the CIA was so angry at the Cubans that it refused for 17 years to have anything at all to do with the island. Therefore, it was only a few weeks ago that the American government became aware of the danger that has faced it since the middle of the Kennedy administration.

Now that the CIA has been persuaded to begin looking at Cuba again, it has uncovered a menace even more alarming than the presence of 2000 ageing Soviet instructors. It is only in the last few days that the agency has confirmed the awful news about Cuba: Almost the entire island, from one end to the other, is inhabited by Cubans.

When this was first reported, high Washington officials and diplomatic circles alike were reluctant to believe that the Cubans would dare to create such a provocation. To double check the CIA reports, the US-based planes used to drop incendiary bombs in Cuban sugar cane fields were equipped with supersensitive tape recorders. The recordings produced clear evidence of people cursing in Spanish.

Even worse, the recordings also contained the unmistakable sound of rifle fire, thus proving that the Cuban occupation force in Cuba is armed with dangerous offensive weepens.

President Carter immediately cancelled a scheduled interview about his sexual fancies with *Playboy* magazine and secluded himself with his top advisers in the White House bomb shelter to consider how to respond to the Cuban provocation.

The meeting quickly reached the conclusion that the Communists were testing the will of the US leadership to resist aggression. As Secretary of State Cyrus Vance put it, if the Cuban occupation of Cuba was allowed to pass unchallenged, it would probably be followed by a Nicaraguan seizure of Nicaragua, then a Honduran

Eventually it was decided to have Vance call in the Soviet ambassador and demand the immediate withdrawal of the Cuban presence in Cuba. The meeting briefly considered, but rejected, the idea of making the demand directly to the Cubans: In the first place, there is no Cuban ambassador in Washington; and in the second place, speaking directly to the Cubans could be taken to mean that the Cuban occupation force was acting autonomously instead of as an agent of the Soviets.

The meeting also decided to back the diplomatic demands on the Soviets by "going public." President Carter is planning a major speech at the United Nations to denounce the Cuban domination of Cuba. In addition, the US garrison at Guantánamo will be strengthened as a public demonstration of American determination that this small island will someday be freed from the tyrannical domination of the people who live there. □

Carter Rejects Soviet Offer to Cut Arms Race

Soviet Communist Party Chairman Leonid Brezhnev, speaking in East Berlin on the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), blasted the plan by NATO military chiefs to deploy an additional 572 nuclear missiles at U.S. bases in Western Europe. He warned that such a move would oblige the Soviet Union to beef up its own forces.

Then, in a rare move that strengthens the hand of antiwar forces in the West European labor movement, Brezhnev announced:

"We are prepared to reduce the number of medium-range nuclear means deployed in western areas of the Soviet Union as compared to the present level, but of course, only in the event [that] no additional medium-range nuclear means are deployed in Western Europe.

"... we have decided, in agreement with the leadership of the G.D.R. and after consultations with other member-states of the Warsaw Treaty, to unilaterally reduce the number of Soviet troops in Central Europe. Up to 20,000 Soviet servicemen, 1,000 tanks and also a certain amount of other military hardware will be withdrawn from the territory of the German Democratic Republic in the course of the next 12 months.

"We are convinced that this new concrete manifestation of the peaceableness and good will of the Soviet Union and its allies will be approved by the peoples of Europe and the whole world. We call on

the governments of NATO countries to properly assess the initiatives of Socialist states and to follow our good example."

The Carter administration was quick to turn down Brezhnev's offer, and the capitalist media stepped up its propaganda about Washington's duty to provide "the ultimate protection" for its European allies. But this put leaders of the NATO alliance in the politically weaker position of openly proclaiming the need for a further escalation of the arms race.

This is important because the NATO plan has yet to be approved by the parliaments of West Germany, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy, where the missiles would be deployed. The Soviet initiative has made the already unpopular plan that much harder for politicians in the target countries to sell.

This was reflected on October 17, when Dutch officials revealed that the West German regime, under rising pressure including from within the ruling Social Democratic Party, had retreated from its previous stance of all-out support to the deployment plan. Bonn will now not approve the plan, they said, unless other NATO governments—in particular the Netherlands—also go along.

The European labor movement, which a year and a half ago blocked the Pentagon's plan to deploy the neutron bomb in Europe, now has a chance to strike another blow against imperialist escalation of the arms race. □

New Support to Campaign to Free Iranian Fourteen

By Janice Lynn

Fourteen members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (Hezbe-e Kargarane Sosialist—HKS) remain in jail in Khuzestan Province in Iran. Imprisoned for over four months, these revolutionaries have won the support of trade unionists, workers parties, civil-rights groups and prominent individuals from throughout the world.

All fourteen are veteran fighters against the tyranny of the now deposed shah. They were imprisoned solely for their socialist views. In August, two of the prisoners, both women, were sentenced in secret trials without attorneys, to life imprisonment. The twelve men were sentenced to death. But, the international protests are what has so far saved their lives.

The worldwide campaign to free the Iranian fourteen continues to win broad support.

In Greece, the Committee Against the Persecution of the Left in Iran has secured the support of several individuals and organizations which have signed a telegram in opposition to the death sentences. Among those signing are presidents of the lawyer's association in Athens, Federation of Press Workers, and Federation of Bank Employees of Greece; the Revolutionary Marxist Fraction of the Organization of International Communists of Greece (OKDE), and the Communist International Union.

From Sri Lanka, new support has come from the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front, a radical youth group). On September 21 a delegation of trade unionists, lawyers, and political leaders visited the Iranian embassy in Colombo to lodge their protest against the jailing of the HKS members. And, on

September 26 a demonstration outside the embassy was attended by members of the Nava Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Revolutionary Marxist Youth, and the Revolutionary Workers Party.

In Paris, four doctors visited the Iranian embassy to deliver petitions signed by thirty-five of their colleagues demanding a halt to the executions of the HKS members. Another delegation from the National Center of Telecommunications Studies brought statements by a number of unions and the signatures of sixty-five engineers and technicians.

From Costa Rica, a telegram was sent by the Students' Congress which on September 23 passed a unanimous motion for the immediate release of the HKS fourteen and against repression in Iran.

In Canada, a recent tour by HKS leader, Farhad Nouri won new support for the defense of the fourteen. Nouri held meetings in Hamilton and Toronto that attracted a number of Iranian and Kurdish students, some of whom drove more than thirty miles to hear him. Nouri was interviewed on A.M. Canada, a nationwide TV show; and on national network radio.

In Montréal, Nouri spoke to a meeting of 100 people held in the hall of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN). Speaking with Nouri were Colleen Levis of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL-LOR) and André Lamoureux of the Socialist Workers Group (GST), affiliated with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The GST has collected the impressive sum of \$1,200 from several teachers' unions for the Iranian defense campaign.

The Montréal meeting voted to send a delegation to the Iranian embassy in Ottawa.

In the United States, telegrams have recently been sent by the Palestinian Student Association in Atlanta, Georgia; Jack Patterson of the New York American Friends Service Committee; Patrick E. Gorman, chairman of the board emeritus of the United Food & Commercial Workers International Union; and Michael Olszanski, executive board member of Local 1010, United Steelworkers of America, in Gary, Indiana. Also, twenty-two Gary steelworkers have signed a petition demanding a halt to the threatened executions.

A promising development was reported in the October 19 *Christian Science Monitor*. A dispatch from Iran states, "Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's revolutionary leader, has ordered a halt to executions until further notice, the Islamic Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office here has announced."

Rifts among the ruling class of Iran on the extent of political repression have been appearing. The October 10 *Washington Post* reported that Ayatollah Mohammed Ali Qazi Tabatabai accused "revolutionary committees, the revolutionary prosecutor general's office, and the provincial governor general's office of failing to act according to the goals of the revolution."

These signs pointed to the need to step up the international protests demanding the release of the fourteen prisoners. A continuing world outcry can open the way to saving the lives and securing the release of all anti-imperialist fighters imprisoned in Iran for their political views. □

Victor Reuther: Free the Socialists!

As part of the international protest, a telegram was sent to Ayatollah Khomeini by one of the United States' best-known union leaders—Victor Reuther, former director of International Affairs for the United Auto Workers (UAW). The telegram reads:

"During many long years, I joined with Iranians in the United States in their demonstrations against the despot shah and the terrorism of his SAVAK. I felt your coming to power would substi-

tute a respect for human rights for political terrorism. However, your government's death sentence of 12 young men and life imprisonment for 2 young women, members of the HKS whose support you accepted in the overthrow of the shah, is the cruelest of political vindictiveness. A regime which rules on such persecution puts its own existence in jeopardy. I appeal to you to set aside this harsh vindictiveness and give the people of Iran the peace for which they have long suffered."

How You Can Help

Protest telegrams should be sent to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Qum, Iran; Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Tehran, Iran; and Ayatollah Ghodsi, Prosecutor General of the Revolutionary Islamic Republic, Tehran, Iran.

Copies should be sent to the Tehran dially *Baamdad*, Hafez Avenue, 24 Zartoshtian Alley, Tehran, Iran. *Baamdad* prints daily reports of all telegrams and petitions on behalf of the HKS members that it receives.

Copies should also be sent to *Ettela'at*, Khayam Avenue, Tehran, Iran; *Kayhan*, Ferdowsi Avenue, Tehran, Iran; and *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

U.S. Rulers Launch Attack on Black Support to Palestinians

By Fred Feldman

The ruling class has launched an offensive against Black leaders who challenged Washington's all-out support for Israel.

Among the targets are Rev. Jesse Jackson, Rev. Joseph Lowery, and Rep. Walter Fauntroy. They visited the Middle East last month, met with leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and denounced Israeli terror bombing of refugee camps in Lebanon.

In a counter-move, a delegation of seven Blacks arrived in Israel October 14 headed by Bayard Rustin, chairman of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, and William Pollard, director of the AFL-CIO's Civil Rights Department. Rustin stated, "I want to make it clear to the Israelis that there are great numbers of Black people who want the United States to give Israel all the support it needs."

Vernon Jordan, president of the Urban League, has declared that solidarity with the Palestinians detracts from "vital survival issues." An official of the Urban League was part of the delegation to Israel.

Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, has also attacked the initiative by Jackson, Lowery, and Fauntroy. "If Americans want to involve themselves in foreign policy," he said, "they should do it through the State Department." He has had no criticism of the Rustin-Pollard mission to Israel, however.

Figures such as the head of the Progressive National Baptist Convention and Gary Mayor Richard Hatcher, on the other hand, criticized attacks on Jackson, Lowery, and Fauntroy. And polls showed most Blacks continue to favor U.S. recognition of the PLO.

The criticisms by Hooks and Jordan are similar to those that top leaders of the NAACP and Urban League leveled at Martin Luther King when he denounced the Vietnam War. King considered Vietnam to be a "vital survival issue."

If Blacks and other Americans had followed Hooks's advice to leave it to the State Department during that war, Americans could still be fighting and dying in Indochina.

Editorials in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* praised Hooks and Jordan, claiming that the only way to prevent a "Black-Jewish rift" is to silence Blacks who identify with the suffering and struggles of Palestinians.

It isn't a rift between Blacks and Jews that the rulers are trying to head off, however, but the growing rift between Black people—and other workers—and

U.S. imperialism. The imperialists view the willingness of Black leaders to denounce the crimes of the Israeli government as a blow to imperialist interests in the Middle East. They are trying to muzzle



Yassir Arafat greets Jesse Jackson.

Jackson, Lowery, and Fauntroy because they want to be able to use Blacks as cannon fodder in the Mideast.

Bayard Rustin, who is spearheading this pro-Israel drive, does not represent the

interests of Blacks, Jews, or union members. Not only does Rustin support the racist policies of Israel, but he is also a prominent backer of the white-dominated regime in Rhodesia and an increasingly open apologist for the South African rulers. Rustin defends the interests of U.S. imperialism first, last, and always.

Proclaiming in Tel Aviv that his delegation would not meet with PLO leaders, Rustin stated: "To give credence or respectability to one terrorist organization gives it to all, and to make the PLO in any way respectable is to make the Ku Klux Klan equally respectable."

But Rustin is meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, whose regime has terrorized more than a million Palestinians, driving them from their homes.

Begin is the former head of the Irgun, a terrorist Zionist outfit that specialized in massacres of Arab villagers. Unlike the PLO, the ultrarightist Irgun had an avowedly racist ideology that really was parallel to the Ku Klux Klan.

In light of the record, Rustin stands condemned for moral hypocrisy.

The attacks on Blacks who speak out won't stop the growing pro-Palestinian sentiment. Oppressed and exploited Black Americans can't help but feel a common bond with the persecuted and plundered Palestinian people.

In this regard, Blacks are leading the way for all American working people, who will increasingly recognize that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose from supporting the racist, imperialist state of Israel. □

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Pope Hedges His Bets on Ireland

By Geoff Bell

[Two stops on Pope John Paul's recent international tour were Ireland and the United States. The following comments on the flying pope's visits are taken from the October 4 issue of the British Trotskyist weekly *Socialist Challenge*, the October 11 *Socialist Challenge*, and the October 19 issue of the American Trotskyist weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

"I know nothing at all of politics," Pope John Paul II was reported as saying to a group of British journalists shortly after he landed in Ireland last weekend. Nevertheless the Pope, especially in his much publicised speech at Drogheda, displayed all the political skills which have made the Catholic Church one of history's great survivors.

Of course he condemned "terrorism." The Catholic Church in Ireland condemned the Young Irelanders' rebellion of 1848, the Fenian Rising of 1867, and the Easter Rising of 1916, and it would have been unrealistic to expect John Paul II to abandon this tradition. Equally predictable was the Pope's call to "all men and women engaged in violence to return to the ways of peace."

But contrary to the impression given by British media reports, that was not all the Pope had to say. He emphasized the fact that "I want to speak to politicians with the same intensity with which I have spoken to the men of violence . . . do not cause or condone or tolerate conditions which give excuse or pretext to men of violence."

In demanding also the "victory of justice," John Paul II commented that it was up to the politicians to "show that there is a peaceful, political way to justice. You must show peace achieves the works of justice and violence does not."

In other words, the Pope was saying that the politicians had singularly failed to show that there was a peaceful road to justice. He went on to condemn the "political vacuum" in the North of Ireland, adding his criticisms of British do-nothingness to those already made by American politicians.

Finally, in an implied reference to the British administration in the North of Ireland, the Pope said that "human rights . . . cannot be set aside . . . by the state itself, for any cause, not even for security or in the interests of law and order." He also referred to "social and religious discrimination."

Such remarks brought howls of outrage from Ian Paisley, who interpreted the Pope's words as "giving comfort to the IRA." This conclusion says more about Paisley's paranoia than about the Pope's

remarks, but it is true that the fact that John Paul II more or less admitted that there was some justice in the cause of the Catholic minority in the North hardly reflects the usual British evaluation of the IRA as "gangsters" without a political cause.

This is not to imply that the Pope of Rome is some sort of pacifist Irish Republican intent on driving the Brits out by appeals to their morality. What it does show is that John Paul II's advisers both in Rome and in Ireland realise the dangers for the Catholic Church of performing like some toy poodle of British imperialism.

The Catholic Church expects to be a force in Ireland long after the last British soldier has left. It would therefore be downright foolish for the Pope not to establish a record now for talking for "justice in Ireland."

For what the Pope was up to in Ireland was to look after the interests of the Catholic Church at a time when it is experiencing some difficulty. There is evidence that attendance at mass has dropped in the North of Ireland during the last ten years. At the same time there have even been pickets of the offices and homes

Provisional IRA Answers Pope

[Despite the acres of space that the press has allocated to the Pope's visit to Ireland not one British newspaper bothered to publish the IRA's statement on the subject.

[The press was particularly concerned to praise the Pope's calls for peace when he preached from Knock, near the border with the North.

[It was widely interpreted as a direct call to the IRA to lay down their arms. The IRA issued a statement in reply to this.

[We believe there is considerable truth in this statement. It is certainly absolutely clear that the church and its calls for peace will make no difference to the population of the North of Ireland.

[The only event that can take the people of the Six Counties a significant step towards peace is the final and decisive withdrawal of British troops and government.

[It is also clear that Britain is not going to withdraw unless it is forced to by the militant struggle of the Irish people. So we agree when the statement says: "We believe that force is by far the only means of removing the evil of the British presence."

[The only quarrel we would have with the IRA is that force is not just a matter of guns—there is also the force that arises out of the mass mobilisations of the population on the streets. It is this latter type of force that will be finally decisive in the

of Catholic bishops staged by Northern Catholics in protest at various anti-Republican statements.

In the South of Ireland the growing movement for women's liberation is seriously challenging some of the most cherished Catholic dogmas. In this respect the Pope's remarks in Dublin have an equal importance for the Catholic hierarchy. John Paul II launched a thinly veiled attack on contraception, divorce and abortion, condemning "false practices concerning freedom, the sacredness of life, the indissolubility of marriage, the true sense of sexuality."

The Pope's visit will no doubt help to re-establish some of the lost authority of the Catholic Church in Ireland. But in the long term the developing confidence of the women's movement and the determination of Irish Republicans and socialists to drive Britain out is unlikely to be seriously hampered.

And should the Pope continue to stress the "peaceful road" then it may well be worth reminding him of the bit in the bible which goes on about "first take the beam out of your own eye." The Catholic Church, from the crusades right down to the American Cardinal Spellman's support for the Vietnam war, has "blessed" more weapons and called for more "just wars" than there are blades of grass in Ireland. □

North of Ireland. —*Socialist Challenge*]

* * *

The Irish Republican Army restates its position in regard to its use of force to bring about political change from the British government.

Firstly, the roots of the present troubles go back into history, but have, in the last decades, their source in the social and economic deprivation suffered by the nationalist people. Responsibility for the poor condition of the people rested in Stormont and with the British government at Westminster.

Attempts to resolve those problems peacefully met with brute force from the state, and people who were exasperated organised and fought back with civil disobedience and the use of force.

In all conscience we believe that force is by far the only means of removing the evil of the British presence in Ireland. Their interference has divided the people and caused untold hardship.

One should not talk about "men of violence" and ignore the 33,000 strong armed forces in the Six Counties, their repressive laws, the army forts occupying areas, the proven cases of torture, and of course the situation in the H-blocks.

Whereas we want the British government to cease interfering in our affairs, they are out to exterminate Republicans, and violently repress the claims being made for Irish self-determination.

Furthermore, we believe that our prospects for victory are supported by the examples of other colonial struggles, by our continued existence given the duration of the repression, and by the widespread support which we know we command and which our operations prove.

We know also that upon victory the Church would have no difficulty in recog-

nizing us.

Church leaders, politicians and establishments are bankrupt and have also failed to resolve the massive social and economic problems suffered by our people and created by British interference. Indeed, it would be correct to say that many of them haven't even examined possible ways of solving the problem.

They lack the courage to honestly identify the problem. We have, and will continue to deal with it, until the British dimension is withdrawn and a climate for real peace with justice can be created. □

Rising Dissent: U.S. Catholics Vs. Pope

By Harry Ring

There is growing opposition among Catholics to the backward social policies of the church, particularly on women's rights.

This came through, despite the unprecedented media buildup, during the pope's seven-day U.S. campaign tour.

John Paul was here to challenge that mounting opposition to church doctrine, a doctrine dedicated to preservation of the status quo.

He proved expert at what U.S. politicians call "working the crowds." But while the manner purported to be warm and charming, the message was hard-nosed and clear: the Vatican will not yield an inch on its reactionary policies.

The opposition proved equally stubborn. Imagine. In the midst of this incredible show, as national TV cameras roll, a nun publicly defies the pope.

Sister Theresa Kane did that in welcoming him to a Washington service.

Hitting at his repeated declarations of opposition to women becoming priests, Sister Theresa declared:

"As I share this privileged moment with you, your holiness, I urge you to be mindful of the intense suffering and pain which is part of the life of many women in these United States. I call upon you to listen with compassion and to hear the call of

women who comprise half of humankind."

She was not alone in her defiance. Fifty-three of the nuns present stood up before the astonished pope in protest. Some 250 of the 5,000 nuns present came in civilian dress, in pointed defiance of the pope's declared preference that nuns wear only religious garb.

The pope says that his stand against women becoming priests in no way interferes with their civil or human rights.

But his bitter opposition to birth control, abortion, and divorce makes it clear: Women are second-class citizens, and if it's up to him, they'll stay that way.

A question was posed by Ray Carrasco, one of four teenagers chosen to escort John Paul at his Madison Square Garden appearance in New York City. Carrasco told reporters he would like to ask the pope about the "abortion issue."

"Why does he feel so strong about it?" the teenager asked. "In my parish in Brooklyn some people cannot have more kids. They cannot afford to feed the kids they have."

In Boston, the day before the pope's arrival, 250 Catholics gathered at a church to voice their objection to the decision not to let women help distribute communion during his visit.

That decision, intended to underline the

U.S. Feminists Denounce Pope's Reactionary Views

LOS ANGELES—At the October 5-7 convention of the National Organization for Women (NOW), President Eleanor Smeal condemned the pope's attacks on women. She told a news conference that contrary to the pope's reactionary views, "NOW is for working women and for the right to birth control."

Smeal repeated this theme in her keynote address to the convention. "The majority of Catholics in the nation support birth control and reproductive rights," she declared.

NOW members cheered her remarks. Many participants sported anti-pope buttons throughout the convention, and Catholics who were present wore blue armbands to symbolize their opposition to the pope's antiwoman views.

church hierarchy's implacable opposition to women's rights, was also protested by Priests for Equality, a national grouping numbering nearly 2,000 members.

There were some who did like what John Paul had to say. For instance, an October 2 editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* pointed to his Dublin speech as indicating a "formidable intellect."

There, in addition to counseling the victims of centuries of British oppression to shun "violence," the pope also inveighed against "pervading materialism."

"Prosperity and affluence," he warned, "even when they are only beginning to be available to larger strata of society, tend to make people assume that they have a right to all that prosperity can bring, and thus they can become more selfish in their demands."

Said the *Wall Street Journal*: "One does not need to be deeply religious to wonder whether this civilization can sustain itself if it slips too far from its Judeo-Christian mooring."

Quite a number of people don't share the *Journal's* concern.

Each year more priests leave the church. In the past decade, the number of U.S. priests declined by 25 percent. Seminary enrollment in the same period dropped from 46,000 to 16,800.

According to an Associated Press/NBC News Poll, 46 percent of U.S. Catholics favor the right of women to be priests.

Priests should be allowed to marry, say 53 percent.

Divorce should be permitted, even where children are involved, respond 63 percent.

Sixty-six percent favor contraceptive birth control.

And, the poll found, 50 percent of Catholics now favor abortion on demand.

John Paul's tour was not quite as triumphal as the tube indicated. □



Life in Italy's Largest Auto Plant

[The following interview with Rocco Papandrea, a member of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (Revolutionary Communist Groups, the Italian section of the Fourth International), was obtained by Tom Leonard earlier this year. Papandrea, a twenty-eight-year-old auto worker, has worked at the giant FIAT complex in Turin since 1969.]

* * *
Question. What were the conditions like at FIAT when you began working there?

Answer. Until 1969 the Italian automobile industry, in particular FIAT, had conditions similar to the automobile industry in the United States and other European countries. There was extremely strong control by the bosses.

The foremen ignored the possibility of accidents and speeded up the work to the physical limits of the workers. It even went to the absurd limit that workers on the assembly line were not given time off to go to the bathroom for as much as eight hours unless a substitute could be found to take their place on the line. There was no right to this substitution. It was done by the foreman when he felt like doing it.

And when the worker got to the bathroom, control was maintained even there because the doors were very small and low hung. There were cases where workers were laid off because they were seen smoking or doing something else in the toilet, like reading a leaflet or newspaper.

At that time the unions at FIAT were very weak. The strongest union from the organizational point of view was closely tied to the management of the company. In addition there were three other unions. Two were very collaborationist, and the union tied to the Communist Party, the CGIL, was very weak, with only several hundred card-carrying members and only a few dozen active members in FIAT.

This was not the case all over, but it was the case at Mirafiori, where I worked, which is the largest factory complex in Italy, with some 100,000 workers.

In terms of working conditions, the pace of work was absolutely inhuman, as were all the other conditions of work. There was no air, little light, the ceilings were low, there were a lot of fumes, there were many accidents at work and no first-aid facilities. There were very high assembly lines on which they put short workers and low assembly lines where they put tall workers.

If workers protested against these conditions they were immediately laid off or

transferred. And there was no chance of preventing the layoff or transfer. This was the normal situation. You would come to work in the morning and couldn't be sure you would have the same job that you had the day before.

In addition, there were a number of pay categories, which were determined in an absolutely arbitrary manner. It was the foreman who decided what pay category you were in, and there was no relationship between the category and the kind of work you were doing. There might be two workers doing the same job, one in the morning shift and one in the afternoon, and one would be in the second category and one in the third category.

Obviously, the pay categories were decided in relationship to the workers' collaboration with management, their willingness to spy on the other workers or betray them in the struggles.

There were also special bonuses that the bosses gave out to the most loyal workers.

Under the contract the work week was forty-four hours, but in reality it was much more. Almost all workers had to work every Saturday, even though the forty-four hour week was supposed to mean working only every other Saturday. The bosses would impose this on both shifts, so that the night workers had to work on Saturdays as well. And sometimes they would have to work Sundays also.

In addition, many of the workers had to work overtime after eight hours. The numbers of hours people would have to work was inhuman. They could do little more than work, go home, and sleep.

Because of the repression by the bosses, there was nothing the workers could do about those hours of overtime. If the worker protested he was given all sorts of hard duty or was laid off. And since the wages were so low, there was a very strong additional pressure on the workers to work beyond the forty-four hours.

Q. What led to these conditions being changed?

A. Beginning at the end of 1968 there was a new upsurge of struggles. At FIAT, important struggles had taken place up to 1954. FIAT was like the fist of the working class of Italy. After 1954 there was a savage repression by the bosses which included the laying off of thousands and thousands of workers, especially members of the Communist Party and of the trade union linked to the CP.

So, the working class at FIAT suffered a real defeat in 1954. Beginning in 1967

massive hiring began to take place at FIAT. In no more than a year they had hired some 20,000 new workers at Mirafiori. And in the same year they opened a new factory, Rivalta, where another 20,000 workers were hired. This was a time of economic boom, and FIAT was doing very well, so there was an expansion. There was a real renewal of the work force at FIAT, with the hiring of many very young workers who had come from the South of Italy.

These new young workers were not marked by the defeat that had come before; instead they were marked by the general radicalization of youth, which was beginning to affect Italy. They came north to Turin and to FIAT with big expectations that they would be able to improve their condition.

The reality they found was very different. They found themselves in a real hell. And outside their job, it was not much different—it was the city of Turin, the city of FIAT, an "auto city." There was no social life, no recreation facilities, not even decent lodgings.

So it was at this time that there began a slow upsurge of new struggles. Struggles had been building up in the country for a number of years, but not yet at FIAT.

At the end of 1968, despite the extreme weakness of union organization and left political parties at FIAT, there began a real wave of struggles. There were two general strikes, one to protest police murders of peasants in two cities in the South of Italy, and one on the issue of social security benefits.

For the first time, these strikes had the participation of massive numbers of workers at FIAT. Even the way the strikes were announced in the factory was different. There were leaflets from the unions announcing the strikes, but in the past such leaflets remained a dead letter with no effect. But this time, some of the vanguard workers took the initiative during the half-hour lunch break when all the workers were together, and in some plants there were guys who got up on the tables and began to speak, explaining that these were our brothers who had been killed in the South.

This had a big effect on the workers at FIAT, because the majority had come from the South very recently. So, there was a great hatred against the behavior of the police, and the strike was successful in several parts of the plant.

This strike against the killing of the peasants was an "interior strike." The

workers who had decided to strike looked for ways to convince the others to join in. They found that the most effective way was to march together through the factory to organize the strike. And this led to quite massive marches through the factory, and the workers began to see that together they were a real force.

Before, there were thousands and thousands of workers who were divided, each one only knowing a few other workers they felt close to, and fearing the other workers as perhaps being spies for the boss. There was no confidence among the workers in themselves. They were thousands, but they were isolated and divided. When the strike began, and the marches through the factory, they could see that they were no longer isolated, that they were a massive force.

I had this experience myself, with the marches through the factory. It really makes an impact on you; it's like a liberation. You realize that right there in the plant, yes, the boss has his power, but you also have a powerful force to contest his power.

After this first strike and this beginning of consciousness of the workers of their own power, there also began to be changes in the overall lives of the workers. The workers began to discuss among themselves. They would say, we know now we can fight back, we have the force to fight back, so let's fight to change our own conditions of work, which were absolutely inhuman.

Q. What were the demands of the workers?

A. In several parts of the factory, especially among the painters at the end of the assembly line, and among the skilled workers who repair the machines, strikes began over wage demands. And for the first time, the demands were the kind that could unify the workers—that is, equal wage increase for all as opposed to a percentage increase, so that you wouldn't have bigger increases going to those who already earned more, and the lowest increases for the lowest-paid workers. The demand for a wage increase was many times bigger than had ever been demanded in the past.

In addition, there were demands relating to the categories of work—that is, demanding that everyone who worked in production should be in the same category, the second category, and that the foreman could not arbitrarily determine your category. The demand was: for the same work, the same pay and the same category.

The workers also made the point that we all have to eat, and we all eat more or less the same kinds of things, so we should all earn more or less the same so we can live.

The other issue of struggle was over working conditions and health and accident insurance. The workers took the position that we were not ready to sell our

health. The policy of the bosses was that they would give a higher wage for jobs involving the worst conditions, where there was a high risk of accidents and job-related illnesses. And the workers began to say, no, our health can't be bought and sold. We refuse to put a price tag on our health.

This struggle led to experiences of real workers control on the job. For example, on the question of the pace of the line, the workers began to say we're fed up with having the speed of the line fixed by the foreman. We should decide what speed is possible, and we should impose the limits.

It was out of this struggle that a new instrument of struggle arose: the delegates. Each team of workers who joined in the struggle got together and elected their own delegate. Each team of workers had a foreman, who represented the power of the boss, and the workers would elect their delegate, who represented the power of the workers against the boss.

Another axis of struggle was hours. On the one hand, there was the demand for a forty-hour week, and on the other hand, the demand that the forty-hour week should be *real*, not just a fiction. The workers demanded zero hours of overtime, together with a salary that allows you to live. Our demand was: we want to work to live, not live to work. This feeling was very strong.

So, struggles began. They did not immediately bring victories on all these questions. But we began to make gains on some questions—the categories, the line speed, some wage increases. You see, we did not have strikes that involved the whole factory complex. Separate departments or plants would launch a strike, and each victory would encourage other strikes.

They were wildcat strikes. Sometimes strikes of two hours, one after another in different parts of the line, would succeed in shutting down the whole line for the day.

Or sometimes there would be a strike of everybody together, where someone would stop working at the beginning of the line, and then gather together the workers to march through the factory explaining their strike and showing again the power the workers had.

Through these kinds of experiences the workers became radicalized. Although the layer of militants was very small at the beginning, in a few months it grew to a sizable layer. They had matured almost spontaneously through their participation in these struggles.

Each partial victory in one plant would stimulate struggles in other plants. This was the situation at FIAT between February and August 1969.

Q. What role did the trade-union leadership play in this?

A. At the beginning the trade unions opposed these struggles. They tried to impose different demands than those the

workers wanted.

This was another factor that pushed the workers to elect delegates, in order to have an instrument of struggle that would represent them. Since the trade-union delegates wanted to negotiate for demands other than those the workers were raising, the workers elected their own delegates who would fight for these demands.

The far-left groups that existed at FIAT were also opposed at the beginning to the delegates structures, and this had the effect of limiting support to these groups inside the factory.

But by the summer the attitude of the unions, even of the top bureaucrats, had begun to change. The example of the struggles at FIAT began to be followed by workers in other companies. And the union leaders began to see the danger of the dynamic of these struggles. They decided to try to channel the movement onto a less militant road.

In many plants the union leaders would take the demands raised at the FIAT plant, generalize them, and try to take the credit for these struggles.

In regard to overtime, the unions did not accept all of the workers demands. They proposed strong limits on the amount of overtime, although not its elimination.

Q. Would you describe some of the gains that were made?

A. In the new contract there was a limitation on overtime of not more than two hours in one day, not more than eight hours in one week, and not more than 200 hours in a year. But management alone could not decide on the overtime. The union had to agree to it. In the 1969 contract it said that there had to be a special reason for overtime, such as a breakdown in machinery during the regular work day, etc. It couldn't simply be imposed to increase production.

This was a big step forward in comparison to the past. But the workers saw it as only a partial victory, because they didn't want any overtime. And the workers wouldn't even work the amount of overtime stipulated in the contract. They simply refused to work the overtime. If the foreman asked them to work overtime they said no, and went home. The foreman no longer had the power to force you to work overtime.

In the next contract there was another step forward. The limitation on overtime per year was lowered to 120 hours. And half the overtime you work has to be made up to you in time off.

Despite these provisions, the workers are still successful in working far less overtime than is allowed in the contract. Sometimes the boss tries to blackmail the workers on the question of overtime by saying that if they work, more workers will also be hired.

For example, a year ago the bosses said it was necessary to work six Saturdays because there was a big improvement in

the market for cars, and they told the workers that if the workers permitted this Saturday work, the bosses would also hire new workers. In the end the union decided against the overtime and there were even strikes against it.

And even though no workers went to work on five of those Saturdays, there were big picket lines to make sure no one tried to enter. The slogan was that not a single worker should go in.

Another example is a struggle that involved a comrade in our organization, the GCR, who works on an assembly line. In his case a team of workers further up the line were asked to work overtime, and agreed to. When the workers in the comrade's team came in on Monday they found that there was a lot of extra work due to the overtime these other people had put in over the weekend.

The comrade's team decided they would only do their regular Monday work and wouldn't do any work on the cars that had been worked on on Saturday. It was a two month struggle they waged around the slogans "no to any overtime," "yes to new workers being hired."

This struggle had a big impact because FIAT tried to refuse the demand. It's too long to go into now, but suffice it to say that there was a sharp conflict, and after two months of hard struggle they won almost everything they asked for.

Q. Were there any fights between the workers regarding overtime?

A. No, there were no fights because there were not many who wanted to work overtime and there were ways of making life difficult for those who did work it. For instance people might come in and find that their work clothes were soaked. Sometimes they found them soaking in the toilet.

Q. How much control have the workers been able to win over the assembly line?

A. We have quite a bit of control compared to workers in other industries, or in the auto industry in other countries. That's the impression I get from speaking to comrades in other situations.

We have very specific agreements with the boss which concretize this control. There is a half-hour when the whole line closes so everyone can eat together. There are also individual breaks that are guaranteed to everyone, and the foremen have to give these to you. That comes to forty minutes per day, in addition to the half hour for lunch.

In addition, the speed of the line is regulated so that each worker must be actually working only 88 percent of his time on the job. This is in contrast to a speed of the line where every second is used in doing the work allotted to that section of the line.

The bosses wanted that 88 percent to be

the average, with some jobs paced above that and some below. We said no, that has to be the maximum for every individual. And it is our interpretation that carries. This means that the average saturation work rate is therefore less than 88 percent since some jobs take less time and 88 percent is the maximum allowed.

Sometimes the bosses try to find ways to speed up the line by dividing the work into smaller portions. In our contract we have provisions that limit this practice. There can be no job that takes less than one minute.

Q. How did you prevent the bosses and foremen from getting new workers to violate this agreement?

A. The new workers are the youngest workers and are the most combative. The older workers are somewhat satisfied. They see that they have made some gains. But the young workers come into the situation as it is now and say that this is a bad situation. They want to change it.

We also got an agreement that the faster the line moves, the lower the percentage of the minute actually involved in working.

Another thing that we were able to do is force the bosses to provide precise three-month projections for the production rate on each assembly line. This was extremely important for the following reason. In the past workers could be shifted from one line to another as needed.

For instance, if today line A is producing a model at 200 cars per day and line B is producing another model at 400 cars per day, some of the workers from line A would be switched to line B. And if the next day line A was producing 300 cars a day and line B was producing 300 cars, some of the workers from line B would be shifted back to line A.

But we forced the company to fix production rates for each line for three months at a time and to staff each line with the number of people needed for that rate of production. A worker cannot be shifted from one line to another, and therefore the bosses now have to hire a full complement for each line.

Given that the average absenteeism is 16 percent, it means that each line must now have an organic workforce of 16 percent more than normally needed assigned to it fulltime. And each three months the company determines what the average absenteeism has been on each line and then adjusts the workforce to reflect the real absenteeism.

If we didn't have this it would mean that the foremen would try to make those present work even harder to cover for the absentees.

There aren't any part-time workers because if everyone came in there would be more people than work.

Q. How long do the contracts run?

A. Three years for the whole industry. Then the contract for each local plant runs one year and covers only the specific conditions in that plant. The bosses tried to get the national contract to establish limits on what could be demanded in the local contracts, but that was beaten back.

Q. How many people are in the union?

A. Among metalworkers as a whole in Italy the percentage is very high, around 70 percent. At my plant it is lower. Where I work a little over 40 percent are unionized. FIAT was always the weakest area in terms of unionization, because of the setbacks I mentioned.

But the delegates are elected by all the workers, not just those in the unions. And workers who are not in unions can be elected as delegates to the factory council, which is the local structure of the union. These councils are both a union and a movement. At the top it is a union, at the base it is a movement.

Q. To what extent have women entered the workforce on the floor as opposed to the offices, and how successful have they been in being accepted by the workers and by the foremen?

A. Women have been in the plant for many years, some for thirty years. In the past they were mainly concentrated in a few factories. In 1967 when there was a big wave of hiring, women began to move into other areas as well. And this continued in the years that followed.

The struggles that took place around conditions of work helped make it possible for women to be hired. Today there is an agreement at FIAT that no worker has to lift more than twenty kilos.

Q. Are there different job categories for people of different physical abilities, so that, for instance, a small person doesn't get put on jobs that require a lot of height?

A. There shouldn't be jobs that are so hard that only some people can do them. We try to force the bosses to introduce new machines or new technology that makes that possible.

This aids the general health of everyone.

Q. Would you go into more detail on the situation faced by women?

A. After 1974-75, the number of women in the plants declined. They were not pushed out, but there was greater turnover of women and less were hired than quit.

But since 1977, with the growth of the women's movement and the unions taking up the question, the number again increased.

The unions demanded some control over hiring and wanted the imposition of more objective criteria for hiring. We felt that it should not be the bosses who have control over hiring, but rather that all the workers



June 22 metalworkers demonstration in Rome.

who don't have jobs should sign up on a list and be classified on the basis of the length of time they have been out of work and their family situation.

Someone who is the head of a family gets more points than someone who isn't. A woman who lives alone or whose husband is out of work would get more points than someone whose husband is working or than a man whose wife was already working.

With this system it turned out that there were more women than men on the list of those who needed jobs. Moreover, many of the men on the list, which was compiled by the city administration together with the unions, did not want to work at FIAT. So those who ended up at FIAT tended to be women and young. Last year many more women than men were hired.

As a result of this process the women have spread throughout much of the plant, although there are still some sections where they do not appear. Overall, about 20 percent of the workforce is women, but in some parts of the line women are more than 50 percent.

In Italy the law prevents discrimination on wages. "Same work, same wages." So there isn't this kind of discrimination. But there is discrimination of another kind. A young male worker, for example, may be able to get a skill if he has the desire and wants to get ahead. A young woman usually cannot.

In most plants, the more skilled the job, the fewer women you have. Women are found in difficult jobs, but not in skilled jobs. But a certain consciousness is beginning to develop on this question among men and women. In one plant there is discussion going on about opening a struggle to get a fixed percentage of women into these openings.

Unfortunately the bosses' ideology that some work is men's work is accepted by many women and by many male workers. Many women see that unequal pay for the

same work would be clear discrimination and they would oppose that, but they do not yet see that the fact that some job categories are restricted to men is also discrimination.

But I believe that after the last wave of hiring that took place, which was so heavily youth and women, this attitude will change also.

Up until ten years ago when these big struggles took place, foremen frequently gave favors to women in return for sexual favors, which was a form of prostitution of women. When, through the struggles, the power of the foremen over questions of assignments and job categories was greatly reduced, this no longer took place. There was the contract that had to be honored, and delegates to see that it was enforced.

This eliminated the objective base of the foreman's power over women. In addition, no one in the team is going to tolerate an authoritarian attitude by the foreman, even when it is directed toward women. There is more solidarity between men and women workers than between men workers and men foremen.

But of course backward attitudes still exist, although they haven't taken extreme forms. Among the delegates and the most advanced workers there is consciousness on the question, which tends to cut down on the extreme forms of this exploitation of women, although even here we should not exaggerate the consciousness.

The main kind of antiwomen attitudes are the ones more associated with everyday life. Men read pornographic magazines and put up pin-ups. But it doesn't go beyond that. There's no violence against women. There are affairs that take place between women and men workers, but the women chose to do that, it's not forced.

It is the normal kind of prejudice that exists outside the factory that is reflected within as well. But I think that there is less in the factory than in general society,

and from what I gather there is less in big factories in Italy than in other countries. I think the reason for this is that for a number of years we have carried out big struggles all together, big demonstrations together, and the sense of solidarity is very strong.

These ten years of struggle have created a much more human atmosphere of solidarity compared to the past, a big change. For many workers their main social life, friendships, relationships, are oriented around the factory.

Q. What kind of political activity is carried out in the plant?

A. All our posters, literature, leaflets and the like are distributed right in the factory under the nose of the foreman. I can go up and hang a GCR poster right next to the foreman. All the left organizations do this.

These days, during the elections, there are more posters inside FIAT than there are at any political headquarters. There are no areas of the plant that aren't totally covered with posters.

Every morning the members of the different political groups bring their papers into the plants. And in each factory there are a number of special places to put up posters. This is not in the contract, but has been imposed on the company by the workers.

Q. When was the provision for 150 hours of schooling won?

A. It was won in the 1972 contract by the metalworkers and then spread to other industries as well. That was at a time when the metalworkers had high hopes and were reaching for the stars. The agreement had two aspects. There are some limitations on using the 150 hours. In a single plant no more than 3 percent of the workers can be absent at the same time. But that's the only limit.

There are two kinds of courses. One kind provides elementary and secondary school teaching for those who need it. Today everyone in Italy goes to school until the age of fourteen. But many older workers who didn't finish primary school can get a diploma through the 150 hours. And many workers did this. Practically everyone in this situation has made use of the 150 hours.

There is another kind of course that features a set number of hours on a single subject. There are courses of anywhere from 40 to 150 hours on things of interest in the lives of workers such as health on the job, studying the bosses' plans for restructuring industry, studying the city, rhythms of work, and more general courses such as class consciousness, internationalism, and the like.

These courses are given in the schools and the workers are paid for the time they spend in the course. □

New Rise of Mass Movement in Brazil

By Benedito Oliveira

During its first five months, the dictatorship of Gen. João Figueiredo was confronted with more than a million and a half striking workers. There were more than eighty-five strikes in at least twelve states. It was the most significant development in the Brazilian labor movement in the past sixteen years.

This big strike movement was accompanied by an equally important political movement—the struggle for the establishment of a workers party led by “authentic” trade unionists and the opposition unions.

The dictatorship, for its part, is trying out “reforms.” And along with American imperialism, the Social Democracy is coming to its aid with Leonel Brizola, an old populist leader.

Strikes, demonstrations, and struggles against the high cost of living, for an unconditional general amnesty, for a sovereign constituent assembly, as well as the building of a workers party—this is the present context of the Brazilian class struggle.

* * *

The military dictatorship that was installed in 1964 and strengthened by an “institutional” coup in 1968 was for an entire period (until 1977-78) the bloodiest dictatorship in Brazil’s history. Despite the initial promises to build a “moral democracy” free of subversion and corruption—promises that have been repeated with every change of president—the dictatorship succeeded only in setting up the most uncontrolled and despotic regime Brazil has ever known. The amount of power concentrated in the hands of the head of state continually increased. The president stood above the judiciary as the real holder of legislative, judicial, and executive powers.

Torture and murder of political opponents was a fundamental prop of the dictatorship. The impunity enjoyed by the repressive apparatus allowed it to develop into a truly independent center of power within the state. Brazil created a political police that was, moreover, able to export its “technology” to other Latin American countries.

Political repression was the basic instrument for freezing wages and for the redistribution of income that made Brazil one of the countries with the greatest inequality in income distribution. This was a fundamental element in the accelerated rate of capital accumulation between 1968 and 1973, Brazil’s so-called “economic miracle.”

Nevertheless, despite the brutal repression and the unprecedented economic developments of this period, the regime was unable to achieve real political stability.

This was due to the dictatorship’s inability to develop an ideology that could give it legitimacy, and thus a reasonable social base. The coup that brought it to power was presented as a “liberal” coup, with the proclaimed objective of reestablishing true democracy, which they claimed had been destroyed by demagoguery, corruption, and subversion. They never developed theories regarding the “sole party” or statements about the total corruption of “the political class” that would have been the basis to establish the necessity for a military government.

This explains the surprising fact that they maintained the congress throughout nearly the whole period, although without scheduled elections and under conditions in which elections were meaningless in terms of power. It also explains the military’s concern with changing presidents at the end of their term, while strengthening the military character of the presidency and maintaining the total power of the army. Each time a new officer became president, it was always suggested that “next time” it would be a civilian government.

For a short period (under General Médici’s government from 1969 to 1974) there was an attempt to use the “economic miracle” to provide legitimacy for the regime. But this short-lived attempt was snuffed out by the beginning of the economic crisis in 1973. And even during the height of the “economic miracle” the regime was being undermined by the exposure of facts regarding the growth of income inequality, the subservience with regard to imperialism, and the growth of the foreign debt.

The regime’s difficulty in justifying its existence as a dictatorship and the decision finally made, under the pressure of the onset of the economic crisis, to attempt to “institutionalize” itself by using self-reform to try to give the dictatorship a liberal façade, are important elements to bear in mind in understanding the recent acceleration of its crisis.

The basic roots of the present crisis can be found in the changes in the country’s economic profile since 1964.

The Economic Model

The economic model that has been followed since 1964 is in fact simply the accentuation and further development of

the model that President Juscelino Kubitschek put into effect in the late 1950s. In its bare outlines, this consists of freezing wages (with a resulting significant growth in the rate of surplus value), along with complete integration of the economy with imperialism. This permitted a big increase in industrial production through the association of imperialism, the state companies, and the big national capitalists. Furthermore, since this period opened up, one can hardly speak of “big national capitalists” because of their integration with imperialism. A more appropriate term would be “big associated capitalists.”

One of the principal reasons for the 1964 coup was the fact that the economic model went against the interests of the people—a fact that was already clear by the beginning of the 1960s. The coup simply brought the political superstructure into line with the repression already taking place on the economic level.

The most important results of the acceleration of this kind of capital accumulation since 1964 were industrialization, the growth of urbanization, and the growth in the weight of the industrial working class. The urban population already comprises more than 60 percent of the country’s total population. In the southeast, where the main industrial states are located (São Paulo, Minas Gerais, and Rio de Janeiro), the urban population represents 80 percent of the total, 90 percent in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Industrialization and urbanization of the country are accompanied by the growing penetration of capitalist relations into agriculture, relegating the archaic forms of work relations such as the *parceria*, a type of share-cropping, to a secondary plane. In the southeast, wage workers already comprise more than 70 percent of the agricultural labor force, and day laborers and seasonal workers represent a high percentage.

It is also important to stress the character of the industrialization. The industrialization has been dominated by monopoly capital, especially in the most modern branches of the economy. The ever greater presence of big capital (state, imperialist, and associated) and the resulting declining arena for the middle bourgeoisie, has led to an increase in the number of wage workers. It is also important to note that this evolution has affected a large part of the old “liberal” professions.

The only way such a transformation could be carried out was through an increase in technological and financial de-

pendence on imperialism. The country's escalating indebtedness is proof of this. In 1973 the foreign debt was \$6 billion. In 1974 it had risen to \$17 billion (corresponding to a short term debt of \$12 billion). Today it is estimated that the foreign debt is more than \$50 billion. The thrust of economic policy was aimed at very rapidly increasing exports, and they have doubled in the period mentioned.

But the basic difficulty is that this growth in exports is also accompanied by an equal or even greater tide of imports due to the type of industrialization that exists in the country. Industrialization has developed furthest in the consumer durables sector of the economy (automobiles, household appliances), with less development in the capital goods sector. Added to this is the problem of oil, which the regime always uses as a scapegoat.

In this context, the development of the financial sector has fulfilled tasks that on the one hand are consistent with the "economic model," but on the other hand has shown its weakness. Even officially it is acknowledged that the "model" encourages speculation.

The Crisis of the Model

Since 1973 the economy has been in crisis. First, its dependence on imperialism has grown in all spheres: financial, technological (the industrialization has taken place with an increase in dependence, especially in the field of industrialization equipment), and in terms of the international market (due to the numerous credits obtained for the sale of their products).

The balance of payments constitutes the most sensitive point of the crisis, with a constant indebtedness due to deficits.

Secondly, the industrialization could only take place with big support from the "mother state." The amount of subsidies granted by the public bodies is unbelievable. Several private groups (including foreign groups such as FIAT) were offered installations practically free of charge, so great was the concern of the government (on the federal and municipal levels) to offer the maximum advantages possible in terms of subsidies, tax exemptions, and participation as partners without control. This phenomenon is most evident in the export sectors, since it justifies the major efforts to make Brazilian products more competitive in the world market.

The penetration of this "new capital" into the countryside also took place with the direct participation of the state, through financing arrangements that charge negative real interest rates, i.e. interest rates that are lower than the inflation rate.

The second sensitive point of this economic policy relates to the "struggle against inflation," which increases the financial dependence, the growing weight of public expenditures to get the various enterprises operating, as well as the pres-

ence of monopolist capital and a highly speculative financial sector. Since 1974 the inflation rate has surpassed an annual rate of 30 percent, and this year it is certain to reach 60 percent.

For a long time the remedy for inflation was the *arrocho*—a wage freeze. The minimum wage was introduced in the 1940s as a subsistence wage for a working-class family. Until the beginning of the 1960s it underwent big fluctuations (the rises and falls always depended on the state of the workers movement). But throughout the period as a whole, the increase in the minimum wage has been very small, much lower than the rise in productivity, meaning a growth in the rate of surplus value.

In the period from 1964 to 1974 the minimum wage declined sharply. This meant that the regime had to heavily repress the union movement, which was already very closely tied to the state as a result of the vertical structure that President Vargas copied from Mussolini in the 1940s.

Today the minimum wage would have to be increased more than 120 percent just to again reach the standard of living of the 1940s, without counting any gain in productivity.

How then has the Brazilian population survived such a brutal drop in its pay level? There are explanations. The number of hours worked rose (despite the eight-hour day established by law) through the artifice of "supplementary hours." Along with this, the average number of people per family who work—women and children—has also risen.

It is therefore impossible for the dictatorship to contain inflation by lowering the minimum wage even further.

The depth of the economic crisis has resulted in a permanent and growing crisis for the dictatorship. Its legitimacy is thrown into question by its lack of "effectiveness." This increases its instability, and therefore lowers its base of support even within the bourgeoisie. As a result, a period of interbourgeois conflict began under the Geisel government (1974-1979). The issues were what political strategy to choose and how to divide the pie. With the installation of the present dictator, Figueiredo, there has been an attempt to solve this crisis with the creation of a "special" minister whose aim is to satisfy all factions of the bourgeoisie.

Nevertheless, the result of this has been the disruption of the form of bourgeois domination. Until 1964 this domination rested on two important pillars.

The first pillar was the control that the rural oligarchy, the big land-owning bourgeoisie, exercised over vast segments of the population. The votes they bought had a decisive weight within the National Congress.

The second pillar was the control that the populist apparatus maintained over the majority of working-class voters. This

apparatus was based on the unions and parties, such as the Brazilian Labor Party,¹ that were controlled by the minister of labor on the basis of the vertical union structure. The complicity of the Brazilian Communist Party helped maintain this pillar.

The rural oligarchy's domination was destroyed by the process of industrialization as well as by the changes in the agrarian structure. The domination of urban populism was also destroyed by the process of industrialization—which increased the social weight of the working class and consequently its desire for a decisive voice—and especially by the repression that its apparatus suffered.

The period immediately following 1964 saw populism go through a process of radicalization (mostly in a nationalist direction, as Leonel Brizola, the principal leader, began using anti-imperialist language). This led the dictatorship to try to destroy it. It was quite natural that a structure controlling the workers movement from "within" would find itself obliged to follow the workers movement in its process of radicalization and that therefore the "destruction" of the workers movement would also mean the dismantling of the populist apparatus.

Beginning in 1974, after having destroyed the "guerrillaist" left, the regime tried to "institutionalize" its rule. But the problem was more complicated than it had thought. What should it do? On one side the electoral road was blocked because the populism that controlled the "bought votes" was now broken down if not destroyed.

And on the other hand the dictatorship's terrorist violence had thrown all those with a "humanist conscience" into the camp of the opposition. Even the church, one of the pillars of the 1964 coup, had become an active supporter of the opposition.

This period was also marked by the beginning of unprecedented victories for the bourgeois opposition—the MDB (Movimento Democrático Brasileiro—Brazilian Democratic Movement), especially in the big urban centers.

More recently, starting in 1977-78, the dictatorship discovered a much more serious challenge than the electoral defeats: the workers movement reemerged full of vigor and on new bases, characterized by its suspicion of traditional populism.

This context explains the persistent crisis of the dictatorship, which began in 1974 and speeded up in 1977-78, as well as

1. The Brazilian Labor Party was an old populist party that had broad support and successfully carried out a class-collaborationist program. The Brazilian Communist Party had an entry tactic toward the Labor Party and played an important role in it. Today the Labor Party has reemerged with the same old leaders, including Brizola.

the rise in the combativity of the workers movement.

Acceleration of the Crisis

The economic crisis that began in 1973 sharpened the problem of the dictatorship's legitimacy. Since the beginning of his government, General Geisel had spoken about "relaxing" the regime. The November 1974 electoral defeat forced him to draw back.

Until 1978 the opposition was developing under the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie, around "institutional" themes. This type of opposition reached its high point after the "April Package," a series of measures decreed by the regime in a context of sufficiently hobbling the Congress to permit parliamentary elections in 1978.

One element of this "package" was the provision for indirect election of one-third of the Senate through the intermediary of an electoral college in which parliamentary representatives of the small towns predominated.

Another was indirect election of governors by this same electoral college (and not by the legislative assemblies as before, since that would have given the MDB control over the governments of the country's principal states).

A third was general application of the Falcao Law, named after its author the then minister of justice, limiting electoral propaganda on radio and television to a simple listing of names, addresses, and biographies of the candidates.

This series of measures led the MDB to call for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, a slogan that certain sectors of the left had been putting forward for some time. This slogan then began to play a key role together with demands for the revocation of Institutional Law No. 5,² an end to torture and general amnesty, demands that had already been partially raised by the bourgeois opposition.

In addition to a deepening of the liberal bourgeois opposition, 1977 was marked by a big growth in the student movement, with huge street demonstrations, the first since 1968. Even more important was the emergence of "authentic trade-unionism." Some trade-union leaders whose whole training had taken place during the period of total control by the dictatorship began to take increasingly combative, class-struggle positions. Their first big campaign was carried out around catching up on wages, meaning the 34 percent wage readjustment that the dictatorship itself had authorized, utilizing the fraudulent figures of the inflation index.

Faced with an opposition that was becoming widespread, the dictatorship

agreed to a series of "reforms" of the regime to take effect at the end of 1977. These included measures such as the abolition of Institutional Law No. 5 and its replacement by mechanisms for "defense of the state." These "mechanisms" included the power of the executive branch to suppress parliamentary electoral mandates or to decree a "state of emergency" without consulting congress. At the same time, the regime granted a partial amnesty. This is how the maneuvers to win over the liberal opposition began.

The predominant weight of the bourgeois opposition within a broader opposition therefore began to break down. During 1978, and particularly since May, a big strike wave broke out—in a situation where strikes were still illegal. The vanguard of this strike wave was what is called the ABC region, the main center of the automobile industry. The ABC region is made up of three industrial suburbs of São Paulo—Santo André, São Bernardo, and São Caetano.

This was the most important strike since 1968, involving more than 50,000 workers. That strike, however, was not organized by the unions and thus took the form of plant-by-plant strikes.

The dictatorship opted to negotiate, agreeing to a large number of wage demands.

The strike movement continued throughout 1978, mainly among salaried workers such as doctors, professors, and the like. In September 1978, during the metalworkers strike in João Monlevade in the state of Minas Gerais, an "authentic" union for the first time took over the official leadership of the movement, which was victorious.

In October-November 1978 a new qualitative leap took place with more than 250,000 metalworkers going out on strike in São Paulo, Osasco, and Guarulhos (in the São Paulo metropolitan area). The results were disappointing, due to the maneuvers of the leaders of this union—which is a company union. The end of the strike was announced without the demands being satisfied and despite the disagreement of a large majority of the workers.

Another important political event of 1978 was the November parliamentary elections. Developments on the politico-institutional level began to fall behind the real social movement.

The year 1979 has been marked by both the radicalization of the struggle for civil liberties and a new explosion of the workers movement. The regime's "reform" took effect on January 1 with the end of Institutional Law No. 5 as the first measure. This was followed by a partial amnesty, which excluded those sentenced for "crimes of blood," meaning those who had confronted the dictatorship with arms. There was also the "party reform," permitting legalization of other political parties besides the official party ARENA (Ali-

ança Renovadora Nacional—Alliance for National Renewal) and the MDB, the tolerated opposition, as well as the dissolution of existing parties.

The amnesty is an important step for making the regime's alliance with the liberals viable and for reestablishing relations with the old populist leaders like Leonel Brizola, who are today aligned around the Social Democracy. This plan for a partial amnesty was massively rejected by the people's movement, which demands a real, general, and unrestricted amnesty.

From another angle, during August the political prisoners organized a big hunger-strike movement on a national scale. The main trade-union leaders have also shown their rejection of the partial amnesty by going into the streets with the population in several cities around the country. The leading "authentic trade-unionist," Luis Inácio da Silva, who is widely known as "Lula," went so far as to tell a meeting organized by his union in São Bernardo that "the real instigator of bloody crimes is the military regime, which is killing the workers through hunger."

The dictatorship needs the new reformulation of the laws concerning political parties in order to be able to win a parliamentary majority. It wants to build an "independent" liberal party that would be a kind of gathering ground for the whole bourgeois opposition and could function as a pillar of the regime. In addition it favors the establishment of a "populist" or Social-Democratic opposition party that could be a "responsible" partner in dialogue.

Aside from the differences within the bourgeoisie, the big obstacle to concretizing this plan is the appearance of the movement for the "Workers Party," led by the "authentic trade-unionists." This movement expresses the combativity of the workers movement.

The big problem confronting the dictatorship is that the bourgeois opposition now plays a secondary role. General Figueiredo, in power since last March, has been confronted with an even better organized and more militant workers movement, including a strike by more than 250,000 metalworkers in the ABC region that lasted over two weeks. This represented a challenge to the dictatorship, forcing it to rethink its policy toward the workers movement. Unquestionably this is one of the causes of the difference in the present dictator's behavior compared to his predecessor Geisel.

Figueiredo has opted for a more daring strategy by enlarging the bounds of the promised "opening," hoping through this to be able to gain a populist image. It is now clear that the dictatorship has decided to gamble on an evolution of the type that took place in Spain after Franco's death.

After negotiations between the union leaders and the regime, the ABC strike ended in a no-score tie. The workers did

2. Institutional Law No. 5 was a series of amendments to the constitution introduced after 1968. It contained measures such as the suppression of civil liberties, habeas corpus, etc.

not win a victory, in that they did not get significant wage hikes. But the regime was forced to recognize the union leaders as real representatives of the workers. It must be emphasized that all this took place in a context of the dictatorship's "intervention," with the unions declared "outside the law" and the strikes illegal. Right after the end of the strikes, the ousted leaders were returned to their posts, something never previously seen in Brazilian trade-union history.

The curve of the strike movement continued to rise. Starting in May 1979 the state of Minas Gerais, which is the second most industrialized, became the center of gravity of working-class combativity. It began with the 37-day public-school teachers strike, which gained a lot of popular support and won an important victory. Then, under the impact of this teachers' victory, a succession of other strikes took place: metalworkers, public transport drivers, street cleaners, bank guards, hospital workers, and, starting July 30, construction workers in Belo Horizonte and Ouro Branco, over-the-road drivers, civil servants, retail workers (for the first time in their history), workers for the prefecture, bank workers, metalworkers in Divinópolis, miners in Nova Lima, and others.

This new rise of the workers movement (not limited to Minas Gerais, although centered there) showed extremely important characteristics, particularly in terms of the *form of organization*. All these strikes were organized by the ranks and through "general strike committees," even when the official unions supported them. This represents a total break by the masses from the union structure that is tied to the state, and it therefore shows the high level of organization of the key sectors of the Brazilian working class.

The second characteristic was the general practice of holding *street demonstrations* to popularize their movement and win the population's support. Generally there was significant support from the masses. There is also a marked tendency toward workers unity within a fighting, anti-dictatorship, anti-employer perspective, with an increasingly predominant role played by the industrial proletariat.

Third, *unionists are participating in strikes by those in other industries*. This is beginning to make it possible for struggles to take place across occupational lines, and it plays a role analogous to a united workers federation. Such a body does not exist and is prohibited by the dictatorship, along with any structure that cuts across occupational lines.

The fourth characteristic is the *increase in repression*. So far the dictatorship has been responsible for the deaths of two workers in the state of Minas Gerais—one a construction worker shot down in Belo Horizonte and the other in Divinópolis. A metalworker died of skull fractures after having been beaten by the police. Dozens

of workers have had to be hospitalized. Strike pickets were broken up by the military police. Several members of the Bank employees' "strike committee" and of the committee of administration workers were imprisoned. Moreover the president of the



FIGUEIREDO

union at the Bank of Belo Horizonte was dismissed from his position.

The people's movement responded to this intensified repression with demonstrations. One example was the big demonstration of construction workers that drew more than 10,000 in response to the death of one of their members. Another aspect of this mobilization is the struggle for general amnesty.

It is very difficult to make predictions. But today it is clear that it is becoming increasingly difficult for the dictatorship to contain the people's and workers movement through repression. The movement has a strong streak of spontaneity, especially since the struggle is over the question of survival. This year inflation will exceed 60 percent, wiping out all the wage readjustments previously obtained.

It suffices to look at the "liberal" press, such as *Veja* magazine and the *Journal do Brasil*, to conclude that in the last five months under Figueiredo there have been more strikes than in the last months of Goulart's presidency in 1964.

Since Figueiredo took over, there have already been 1.2 million workers on strike, and by the beginning of August, 14.3 million work days had already been lost. Under Figueiredo there has not been a single day when there hasn't been a strike somewhere, and it will continue like that.

The workers movement has a high level of combativity, has forms of organization, has class consciousness, and enjoys the support of the population. But it also has a

rather serious weakness: its low level of political consciousness.

The big proposal is for a Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers Party), which, according to its leaders, would be a beginning of a workers united front. This proposal, while being correct, has limits and is subject to vacillations that are difficult to overcome, beginning with the hesitation of most of the left.

The Brazilian Communist Party is in favor of broad unity of all the opposition forces around the MDB, including "liberal" sectors of the ARENA. The CP systematically tries to hold back strikes, even going so far as to boycott them as it did in the journalists' strikes in São Paulo.

Another sector of the left is made up of the pro-Albanian Communist Party of Brazil (not to be confused with the Brazilian Communist Party); the Movimento Revolucionário 8 de Outubro, which has a guerrillaist origin; the Aliança Popular Marxista-Leninista; as well as other organizations. This sector preferred to support the launching of what they called a "people's party," on a more populist, less class-struggle basis than the Workers Party.

Revolutionary Marxists see the decisive importance of pushing forward the formation of the Workers Party. Within it we will be able to constitute a wing with its own character. This is the only way the working class will have the revolutionary leadership that is an indispensable tool for the events to come. □

Volcanic Nuke

President Marcos and Westinghouse are pushing ahead with construction of the Philippines' first nuclear plant despite objections from the Philippines Movement for Environmental Protection that the project is not safe.

The construction site forty-five miles west of Manila is within ninety miles of four "active" volcanos. Mt. Natib, the nearest, is only ten miles away and the mudflow from its last eruption came within two miles of the site.

The U.S. State Department gave the go-ahead October 1 for Westinghouse to export a key component of the nuclear plant. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission still has to approve the export decision but, in any case, President Carter could overrule them, as he has done in the past.

The State Department noted that the "seismic activity and volcanic history of the site region is not well known or understood" and urged installation of a "volcano surveillance system" to evaluate the "probabilities of eruption."

In approving the project, they obviously had concerns other than safety in mind. Wall Street is particularly eager to see the \$1.2 billion deal completed because of dim prospects for the nuclear industry in the U.S. Only one nuclear power plant has been ordered by a domestic utility company in the last three years.

WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR AID TO NICARAGUA



Solidarity Conference Planned in United States

[The following is from an article that appeared in the October 26 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist news-weekly published in New York.]

* * *

The National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan people will hold its second national conference in Detroit November 16-18.

This will be an important event for activists across the country who are working to develop solidarity and material aid for the Nicaraguan revolution.

Groups and individuals affiliated with the National Network include unionists, church groups, and local solidarity committees.

Among them are Leo Suslow, director of International Programs for the United Auto Workers.

Also, Abe Feinglass, vice-president of

the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and Frank Arnold, executive board member of the Santa Clara, California, Central Labor Council.

A tentative schedule for the conference provides for registration and a social gathering Friday evening, November 16, a plenary session Saturday, and workshops both on Saturday and Sunday.

The plenary session will be addressed by representatives of the Nicaraguan Government of National Reconstruction and the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

Several workshops will focus on the economic situation in Nicaragua and what is needed to achieve reconstruction of the devastated country.

Holding the conference in Detroit, the center of an entire area of union strength, helps in the important job of involving the organized labor movement in a massive campaign of aid to Nicaragua. □

French JCR Launches Fund to Aid Literacy Campaign

The French Trotskyist youth group JCR (Revolutionary Communist Youth) held a meeting in Paris October 16 to launch a campaign to raise 50,000 francs (US\$11,850) to aid the drive to wipe out illiteracy in Nicaragua.

An estimated 700,000 persons in the countryside—more than a quarter of the country's total population—can neither read nor write owing to decades of neglect of education under the Somoza regime.

The funds collected will be sent to Nicaragua to help purchase the 1,500 tape recorders, 50,000 cassettes, and 650,000 school notebooks required to conduct the literacy campaign.

Contributions to the fund may be sent c/o Philippe Andréa, 10, Impasse Guéméné, 75004 Paris, France.



Anibal Yáñez/Perspectiva Mundial Cuban pediatrician (center) and two volunteer workers at temporary clinic in Masaya. Socialist mayoral candidate says "Let's have Phoenix follow the Cuban example in aiding the people of Nicaragua."

A Sister City for Managua?

[The following article appeared in the October 10 issue of the daily *Arizona Republic*, under the headline "Phoenix Mayoral Candidate Urges Aid for Nicaragua."]

* * *

A new sister city for Phoenix—Managua, Nicaragua—was proposed Tuesday by the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Mayor.

Dan Fein, a welder by trade, said Managuans are in dire need of food, clothing, medicine and other aid after the fall of the Anastasio Somoza regime.

Fein said the mayor's office in Phoenix could be a collection point for aid to Nicaragua.

"The city (Phoenix) could grant city employees paid time off to do service work in Managua," Fein added. "City engineers could be sent to construct sanitation facilities, help with water purification and health problems. The mayor's office could establish a program for teachers to be sent to Managua."

The program would require Phoenix to hire more employees to fill in for those on leave, Fein said, adding: "There is plenty of money available for this." □

Fein charged that the United States is withholding aid from Nicaragua "to pressure the Sandinista government against infringing on U.S. corporate interests."

Cuba, meanwhile, has sent teachers, medical personnel, milk, and textbooks to Nicaragua, Fein said.

"Let's have Phoenix follow the Cuban example in aiding the people of Nicaragua," he said. □

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