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USA 85¢

UK 30p



Havel
4½ years



Uhl
5 years



Benda
4 years



Bednarova
3 years



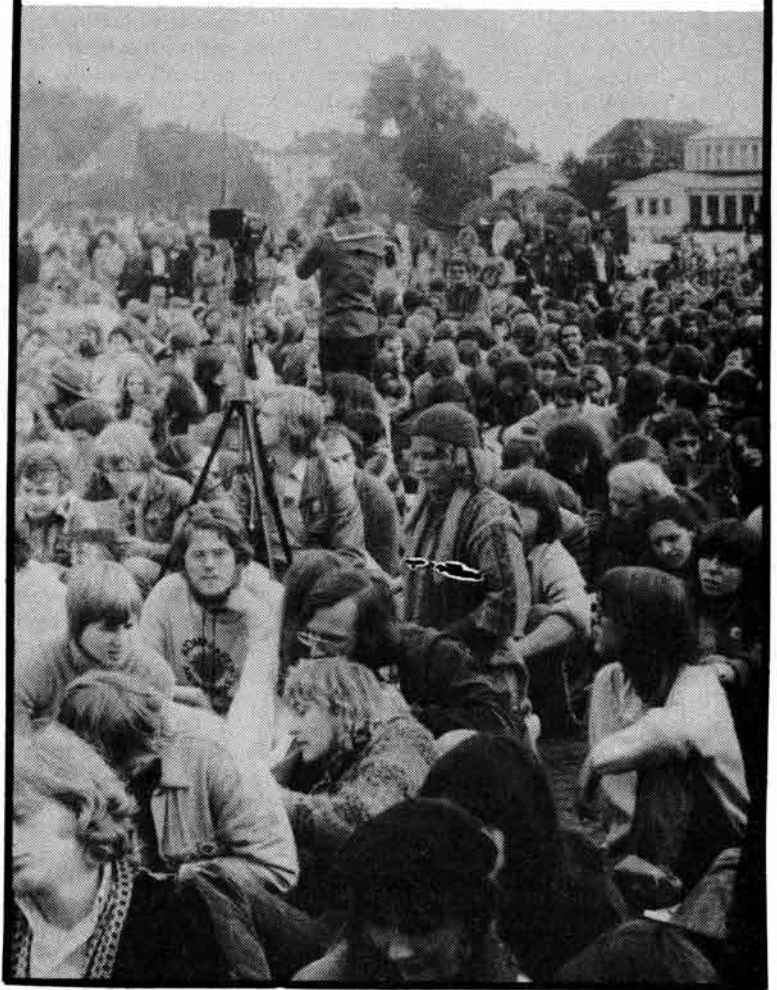
Dienstbier
3 years



Nemcova
2 years

**Czechoslovak Court
Hands Down Stiff
Sentences to Six
Charter 77 Defendants**

100,000 in Bonn Say 'No Nukes!'



**South Korean Palace Coup
Tries to Head Off Growing
Opposition to Dictatorship**

Free the Czechoslovak Dissidents!

By David Frankel

A hurried two-day trial ended in Prague October 23 with the sentencing of six Czechoslovak human-rights activists on charges of "subversion of the republic."

All six defendants were leaders of the Czechoslovak civil-rights movement, Charter 77; and of the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), a Charter 77 subgroup.

The Stalinist regime—despised by the Czechoslovak people and owing its existence to the Soviet invasion of August 1968—had the gall to charge that the six fighters for democratic rights had been "abetted by a foreign agent."

But the failure of the regime to present even the pretense of a criminal case and the worldwide condemnation of the frame-up—including protests by many Communist parties—marks the trial as another blow to the already minuscule prestige of the Czechoslovak government.

Hoping to keep publicity to a minimum, the regime barred foreign journalists and supporters of the defendants from the courtroom. Forty people who took part in a vigil outside the courthouse on the night of October 22 were arrested, and the trial was rushed to an end.

Petr Uhl, who at the time of his arrest May 29 was the editor of the Charter 77 information bulletin, was described from



VACLAV HAVEL

the start as the principal "conspirator." He was sentenced to five years in prison.

Vaclav Havel, an internationally known playwright and one of the three original Charter 77 spokespeople, received a four-and-a-half-year sentence.

Vaclav Benda, secretary of VONS and a Charter 77 spokesperson, got four years.

Jiri Dienstbier, a commentator for Radio Prague and a member of the Communist Party prior to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Otta Bednarova, a journalist, were both sentenced to three years imprisonment.

Dana Nemcova, a leading activist in the cultural underground, drew a two-year suspended sentence. The court cited her seven children as the reason for its "leniency."

Especially damaging to the Czechoslovak regime has been the outcry against the sentences in the international labor movement. *L'Humanité*, the newspaper of the French Communist Party, declared October 24 that "the motives given for the arrests, the conduct of the trial and the length of the prison terms can only be received with indignation."

L'Unità, the Italian Communist daily, announced the verdict on its front page and called it a "serious and inadmissible sentence." The Italian Trade Union Federation, which includes the Communist-led Italian General Confederation of Labor, also denounced the sentences.

Amnesty International has adopted the six as "prisoners of conscience."

Among those who had previously protested the frame-up of the six were seventy-eight Labour Party members of Parliament and twenty-four leaders of the British Communist Party. Olaf Palme, in his capacity as a leader of the Second International, denounced the "monstrous trial," as did French Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand.

On June 6 more than 3,000 people demonstrated in Paris against the arrest of the Charter 77 activists. Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov also protested the arrests and urged worldwide protests.

Since its appearance in January 1977, Charter 77 has presented the Czechoslovak Stalinists with a continuing dilemma. Presented as a petition to the authorities, Charter 77 demanded that the regime adhere to the democratic standards embodied in the Czechoslovak constitution and in the covenants on human rights ratified at the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Charter 77 explained that there were "many fundamental human rights that, regrettably, exist in our country only on paper."

It noted that "tens of thousands of citizens have been prevented from working in their professions for the sole reason that

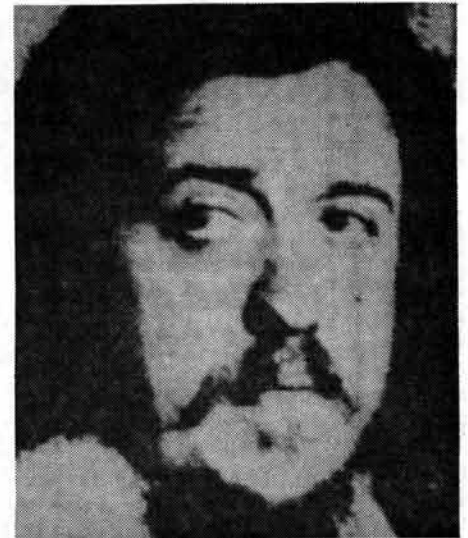
their views differ from the official ones.

"... many young people are prevented from pursuing higher education because of their views or even because of their parents' views. . . ."

"Freedom of speech is suppressed by the government's management of all mass media, including the publishing and cultural institutions. No political, philosophical, scientific, or artistic work that deviates in the slightest from the narrow framework of official ideology or esthetics is permitted to be produced. Public criticism of social conditions is prohibited."

Lack of freedom of speech, assembly, and association, the Charter said, "prevent working people from freely establishing labor and other organizations for the protection of their economic and social interests, and from freely using their right to strike. . . ."

"Other civil rights . . . are gravely circumscribed by the fact that the Interior Ministry employs various practices to con-



VACLAV BENDA

trol the daily existence of citizens—such as telephone tapping and the surveillance of private homes, watching mail, shadowing individuals, searching apartments, and recruiting a network of informers from the ranks of the population. . . ."

Signatories of Charter 77—more than 1,000 have signed—declared:

"Charter 77 is a free and informal and open association of people of various convictions, religions and professions, linked by the desire to work individually and collectively for respect for human and civil rights in Czechoslovakia and the world. . . ." (For the full text of the charter, see *Intercontinental Press*, February 14, 1977, p. 132.)

The appeal for democratic rights in Czechoslovakia, which was signed by some prominent former Communist Party members, such as former Foreign Minister Jiri Hajek, met with a friendly response among broad layers of the working class around the world. Under this pressure

l'Humanité declared in its January 25, 1977, issue:

"We cannot fail to express our shock at the accusation raised by the Czechoslovak authorities that the signers of Charter 77 are following the 'commands of anti-Communist and Zionist centers.' The use of such methods inevitably evokes the arbitrariness of a tragic past. . . .

"We cannot consider the exercise of the right of petition, of distributing pamphlets, and of calling for dialogue and discussion



PETR UHL

as crimes, and especially not in a socialist society. . . . We cannot accept practices that imply that under socialism every discordant voice will be condemned either to silence or repression."

When the British and Italian Communist Party dailies defended the Charter 77 group, they were banned in Prague.

Although the Czechoslovak regime was forced to slow down its repression due to the international outcry, events since Charter 77 was made public have more than confirmed the charges it raised.

In a March 1978 interview, Uhl pointed out that "my flat is under round the clock surveillance by the police, VB (uniformed police) agents are watching me and look at the identity papers of those who come to visit me and often prevent people from coming in. . . .

"I have lost my driving license, my rank in the army has been withdrawn, the telephone has been cut off, I have had problems at work, and recently I got a letter sacking me. . . ." (*IP/I*, March 20, 1978, p. 340.)

Now, after five months of detention, the regime has gone a step further and convicted Uhl and his comrades of "subversion."

Such miserable frame-ups however cannot stifle the aspirations of the Czechoslovak workers to live in freedom and dignity. Nor can they stop the solidarity of the working class movement around the world. The police state measures of the Stalinist regime should be answered by a worldwide campaign demanding freedom for the imprisoned dissidents. □

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Editor: Mary-Alice Waters.
Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.
Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.
Editorial Staff: Dan Dickeson, Gerry Foley, David Frankel, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.

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

Technical Staff: Paul Deveze, Larry Ingram, Arthur Lobman, Kevin McGuire, James M. Morgan, Sally Rhett.

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Rise in Class Struggle Forces Concessions From Iran Regime

By Fred Feldman

A big step-up in the struggles of workers, peasants, and oppressed nationalities in Iran is forcing the capitalist Khomeini-Bazargan government to back down from some of its attacks on civil liberties.

The deepening of the Iranian revolution is being covered up by the big-business media internationally. Their reporting focuses on repressive moves attempted by the regime, while covering up the growing resistance in Iran to these actions.

The Hezb-e Kargar-e Sosialist (HKS—Socialist Workers Party) held a news conference October 21 in Tehran. HKS leader Babak Zahraie protested the frame-up of members of the party (twelve men have been sentenced to death and two women given life terms) in Khuzestan Province.

The HKS revealed that three of the imprisoned socialists have been denied needed medical care. All fourteen have been barred access to radio, newspapers, and visitors. The HKS demanded an immediate end to this inhuman treatment and the transfer of all fourteen to Tehran.

The party also called for the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts to review the cases.

The news conference was front-page news in *Baamdad* and *Ettela'at*, two major dailies. *Ettela'at* headlined its story, "Socialists Imprisoned for Beliefs."

On October 20 the Committee to Defend Political Prisoners held a news conference to demand the freeing of 1,500 political prisoners—most of them in Kurdistan and Khuzestan, where oppressed nationalities have been demanding the right to autonomy.

There was no attempt by rightist thugs to disrupt either news conference—a contrast to the free rein given these progovernment gangs by Khomeini and Bazargan only two months ago.

A rally of 10,000 at Tehran University organized by the Tudeh Party also took place without any attacks.

Popular resistance to repressive measures was reflected in a conference of Islamic judges held in Qum in early October. Many judges voiced opposition to arrests without charges, executions for violations of "morality," and right-wing holliganism.

Making a concession to this pressure, the Ayatollah Khomeini promised October 10 that no executions would be carried out for the time being. He did not commute any existing death sentences, however, and the moratorium can be lifted by Khomeini at any time.

The regime also beat a retreat from the all-out attack it launched against freedom

of the press last August 18, when dozens of newspapers and periodicals were shut down.

Twenty-one newspapers are now publishing legally. Among them are *Mardom*, the daily paper of the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party, and *Voice of the People*, a pro-Peking journal.

The HKS is pressing for the right to resume publication of its weekly paper *Kargar*, which had won growing popularity among workers before the crackdown.

These advances in the fight to maintain the rights won in the battle against the shah occur against the backdrop of a sharp rise in the class struggle.

Recent developments signal the failure thus far of the Khomeini-Bazargan government—acting for Iran's capitalists and landlords—to put an end to ferment and demands for social change among working people.

A new popular uprising is taking place in the cities and villages of Kurdistan, which were occupied by government troops and Pasdaran (Islamic Revolutionary

Guards) after Khomeini declared a "crusade" against the Kurdish people at the end of August. As of October 21 Kurdish fighters were reported to be in control of most of Mehabad, including the army barracks.

The regime failed to maintain the chauvinist fervor it tried to whip up against the Kurds. Slogans have appeared and meetings in solidarity with the Kurds' just demands have taken place at some universities.

A representative of the "Imam's office" in Qum, who was sent to Kurdistan to investigate the situation, has publicly denounced the massacres perpetrated against the Kurdish people during Khomeini's "crusade." He pointed to the slaughter of the entire population of the village of Gharna—more than eighty people—as an example.

Land seizures in southern Kurdistan—which Khomeini sought to crush with his anti-Kurdish drive—have continued and spread to the southern districts of neighboring Azerbaijan.



Auto assembly line in Tehran. Factory committee at Tehran GM plant forced cut in administrators' salaries and tripling of lowest-paid workers' wages.

Large demonstrations protesting repression have taken place in the Azerbaijani capital of Tabriz.

Unrest is not limited to the oppressed nationalities. In the Caspian Sea port of Bandar-e Enzeli, thousands protested a government ban on fishermen plying their trade. The ban was an effort to guarantee a monopoly for the state-owned fisheries.

Ten people were killed October 16 when Pasdaran fired on a protest of 5,000 to 10,000 people. Fighting spread throughout the city and demonstrations grew, demanding the punishment of the Pasdaran. The police headquarters was burned to the ground.

A demonstration of 10,000 took place in the neighboring city of Rasht.

As it became clear that repression would not be enough to stop the uprising, Khomeini issued an order rescinding the ban against the local fishermen.

The conflict revealed growing questioning among the Pasdaran about the repressive role they are being called on to play.

Two members of the HKS were arrested during the demonstrations in Bandar-e Enzeli and questioned by Pasdaran. One of the socialists had run an election campaign for the local city council, in which the HKS also backed independent fishermen candidates.

After talking to the guards about their politics, the HKS members were able to win over some of the Pasdaran. The government not only had to release the socialists, but had to order them expelled from the barracks where they were continuing to hold discussions with the Pasdaran.

Across Iran, workers are looking for effective ways to combat growing unemployment, rising prices, poor housing, and blatant sabotage of the economy by the capitalists.

The nationalization of many industries July 5 led to a discussion among workers of the need for *shoras*, or factory committees, to express the interests of workers in the nationalized plants. The call for *shoras* was a theme in the September 10 demonstrations of mourning for the late Ayatollah Taleghani of Tehran, who is said to have advocated their formation.

Since their nationalizations, many workers believe that "if the factories belong to us, then we should be the ones to decide how they are run."

The new factory committees vary from plant to plant. In some, progovernment forces and more conservative technicians have the upper hand, while in others production workers are playing an increasingly dominant role.

Shoras have spread from the factories of Tehran to the steel industry of Isfahan, as well as to other cities.

At the General Motors Plant in Tehran, the *shora* ordered cuts in the salaries of

overpaid administrators, while tripling the wages of the lowest-paid workers. Company files were opened. Efforts are being made to establish collaboration with *shoras* in other factories in order to begin production of a compact, four-cylinder car when the contract with the U.S. owners of GM runs out three months from now.

The *shora* is demanding a government takeover of land owned by the proprietor of the GM plant. They want the land used to build inexpensive housing for workers.

At another Tehran plant, workers have opened company files and pasted the contents along the factory walls for all to see.

In some instances, defense guards have been formed to protect the factories and the workers.

Letter From Mexican Political Prisoners

Free the Iranian Socialists!

[The following is the text of a letter sent to Ayatollah Khomeini by two Mexican political prisoners, Juan Islas Martínez and Arturo Gallegos Nájera. Both are members of the Revolutionary Workers Party, the Mexican section of the Fourth International, and both are confined at the Santa Martha Acatitla prison on the outskirts of Mexico City. The letter, which is dated September 18, originally appeared in the October 1 issue of the Mexican Trotskyist weekly *Bandera Socialista*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Deprived of the possibility of regularly receiving political newspapers and publications, we have just been informed that fourteen comrades, members of the HKS (Socialist Workers Party) of Iran, are in prison in that country. We have been informed that twelve of them are sentenced to death, and the remaining two *compañeras* to life imprisonment.

We have been very surprised to learn that partisans of the revolution that demolished the hated regime of the shah today find themselves prisoners due to their political convictions. In our country it is common for charges against political prisoners to be invented or for cleverly conducted trials to be carried out in order to keep us in prison without acknowledging the political character of our cases.

We know that the regime of the shah—who today is unfortunately sheltered in our country—made use of methods such as torture and assassination against the political opposition. It is scandalous that in the name of the revolution that overthrew the shah similar methods are now applied against revolutionary militants.

Interest in socialist ideas has grown among the workers. They know they played a decisive role in bringing down the shah, and are increasingly aware that they must play a role in solving the economic problems of the country today.

Because of this, the HKS has been able to deepen its roots among industrial workers despite the repression launched against it.

The experiences of the past months show that despite the blows struck by the Khomeini-Bazargan government, the Iranian revolution has not been crushed and continues to deepen. The decisive battles between the imperialists—and their capitalist and landlord allies—and the Iranian workers and farmers lie ahead. □

Our women comrades imprisoned in Iran have affirmed that prison will not silence them. We wish to say that neither will we be silenced. The imprisonment that we suffer today will not stop us from uniting our voice with that of all those around the world who demand that the lives of our comrades be respected and that they be freed immediately.

If we consider it an obligation to demand that the democratic rights of our comrades in Iran be respected, we feel all the more obligated at the knowledge that those threatened with death are members of our own party. As members of the Revolutionary Workers Party, Mexican section of the Fourth International, we cannot refrain from expressing our solidarity and admiration for our comrade prisoners of the HKS, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Iran.

From May of this year, when we were transferred from the Acapulco prison to here, we have been practically isolated in our cells. On less than ten occasions since then, we have been allowed to go into the prison yard to get some sunlight. Visits to us are restricted. The difficulties in receiving reading matter and in writing are immense. On two occasions plans to assassinate us have been discovered. Despite all this, we have finally been able to learn of the situation of our imprisoned comrades in Iran. We are sure that even if they are also isolated, sooner or later they will be informed of our solidarity.

Our revolutionary convictions have not diminished either. Therefore, despite the risks that we run in making this letter public, we want to demand that the fourteen members of the HKS be freed and that the repression against our brother party in Iran, and against the minority nationalities of that country, stop immediately. □

Behind Imperialists' Campaign of Lies on Huber Matos

By Fred Feldman

On October 21, the Cuban government released Huber Matos from prison. He had completed a twenty-year term for treason against the Cuban revolution. He is among more than 3,000 imprisoned counterrevolutionists who have been released in the past year, leaving only a few hundred in jail for such offenses.

Matos got a hero's welcome from Costa Rica's capitalist rulers when he arrived in San José October 22. He was greeted by Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo and by ex-President José Figueres.

The U.S. media used Matos's release to step up the propaganda campaign against Cuba. He is being portrayed as a martyr—an innocent victim of communist dictatorship. As the *New York Times* and other capitalist newspapers tell it, Matos was a supporter of the revolution who was jailed by Castro solely because he believed in democracy. Matos's claims—supported by no evidence—of having been tortured in prison are being treated as gospel.

Reporters who looked for signs of torture on the sixty-year old Matos were disappointed. *New York Times* correspondent Jo Thomas had to settle for noting that "only a pale gray mustache remains of what was a dark beard and dark glasses protect bad eyesight."

Huber Matos was a bitter enemy of the Cuban workers and peasants. He landed in prison when he moved publicly from counterrevolutionary words to deeds.

A rice planter and teacher, Matos joined the guerrilla fighters in early 1958. He became commander of a Rebel Army column. By this time virtually all sections of the Cuban population agreed that the Batista dictatorship had to go. Support for the armed struggle which Fidel, Raul, Che, and others had launched more than a year earlier was growing fast.

With the flight of Batista on December 31, 1958, and the entry of the victorious rebel soldiers into Havana, a coalition government was set up. It was headed by a wealthy and popular judge, Manuel Urrutia.

The Cuban capitalists and landlords—and their backers in Washington—hoped that the revolution would stop right there with only a change of faces at the top.

But the July 26 Movement had promised many things to the Cuban people—agrarian reform, an end to racist discrimination and unemployment, free medical care, decent low-cost housing, and an end to illiteracy. Castro and his fellow revolutionists who made up the core of the July

26 Movement were determined to keep those pledges.

Their determination divided the forces that had joined momentarily to support the ending of Batista's terror.

Matos, who was now military governor of Camagüey Province, opposed a revolutionary course.

Simmering conflict between the workers and peasants on one side and the wealthy Cubans and the imperialists on the other exploded on May 17, 1959, when the government, prodded by Prime Minister Fidel Castro, promulgated an agrarian reform bill. This guaranteed sixty-seven acre plots to tens of thousands of sharecroppers, while turning many of the big sugar plantations and cattle ranches into state farms and cooperatives.

The Eisenhower administration in Washington demanded massive compensation for U.S. sugar magnates and cattle barons. And Cuba's landlords and capitalists moved into open opposition.

Since the land reform was overwhelmingly supported by the workers and peasants and could therefore not be attacked openly, the opposition concentrated on denouncing "communist infiltration" in the government, and pressing for a witch-hunt against leftists.

Matos, sometimes joined on the platform by President Urrutia, made anticommunist speeches. (During this period, Matos took out a \$120,000 loan from Urrutia which he said was for "normal expenses.") And Matos did what he could to stall the agrarian reform in Camagüey.

"The cattle ranches of Camagüey," historian Hugh Thomas explains, "were in fact the heart of counterrevolutionary Cuba, the home of conservative interests. . . ."

When Castro denounced Urrutia's obstruction of needed social reforms, mass demonstrations forced him to resign.

Counterrevolutionists didn't limit themselves to words. Pedro Díaz Lanz, the head of the air force and a close collaborator with Matos in the right wing of the Rebel Army, deserted to the United States in June and called for U.S. action against Cuba. About this time, the CIA began to back bombing raids against Cuban cane fields and towns, carried out by Cuban exile and U.S. pilots.

Counterrevolutionary guerrillas—many landed in Cuba by the CIA—appeared in the Sierra de Escambray. Philip Bonsal, who was U.S. ambassador to Cuba at the time, acknowledged later that "anti-Castro guerrillas were receiving arms-drops from

a source generally assumed to be a United States agency."

In mid-August a plot by cattle ranchers in Camagüey to bring down the regime was thwarted. "It is just possible that the CIA were also involved," wrote Thomas.

In Washington, figures like Vice-president Richard Nixon and the chief of naval operations, Admiral Burke, were pressing for the organization of an exile army to invade Cuba.

With the counterrevolution pushing hard, Matos began organizing opposition to the revolution among the officers of the Rebel Army.

On October 19, Matos and fourteen other officers sent "letters of resignation" to Castro denouncing "communist infiltration." Having thrown down the gauntlet, they hoped Castro would back down in face of a split in the Rebel Army. Retreat would have meant the end of agrarian reform, the end of moves toward independence from imperialism, and repression of the workers and peasants instead of moves to thwart the counterrevolutionaries.

Castro didn't back down. Knowing that the U.S. rulers were working day and night to bring down the revolutionary government—and that Washington had used a CIA-organized exile invasion backed by local military commanders to bring down a popularly supported government in Guatemala in 1954—Castro was determined that this would not happen in Cuba.

He went to Camagüey the next day to arrest Matos. The masses of Camagüey poured out in support of Castro and the agrarian reform, and in opposition to the military governor.

On October 21, Matos' associate Díaz Lanz carried out an air raid over Havana that resulted in forty-seven casualties.

As he always did at key turning points, Castro explained this development to the Cuban people. On October 26 he addressed a rally of one million people who gathered in Havana to protest Washington's stepped-up aggression against Cuba.

"The revolution is here to stay," Castro proclaimed.

He explained why the revolutionary government could not permit the right wing of the Rebel Army command to organize against the revolution:

What the reactionaries would like is an unarmed civil population and an army which is corruptible and that some day may be able to put a brake on the revolution and make our country backslide. This is why the betrayal of Huber Matos is such a serious matter. It was the first

attempt to utilize members of the Rebel Army against the revolution; it was the first attempt to corrupt officers, to use them against the people, against the interests of the people, against the Cuban revolution. Of course the reactionaries do not want the workers and farmers to be given weapons. All they want is a professional army of which they might some day be able to win over some officers. They might be able some day to corrupt a professional army and once again have an instrument with which to perpetrate another coup d'etat, like the 10th of March [the date of Batista's 1952 takeover].

But there will never again be a 10th of March in our country.

Castro announced that the workers and peasants would be armed, organized into militias, and given military training. This provided the mass base for the creation later of a revolutionary professional army.

Matos went on trial before a specially-established tribunal December 11. Fidel and Raul Castro were the main witnesses against him. Matos, who was represented by counsel, spoke for two hours in his own defense. He was convicted and given a twenty-year term. The officers who had joined his anti-government move were given lighter terms.

Felipe Pazos, head of the national bank and the last important capitalist politician remaining in the government, resigned in

the wake of Matos's arrest. Guevara was appointed to replace him.

With the support of the vast majority, the Castro leadership went on to overturn all capitalist property relations and consolidate the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

Subsequent experience has shown how correct the revolutionary government was to move quickly and firmly against Matos's attempt to organize the officer corps against the revolution.

The workers and peasants government in Algeria, headed by Ahmed Ben Bella, faced a similar problem in the first years after Algeria won its independence from French rule in 1962. Army commander Houari Boumediene went into opposition to Ben Bella's anticapitalist course.

Instead of mobilizing working people against Boumediene, Ben Bella compromised with him. This made it possible for Boumediene to launch a military coup in 1965, place Ben Bella under arrest, and reverse many of the gains won by the workers and peasants.

Matos claims to have supported the Cuban revolution but, in the numerous letters he wrote from prison, he gave no hint of opposition to the Bay of Pigs

invasion, the economic blockade, or other counterrevolutionary moves by U.S. imperialism—not even when President Kennedy threatened to pulverize Cuba and the world in the "missile crisis" of October 1962.

Matos was fond of predicting that he would never be released, that Castro would have him murdered before he could leave the country. But the Cubans set him free right on schedule.

The Cuban government can release Matos and thousands of other counterrevolutionaries because the Cuban workers and peasants have defeated them decisively, and dealt big blows to their imperialist masters in the process. Types like Matos can't do much damage to the Cuban revolution today, a fact which all the sanctimonious editorial writers in the capitalist papers can't do much to change.

But the Cuban revolution still has a powerful enemy in U.S. imperialism, which is using the campaign of lies about the Matos case as part of the preparation of new aggressions.

Working people have an answer for this drive. It is to demand hands off Cuba, an end to the blockade, and normalization of diplomatic relations with Cuba. □

'Cuba Is Less Isolated Than Ever'

Castro Speaks on Cuba's Role in World Politics

On September 28, at the height of the furor created by the Carter administration over its supposed discovery of a brigade of Soviet combat troops in Cuba, Fidel Castro held a news conference in Havana for U.S. and other foreign journalists. The text was printed in the October 7 issue of the Cuban weekly *Granma*.

One of the areas the discussion centered on was Cuba's role as an independent and sovereign country, and Castro's view of Cuba's part in international politics.

When asked if he would allow the journalists present to inspect the training bases staffed by Soviet forces, Castro responded:

"Would the United States Government allow a group of Cuban journalists to inspect U.S. military installations—ones of our choosing—nuclear research centers, the headquarters of the Strategic Air Command? . . . Why should we submit to any form of inspection? I repeat: not even during the October [1962 Missile] Crisis, when world peace was in the balance, not the reelection of a president, not even during the October Crisis would we allow it. I repeat that we will never allow an inspection of Cuba. This is a question of principle, an article of faith almost."

Referring to Washington's constant hos-

tility and to the U.S. blockade, Castro declared:

"All the plans against the Revolution have failed. Cuba is not more isolated: Cuba is less isolated than ever. The prestige of the Cuban Revolution is not smaller; it is greater than ever before. Five presidents have had their campaigns and subversive plans against Cuba run aground. Maybe Carter will be the sixth and then all we can hope for is that we'll have better luck with a seventh U.S. president."

Asked about nuclear arms in Cuba, Castro said: "Everyone in the world knows that we have no nuclear submarines and that we have no nuclear weapons. Everyone knows there was an agreement on this between the Soviet Union and the United States in 1962. We are not bound by that agreement, because, quite simply, we were not party to it and everyone knows that. In other words, we have never given up any of our rights. Do you understand? . . . The Soviet Union is the only country that could supply us with nuclear weapons. And the Soviet Union has scrupulously—that is the precise word: scrupulously, rigorously—abided by the 1962 October Crisis agreements. That is what I can declare. Accords which we were

not party to and which we don't feel bound by."

Aid to Grenada

One journalist asked if Cuba had set up "a training facility to train troops from the People's Revolutionary Republic of Grenada?"

Fidel replied: "I prefer not to answer that question. Strictly speaking, we do not have a training center. Now we have given certain collaboration, modest and discreet collaboration, since the triumph of the Revolution. But to speak of a center, no. There have been some Cubans there, there have been some Cubans and they have given a kind of modest and discreet aid. . . ."

"We offered this collaboration at the beginning, after the triumph of the Revolution. But now, all the collaboration that we are discussing with Grenada deals with collaboration in the fields of medicine, construction, fishing, as well as some agriculture."

In rebutting the charge that Cuba is a Soviet puppet, Fidel asked: "Why do they pay so much attention to Cuba, if Cuba doesn't have any policies of its own? Why did they pay so much attention to the 6th Summit? Why are they so concerned that

Cuba heads the Non-Aligned Movement? Why does Cuba today have the support that it has in the heart of that Movement? How can this be explained, if we are a satellite country?"

SALT II Treaty

Turning to the SALT II treaty, Castro stated: "It is said that this minicrisis, this pseudocrisis, or however this crisis is called, true or false, can jeopardize SALT. If this is true, then I think that this is something that is of concern to all of humanity, not only to the United States, the USSR and Cuba."

But after this endorsement of SALT, Castro continued: "Now what is the price of SALT? Must we be subjected to blackmail? Must we be subjected to intimidation? Must we be subjected to humiliation? On these grounds, there will be no collaboration from Cuba for that."

"With respect to the stand the Soviets will take, I think you must ask the Soviets that. I can't speak for the Soviets. But the Soviets have shown themselves to be our good friends."

Charged by one journalist with interfering in the affairs of Grenada, Castro declared:

"Grenada was already a legally constituted government. Where is the interference there? If that is interference, then you are interfering in at least 60 countries in the world. I don't know how you can talk about our interference. And what about your interference in Japan, Turkey, Greece, the FRG, England, Spain, Panama, Puerto Rico? The list is never-ending. . . ."

"We have collaborated [with Grenada] and we have done so with discretion. . . . But because we want to do it that way, because we feel it is convenient to do it that way, because we don't want it to appear that we are creating conflicts, we don't want it to appear that we are creating problems. . . . We have been discreet, careful. We have not been going around publicizing it."

Role of Cuban Troops in Africa

Two days later Castro granted an interview to Dan Rather of CBS-TV, an interview that was also printed in full in the same issue of *Granma*. Replying once again to the charge that Cuban forces in Africa were acting as "mercenaries" for the Soviet regime, Fidel said:

"Mercenary armies never defended a just cause. The causes we have defended all over the world have been just causes."

"You can ask the Africans, the Angolans, the Ethiopians and the fighters in Namibia and Zimbabwe; you can ask all the really progressive and honorable movements."

"You can ask the most prestigious governments in Africa; they can answer that question."

Taking up the relationship between So-

viet and Cuban policy, Fidel said, "At times we coincide. We don't always coincide."

Rather asked: "Can you think of a time when you've not coincided with Soviet policy?"

Fidel replied: "I gave an example, the October Crisis, in 1962."

Nicaraguan Revolution

Moving on to Rather's claim that the Nicaraguan revolution represented one of "Fidel Castro's military adventures," Fidel declared:

"What is it that makes Nicaragua Castro's adventure? It was an adventure of the United States. It was the United States that intervened in Nicaragua, that set up the National Guard and installed Somoza in power and kept him there for over 40 years. . . ."

"It wasn't Cuba nor was it Cuban soldiers that overthrew the Government of Nicaragua, that is, the Somoza dictatorship. It was the Sandinistas, the people of Nicaragua."

Rather asked: "Were you the principal arms supplier for the Nicaraguan rebels?"

Fidel replied: "There is absolutely no proof of that."

"But I have no intention of answering

that question."

Revolution in El Salvador

Rather suggested that perhaps another example of a Cuban adventure is in El Salvador. Answering that, Fidel said:

"What's happening in El Salvador? There is a corrupt, tyrannical, genocidal government, and the people are no longer willing to tolerate the regime. Why must we be blamed for that?"

Rather: "Because you were training the people, you are supplying the arms, the money. . . ."

Fidel: "I think that the United States is the one that has trained all those armies—the one in Chile that murders the people, the one in Uruguay that has killed thousands of Uruguayans, Somoza's army and that of El Salvador—the United States has trained and equipped all the genocidal governments in this hemisphere, not Cuba."

"If we were to help the revolutionaries we would have the right to do so, but I'm not going to say here that we are doing so."

"That is our affair and not a matter to be discussed on television."

Rather: "But you don't deny it?"

Fidel: "I neither confirm it nor deny it. I proclaim it as a right; furthermore, as a duty." □

An Account Israeli Censors Tried to Suppress

How the Palestinians Were Driven From Israel

Not even former prime ministers can escape the heavy hand of the Israeli censors. Particularly when the facts about how the Palestinians were driven from Israel is involved.

In the October 23 issue, *New York Times* correspondent David Shipler quoted passages of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's memoirs that were censored by the Israeli government.

The deleted passages dealt with the expulsion of 50,000 Palestinian inhabitants from the towns of Ramle and Lydda during the 1948 war. Rabin's account gives the lie to the argument usually made by Zionists—that some 700,000 Palestinians left their homes and villages because they were ordered to by the Arab governments.

Describing a meeting between Palmach Commander Yigal Allon—later an Israeli foreign minister—David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, and himself, Rabin said:

"While the fighting was still in progress, we had to grapple with a troublesome problem, for whose solution we could not draw upon any previous experience: the fate of the civilian population of Lod [Lydda] and Ramle, numbering some 50,000. . . ."

"We walked outside, Ben-Gurion accompanying us. Allon repeated his question: 'What is to be done with the population?'

B.G. waved his hand in a gesture which said, 'Drive them out!'

"Allon and I held a consultation. I agreed that it was essential to drive the inhabitants out. . . ."

"'Driving out' is a term with a harsh ring. Psychologically, this was one of the most difficult actions we undertook. The population of Lod did not leave willingly. There was no way of avoiding the use of force and warning shots in order to make the inhabitants march the 10 to 15 miles to the point where they met up with the [Arab] legion."

In his self-serving account, which presents the expulsion of the Palestinian population as an incident rather than the systematic policy that it was, Rabin stresses how hard things were—not for the Palestinians expelled from their homes, but for the Israeli soldiers carrying out the action!

"Great suffering was inflicted upon the men taking part in the eviction action," Rabin says. "Soldiers of the Yiftach Brigade included youth-movement graduates, who had been inculcated with values such as international brotherhood and humane-ness. The eviction action went beyond the concepts they were used to."

After the *Times* publicized Rabin's account, Allon claimed the whole thing never happened that way. "I did not ask the late

Ben-Gurion for permission to expel the population of Lydda. I did not receive such permission and did not give such orders," he said.

Although Rabin was one of the brigade commanders who actually carried out the expulsion, Allon argued that "I was his commander and my knowledge of the facts is therefore more accurate."

Allon resorted to the timeworn lie that the Palestinians fled because they were "panic-stricken" and because "they were instructed by the Arab Legion to evacuate in order to enable the latter to recapture Lydda from us."

Palace Coup Aims to Head Off Rising Opposition

Military Takeover in South Korea

By Dan Dickeson

The South Korean military, headed by army chief of staff General Chung Seung Hwa, seized power October 26 and immediately declared martial law. President Park Chung Hee and five of his bodyguards were killed in the palace coup, and the head of the powerful Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) was placed under arrest.

Under the martial law decree covering all the mainland provinces of South Korea, military censorship was imposed on the press, airports were closed, the nightly curfew was extended, universities were ordered closed, and all meetings and demonstrations were banned. Military rule had been imposed on the south coast cities of Pusan and Masan the week before, following mass antigovernment protests there.

General Chung took pains to maintain the image of civilian authority. The martial law decree was presented as a temporary measure, and Park's cabinet was not abolished. (If provisions of the current constitution are followed, a new civilian president should be designated within 90 days.)

The first news of the coup came on the evening of October 26, when a government broadcast announced that Prime Minister Choi Kyu Hah had become acting president, replacing Park. No further explanation was given until the next day, when the Public Information Ministry issued a statement claiming that Park had been "accidentally" shot and killed when he tried to break up an argument between his bodyguard, Chu Chi Chol, and the KCIA director, Kim Jae Kyu, at a dinner party. Kim Jae Kyu was named as the assailant. A more embellished version of the story, released the next day by the martial law command, dubbed the murder "an intentional plot hatched and executed by Kim Jae Kyu."

The 38,000 U.S. troops in South Korea, whose units operate under a joint command with the South Korean armed forces,

The censorship of Rabin's memoirs is only the latest incident in which the Israeli regime has attempted to hush up damaging information. Through military censorship, the Israeli army made a year-long effort to stop news about an atrocity in southern Lebanon from leaking out.

In that case, an Israeli military court established that during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in March 1978, Lt. Daniel Pinto seized four Lebanese villagers, including a sixteen-year-old boy. Pinto tied the four up in separate rooms of a building, tortured them, and then strangled them and dumped their bodies into a well.

Pinto was convicted of two counts of murder (two of the bodies were not recovered) and sentenced to twelve years in prison. A military appeals court reduced the sentence to eight years in January. In June, the case was reviewed by Lt. Gen. Rafael Eitan, the Israeli army chief of staff, who reduced the sentence to two years.

Eitan invoked military censorship to prevent the facts of the case from getting out, but he was unable to prevent them from being printed in newspapers outside of Israel. □

were placed on alert as soon as martial law was declared. U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown announced October 28 that an American aircraft carrier and radar warning planes were being sent to South Korea.

In Washington, State Department officials claimed that Park's downfall had caught them by surprise. That's about as plausible as the stories about the dinner party. Harold Brown had been in Seoul for talks with his South Korean counterparts seven days before the coup, and the American government and media had increasingly let it be known that they viewed Park as a liability.

The rebellions in Pusan and Masan confirmed the capitalists' fears. General Chung's palace coup was apparently a preemptive move aimed at defusing the explosive situation created by Park's brutal intransigence in face of the rising mass movement.

Although Pusan and Masan were reported calm after troops were ordered in October 17 and 18, protests had continued spreading to other cities. These included the shipbuilding center of Ulsan, as well as Kwongju and Taegu.

On October 25, in an unprecedented step, the leadership of the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) issued a statement proclaiming their solidarity with the protesters in Pusan and Masan, demanding that martial law be lifted and those arrested released, and warning that more protests would follow "if democracy is not restored."

The intensity of Park's repression, and the depth of mass hatred for his regime, had more and more forced even the timid bourgeois opposition parties to take their distance from the dictatorship.

Following Jimmy Carter's visit to Seoul at the end of June, NDP leader Kim Young Sam made a series of speeches demanding Park's resignation, and openly calling on the military and the U.S. government to

withdraw their support for the regime. When Kim was expelled from the National Assembly for his statements, the entire opposition bloc responded by resigning, thus removing even the façade of parliamentary rule.

The NDP even defied Park on the question of relations with the North Korean government—the most burning issue in Korean politics. After Park had rejected a North Korean proposal for a pan-Korean conference aimed at reducing tensions between the two regimes, Kim Young Sam stated June 13 that he was willing to meet with North Korean officials if it would help to get talks started. This was a stinging rebuff to Park's policy of maintaining military tension and a constant siege atmosphere in order to justify the suppression of all dissent.

The recent wave of antigovernment protests was unprecedented not only in its size, but also in the extent of participation by workers. Park's policies turned South Korea into a paradise for foreign investors, but the ensuing rapid growth of foreign-financed, export-oriented industries also created a substantial and concentrated working class in what used to be an overwhelmingly peasant society.

The upsurge of student and worker protests coincides with deepening economic difficulties. Contrary to the high praise South Korea gets in the capitalist press as the economic showcase of Asia, it suffers the same crises as all semi-colonial countries. It is now in the midst of a recession. Inflation is running at over 25 percent, while the government has imposed a wage freeze. Tight credit policies aimed at curbing inflation are driving many smaller companies bankrupt, boosting unemployment. The October 13 *Asian Wall Street Journal* reported that South Korea's trade deficit soared to \$3.3 billion in just the first eight months of 1979, compared to \$1.8 billion for all of 1978. Imports are increasing twice as fast as exports.

Whatever promises the new regime may make, it clearly has very little room for concessions. But by the same token, the working people of South Korea, having dug the grave of one tyrant, will hardly be willing to accept another. □

Vietnam Is Not Cause of Famine

[The following article is by Christiane Dumont, who works with the Québec Committee for Aid to Vietnam. It appeared in the October 24 issue of the *Guardian*, a New York weekly that supports Pol Pot, in answer to earlier articles blaming the famine in Kampuchea on Vietnam.]

* * *

Having just traveled for one week in Kampuchea, this September, I feel obliged to reply to William Ryan's article concerning the famine in Kampuchea (*Guardian*, Sept. 5). I was able to visit Phnom Penh and Kompong Speu and the eastern region from Phnom Penh to the Vietnamese border, as well as the regions northwest and southwest of Phnom Penh.

I visited the old Pol Pot prison of Tuol Slang; I also visited factories, hospitals, orphanages, markets and schools, all of them functioning only since January 1979. I had the opportunity to talk directly with many people from different walks of life, everyone of whom witnessed the horror under the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime. They all agreed with what I am about to tell you.

Ryan estimates the actual population of Kampuchea to be 5 million. How did 3 million people disappear in those four years, 1975-1978?

The Kampucheans told us that there were many massacres but, that in addition, many people died of hunger, exhaustion, and disease. Ryan says there was no shortage of rice during the dictatorial regime of Pol Pot. You are not wrong.

The Kampucheans confirmed for us that they all had to work in the countryside long hours everyday to cultivate the rice and construct irrigation systems. Besides the usual work force, children over seven and old people barely able to stand up were forced to work. So rice and irrigation systems they certainly had.

But for all this work they didn't have rice to eat. As soon as it was harvested, it disappeared. (Could it have been for export?) Almost everyone received only two bowls of soup daily, which consisted of water, and one spoonful of rice. Some lucky people were able to have two bowls of rice a day during the two months of harvesting. The rest of the year they were reduced to the same rations as everyone else.

Some people told us that they had survived by stealing fruits and vegetables during the night, at the risk of severe penalties, even death. Those who were unable to work because of illness received no rations at all.

When Ryan says "There were no reports

of starvation" from 1975-1978, I must remind you that there were no reports of anything at all during this time.

Many people told me that they receive now more food than during the Pol Pot regime, but it is still not sufficient.

Only some people mentioned clinics—but when they did, they were always dirty ones, or ones with medicine that was of no use or improperly used, or ones whose personnel had no training (sometimes girls of 10-12 years).

Others told us that they never saw a clinic in all those four years. Everyone told us that most of the doctors were killed by the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime.

Ryan mentions that there are 10 deaths for every child born in Kampuchea now. I myself question that statistic. But what is true is that there is a serious problem; there are very few births now.

The few remaining doctors explained to

us why. Under the regime of Pol Pot-Ieng Sary, 70% of the women stopped their menstruation because of extremely hard work and malnutrition. Also couples were often separated for months and sometimes years because of the policies of the regime of Pol Pot, which divided families. Now these separated couples are still trying to find each other. Furthermore, many couples became single because of the death of a spouse.

As I said before, there certainly were irrigation systems. The Kampucheans, children included, had to work like slaves to construct ditches, dams and reservoirs, which are found now to be poorly designed and badly constructed. The fact is that most of the engineers were massacred. Those among them who survived were not used to draw up plans for these works. It seems that the whole irrigation system has to be redone.

Ryan does not give any explanation for the lack of agricultural, fishing and other equipment. This "severe shortage," as he says, doesn't come out of thin air. For example, from 1975-1978 fishing diminished dramatically. In certain regions anyone caught fishing could be killed. Furthermore, the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime

Vietnam Blasts U.S.-Thai Collusion

Nhan Dan, the Hanoi daily newspaper of the Vietnamese Communist Party, charged October 18 that the Thai military dictatorship, "under the pretext of famine relief and humanitarian aid, are joining Peking and Washington's efforts to legalize their revitalization of the remnants of Pol Pot's army."

This charge has been confirmed by U.S. and Australian news reports that most aid being distributed near the Thai border is going to Khmer Rouge troops.

Nhan Dan added, "There are in Thailand today some people who wish to use the pretext of self-defense to find an excuse to bring back U.S. troops and invite Chinese troops there, transforming Thailand yet again into a logistic and operational base against the three Indochinese countries."

U.S. arms aid to the Kriangsak regime in Thailand has quadrupled since the fall of Pol Pot in January, with some arms being funnelled to the Khmer Rouge. U.S. military "advisers" have returned to Thailand.

The Thai army has been decisive in making possible the survival of the remaining Pol Pot forces. It has rearmed Khmer Rouge troops in their enclaves along the Thai border and established refugee camps in Thailand that are controlled by armed Pol Pot soldiers.

When heavy shelling drove 25,000 Pol Pot troops and civilian captives into Thailand, Thai soldiers were rushed to the area to protect Pol Pot's killers. Reporting from the border area October 12, *Washington Post* correspondent John Burgess explained that "the Thai government believes that a Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia is preferable" to that of Heng Samrin.

New threats against Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea also came from Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua during a visit to Paris October 18. "China cannot permit Vietnam to reign as the absolute master in Southeast Asia, as the Cubans do in Africa," he warned.

Evidence of the Carter administration's military support to Pol Pot's forces in Kampuchea continues to mount. On October 25, CBS correspondent Ed Bradley interviewed a U.S. army lieutenant he found in a Khmer Rouge dominated refugee camp along the Thai border.

According to Bradley, the lieutenant was part of a military delegation observing the situation along the Thai-Kampuchea border.

The appearance of U.S. military personnel in Pol Pot's camps added weight to a warning issued by the Vietnamese leadership.

took great pride in the fact that their country was constructed completely by hand. They scorned every kind of mechanization. The abandoned and pillaged factories near Phnom Penh bear witness to that.

Would people who during nearly four years were malnourished, inhumanly overworked, separated from their families, uprooted from their homes, deprived of any kind of health care or education for their children, who were even deprived of mosquito netting basic for protection against malaria, do you think that these people, now shocked and sick, could recover as soon as they saw liberation troops? There is no doubt in the minds of the Kampuchians that the present deaths and diseases are a direct consequence of the serious crimes of Pol Pot against his own people.

Ryan talks about people who have been uprooted and are now without administration, as if this too, were caused by the new government. Most of the population of Kampuchea was uprooted by Pol Pot. The people of Kompong Speu were removed to Battambang and vice-versa. This is only one example.

The entire population of Phnom Penh was given two hours to two days in which to leave their city and move to the countryside in 1975. People, now, are still in transit, trying to get back to their villages, and hoping to find their relatives. As to the lack of administration, many of the former cadres of the party were eliminated by the Pol Pot regime because they were opposed to the policy of the Angkar (Party of Pol Pot).

Because this regime was very suspicious, especially against educated people, many of them were also eliminated.

But in spite of this, I saw many villages with schools, local defense militia, little markets and so on.

Ryan seems to say that the new government is wasting its time discussing the way aid should be distributed by relief organizations. I find it natural that an independent government would want to handle this kind of activity and direct its own government. I met in Phnom Penh some officials of UNICEF, Red Cross, Oxfam who told me they were surprised and happy to meet efficacy and rapidity in the distribution of goods.

Ryan qualifies this government as a "Vietnamese-imposed regime." Imposed on whom? People I met often told me without my asking that their lives were saved by the new government.

When Ryan talks about the Vietnamese government, he does not make himself clear. Either they do too much or they do too little. They are reproached for aiding the Kampuchians to save their lives and at the same time reproached for not helping them recover.

Vietnam now gives aid in the form of rice, mosquito netting, fabrics and medi-

cine, all of which it can little afford to give up. Ryan complains about the lack of aid from the USSR and Vietnam, and that everything is in the hands of UNICEF. I say it is up to all the progressive peoples around the world to come to their aid.

The Kampuchean people are facing enormous difficulties. Despite this, they go

Oxfam: 'Widespread Hunger in Every Village'

[The following eyewitness account of conditions in Kampuchea, based on an eight-day fact-finding tour, was given in London October 8 by Brian Walker, director-general of the international relief organization Oxfam. We have taken the text from the October 21 issue of the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*.]

* * *

No one knows what the real situation is, but we do know there has been a dramatic reduction in the population. I think it is reasonable to say that, out of a population of 7½ to eight millions, there are something like 3½ to four millions left.

The first impression I have brought back with me is of widespread hunger and malnutrition. You see this at every corner and twist of the road, in every village that you enter, in every hospital, in every orphanage. Out of this widespread hunger and malnutrition—which so far as I can see is shared by the entire community, from the Prime Minister down—there is consequential disease and illness on a significant and massive scale.

The illnesses I found were anaemia, followed closely by malaria and then all the intestinal problems—hookworm in particular—diarrhoea and a great deal of tuberculosis.

Undoubtedly the massively traumatic political event through which the people have gone, the unbelievable cruelty and bestiality of the Pol Pot regime—which in my personal judgment exceeds in immorality the wickedness of that of the Nazi regime against the Jews in Germany—has reduced the population to an extremely confused and befuddled state of mind.

Within this area of personal confusion there is the confusion of the entire community. Under Pol Pot, one of the tactics to create disorientation among the community was virtually to redistribute the whole population. As far as I can gather, this was broadly on a north-south basis—the people living in the north were sent south and the people in the south sent north.

The 50 per cent who have survived are now struggling to walk back to their homes, their villages. These migrant groups are constantly on the move and they are not able to secure a share of the Government's rice ration—because they are a shifting population. So they depend

back to work preparing the next season's crops. People are also working in schools and hospitals which are functioning now after having been closed for nearly four years. I am certain that if they receive adequate help, the Kampuchean people will be able to reconstruct their country and in a few years will be self-supporting.

on the goodwill of the governor whose province they happen to be walking through at that time or the goodwill of the people who have received the rice ration in the villages through which they are passing.

So they survive by begging. These groups of people were the emaciated, walking Belsen-type skeletons that one has read about in the media. Their position is one of extreme anguish, extreme pain, extreme malnutrition.

One of the things which struck me very early on was that I did not see any lepers. The reason was very simple—Pol Pot has exterminated all lepers.

Three methods were used, I was told, in different places. In some villages they were summarily rounded up and shot, in other villages they were given medicine and told to take it—it was poison—and in other villages they were simply chased out into the hills where there was no food and they subsequently died.

In the same way, there are no cats and dogs in this country. That is a minor exaggeration—I saw one in Phnom Penh and one guard dog with the governor in Seam Riep. And again this was because animals were killed by Pol Pot as part of the process of informing and spying on the population.

Informers in villages were required at night time to listen to people's conversations—it was illegal under the Pol Pot regime to close your doors or windows at night time on pain of death. People would squat under your house, listening to your conversation and reporting to curry favour with the Pol Pot forces. Dogs and cats would disturb such informers and spies and so they were eliminated.

The overall impression one has is that the infrastructure of the community has been totally smashed. I can pick out a few vignettes to communicate this to you.

A week ago yesterday I drove about 60 or 70 miles from Phnom Penh, down Route One towards Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). This was a long, straight road whose borders had been planted with trees about 30 or 40 years ago which had grown to a substantial size. They had been planted to give shade to the workers in the paddy fields adjacent to the road.

With the exception of only three trees, all of these are now stark, dead skeletons.

They have been ringed by Pol Pot—and you can see the axe marks all the way around the bark. That is the way to kill a mature tree. This was done because people were required to work in the fields under Pol Pot from 4 a.m. to 12 noon and then again from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m.

He took the view that people did not need shade—it was a sign of idleness and

laziness—and that therefore shade should not be provided.

The population as a whole is clearly at risk and highly vulnerable to malnutrition, and to the diseases consequent to malnutrition, through to next August. In our own judgment it is generous to say there has been 20 per cent of planting during the current season—the crop which should be

ready in January. Other agencies say from satellite surveillance that the figure is as low as 5 to 10 per cent.

When I left Cambodia on Friday the total input of Western aid over nine months—against this hideous background—amounted to 200 tons of food. I don't see how any of us can be proud of that situation. □

After the Coup In El Salvador

New Military Rulers Refuse to Grant Demands of Masses

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—The death toll in the first few days after the installation of El Salvador's new military government reached at least fifty-two, with well over a hundred wounded, according to figures compiled by that country's Human Rights Commission (CDH).

Since coming to power October 15, the new regime has made no moves to grant the rising demands for dissolution of the repressive state institutions, or for the release of political prisoners and presentation of the hundreds of political activists who have "disappeared" during the past several years.

The immediate axis of struggle in El Salvador is shaping up around demands that the new junta follow through on its promises of democratic rights—above all, that it lift the state of siege and release the political prisoners.

On October 24, an estimated 1,000 members of the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR), many armed with handguns or machetes, took over the headquarters of the Labor and Economics Ministries in the capital city of San Salvador. They took 300 hostages, including three cabinet ministers, to press demands for the release of political prisoners, presentation of the "disappeared," and wage increases.

On October 20, representatives of the Salvadoran Human Rights Commission met with members of the junta, as did parents of some of the "disappeared" activists. The CDH presented a list of 276 "disappeared" persons, and demanded their immediate presentation. Colonel Adolfo Arnoldo Majano responded that he really didn't know if any clandestine political prisons existed in El Salvador, and that "never in my life have I visited a jail. . . ."

The junta did offer to allow the CDH and parents' representatives to visit the jails themselves to look for the "disappeared," but this was rejected by the parents. "We don't want to see where our children were

tortured or killed," one mother declared. They told the junta they would go to the prisons only if they were assured they would find the "disappeared." But the junta claimed "we have no information to that effect."

The CDH is also demanding the dissolution of the repressive bodies—the Treasury Police, National Police, National Guard, and National Security Agency—and the extradition from their countries of exile of ex-presidents Romero and Arturo Armando Molina for trial on charges of mass murder and torture.

The new military chiefs have made statements to the news media that show clearly their unwillingness to tackle these problems. Questioned by a correspondent of the Managua daily *La Prensa* about the continuing terrorist activities of the right-wing paramilitary group ORDEN, Colonel Majano responded vaguely that what was involved was "a slow process," and that it was necessary to view the situation with "a little comprehension."

When the *La Prensa* reporter inquired as to the future of the National Police, National Guard, and Treasury Police, Majano replied that "we want to improve the training process, better orient the military doctrine, and bring the administrative systems up to date." In other words, develop a more "efficient" repressive apparatus.

The new rulers are trying to dissociate themselves from the crimes of past military regimes, without taking any concrete measures to remedy the effects of these crimes, punish the guilty, or ensure that such crimes are not repeated in the future.

Upon ousting General Carlos Humberto Romero from the presidency on October 15 and sending him and a number of his top ministers and security chiefs into exile, the new junta headed by Colonels Jaime Abdul Gutiérrez and Adolfo Arnoldo Majano offered promises of a "democratic opening," land reform, and "a redistribution of the national wealth." But the immediate

actions of the colonels belied their rosy pledges.

The country was placed under a curfew and martial law. Street demonstrations were banned. Press censorship was tightened. Tanks and heavily armed troops were deployed in the streets of the cities.

When armed uprisings led by the Revolutionary People's Army (ERP) and the February 28 People's League (LP-28) broke out October 16 in the working-class suburbs northeast of the capital, the junta did not hesitate to send in tanks and troops armed with machine guns. Air force planes flew overhead as the army crushed the resistance and drove the ERP and LP-28 activists out of the area. Most of the reported fifty-two deaths occurred in these confrontations.

Also on October 16, units of the notoriously repressive Treasury Police stormed three factories that had been occupied for several months by striking workers in Ilopango, just east of the capital. Several workers lost their lives and dozens were jailed and tortured. "They are subversives," a Treasury Police official told a reporter. "We will never permit this again."

The new junta later claimed that the factory raids had been carried out without authorization, and ordered the release of the jailed workers.

The main organizations of workers and peasants in El Salvador—the Revolutionary People's Bloc and the United People's Action Front (FAPU)—have declared their opposition to the new regime. The BPR on October 20 reiterated its "condemnation of the fascist-like military tyranny's palace coup," and said it would "never join a dialogue with the junta." The BPR scheduled mass demonstrations in the capital to repudiate the new rulers.

FAPU General Secretary Jorge Alberto Ramos explained his organization's position in an interview published in the October 25 *La Prensa*. The military coup had not changed in the slightest FAPU's

"strategic road" of fighting for a "revolutionary people's government of the workers and peasants," Ramos said. But the new situation did require some adjustments in the "forms of struggle."

"As the first step we have decided upon, we are going to press forward a series of struggles that involve mobilizing the entire people and increasing their combativity in the framework of peaceful, nonviolent struggle. . . .

"The value of this tactical variant is that it will permit—in the context of the 'freedoms' of organization and mobilization that this junta has to provide—the accelerated growth of our organization, linked to the struggle for the immediate demands of the people."

The FAPU leader considered this "tactical retreat" necessary because the military coup "broke off the possibility of an accelerated process of armed struggle."

The *La Prensa* correspondent also spoke with a representative of the guerrilla group known as the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN). In this militant's opinion, it was necessary to "transform this crisis into a revolutionary situation." This could be done by opposing the military junta and "beginning the construction of people's power around the centers of production." In that way, conditions could be prepared for a "popular insurrection."

The colonels have managed however—on the strength of their promises—to pick up support from some opposition groups, mostly among the bourgeois parties. On October 17, the addition of three civilian representatives to the junta was announced in San Salvador. These were Guillermo Manuel Ungo, a leader of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) and the 1972 vice-presidential candidate on a united opposition ticket headed by Christian Democratic leader Napoleón Duarte; Román Mayorga Quiroz, rector of the Central American University; and Mario Andino, a leader of the Chamber of Commerce and director of the Conelca Electronics Company (a subsidiary of U.S. multinational Phelps-Dodge).

Ungo's MNR is a member of the People's Forum, a coalition of political groups and trade unions that also includes the February 28 People's League. At first the LP-28 was reported to have withdrawn from the People's Forum in protest of Ungo's collaboration with the colonels. But it later issued a statement saying that "after a second analysis," it was ready to cooperate with the "progressive sectors" of the junta.

The Salvadoran Communist Party took a similar position, and was the first of the left groups to offer "critical support" to the junta. CP leader Roberto Castellanos declared October 21 that "we support the junta because we believe it is going to comply with its promises and open the possibility of democratizing the country."

On October 19 the Revolutionary Peo-

ple's Army declared a "partial and preventive truce," and called off further military actions against the regime. The BPR and FAPU have also explained that the conditions for an insurrection against the dictatorship are not yet ripe.

The situation in El Salvador continues to hold the attention of Nicaragua. On October 21, the Nicaraguan Committee of Solidarity with the Peoples issued a state-

ment reiterating the need for support to the fight against the imperialist-supported dictatorship in El Salvador, and pointed to the need for unity among the revolutionary groups there.

As of October 26, no official statements on the coup or the new situation in El Salvador had been issued by the Nicaraguan government, or by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. □

'Year of Education' Declared

Nicaragua Announces Literacy Campaign

By Daniel Schwartz

MANAGUA—Brigades of volunteers organized by local Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS) began going door to door here October 21 in a census that is the first stage in Nicaragua's mass literacy campaign.

On October 20, I attended an assembly organized by the CDSs in the Santa Rosa neighborhood, where the main item of business was the literacy drive. According to the speakers, eliminating illiteracy is considered one of the most important tasks of the revolution.

At least half of Nicaragua's population of 2.3 million is illiterate, and in some rural areas this figure may reach 80 percent. These statistics from the Somoza regime are believed to have been falsified, because the true figures would have brought even more discredit to the dictatorship, which is responsible for the high illiteracy rate.

Polivio Mendoza explained to the assembly in Santa Rosa that the census now under way is not only to determine the true extent of illiteracy, but also to determine how it can be ended. People are being asked questions such as the day and hour they would like to attend classes on reading and writing, and whether they could volunteer to be a teacher. Census takers working in Santa Rosa October 21 reported that almost everyone who is literate offered to assist with the campaign. The census is to last one week.

The literacy campaign will reach all parts of the country, with the goal of teaching 700,000 persons to read and write. The cost is estimated at \$20 million, and will involve some 200,000 persons in literacy brigades.

The launching date for the teaching part of the campaign is March 30, 1980. Students will play a big part in the campaign—classes for all those above the sixth grade level will be suspended for four months, or more if necessary. Factories and workplaces will be converted into temporary schools.

Barricada, the daily newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), is running quarter-page advertisements, and posters are appearing. Slogans of the campaign include "Learning to Read is Your Salvation—Teaching to Read is Your Obligation;" "Revolution is Education;" and "Death to Illiteracy."

The Sandinista Defense Committees, trade unions, and associations of peasants, women, and teachers, are all expected to participate in the campaign.

The government and the FSLN have rejected the participation of large numbers of foreign volunteers, explaining that the campaign is the task of the Nicaraguan people themselves. Some countries will be sending symbolic brigades, however, and Cuba will be providing technical aid gained from its own successful literacy program. Cuba is also helping to train teachers for the campaign. Paulo Freire, the famous Brazilian educator and author, will work with the Ministry of Education in planning the literacy drive.

Teaching almost half the population over ten years of age to read and write is a gigantic task for this impoverished and devastated country. But the Nicaraguans are confident that they can defeat illiteracy in the same way they defeated Somoza. In fact, the literacy brigades will be divided into the same four fronts as were the FSLN armies in the war against the dictatorship.

The literacy campaign was part of the FSLN's program, which seeks to guarantee the right to an education.

Douglas Stewart of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education explained to the Cuban newspaper *Granma* in September that the goal of the campaign is more than literacy. "We are going to prepare reading primers and organize the entire campaign around problems faced by the revolution," he said. "As a result, those learning to read and write will learn not only letters and words, but also a new political and social consciousness." □

PLO Leader Welcomes Support of U.S. Blacks

By Gus Horowitz

[The following has been excerpted from an article in the November 2 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist news-weekly published in New York.]

* * *

Zehdi Terzi, the Palestine Liberation Organization representative to the United Nations, said at a public meeting October

The accords give legitimacy to the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories conquered in 1967, he added, whereas the occupation had previously been considered illegal.

"We are struggling for our rights," he said in conclusion. "Those include our rights to life, our rights to our homes, our rights to self-determination, our rights to

Rev. Herbert Daughtry, the metropolitan chairperson of the Black United Front, which came into city-wide prominence last year for organizing protests against the killing by police of Brooklyn Black community leader Arthur Miller; and David Frankel, a staff writer for *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

It is "the right of African Americans and all people to involve themselves in world affairs," Herbert Daughtry said in his remarks. "After all, it is our world, and we will be blessed or cursed by the decisions that others make regarding this world."

Daughtry said that the Black United Front had a long-standing position of support for Palestinian self-determination, and he welcomed the public debate on this issue. "Those who want to stop the debate don't want the facts to come out."

Kendrick Radix of Grenada specified U.S. imperialism as the enemy, taking up this theme from the viewpoint of someone "from an island in which we are the sons and daughters of slaves, an island which imperialism has dominated for the past 350 years."

He stressed the connection between the struggles of his people, of Black people in the United States, Blacks in South Africa, and the Palestinians, saying that "the power center of oppression and exploitation is right here in America."

There is a common enemy and a common struggle against that enemy, he stressed. "Africa's freedom is our freedom. The freedom of the Palestinians is our freedom. Wherever there is a struggle to be fought, we must join and be part of that struggle."

Radix also warned that "an adventure similar to the one in Vietnam is looming for the people of the United States." He was referring to the "rapid deployment forces" that Washington is setting up to be able to intervene quickly in the Mideast or the Caribbean.

The danger of new wars in the Mideast was dealt with in greater detail by David Frankel. He pointed to the past Mideast wars in which Washington had been prepared to intervene directly, and said that U.S. policy in the Mideast "can only end in a new war, a war that may well end in nuclear disaster for the whole world."

Frankel declared that U.S. support for Israel is against the interests of American workers, and hailed Black leaders like Jesse Jackson and Joseph Lowery for acting in the interests of all working people by opening a discussion on the rights of the Palestinian people. □



Suzanne Haig/Militant

PLO's UN representative Zehdi Terzi, left, acknowledges standing ovation. Other panel members shown are, from left to right, Maceo Dixon of the SWP; Rev. George Lawrence, Progressive National Baptist Conference; David Frankel, staff writer for *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*; and Kendrick Radix, Grenada's ambassador to the UN.

20 that "the 'resignation' of Andrew Young was a spark that awakened a latent consciousness" among Americans, particularly Black Americans, about the issues in the Middle East.

Terzi, speaking at a Brooklyn Militant Forum, said that an initial curiosity and interest was increasingly becoming identification with the Palestinian struggle "for self-determination, independence, and sovereignty in our own country."

He denounced the Camp David accords as a "flagrant violation of the rights of the Palestinian people." The accords, he said, talk about "Arab inhabitants" of the area, but not about the "Palestinian people, as such."

have our own state. Unless we are able to exercise those rights, there will be no peace."

Terzi received a standing ovation from the crowd. He was speaking on a panel devoted to the theme, "Black Americans and the Middle East," a subject that has been the focus of international attention ever since Andrew Young was forced to resign his post as UN ambassador after meeting with PLO representative Terzi.

Others participating in the October 20 panel were Kendrick Radix, the ambassador to the UN from Grenada; Rev. George Lawrence, the communications director of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, an organization of 1.5 million Blacks;

West Germany: 100,000 March in Bonn

By Nora Roth and Marc Levy

BONN—"There are no protected gardens we can maintain in the shadow of the death industry. . . . Either we will bring the entire nuclear program down or we will fall into the snare of the nuclear state."

With these words of greeting, Walter Mossmann, songwriter and performer, opened a rally of more than 100,000 in Bonn on October 14.

Opponents of the West German government's nuclear program traveled to the capital city by bus, by bicycle, in car caravans, in fourteen special trains. Farmers from Lüchow-Danneberg (the district surrounding Gorleben, the site of the projected national nuclear-reprocessing and nuclear-waste storage plant) made the journey by tractor. A group of students from Frankfurt am Main chartered a river steamer.

The demonstration, called by the National Association of Citizens Committees for Environmental Protection (BBU), and supported by more than 120 groups, was the first national action against the West German nuclear program.

Earlier actions had been aimed at specific targets, such as the nuclear-power plant at Brockdorf or the Gorleben installations. The success of the March 31 demonstration against the Gorleben project, which drew more than 50,000 protesters, was the basis for calling a national action.

The call for the demonstration included four demands:

- End the nuclear program.
- No reprocessing plant in Gorleben or anywhere else.
- Immediate closing of all nuclear-power plants.
- No criminalization and prosecution of antinuke activists.

Internationalism was a prominent feature of the demonstration with sizable contingents from France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria. Speakers at the rally from Great Britain, France, Australia and the United States expressed solidarity.

Cathy McCaughlin from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the site of a near-nuclear catastrophe last March, told the crowd:

"The politicians of various countries speak different languages, but the results are the same everywhere in the world. Their actions bring fear, destruction and death. . . . We have to put a stop to it. We all live in Harrisburg. Together we can do it!"

Jakob Moneta, editor of the IG-Metal newspaper *Express*, ridiculed the government's claim that nuclear-power plants are necessary in order to provide jobs.

"It is scandalous," he said, "that hundreds of thousands of German workers are deprived of their elementary right to a

job. But if the government were really interested in creating jobs, it could shorten the workweek with no cut in pay or speed-up. A cut in the workweek of just one hour would not only mean an improvement in the quality of life for all job-holders, but would also provide 350,000 new jobs for the unemployed."

Moneta is also one of the founders of the AKL (Action Group: Life), an organization of trade unionists which has made carrying the fight against nuclear power into the DGB (German Trade Union Association) its central campaign.

Despite official DGB support for the government's nuclear-energy program, in Hamburg alone the AKL group—one of about thirty in the country—collected the signatures of over 180 trade-union officials for the demonstration call. A number of unions also organized buses to take their members to the demonstration.

The deepening split within the ranks of the ruling Social Democratic Party and its coalition partner, the small Free Democratic Party, was also reflected in the Bonn demonstration.

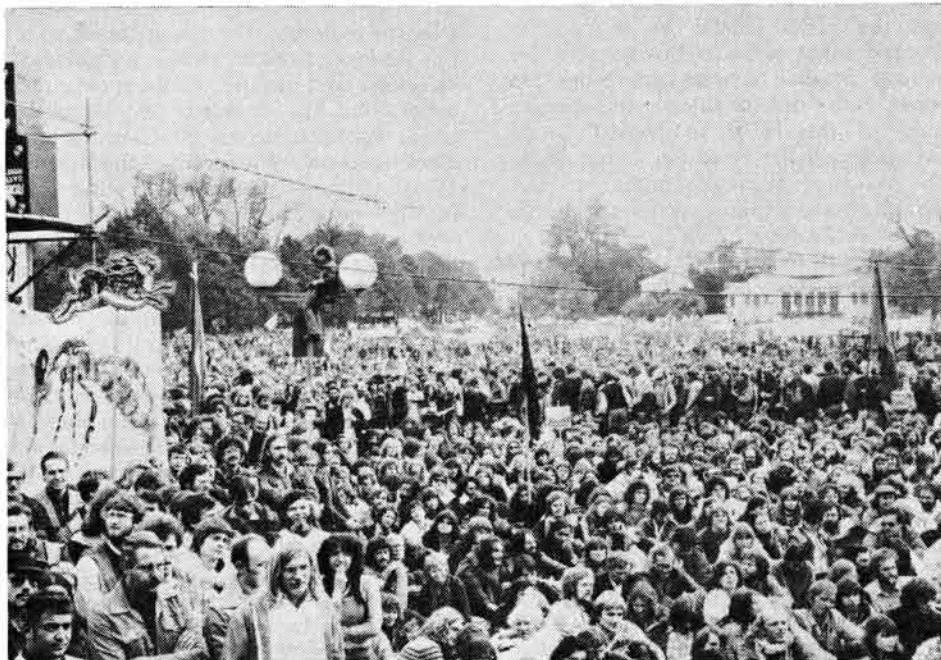
The national leadership of the FDP Young Democrats and Liberal University Association issued a statement calling for "the nationalization of the energy economy, the decentralization of energy production . . . and a ban on the export of ecologically dangerous technology."

The statement also noted that "the struggle against nuclear-power plants is enmeshed in a confrontation with the capitalist economic and social 'order.'" The triumph of the demands of the antinuke movement would require a "reduction" in the power of capital, the statement added.

In Bonn, for the first time, official Social Democratic groups marched openly under their own banner. Many demonstrators carried placards with the message: "I'm a Social Democrat and I'm against nuclear power."

Elsewhere too, opposition to the SPD's pronuclear policy is making itself felt. Following the October 13 North Rhine/Westphalia SPD Conference, Jochen Stemplewski, state president of the Young Socialists, told the Berlin daily *Tageszeitung* that he expected a large number of resignations from the party if the pronuclear-power line of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt prevailed at next December's party conference. That conference will determine the SPD's platform for the 1980 national elections.

The present policy of the SPD, as stated in an official resolution passed by the



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Hamburg party conference, is that it is "untenable to forgo in principle the use of nuclear power at the present time" but that "the option to forgo the use of nuclear power in the future must be opened up."

The political pressures that require the SPD leadership to talk about forgoing nuclear power "in the future" were indicated by Gerhard Stoltenberg, Christian

Democrat minister president of Schleswig-Holstein, in a guest article in the October 12 issue of *Die Zeit*.

Stoltenberg, a strong proponent of nuclear power, complained: "For the last three years it has been our experience that numerous members of the Bundestag in Bonn vote time and again for increases in the nuclear-energy program, approve mil-

lions in appropriations for this purpose, only to return home to their local districts to make emotional speeches against the 'nuclear economy' or the 'nuclear state' and vehemently oppose specific nuclear-power projects in local state [Landtag] elections."

The size of the Bonn demonstration seems a clear indication that the time for political double-dealing is running out. □

Organizing Committees Formed in Industrial Centers

Mounting Pressure in Brazil for Independent Workers Party

By Socorro Ramírez

Until the end of 1978, the opposition to the Brazilian dictatorship seemed to be an undifferentiated grouping dominated by factions of the liberal bourgeoisie, such as the Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB—Brazilian Democratic Movement), the official opposition party.

Since then, however, differing class perspectives have led to a process of differentiation within the opposition. The appearance of the workers movement in the struggle against the dictatorship—in strikes, street demonstrations, and in the debate over how to carry out the officially sponsored reorganization of political parties—has significantly changed the situation.

Following the May 1978 metalworkers strike in Santo André, São Bernardo, and São Caetano—the industrial suburbs of São Paulo known as ABC—and the later meetings of the metalworkers unions as well as other unions, a proposal to build a Workers Party was put forward. It was proposed as a party "without bosses, without foremen, and without sell-outs, a party that would fight to defend the economic and democratic rights of the workers and for socialism" as "Lula" [Luis Inácio da Silva], the leader of the São Paulo metalworkers, put it in presenting the proposed definition of the party.

Under the pressure of rising opposition to military rule and the economic crisis shaking Brazil, Gen. João Baptista de Figueiredo, who has been president of the country since last March, has proposed a series of political reforms that he calls a "democratic opening." These include the possibility of legalizing other political parties besides the two officially sanctioned ones—ARENA (Aliança Renovadora Nacional—Alliance for National Renewal) and the MDB. It is within this context that the moves to establish a Workers Party take place.

The discussion now taking place on the reorganization of political parties is not simply restricted to the proposal and the

initiatives made by the military dictatorship.

Figueiredo is looking for a way to set up a loyal parliamentary majority, as well as to form an independent liberal party that would be based on the bourgeois opposition but would remain an auxiliary of the regime. Through his "proposals for an opening," Figueiredo is trying to come up with an authorized representative with whom he can negotiate and ratify his regime's self-reform. Above all he is looking for a partner who, through a combination of repression and concession, will be able to control and demobilize the workers movement.

Through "reorganization of political parties" the dictatorship hopes to resolve the crisis that the two-party ARENA-MDB system is going through, and to establish new forms of domination that correspond to the new situation, particularly to the rise of the workers movement.

The discussion over whether ARENA and the MDB should be retained or dropped takes place in this context. Numerous possible courses are being proposed. Some call for the possible dismantling of the MDB to benefit Leonel Brizola's populist Brazilian Labor Party. The so-called authentic group of MDB parliamentary deputies is for the formation of a "People's Party."

Others call for maintaining the unity of the MDB as the vehicle for "unity of all the oppositionists." The Brazilian Communist Party supports this proposal. So do the "historic leaders and the moderates of the MDB," who hope to use it to their benefit.

The proposal for a Workers Party is a response to all these proposals.

The Present Situation

A "Movement for the Workers Party" has been established and is beginning to set up committees in several regions. The idea has assumed a national dimension, although on an organizational level it is still developing slowly and unevenly.

The proposal for the Workers Party is

the expression of the present rise in the class struggle in Brazil. The push was given by what are called the "authentic" trade-union leaders (not to be confused with the wing of the MDB that uses the same designation). They began to develop links with class-struggle currents that arose in recent struggles (administration, banks, teaching, construction, etc.) as well as links with trade-union opposition forces who for a long time were the only organized expression of the workers movement's resistance to the dictatorship and to state control over the unions.

In most of the present struggles the workers are placing their confidence in the strike leaders, the strike command centers that are elected by general assemblies of workers. There are numerous strike command centers and their leaderships ultimately accepted the idea of building a Workers Party.

These leaders have been strengthening the pro-Workers Party nuclei and committees, the majority of which are made up of the leaders of recent strikes, "authentic" unionists, and members of the trade-union opposition. The members of the trade-union opposition came in following long discussions on the program of the Workers Party and are, on the whole, integrated into the work of building the party.

Meetings of unions, meetings to support and set up the Workers Party, are taking place every week in many regions. In São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, and Rio de Janeiro the proposal has begun to take concrete shape. Important discussions on the question of how to organize the Workers Party have also taken place in Belo Horizonte—for example discussions on creating nuclei that can intervene in various areas of struggle: in the factories, the schools, committees against the high cost of living, and committees for general amnesty.

The process has particularly accelerated since the Contagem (Minas Gerais) meeting last July 28, which determined the platform and structure of the Workers

Party. In Pôrto Alegre the coordinating committee was enlarged through carrying out massive propaganda about the Platform of Principles and the Program in community organizations and neighborhoods, among unions and political groupings and organizations, as well as within the student movement. There is, for example, a nucleus among bank employees that began several months ago to organize payment of monthly dues, to search for offices to function from and to set up a newspaper.

From August 2 to August 6 a national meeting of trade-union leaders was held in Gragoata (Rio de Janeiro) under the auspices of the Centro Brasileiro Democrático (Brazilian Democratic Center). This was the first such meeting since the 1964 coup. Many trade unionists from cities and from the countryside attended. Despite the absence of representatives of the trade-union oppositions, the meeting was very large and very representative.

This meeting played a preponderant role in analyzing the economic and political situation and especially in analyzing the perspectives outlined for the workers movement. In the face of the severe economic crisis and the austerity that is hitting the working class, the meeting viewed the need to prepare a call for a general strike as one of the central tasks that must be undertaken.

Basic demands of the population—such as the “struggle against inflation, against the increase in the cost of living, for general wage increases, and for job security”—were taken up in the “Gragoata Charter.” Several places in the charter contain declarations in favor of “trade-union freedom and rights,” as well as declarations for a “general amnesty” and “against the dictatorship.”

The meeting counterposed the slogan of “a free and sovereign constituent assembly” to Figueiredo’s proposals for a “democratic opening” and “institutionalization.” At the same time, the meeting demanded the “dismantling of the repressive apparatus” and the “annulment of repressive measures.” Concerning the situation of the trade-union movement, they came out for trade-union unity and for building a “United Workers Federation.”

Their declarations were also completely clear regarding the need to fight for a union structure freed from verticalism—the situation where each union functions in isolation from unions in other fields. This division and atomization of the workers movement is a relic of state and police control over the unions.

Demands for the establishment of “factory committees” elected by union assemblies to negotiate contracts through collective bargaining, as well as for the election of trade-union delegates with job security were among those adopted by the unionists. Also adopted was the demand for the creation of a trade-union coordinating body.

Discussions regarding the Workers Party were an important part of the deliberations that took place in Gragoata. Two proposals were debated—the “authentic” trade-union leaders supported the formation of the Workers Party, while Communist trade-union leaders proposed maintaining the unity of the MDB. While the CPers explained that a proletarian party, the CP, already existed (since 1922), others called for a fight to legalize the CP and, more generally, to legalize all the parties now underground.

The representative of the São Paulo leatherworkers union stated: “Comrades from the CP, you must leave the MDB. That party is not a workers party. If you cannot get your party legalized, enter the Workers Party as a way of functioning legally. Tendencies will exist within it, because we would be utopians if we did not recognize the different tendencies within the workers movement.”

In the course of the debate it was decided that no position would be adopted on this question because some unionists did not agree with the majority, who favored the Workers Party proposal, and there seemed to be no way to force them to take up this slogan among their rank and file.

While it is clear that the proposal to set up a Workers Party is a significant step forward for the working class on the road to its political independence, and while it illustrates the level of organization, combativity, and consciousness attained by the Brazilian workers movement, the proposal still faces objective obstacles and important subjective limitations and deficiencies. We should take note of at least some of them.

1. The first obstacle is the low level of consciousness, political education, and organizational experience of most of the union leaders who call for the formation of the Workers Party. This low level of consciousness is also one of the characteristics of the new layer of fighting, class-struggle unionists who have emerged in the recent struggles against the employers and the dictatorship.

2. The Brazilian Communist Party clearly opposes the proposal to set-up the Workers Party and continues to argue for work inside the MDB. Other organizations, centrists such as the pro-Albanian Communist Party of Brazil, the Aliança Popular Marxista-Leninista, and the Movimento Revolucionario do 8 de Outubro are also against this proposal. Only centrist organizations like the MEP (Movement for the Emancipation of the Proletariat) and Trotskyist organizations like the Socialist Convergence and the POC (Communist Workers Party) are politically taking part in the discussion on the program and organization of the Workers Party.

3. Another big obstacle could be the reestablishment of the old Brazilian Labor Party (PTB), the populist organization led by Leonel Brizola. With strong support

from the European Social Democracy and counting on a certain amount of “flexibility” from the dictatorship, the PTB is attempting to make a big reentry onto the political scene and to take over the Workers Party’s political space.

4. In trying to build the Workers Party, the class-struggle militants in the unions run up against the maintenance of the vertical trade-union structure controlled by the state and by the dictatorship. The prohibition by law of any trade-union structure that cuts across occupational lines is a major obstacle to the Brazilian workers movement restructuring the unions on a class basis, a process that must be indissolubly linked to the building of the Workers Party as an independent political organ and united front of the working class.

5. Finally, we should note the maneuvers by the so-called “authentic” wing of MDP parliamentary deputies, who are calling for the formation of a “People’s Party.” Today they are the ones exerting the greatest pressure on the fighting trade-union leaders who are involved in the proposal for the Workers Party. Several commissions of parliamentarians, intellectuals, and trade-unionists have been formed. Meetings and discussions between partisans of the “People’s Party” and supporters of the Workers Party have taken place at the initiative of MDB deputies.

At the meeting in São Bernardo (a suburb of São Paulo), at the one in Vila Betania (in Pôrto Alegre), as well as at the most recent one held in São Paulo, the “authentic” deputies could be heard making the same “realistic” speech. According to them, “we must bring all the oppositionists into a single party,” “those who are really fighting the dictatorship should form a truly people’s party.” In trying to put their multi-class and collaborationist plan into operation, the “authentic” deputies use a weighty argument. Under the projected terms of the dictatorship’s “opening” a party must have thirty deputies in the parliament that was elected last November to be given legal status. This means that a party must get thirty members who were elected on the slates of the two official parties—ARENA and the MDB—to vouch for it or join it. These legal stipulations give a certain weight to the blackmail by the “authentics,” who argue that a national political party cannot be set up solely with workers and unionists, but also needs to make use of politicians and members of parliament who know all the ins and outs of public life.

Another big, central weakness of the proposal to build the Workers Party is the slowness and the delays with which it is being built among the ranks, in the work places, and in the neighborhoods. Up to now in practice the movement has been limited to nuclei of “authentic” trade-union leaders and a large portion of members of trade-union opposition groups who have

begun to organize and coordinate around this proposal. The current absence of rank-and-file organization of the Movement for the Workers Party obviously can only favor vacillation, including opportunist temptations, by the leaders who took the initiative on the question.

While we must not ignore the weaknesses that weigh on the proposal to build the Workers Party, it is equally important to take note of the fact that this proposal has been made and has been increasingly taken up by the whole of the working masses in their struggle against the dictatorship. Moreover, since these struggles of the Brazilian working class

increasingly play a central and driving role in the anti-dictatorship movement, the political question posed by the building of the Workers Party, by the objective need shown in the class struggle for Brazilian workers to have an independent political expression on a class basis, becomes more pressing.

There is no doubt in our mind that the dictatorship and the bourgeoisie will utilize every means possible, will carry out all forms of repression and collaboration, sometimes combining the two, to try to dislocate or derail the proposal to set up the Workers Party.

An immediate milestone for building the Workers Party is the wage campaign that will draw together more than 2 million workers whose contracts are coming up for negotiation in October and November. This will obviously be a very important test to establish the viability of the proposal and to set up a rank-and-file structure for the movement for the Workers Party.

In the words of Paulo Skromof, leader of the São Paulo leatherworkers union, this wage campaign can become "the launching pad for holding, within six months, the founding convention of the Workers Party, the first working-class party, without bosses, in Brazil's history." □

Interview With Leader of São Paulo Leatherworkers

Behind Movement to Build Workers Party in Brazil

[The following is an interview with Paulo Skromof, leader of the leatherworkers union of São Paulo.]

* * *

Question: What has been the situation in Brazil since the November 1978 elections?

Answer: The main element in the situation is the rise of struggles by the people and the workers. This is both causing and deepening the crisis of the military regime.

On March 12, 1978, the Scania strike in São Bernardo began a continuing process of localized (sectoral) strikes, strikes by industry, and even strikes simultaneously involving several branches of the economy, which rapidly spread throughout the country.

Today struggles are taking place in Minas Gerais and, in addition, we are now welcoming the entry of the workers in the state of Rio Grande do Sul into the struggle. The crisis of the dictatorship has now reached the point where the repressive apparatus is no longer able to hold things back. Each repressive measure is answered by the mass movement.

In my opinion the November 1978 elections were of secondary importance compared to the crisis of the regime and the rise of workers struggles in Brazil.

But the elections showed that we are in an ambiguous system: the elections had the character of a plebescite. All the workers could do was show their rejection of the dictatorship in one of two ways. They could cast a blank ballot or could vote for the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB). The significance of the elections evaporated as soon as the votes were cast. Between the blank ballots and the MDB vote the government suffered another defeat.

It is only now that we can pose a clear alternative, which is the old goal of the

workers movement—the struggle for an independent workers party. This struggle is being taken up by a very significant segment of trade-union leaders. We're talking about the goal of building the Workers Party, a goal put forward in December 1978 just after the elections, and now in the process of being carried out.

This is the outline of the situation in the country. The masses have begun to struggle against the regime. But they do not yet have their own means of political expression. This has made it possible so far for the regime to be successful in beginning to make a peaceful transition toward another form of domination—one where police repression, such as torture, is only used as a final resort.

Q. Could you go into more detail about this plan to build a Workers Party?

A. Up to now the Brazilian working class has never been organized on the basis of class independence. The working class's entire political expression has taken place within bourgeois parties, except for the small segment that was won to the Communist Party.

In the months after it was announced in December 1978, the Movement for the Workers Party has grown. The movement was primarily made up of leaders of the official unions. They were a small minority within the trade-union structure, but the fact that they specifically came from the official structure is very important.

When "Lula" [Luis Inácio da Silva], the president of the São Bernardo metalworkers, put forward the idea for the party, he was able to win the adherence of the Santo André and Osasco metalworkers and the oil workers in the city of Campinas. Santo André and Osasco are industrial suburbs of São Paulo.

Today, having gotten all the union lead-

ers we can, we are moving out from São Paulo to look for new leaderships. For example, in Rio de Janeiro the movement's coordinating committee is primarily made up of trade-union oppositionists. In the last month, the oppositionists in the state of Minas Gerais have taken the leadership of the movement for a Workers Party on the state-wide level.

In São Paulo, José Ibrahim, the former leader of the Osasco union who was forced into exile after the 1968 strikes, has joined the movement. Since he joined, we are confident that we will win over the most consistent sectors of the trade-union opposition.

We are setting up the Movement for the Workers Party, which is being structured as a party. We hope to hold the founding convention within six months, although the date has not yet been set.

Moreover, we are trying to set up nuclei of the movement in every region of the country. We are holding three public meetings a week, and we no longer limit ourselves simply to propagandizing for a Workers Party. Now at the end of each meeting we organize nuclei of activists. Our plan is to launch the Workers Party with a big public demonstration at the Praça de Sé, the traditional site of demonstrations by the workers movement.

The attitude of the traditional left has been mixed, depending on what currents and groups you talk about. With the exception of a group called the Crimson Wing of the Communist Party of Brazil, the Maoists have not joined the Workers Party. The Maoists called for building a party within which a popular front with sectors of the national bourgeoisie can be cemented.

The groupings of Trotskyist origin have all supported the proposal for the Workers Party, with the exception of the Posadaists and the Lambertist OSI, which belongs to



São Paulo metalworkers demonstration in 1978.

O Trabalho

the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The Communist Party maintains that the workers party has already been in existence for 57 years and that they are it!

The other tendencies on the left, from the left Catholics to the nationalist movements, tend to support the Workers Party.

But all these groups still display a great deal of distrust toward the Workers Party. They don't understand the role it can play. They cannot conceive of building a Leninist party except through a handful of intellectuals who then attract thousands of workers in a process of organic growth.

They do not understand that the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party itself was decentralized for a very long period before the phase of centralization began in 1903. This is what we should use as our model.

Q. What are the prospects since the recent strikes?

A. Until recently strikes took place only through unions led by leaders of the Workers Party. Today the process of mobilization has gone well beyond that. We can say that the Workers Party is the reflection of all the struggles for the demands of the working class.

The strikes that are not organized by the unions, as in Belo Horizonte, are all identified with the Workers Party. When the head of the construction union shamefully sold out the strike, the strike committee brought together the main union leaders in São Paulo (who are the main forces behind

the Workers Party) to take part in workers assemblies in order to counteract the weight of the bourgeois politicians from the MDB, who had nothing to do with the workers movement. The presence of the Workers Party provided a certain form of continuity to the struggle, restoring the workers' full confidence to lead the struggle, side by side with the Workers Party, toward a Workers Government.

During the Vargas period [1930-55] the trade-union structure was tied into the state, and a vertical form of organization was imposed upon it. This still holds true today.

Recently a big movement has arisen with the aim of creating an autonomous union structure. This movement is made up of trade-union oppositionists and fighting trade-union leaders. In my opinion the establishment of an autonomous union structure is the biggest task facing the workers movement.

A political instrument is needed to carry this task to completion, to organize the workers even inside the official unions with an understanding of the need to wrest these unions from state control, to eliminate the union tax, to win the right to freely establish bylaws, to control union finances, and, finally, to organize the workers struggles. This is the fight to build a "United Workers Federation," which must come out of a big congress of labor in which every industry and every factory is represented. In contrast, the CP proposes establishing a federation simply by bring-

ing together the present union leaders.

Q. What role will the Brazilian Labor Party play?

A. In past decades the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) was the trump card used by the ruling class. After the 1964 coup the trump card was the military dictatorship, which now is trying to cloak itself in limited formal democracy while keeping the working class excluded from politics.

Today the PTB is being revived again. Those who look to the past hope that by launching the PTB they can place a major obstacle in the way of the working class freely expressing itself, and they hope to avoid the destruction of the vertical union apparatus. If the bourgeoisie is successful in imposing this party in Brazil, as happened in Argentina with the return of Peronism, no specifically working-class alternative will exist.

The PTB as it is today conceived under the leadership of Leonel Brizola or Ivete Vargas ("dismissed" former parliamentary deputy, and daughter of the late dictator) becomes an even more suspect instrument, despite its self-criticism of past errors. I do not believe that today the PTB can develop a nationalist program, opposed to imperialism. Perón could not do it during his second return to power.

Finally, we should note that since the launching of the proposal to build the Workers Party, the Brazilian Labor Party has not been able to win the adherence of any significant trade-union leaders. □

Selections From the Left

[This week's column is devoted to assessments of the current situation in Kampuchea.]

* * *

Socialist Challenge

Newspaper sponsored by the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in London.

Today the most burning issue is not whether Pol Pot's regime was capitalist or a workers state, Clive Turnbull writes in the September 27 issue.

"... it is the fact, as [London *Daily Mirror* correspondent] John Pilger testifies, that the people of Kampuchea face extinction.

"Today the process begun by Kissinger is nearing completion. . . ."

"A massive labour movement campaign for aid to the Kampuchean people is vital."

In a letter in the following week's issue, Tariq Ali comments:

"John Pilger stated in the *Daily Mirror* that the Pol Pot regime was a product of imperialist savagery. Clive Turnbull argued in *Socialist Challenge* last week that Pol Pot was the product also of Stalinism. In their different ways both are correct. The question that arises, however, is the attitude of socialists towards this regime, the subsequent invasion by Vietnam, and what exists today.

"It is widely accepted within the Trotskyist movement that the class character of a state can be easily ascertained. It is either a capitalist state or a workers state. In general, of course, this is correct. But history can, on occasion, be cruel. Exceptions, albeit of a limited and temporary duration, can exist.

"I would maintain that Kampuchea under Pol Pot was neither a capitalist state nor a workers state. It was a historical aberration and its future was always unstable. If the Vietnamese had not overthrown Pol Pot it is very likely that imperialism (utilising the refugees and Thailand) would sooner or later have made a push in that direction.

"It is true that Pol Pot was not creating a capitalist state. Everything was taken over by the state (including personal belongings). It is also true that the means of production and the working class were smashed. Stalin's atrocities did have a rationale: heavy industrialisation, i.e. increasing the weight of the working class. Pol Pot destroyed the tiny working class

as a social class. All human rights were taken away.

"It wasn't a case of substituting politically for the working class as the bureaucracy normally does. It was something completely different, which defies characterisation in terms normally used on the left. It is easy to sit back and say that it would have been infinitely better if Pol Pot had been overthrown by the Kampuchean masses. It would have been. However, there is a danger that Pol Pot would have exterminated what was left of the population before he went down himself.

"So we should admit that the Pol Pot regime was neither fish nor fowl. And as such it was characterised by an instability which was reflected in its barbarism. Its overthrow was a tiny step forward for the Kampuchean people who are still alive. And one can agree with Clive that pressure should be built up in the labour movement to press for all forms of aid."

rouge

"Red," weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League, French section of the Fourth International. Published in Paris.

Under the headline "Holocaust in Cambodia," C.S. writes in the October 12-18 issue:

"We have not yet seen the last of the consequences of imperialist intervention and the criminal policy of the Communist Party bureaucracy in Cambodia.

"Representatives of international organizations who have returned from Cambodia report a veritable holocaust. A little more than half of the country's population is said to have disappeared over the course of the last few years—victims of the repression but also of the economic consequences of the Pol Pot government's criminal policies.

"Cambodia was hit in the course of the war with three times more bombs than Japan during the Second World War. Furthermore, whatever was not destroyed by the Yankees was systematically leveled by the bureaucracy. Forced labor and famine-level rations completed the picture. There are today practically no children under four years of age.

"The near total destruction of the network of roads and the absence of means of transportation make it difficult to deliver food aid. We must demand that the imperialist governments, whose responsibility

for this situation is not among the least, immediately send food and technical aid to Cambodia."

lutte ouvriere

"Workers Struggle," Paris weekly supported by a grouping of militants who view themselves as Trotskyist in orientation.

The capitalist press "has been unable to find words harsh enough to denounce the war in Kampuchea between supporters of the Khmer Rouge and those of the new Pnompenh regime established with Vietnamese help," Cécile Bernier writes in the October 6 issue.

While there can be no doubt that the situation is "extremely grave," she continues, "it does not date from the Vietnamese intervention a year ago, or even from the taking of power by the Khmer Rouge five years ago, despite what the hypocrites who are today feigning pity for the unhappy fate of the Kampuchean people would have us believe.

"What did the rich countries do when Kampuchea was under the yoke of imperialism? They pillaged it during the entire colonial period, and subsequently covered it with a carpet of bombs when it began to demand and fight for its independence.

"The fact that Kampuchea's economy is destroyed, its population stricken by famine, is the responsibility of French imperialism and its successor, American imperialism. . . ."

"What are the rich countries waiting for, if they really want to send in sufficient food and medicine to halt the famine? Authorization from the Vietnamese and Kampuchean governments? . . . Have they ever shown such scruples before? Did they request the permission of the population before bombing it with napalm during the colonial war?"

"The Vietnamese and Kampuchean regimes are both without doubt ferocious dictatorships. But the patent representatives of imperialism, in the United Nations or elsewhere, do not have the right to discuss this, for they are the ones who are responsible for the present situation and the famine."

DIRECT ACTION

Socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia. Presents the views of the Socialist Workers Party.

Under the headline "For Real Aid to Kampuchea," the editors state in the October 4 issue:

"After months of reports that the people of Kampuchea were facing starvation, the major capitalist powers have found it

impossible to refuse any longer to send aid to a country whose devastation was overwhelmingly the result of Washington's bombing. Last week minister for Foreign Affairs Andrew Peacock declared that Australia too would be sending 20,000 tons of rice to Kampuchea.

"Does this signal a change of heart on the part of the Fraser government? Quite the reverse.

"The US and its partners such as Australia are using the "international aid effort" with cynical calculation. For them it is a means to lever concessions out of the Heng Samrin government of Kampuchea and re-establish a toehold in the shattered country.

"The moves in this cold-blooded game are simple enough—as a condition for aid make impossible demands on the Heng Samrin government. Then, when it has refused to accept such threats to its sovereignty, announce, as the US State Department did last week, that Heng Samrin and the Vietnamese are 'hampering the aid effort.'

"Then send all aid to Kampuchea via Thailand, Washington's faithful satellite in the region. This ensures that it will go to directly strengthen mass murderer Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, who are confined to a small strip of Kampuchea, along the Thai border.

"It has been revealed that Australia is a party to this display of imperialist 'humanitarianism.' In a report from the Khmer Rouge-held town of Phnom Malai, Nigel Starke, the ABC's Bangkok correspondent, revealed that Australian rice was going to Khmer Rouge troops.

"Meanwhile, the vast majority of Kampuchea's people, living under the Heng Samrin government, are receiving nothing and their situation grows more desperate by the day.

"The broad labor movement must demand that the Fraser government recognize the Heng Samrin government and provide massive aid through it to the Kampuchean people."

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League. Published in London.

"Few if any of the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy in other countries can have surpassed the deeds of the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea," the September 26 issue states.

Nonetheless, "the claims today by the Vietnamese and Soviet regimes that they have 'liberated' Kampuchea from tyranny are hypocritical. They did not reveal or condemn the crimes of the Pol Pot regime before they invaded. And they are doing so

now only to justify that invasion.

"It must, however, be accepted that if the Vietnamese occupying forces at present wished to begin to reverse the tragedy of the Kampuchean people it would be very difficult because of the hostile policies of imperialism.

"At the same time some attention must be given to a number of reports from refugees who in their tens of thousands are attempting to leave Kampuchea, that Heng Samrin and the Vietnamese are pursuing policies which suggest they too are continuing the destruction of the Kampuchean nation. . . .

"Such accusations against the Vietnamese cannot at present be verified. But they would be consistent with policies within Vietnam itself which contemplate the emigration of 3 million of the population."

Guardian

An independent radical newsweekly published in New York.

The cause of the famine is "principally the massive disruption of rice planting, the result of the Vietnamese invasion in January and subsequent fighting," states the September 5 issue of this New York weekly, which supports the Pol Pot forces.

The article, a report by staff writer William Ryan, continues: "Analysts estimate that no more than 5-10% of the arable land has been planted, based on aerial photographs and visitors' accounts. The photographs of what was once the most populous part of the country—the 'pacified' eastern region between Phnom Penh and the Vietnam border—show scattered settlements, with once-fertile fields abandoned and virtually no sign of livestock. The Kampuchean population there is said to be thoroughly uprooted and without administration. In other parts of the country, such as the formerly rich rice-producing Bat-

tambang region, continued fighting has prevented normal agricultural production."

In contrast, according to Ryan, conditions under Pol Pot were vastly superior:

"Prior to the massive Vietnamese invasion, despite the many reported ultra-'left' excesses of the Pol Pot government, there were no reports of starvation. According to a recent statement from the Pol Pot government, adequate irrigation ditches and reservoirs were built after the defeat of U.S. imperialism in 1975, with resulting large harvests in rice."

(A reply to Ryan, written by Christiane Dumont, an eyewitness observer of current conditions in Kampuchea, was published in a subsequent issue of the *Guardian* and is reprinted elsewhere in this issue.)

The Call

Organ of the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist). Published weekly in Chicago.

This slavishly pro-Peking weekly on occasion even outstrips U.S. imperialist propaganda. The famine in Kampuchea is a case in point. Editor Daniel Burstein writes in the October 8 issue:

"The widely-reported famine now gripping much of Kampuchea is completely the result of the Vietnamese invasion. Critics as well as supporters of the Pol Pot government agree that prior to the invasion, great achievements had been made in agriculture and the people were sufficiently fed. Now an estimated two million Kampuchean face starvation."

In this situation, Burstein urges a halt to food aid to the great bulk of the population, which lives in areas controlled by the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin government: "International relief efforts going through the Vietnamese side are only worsening the situation, delivering food not to starving people but to Vietnamese troops."

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AROUND THE WORLD



Venezuela Blasts U.S. War Drive in Caribbean

Venezuelan Foreign Minister José Alberto Zambrano stated October 23 that U.S. naval and marine corps exercises in and around Cuba carried out under the pretext of Soviet troops there constituted an "excessive demonstration of force, in a situation difficult to characterize as an authentic crisis. . . ."

Speaking at the meeting of the Organization of American States in La Paz, Bolivia, Zambrano complained that such U.S. military moves make the nations of the Caribbean region appear "to the eyes of the world as subject to military tutelage."

Alfred A Rattray of Jamaica spoke in support of Zambrano's remarks, insisting that the Jamaican government "rejects the Caribbean as a sphere of military conflicts among great powers."

Ben Bella Still Under House Arrest

Ahmed Ben Bella, the former president of Algeria who was released last July after fourteen years in prison, remains under virtual house arrest in the small city of Msila, about 130 miles southeast of Algiers.

Ben Bella, who was overthrown in a 1965 coup led by Houari Boumediene, was released on July 4. Since his release he has not been permitted to meet with reporters.

In September, however, Peter R. Knauss, an American professor, was able to get questions to Ben Bella through an Algerian acquaintance. According to Knauss's report in the October 5 *New York Times*, Ben Bella stated that he is always under police surveillance and is restricted to the area around Msila.

Boumediene's regime, in Ben Bella's view, was characterized by "bureaucratization of agriculture, generalized corruption, a disastrous industrialization policy and a crisis in housing."

He charged that the peasants on cooperatives and state farms are systematically cheated by government purchasing agents and that they know "that the government is run by thieves." He also attacked the practice of gouging consumers by cornering the market in vital food supplies.

Ben Bella criticized the regime's focus on large-scale industrial projects at the expense of much-needed investments in agriculture, housing, and other needs.

He characterized his own policy as Algeria's first president in the following

manner: "I inaugurated a policy of aid and solidarity with black Africa, Latin America, the Arab countries and the Socialist countries. I denounced imperialism the day after independence. I tried to show the way of solidarity with Vietnam and with Palestinians. . . ."

Over the years there had been many calls for Ben Bella's release. Cuban President Fidel Castro and Yugoslavia's President Tito are reported to have made numerous inquiries regarding his situation. Ben Bella was finally released by President Chadli Benjedid, who took office last February following Boumediene's death.

Prior to Algeria's independence Ben Bella had spent nearly eight years in French jails.

Supreme Court Rejects SWP Appeal

The United States Supreme Court issued a ruling October 9 effectively blocking the Socialist Workers Party's attempt to force disclosure of the activities of FBI spies in the party. It was the latest in a series of widely publicized court decisions in the SWP's lawsuit against the FBI and other government agencies.

Since the suit was filed in 1973, it has played a major role in exposing the FBI's crimes against the labor movement, the women's movement, Blacks, Latinos, and socialists. In May 1977, Judge Thomas Griesa concluded that the files of eighteen FBI informers in the SWP were critical evidence in the case, and he ordered Attorney General Griffin Bell to produce them to lawyers for the party.

The Attorney General refused to obey the order, and he was declared in contempt of court. This raised the legal possibility that he might be jailed for defying the court ruling.

But a court of appeals subsequently reversed the contempt order, holding that although it had no authority even to consider such an appeal, it would make a special exception for this case. The court argued that it was "unseemly" to apply such a measure against the nation's highest law enforcement official.

The Supreme Court has now refused to hear the SWP's appeal from this unprecedented ruling.

The SWP suit will go to trial despite the Supreme Court ruling, on the basis of the massive evidence of FBI crimes already piled loose.

SWP presidential candidate Andrew Pulley, speaking on the ruling, commented, "The Supreme Court has 'Equal Justice Under Law' engraved over its door. But it's decided that the FBI is a lot more equal than us, under the laws of this system."

Carter OKs New Arms Sales to Morocco

The Carter administration announced October 22 that it would seek Congressional approval to sell helicopter gunships and armed reconnaissance planes to the Moroccan government. In a shift from earlier policy, U.S. officials openly acknowledged that the new weapons are for use against the freedom fighters in the Western Sahara, who have made significant advances in recent months.

According to the October 23 *New York Times*, the Saudi Arabian regime has indicated that it may finance the new Moroccan arms purchase. The French government is King Hassan's other major backer.

Previously Washington had maintained the fiction that U.S. military aid to Morocco was not to be used outside the boundaries of that country. While still claiming to favor a negotiated settlement of the Sahara conflict, American officials now say that the sale of more arms to the Moroccan military will make King Hassan's regime "more willing" to negotiate with the Polisario Front.

FIAT Launches Attack on Auto Union

In an attempt to housebreak its work force and weaken its unions, FIAT, Italy's largest privately owned company, has fired sixty-one workers and has temporarily banned all new hiring. Although offering no evidence, FIAT tried to link the fired workers to terrorist activity.

In justifying the firings, FIAT, which has 270,000 workers in 150 plants in Italy, stated that since 1975 three executives have been shot and killed, nineteen have been wounded, and eighteen have had their cars burned. Although it could not present any evidence tying the fired workers to these acts, FIAT claimed they are guilty of acting in ways "that go beyond the limits of a civilized confrontation between social parties," and accused them of "contributing toward a climate of tension" in its plants.

The fired workers have strenuously denied any connection with terrorist activities. Four of them had been participating in negotiations with the company over wages and health conditions.

Silvano Veronesi, a delegate to the FIAT factory council in Turin, stated: "We know these fired comrades. They are people like us. They were involved in the same struggles." He added that this step "takes us back twenty years" in labor relations.

A joint communiqué by all of Italy's major unions confirmed this analysis. "This is an attempt," the communiqué noted, "to recreate a climate of fear within the factory."

FIAT representatives have stated that they are willing to undergo short-term losses in production in order to enforce discipline and force an increase in productivity.

Since the announcement of FIAT's move, other Italian industrialists have been closely watching the situation. If FIAT gets away with its attacks, other companies will follow suit. Already Alfa-Romeo has followed FIAT's lead by firing workers it considers troublesome.

In the past decade, FIAT workers have been able to win a number of major improvements in working conditions and have gained some control over the pace of work in the plants. These gains, which are described in the interview with a FIAT worker ("Life in Italy's Largest Auto Plant") published in our last issue, are what FIAT hopes to win back.

Two Soviet Scientists Voice Doubts About Nuclear Safety

In an article published in the October issue of the Soviet CP theoretical magazine *Kommunist*, two leading energy specialists warned about some of the dangers involved in Moscow's massive nuclear development program.

While affirming that "there is no doubt of the historical necessity and great potential of nuclear energy," the authors stressed that caution "should be emphasized with respect to this just as with anything else."

In contrast to all previous reporting in the Soviet press, which had insisted that the nuclear industry in the "socialist countries" was completely safe and trouble-free, *Kommunist* admitted that serious technical problems remain unsolved.

It is obviously wrong to believe that guaranteed, reliable, economical, advanced and time-tested technologies have been created for all production aspects of the external [nuclear] fuel cycle.

The article also referred to the danger of accidents during the transportation of nuclear fuel and wastes, and to ecological problems caused by the tremendous consumption of cooling water by nuclear plants in heavily industrialized regions of the country.

The article estimated that by 1980 10 percent of all electricity generated in the western part of the country would come from nuclear power plants. It did not refer specifically to any accidents or other problems at those power plants or at the fuel/waste processing facilities, although such accidents have been reported by dissidents in both the Soviet Union and neighboring Czechoslovakia.

IMF Supervises Collapse of Jamaican Economy

Jamaica has more funds in loans per capita from the International Monetary Fund than any other country. For the last year and a half the Jamaican government's economic policies have been formulated under direct IMF supervision. And the result? According to the October 9 *New York Times*, Jamaica has acquired a reputation in international banking circles as an economic "basket case."

Since the start of an IMF-imposed austerity policy in June 1978, real incomes in Jamaica have fallen by 35 percent, while unemployment has risen to over 25 percent. With consumer spending down, and exports still lagging, the country's economic growth rate has been negative for five consecutive years.

In return for a major IMF loan package the government of Prime Minister Michael Manley agreed to carry out a 30 percent devaluation of the country's currency, along with sharp cutbacks in social spending to balance the national budget. These measures, along with tight credit policies, a ceiling on wage raises, and new incentive for investors, were supposed to "start the country moving again."

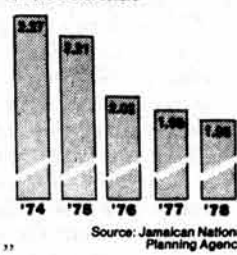
But despite these incentives, investment has not picked up. No new factories have been built in the capital city of Kingston for years.

Devaluation of the currency was supposed to improve the balance of payments by reducing imports and stimulating exports. But much of Jamaica's imports are capital goods essential to the mining industry. Since these imports could not be substantially reduced, the effect of devaluation was only to make them more expensive. Inflation in the imperialist countries boosted their prices still further.

Devaluation did lower the price of Jamaican bauxite (aluminum ore), the country's main mineral export. But major aluminum corporations still said they could buy bauxite cheaper elsewhere, and have continued to cut their purchases from Jamaica.

Jamaica's Troubled Economy

Real gross domestic product, billions of U.S. dollars



Jamaica's other main export, sugar, was little affected by the devaluation, because of protectionist policies in the major consuming countries. The European Common Market buys sugar at a price fixed in European currencies, while the United States government has set quotas limiting sugar imports in order to keep domestic prices artificially high.

The *New York Times* noted that the disaster of the Jamaican economy is "potentially highly embarrassing for the IMF. . . ."

"Whatever its eventual outcome, the Jamaican case is significant in light of the increasingly central role played by the IMF in international economic affairs, and in the policies of developing nations."

While bankers profess to suffer "embarrassment," malnutrition is spreading in Jamaica.

Former Leader of Israeli Trotskyists, Yigal Schwartz, 1950-1979

On the night of September 6, Yigal Schwartz, a leader of the Israeli Trotskyist movement for several years, died in Haifa at the age of twenty-nine.

Like other Jewish youth in Israel, Yigal was drafted into the Zionist army when he was eighteen. While serving in the army, he joined the Israeli New Left (Siah). During this period he was sent to a military jail because of his political views. There he organized a prisoners' hunger strike in protest against prison conditions.

In 1970, he joined the Workers League, a Trotskyist group then affiliated with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The Workers League held the position that the Israeli state was no different than other states in the Middle East, even though it is a colonial settler state subsidized—not exploited—by imperialism. Thus, in the 1973 war the Workers League refused to support Egypt against Zionist Israel.

This led to a split in the organization and the formation of the Palestine Communist Group, under Yigal's leadership.

In April 1979 the Palestine Communist Group fused with the Revolutionary Communist League, the section of the Fourth International in Israel. Yigal was ill and did not participate in the fusion itself, but he had been centrally involved in early negotiations leading to the fusion process.

In 1978, Yigal had a nervous breakdown and was institutionalized, where he tried several times, unsuccessfully, to take his life. On the night of September 6, 1979, he left the hospital against medical regulations and was found in a railroad tunnel where he had been struck by an oncoming train. He died soon afterwards in hospital.

Yigal spent the last ten years of his life struggling against the Zionist state. He never lost his confidence in the socialist revolution, even during his illness.

WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR AID TO NICARAGUA



\$6,000 Raised in Canadian Solidarity Meeting

[The following article appeared in the October 1 issue of *Socialist Voice*, the Canadian Trotskyist newspaper.]

* * *

EDMONTON—At least 600 people jammed the Ukrainian Center here September 8 to express solidarity with the efforts of the Nicaraguan people to rebuild their country. Crowds were turned away at the door of the meeting, organized by the Committee for Peace and Reconstruction in Nicaragua as a benefit to provide aid for the Sandinista government. The meeting raised \$6,000.

Highlight of the benefit was an address by Pastro Valle-Garay, who is now the official Canadian representative of the Sandinista government. He stressed the urgency of material aid to fight the wide-scale threat of starvation facing the youth of his country. The United States has a special responsibility in this regard, he

added, but his government would accept "no conditions" for aid from Washington.

Valle-Garay singled out two groups who have given important support in Canada: the Chilean exile community, and the workers movement. Noting the "complete isolation" his country now faces internationally, the Nicaraguan representative urged Edmonton union members to use the CLC's solidarity campaign to pressure the Canadian government to provide the relief needed by his people.

In response to "speculation about whether we will go left or go right," Pastor Valle-Garay said that his country alone will determine its direction, but that "our revolution is a socialist revolution."

Speakers from Oxfam and Edmonton's Spanish community also addressed the benefit, whose proceeds went to the Sandinista Liberation Front through the Nicaraguan Human Rights Committee in Toronto.

—Andrea Waywenko

Washington, D.C., Central Labor Council Urges Aid

[A number of local trade unions in the United States have demanded that the U.S. government provide aid for the reconstruction of Nicaragua. On October 5 such a resolution in solidarity with the Nicaraguan people was adopted by Blue Eagle Lodge 190 of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen in Alexandria, Virginia. In Washington, D.C., Lodge 1906 of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks also adopted a resolution, and on October 15 the Washington, D.C., Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, unanimously adopted the following statement.]

* * *

The people of Nicaragua have paid a great price for their freedom from the Somoza dictatorship. The vast destruction wrought by Somoza and his national guard has left the country in a desperate situation.

Three hundred tons of food per day are needed to stave off the threats of starvation and medicine, tools, and clothing are also urgently needed.

As a final act of robbing the Nicaraguan

people Somoza drained the national treasury before he left and thus left the country in bankruptcy. The agricultural and industrial sectors have been severely disrupted.

The United States being the richest country in the world, also carrying the responsibility for having installed and supported the Somoza dynasty, has shown a mediocre response toward the tremendous needs of the Nicaraguan people.

We call on the president and congress of this country to live up to the U.S. promises to support Nicaragua by immediately increasing food aid and by granting generous, unconditional reconstruction aid for the rebuilding of a free and democratic Nicaragua.

The Washington, D.C. Central Labor Council will send a copy of the resolution to all its affiliated unions and urges them to educate their membership about the situation in Nicaragua by inviting a representative of the Washington D.C. Nicaragua Solidarity Coalition (DC-NICA) or other supporters of the Nicaraguan people to make presentations at union meetings.

Swiss Raise Funds for Hospital in Estelí.

[The following article appeared in the September 29 issue of the Swiss Trotskyist fortnightly *La Brèche*. The translation is by Intercontinental Press/Inprecor.]

The Swiss Association for Solidarity With Nicaragua has just been formed in Geneva. The association has decided to help raise funds for the construction of a municipal hospital in Estelí (expected to cost 6 million Swiss francs [about US \$3.6 million]), in accordance with a written request by a representative of the Nicaraguan government.

The association also intends to seek contributions of the most urgently needed drugs and medicines.

To launch the solidarity campaign, the association has already set up information booths, including at the recent hospital workers picnic, where a representative of the association was able to address the gathering.

The association also intends to carry out a campaign demanding that the Swiss government immediately send material aid to Nicaragua, and that the imperialist powers refrain from any political or military interference in Nicaragua.

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