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## *El Salvador*

# What Really Happened At Archbishop Romero's Funeral?

Eyewitnesses Rebut  
Lies by Washington  
and Salvadoran Junta

### Speech by Fidel Castro

'Grenada, Nicaragua, and  
Cuba are Three Giants  
Rising Up on  
Imperialism's Doorstep'

*Conscription and  
Socialist Policy Toward  
Capitalist Militarism*

# NEWS ANALYSIS

## Castro Warns Against New 'Vietnam' in Caribbean

By Steve Clark

In this week's issue we are running a portion of a speech by President Fidel Castro before the Third Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women (page 382).

The U.S. government is "planning to intervene in Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Cuba; the Caribbean and Central America," Castro said. "Their plans for intervention to contain the revolutionary movement are very clear."

Castro's warning takes on greater urgency today than when the speech was given only a month ago. In response to the quickening anticapitalist direction of the Nicaraguan revolution and the deepening crisis of the repressive military-civilian junta in El Salvador, Washington has recently increased its efforts to shore up imperialist domination over the region.

While freezing loans to help reconstruct Nicaragua, the U.S. Congress is speeding through \$5.7 million in arms and \$50 million in "economic aid" to the repressive regime in El Salvador. U.S. military "advisers" are already assisting counterinsurgency operations against Salvadoran workers and peasants, and opposition forces there charge that Washington is secretly putting together an army of intervention.

In his speech, Castro was both responding to the already steep escalation of imperialist military threats over the past year and preparing the Cuban people for even sharper confrontations in the months ahead.

In this regard, Castro stressed three main points.

1. "Grenada, Nicaragua and Cuba are three giants rising up to defend their right to independence, sovereignty and justice, on the very threshold of imperialism."

In other words, Washington's belligerence does not stem from greater confidence and strength, but from heightened weakness. The Cuban revolution is no longer alone in the Caribbean. The victories in Grenada and Nicaragua have now created a firm tripod in the region on which to base further resistance to imperialist exploitation.

And Castro is confident that there will be other "giants rising up," perhaps quite soon, as in El Salvador.

2. "Why shouldn't the peoples of our continent have the right to freedom and independence? There were too many centuries of colonial and imperialist oppression, and it simply wasn't going to last forever. It can't last forever."

Echoing Castro's address last October before the United Nations, this is a power-

ful assertion of the right of the oppressed nations of the Caribbean and Central America to revolt. It is a defense of their right to develop their economies and determine their futures free of domination by Wall Street and the Pentagon.

The imperialist oppressors will have to "resign themselves to the reality that the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean have the right to be free," Castro told the Federation of Cuban Women, "to be the masters of their own destiny and to make the changes they deem necessary, because they will never be able to prevent it."

This leads into Castro's third major point.

3. "In the face of the threats and insinuations as to our being victim to invasions, we shall respond by strengthening our defenses and furthering our awareness, we shall respond as we have always responded in the past."

The Cuban people are deeply imbued with anti-imperialist internationalism. They have stood with the Angolan people against South Africa. They have stood with the Ethiopian revolution against efforts to crush it by the proimperialist government of Somalia.

And for twenty years they have stood with the people of Vietnam. During the long and bloody U.S. aggression there, Cuba constantly pressed the governments of the Soviet Union and China to vastly increase their stingy aid and grudging solidarity.

"... we think Vietnam should be given all the necessary aid... we are in favor of aid in arms and men," Castro said in 1965. "... we are for the socialist camp risking everything required for Vietnam."

Again last year, during Peking's U.S.-inspired invasion of Vietnam, the Cuban government plastered posters throughout the country pledging to defend Vietnam "to the last drop of blood." Cuba offered to send troops to help repel the invasion, and mobilized giant solidarity demonstrations across the island.

So Castro's message to Washington is clear when he asserts that if the imperialists "try to hold things back, they'll create a colossal Vietnam in Central America, or bigger still, in the hemisphere."

"They can make the struggle costlier," Castro said, "they can make it bloodier and more painful, but there's no way they can prevent it." That was proven by the Sandinistas and is being shown again right now by the Salvadorans, he pointed out.

Castro's aim is to alert the U.S. ruling class that so long as the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran masses press forward their struggles, Cuba will be at their side.

Cuba does "not follow a policy of provocations," Castro stressed, "we're not interested in creating conflicts."

But, he emphasized, "we set forth our policy so that nobody can get us wrong, so that there's no room for mistakes. . . . we can indeed guarantee and assure everybody, our adversaries, that this country can never be threatened, can never be intimidated, can never be made to acquiesce, can never be forced to give up a single one of its principles."

And the Cuban people in their vast majority won't shrink from the consequences of these internationalist policies. "We can't move from this hemisphere," Castro said.

"And even if we could, we wouldn't, as a matter of honor and dignity. We're really satisfied with our geographic location."

How does this spirit of revolutionary optimism square with Castro's statement, at the beginning of the excerpt we are running, that, "In the last few weeks, the international situation has become worse"?

Clearly, Castro is *not* contesting the fact that Washington has suffered serious blows over the past year at the hands of workers and peasants from Indochina to Iran to Nicaragua. He recognizes that the impact of the Cuban revolution on world politics today is greater than at any previous time since the victory over Batista in 1959.

"Cuba is not more isolated; Cuba is less isolated than ever," Castro told a group of U.S. reporters last September. "The prestige of the Cuban Revolution is not smaller; it is greater than ever before."

In saying that the world situation has gotten "worse" recently, Castro is evidently referring to Washington's militaristic response to revolutionary advances in Kampuchea, Central America, Iran, and Afghanistan.

He specifically cites such examples as the provocative U.S. troop landing at Guantánamo Bay during the "Soviet brigade" scare whipped up by Carter late last year; the U.S. naval buildup in the Indian Ocean; plans by NATO to deploy nearly 600 nuclear missiles in Western Europe; the big expansion of the U.S. war budget; and the White House decision to put off ratification of SALT II.\*

These moves threaten "to plunge the world into the cold war era once again," Castro said, "to justify the aggressive

\*While paying lip-service to the deceptively labeled "arms limitations" pacts negotiated by Moscow and Washington, the Cuban government's attitude toward their importance is different from either the U.S. ruling class or the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin. See *IP/1* October 22, 1979, page 1007; and November 5, page 1072.

policy of imperialism all over the world."

Castro is correct that Washington is desperately trying to justify its aggressive policies, especially to the antiwar majority of American workers. But what about the likelihood of a "new cold war"?

It is certainly true that Washington would like "to plunge the world into the cold war era once again."

That was an era of worldwide capitalist economic expansion, with the United States at the top of the heap.

It was an era that opened with Washington possessing nuclear weapons, while the Soviet Union had none.

It was an era marked by an anticommunist witchhunt in the United States, the purging of militants from the unions, and the consolidation of a class-collaborationist and proimperialist bureaucracy to stifle the American labor movement.

It was an era when Washington could send U.S. troops into Korea, Lebanon, the Dominican Republic, and—eventually half a million troops—into Vietnam.

But that era in world history, the so-called American Century, is over. It was based on a relationship of class forces, both on a world scale and in the United States, that has now been reversed.

Washington's defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese people marked a shift in the scales toward the world working class, and the scales have been tipped further by subsequent victories in Africa, Iran, and Central America.

Moreover, the growth of the anti-Vietnam War movement in the United States began to tip the scales toward the workers there, as well. Despite intense capitalist propaganda around the Vietnamese role in overthrowing the Pol Pot tyranny in Kampuchea, the occupation of the U.S. embassy in Iran, and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Washington has been unable to reverse the antiwar attitudes of American workers.

In fact, today Carter confronts the growth of significant antidraft and antiwar protests before he has even reimposed the draft or started another war.

Finally, the economic contradictions of world capitalism, which have worsened since the 1974-75 international recession, undermine the relative social peace on which imperialism's cold war policies were made possible.

Despite Castro's use of a questionable analogy with the cold war, his speech is convincing evidence that the Cuban leaders not only recognize the advance of the world revolution, but base their entire international perspective on it.

Pointing to the inevitable triumph of anti-imperialist struggles throughout Latin America, Castro points to a "day when our America is a giant, and then, if you wish, there will be two giants: them [U.S. imperialism] and our peoples."

There is a third giant in the Americas,

however, that Castro does not refer to: the U.S. working class. During the 1950s and 1960s, it was sometimes referred to as the "sleeping giant."

Over the past ten years, that giant has begun to wake up. It is gaining experience in the need to fight for its own class interests, while it is less and less willing "to fight for Exxon's."

That fact is decisively important for the

peoples of Cuba, Grenada, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.

As more giants such as these rise up in Latin America and throughout the world, the giant inside the United States will be growing in class consciousness and combativity, as well as in working-class internationalism.

And in this sense, too, Cuba "is less isolated than ever before." □

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## Eyewitnesses Say Government Troops Fired on Romero Funeral

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Following the March 30 massacre of participants in the funeral of slain Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, the U.S.-backed junta ruling El Salvador extended the state of siege first declared March 6. The regime has deployed troops and armored vehicles in the streets of the country's major cities and towns.

Further repression appears to be the only response the junta is capable of. Its already weakened credibility has waned further since the murder of Romero and the subsequent "Palm Sunday Massacre." The death toll from this attack on Romero's funeral was still rising as of April 2.

Reports reaching here at that time indicated that at least fifty people were killed and more than 650 wounded or injured when elements of the Salvadoran armed forces and extreme rightist paramilitary groups assaulted the crowd of nearly half a million people who had gathered outside the Metropolitan Cathedral in downtown San Salvador.

### 'Palm Sunday Massacre'

Numerous eyewitnesses, among them foreign journalists and prominent religious figures from many countries, have declared that the massacre on March 30 began when a grenade or bomb was thrown from the balcony of the National Palace adjacent to the plaza outside the cathedral. Several more bombs went off at street corners near the plaza, blocking the crowd's flight and spreading terror. At the same time, snipers both in uniform and civilian dress began firing from the upper floors of the National Palace and other buildings.

Panic swept the multitude of workers and students who had travelled from all



Nuns leave Metropolitan Cathedral in San Salvador, where they had sought refuge from snipers.

parts of El Salvador to pay their last respects to the religious leader who had spoken out in defense of their struggles. As the firing continued, thousands pressed to gain refuge inside the cathedral, while others fled down side streets.

Many were trampled underfoot. Some collapsed from suffocation as they were jammed inside the cathedral.

The shooting went on for several hours. Hundreds of religious figures, journalists, and members of official delegations were

trapped inside the cathedral. They were finally able to walk out cautiously, in single file, with their hands held over their heads.

Later the same afternoon, the Salvadoran junta issued a statement claiming that the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses (CRM) had organized the attack, tried to steal Archbishop Romero's body, and forcibly held the religious dignitaries inside the cathedral. The junta claimed its military forces had all been inside their barracks throughout the day.

### Bishops Answer Junta's Lies

Within hours of the junta's statement, twenty-eight Catholic bishops and other religious figures from various countries—including Archbishop John R. Quinn of San Francisco, California, and leaders of the U.S. National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches—issued a declaration in San Salvador denouncing "grave falsehoods" in the junta's statements. Their declaration said:

At no time did anyone try to carry off Msgr. Romero's cadaver. The Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses [which had organized a demonstration of some 80,000 persons before the funeral] entered the Plaza Barrios outside the cathedral in a peaceful, respectful, and orderly way. . . .

It is false that there was any pressure what-

### FSLN: 'Aggression Against El Salvador Is Aggression Against Nicaragua'

MANAGUA—Washington's open intervention in Central America is aimed not only at the Salvadoran revolution, but at the revolutionary Sandinista government here in Nicaragua as well. The threat is clearly recognized by the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front. The FSLN has encouraged a big acceleration of solidarity actions with El Salvador by the trade unions and other mass organizations in the days since the murder of Archbishop Romero.

On April 2 Tomás Borge, Commander of the Revolution and Minister of the Interior, issued a stern warning to Washington. Speaking to reporters during a visit to Czechoslovakia, Borge declared:

"Any aggression against [El Salvador] will be like an aggression against our own country. We will clear the decks for battle if any forces intervene against the interests of that fraternal people."  
—Fred Murphy

soever on the part of the Coordinating Committee to force us to stay inside the cathedral. If we remained there even after the attack ended, it was owing to our Christian desire to accompany the many terrorized people who were tightly pressed inside the sanctuary.

The bishops went on to affirm that the attack was launched from the second floor of the National Palace—where the Salvadoran Defense Ministry has its headquarters. Government security forces, the bishops asserted, were present “from the early hours of the morning . . . in the streets of San Salvador and at the approaches to the city.”

The statement concluded: “We who came to honor Msgr. Romero have been able to experience the truth of his words when he untiringly fought the repression against the Salvadoran people.”

#### Terrorizing Journalists

The junta tried to back up its version of the attack at a news conference the following day, displaying television film and photographs allegedly showing armed CRM activists in the cathedral plaza. The tables were turned, however, when several American journalists rose to denounce the regime's security forces for electronically tapping their transmissions of material to the United States.

Two Dutch journalists, Jan Vander Huyten and Franz Diamond were among those who pressed the junta hardest on its lies at the March 31 news conference. The next day the two were wounded when their car—clearly marked “journalists”—was attacked with machine guns by police at a checkpoint near San Salvador.

Other foreign journalists have received death threats; many have abandoned the country.

In the days after the massacre, further statements holding the regime responsible for the attack and denouncing the armed forces' repression, were made by prominent Catholic officials as they returned to their own countries. In Canada, the Conference of Bishops has called on the Ottawa government to withhold planned aid to the Salvadoran junta. Archbishop Luciano Mendes of Brazil has urged a halt to

### New Opposition Bloc Announced

MANAGUA—Coupled with the Salvadoran junta's deepening international isolation has been the further decay of its political base at home. Three Christian Democratic cabinet ministers resigned following Romero's murder, joining other leaders of their party who had broken with the regime earlier. This grouping now calls itself the “People's Tendency” of the Christian Democracy, and claims the support of a majority of the party's ranks.

## Salvadorans Appeal for World Solidarity

MANAGUA—Leaders of the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses (CRM), which unites the four main organizations of Salvadoran workers and peasants, held a news conference in San Salvador on April 1 to respond to the ruling junta's slanders against the CRM regarding the March 30 massacre and to issue a special call for international solidarity with the struggle in El Salvador.

According to a report in the April 1 issue of the Sandinista National Liberation Front daily *Barricada* here, the call for solidarity included the following:

“• The coordinating committee has decided to ask the world's democratic and progressive governments—including the Vatican—to break all diplo-

matic and other relations with El Salvador.

“• Also the coordinating committee has resolved to call on the international working class to boycott arms shipments and any other aid directed to the Salvadoran junta.

“• To request the popular and trade-union organizations of the United States to put pressure on their government to halt the economic and military aid that it plans to give [the Salvadoran] government.

“• To ask the peoples of Venezuela and Puerto Rico to pressure their respective governments not to allow themselves to be used by imperialism in its attempts to intervene militarily [in El Salvador].”

Brazilian arms sales to El Salvador.

After President Carter called San Francisco's Archbishop Quinn with condolences on Romero's assassination, the church leader said: “I thanked him for his expressions of sympathy. But I took advantage of the conversation to say that we are now even more conscious of the letter Archbishop Romero had written him and that we hoped he would reconsider his answer” on military aid for the junta. (Romero's letter is reprinted on page 366.)

Upon his return here from San Salvador, where he had helped officiate at the funeral mass of Archbishop Romero, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto placed responsibility for the attack on “the criminal, oligarchic class” that “for decades has been massacring the workers and peasants.”

#### Carter Backs Regime

The ruling junta's main source of support continues to be the Carter administration. U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White, has adamantly upheld the junta's version of the March 30 events.

And on April 2, the House Budget Com-



mittee of the U.S. Congress voted approval of Carter's request for \$5.7 million in military aid and \$50 million in economic aid for the Salvadoran regime. The Pentagon is said to be already overseeing the construction of four heavily fortified helicopter bases in the Salvadoran countryside, and readying an intervention force made up mostly of Puerto Rican and Venezuelan troops.

Washington has also stepped up threats against Cuba. James Cheek, assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, charged in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa on April 1 that the Cuban government is shipping arms through Honduras to Salvadoran guerrillas.

“There is a dangerous threat to the Central American region on the part of extremist groups,” Cheek warned. He was in Honduras for talks with the Paz Garcia dictatorship on “regional security.” Washington is planning to step up its military aid—including helicopters and “advisers”—to Honduras as well. □

# Archbishop Romero's Letter to President Carter

[The following is the text of a letter sent by Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero to President Carter on February 17. Romero's letter was an appeal to withhold U.S. military aid to the murderous junta. Six weeks after his appeal, which was ignored by Carter, Romero was gunned down by rightist assassins as he celebrated mass in San Salvador. The translation is by *IP/L*.]

\* \* \*

Mr. President:

In recent days a report has appeared in the press here that greatly disturbed me. It was said that your government is studying the possibility of providing economic and military aid to the present junta.

Since you are a Christian and have indicated that you want to defend human rights, I decided to explain my view as a pastor in regard to this report and to make a direct appeal to you.

I was very much worried by the report that the U.S. government is looking at ways to promote the arms race in El Salvador by sending military teams and advisers to "train three Salvadoran battalions in logistics, communications, and intelligence." If this report is correct, instead of promoting justice and peace in El Salvador, your government will be sharpening the injustice and repression against an organized people that has fought on many occasions to win respect for its most fundamental human rights.

The present junta, and above all the armed forces and the security forces, have unfortunately shown no capacity to find a solution to the grave problems our country faces by making the necessary political and structural changes. In general, they have simply resorted to repressive violence, leaving more people killed and wounded than the military regimes of the recent past, whose systematic violation of human rights was denounced by the International Commission on Human Rights.

The brutal way in which the security forces recently cleared the occupiers out of the Christian Democratic Party headquarters,<sup>1</sup> killing some of them—although this operation was apparently not authorized either by the government or the Christian Democrats—shows that this party and junta do not really run the country. Instead, the political power is in the hands of unscrupulous military officers. All they know how to do is to repress the people and serve the interests of the Salvadoran oligarchy.

1. The headquarters of the Christian Democratic Party in San Salvador was occupied by left-wing activists January 29. On February 12, Salvadoran police stormed the building, killing seven people and wounding twenty-three.

If it is true that last November "a group of six Americans was in El Salvador . . . handing out \$200,000 worth of gas masks and protective vests and showing how to



After denouncing record of military junta, Romero himself was gunned down.

use them in combatting demonstrators," you should be informed that after that time it could be seen that the security forces, with better training and personal protection, launched a still more violent repression against the Salvadoran people, using deadly weapons.

Therefore, since as a Salvadoran and as archbishop of the archdiocese of San Salvador, it is my duty to defend Christian principles and justice in my country, I call

on you, if you really want to protect human rights,

- To ban any such military aid to the Salvadoran junta

- To guarantee that your government will not intervene directly or indirectly—by means of military, economic, or diplomatic pressures, or any other such means—to decide the fate of the Salvadoran people.

At this time, we are living through a grave economic and political crisis in our country. But it is clear that the people are becoming conscious and organizing and have thus begun to prepare themselves to run the country and to assume responsibility for the future of El Salvador. It is equally clear that only the people of this country can overcome this crisis.

It would be unjust and deplorable if the Salvadoran people were thwarted, were repressed, were prevented from freely deciding the political and economic course our country should follow by the intervention of foreign powers.

This would represent the violation of a right that the Latin American bishops publicly recognized when they met in Puebla<sup>2</sup>: "In exercising with their legitimate right of self-determination our peoples must have the freedom to organize themselves in accordance with their own distinctive genius and historical tradition and to cooperate in a new international order" (Puebla, 0505).

I hope that your religious feelings and your interest in defending human rights will lead you to accept my appeal and thus to prevent further bloodshed in this martyred country. □

2. A conference of Latin American bishops was held in Puebla, Mexico, during January and February 1979.

## U.S. Religious Leaders Hit 'Barbarity' of Junta

A delegation of American religious figures who visited El Salvador to report on the status of human rights there returned following the "Palm Sunday Massacre" and declared that they were "particularly shocked by the barbarity of the repression" carried out by the junta.

The church leaders pointed out that the current regime is even more murderous than the previous military dictatorship. They said that in the first two and a half months of the present regime, 682 persons were killed, 211 detained, and 176 have been kidnapped and "disappeared," figures that "far exceed those of the entire three-year regime of

Gen. Romero."

In a report of their findings they said: "We have heard testimony from eyewitnesses of rape, torture, mutilation, decapitation, garrotting and the murder of unarmed and defenseless men, women and children."

The delegation noted that there is extensive evidence that these atrocities are being carried out by members of the military, often in uniform, as well as by ultraright murder gangs working in cooperation with the regime.

Appeals of church leaders for a halt to U.S. military aid to the Salvadoran butchers have been rejected by President Carter.

David Frankel

# WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR AID TO NICARAGUA



## Cuban Teachers Set Internationalist Example

[Nicaragua's literacy campaign is now underway. Prominent among the participants are 1,200 teachers sent by Cuba. The following report on their work leading up to the campaign by Prensa Latina correspondent Erasmo Terrero appeared in the March 16 issue of the English-language *Granma* weekly.]

\* \* \*

The aid given by Cuban internationalist teachers to Nicaragua was instrumental in 558 new schools being opened in an equal number of towns that had always lacked the means to educate the children.

According to Ministry of Education statistics, 53 of 558 rural schools were built by the peasants themselves, organized by the Farm Workers Association (ATC), with the Cuban teachers' advice and direct participation.

Similarly, 65 premises were repaired and turned into schools, 68 others were painted and 21 enlarged, all in an equal number of localities.

The 1,200 Cuban teachers working in the remotest areas of Nicaragua's 16 departments are teaching 50,593 primary students during the day and several thousand rural workers and housewives, most of whom are illiterate, in the evening.

As agreed by the two countries, the Cuban teachers began arriving in Nicaragua on November 5, 1979, and the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education then assigned them to places with the greatest shortages of teachers. There they live in the homes of peasants while giving themselves to the people of Augusto César Sandino free of charge.

Nicaraguan Ministry of Education officials have repeatedly praised the professionalism, spirit of sacrifice and internationalist dedication of the Cuban teachers.

The head of the southern Río San Juan department, Carlos Aguirre, recently extolled the Cuban teachers' initiative, discipline and dedication to their job. He said they were "very special people."

Although the lack of schools in the past accounts for most students now enrolled being first graders, other grades are also taught in the morning and afternoon, and evening classes are given to adults.

It is now commonplace to see adults of

up to 30 years old who have applied for admission into school to learn how to read and write, sitting next to six-year-olds.

At times parents attend the same classes as their first-grade children; other times the children go to school during the day and their parents learn to read and write during the evening.

Just to give one example, four children aged six to 13 are all in the first grade and go to school during the day, while their mother and father are learning how to read and write together at night with the same teacher and in the same school in the town of Villa Alvarez, in the central municipality of El Almendro. In their absence, their eldest son minds the house and cares for his younger siblings.

Far from confining their work to just the classroom, the Cuban teachers also arrange for educational outings and other cultural and sports activities.

Over the weekend and the end-of-the-year vacation, the teachers take part in voluntary work stints like picking coffee and building more schools and health centers. They contribute what they are paid for this work to buy school equipment and materials.

Moreover, the internationalist teachers promote hygiene during their classes and in the community and have helped build latrines. Also they are assisting the Nicaraguan Ministry of Public Health in campaigns to promote preventive medicine.

For example, they have cooperated closely with the Nicaraguan authorities in a census of pregnant women, undernourished children, etc., and have aided Nicaraguan doctors in the vaccination campaigns against polio, measles and other diseases, in line with programs being implemented by the revolutionary government.

The Cuban teachers have also taken part in a census of illiterates in preparation for the great national crusade to wipe out illiteracy.

To accomplish these tasks and to travel to their schools, the young Cuban teachers use the most diverse means of transportation, including rafts, rowboats, canoes, mules and even oxen, particularly during the rainy season.

The dedicated work of the Cuban

teachers in the rural communities has won them the affection of the peasants, some of whom are regretfully counting the days still left of the two-year period that their Cuban friends will stay in Nicaragua. □

## New Zealand Support

Activists in the New Zealand Nicaragua Solidarity Committee have put out an attractive printed fact sheet explaining what has been happening in Nicaragua and the need for aid. The March issue of the committee's newsletter reports on past and future activities in Auckland, Hastings, Wellington, and Christchurch. Tours by committee members who visited Nicaragua and by Isabel Allende of the Chilean Socialist Party, are being organized.

## Solidarity Meeting in France

Three days of Nicaragua solidarity activities were organized in the French city of Strasbourg March 10-12 by the broad-based Nicaragua Committee. Sandinista representative Ernesto Medina addressed a meeting of 400 people and met with representatives of the three major French trade unions. Medina also held talks with members of the Communist Party, Socialist Party, and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International.

Several left-wing mayors in the region met with Medina as well. Each agreed to organize a week of solidarity activities in order to collect funds and medical supplies for Nicaragua.

More than 6,000 francs (\$1,350) was raised at the meeting.

## Successful Meeting in Belfast

*Socialist Republic*, the Irish Trotskyist newspaper, reports that "the Belfast Connolly Society held a very successful meeting on Nicaragua in February. A hall in the Lake Glen Hotel was packed out as guest speaker Andy Pollak (a journalist who covered the revolution there last July) gave a very informative talk."

The article notes that "Irish revolutionaries can learn many lessons from a study of the Nicaraguan revolution, particularly on the thorny questions of armed struggle and the building of a mass movement."

## Honduras: Another Dictatorship in Crisis

By Aníbal Yáñez

The example of the people of Nicaragua, who overthrew the criminal Somoza dictatorship last July, has Washington extremely worried. The U.S. rulers fear the development in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras of what has been called a "triangle of agitation" in Central America.

The struggles of the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala, marked by growing revolutionary mobilizations and brutal repression, are more widely known. Now, as the Associated Press points out, "the strength of the movements in those two countries threatens to ignite the revolutionary spark in Honduras."

In early March, Gen. Policarpo Paz García, the dictator of Honduras, made a "personal visit" to Washington to consult with his imperialist masters. During that visit President Carter hailed the Honduran military regime, calling it a "very enlightened government." Carter pledged his support on the basis of its "promise to carry out reforms, promote economic progress, and hold free elections."

The concrete result of Paz's visit was the U.S. government's announcement that it would send Honduras \$3.9 million worth of M-16 and M-14 rifles, hand guns, grenade launchers, mortars, recoilless rifles, trucks, jeeps, patrol boats, communications equipment, and parts for aircraft and helicopters.

In a March 23 column, journalist Jack Anderson reported that Maj. Gen. Robert L. Schweitzer held secret meetings with the Honduran junta and told them that the Pentagon expects the Honduran military "to assume the regional role played for years by Nicaragua's Anastasio Somoza—to become a bulwark of anti-communism against the pressures of popular revolt."

The Honduran elections that so excited Carter have been repeatedly denounced within the country as a fraud, and with good reason. The April 20 vote is being rigged to transfer the reins of government from the military to a civilian façade run by the extreme right-wing National Party.

In an article entitled "Elections or Repression?" in the February issue of *Tribuna Sindical*, the magazine of the trade union at the National Autonomous University of Honduras, Roger Isaula explains that the entire period leading up to the election date has been marked by "a thicket of illegalities."

"In the first place," Isaula writes, "the government has spared no efforts in aiding the maneuvers of the Partido Nacional, . . . illegally preventing the Christian Democrats from registering and . . .

using a whole range of maneuvers to ensure that the cliques in the traditional parties can impose their candidates for deputies in the National Constituent Assembly."

The Federation of Honduran University Students has denounced the jailing and disappearance of dozens of workers, peasants, and students, the murder of dissidents, and the violation of the university's autonomous status.

The trade-union and student movements have not been alone in their denunciations of the electoral farce. The Organization of Junior Officers (OSOS) has openly accused the army high command of maneuvering to keep itself in power. The OSOS has also accused the high command of a whole range of corrupt practices, including smuggling grain and weapons, accepting illegal payments from foreign companies, and drug trafficking.

Honduras does not control its own economy. The major export products (aside from coffee) and many industries are in the hands of foreign—mainly U.S.—companies.

The production and processing of bananas and palm oil are controlled by the Tela Railroad Company, a subsidiary of United Brands (formerly United Fruit), and by the Standard Fruit Company, a subsidiary of Castle & Cook, Inc.

Mining is controlled by the Rosario Resources Corporation. In addition, foreign companies wholly or partially control the plastics, food processing, soap, beer, and cardboard industries; radio and telegraph; and banks and financial groups.

Texaco Caribbean, Inc., part of one of the giant energy monopolies, operates the country's only oil refinery.

Imperialist exploitation has resulted in abject poverty for the Honduran masses. The high rate of inflation hits hardest at mass consumption goods. The official minimum wage is under three dollars a day, and in reality many workers get much less than that.

According to official 1975 figures, per capita income stands at \$331 per year, and 69 percent of the population is "economically inactive."

It is estimated that 60 percent of the population is illiterate. Health care is abysmal. Of every 1,000 children born, 117 die before their first birthday. The entire country has only 919 doctors to serve a population of more than three million.

Given these conditions, it is not surprising that the country's workers and peasants have begun to fight back.

Late in 1979 workers at the National Electric Power Company staged a series of work stoppages. In addition, more than 14,000 workers struck thirty-four banana plantations owned by United Brands. They demanded wage increases, tools, and medical benefits.

On February 13, 1980, more than 1,000 sugarcane cutters went on strike at a sugar mill in the southern department of Choluteca to demand higher wages and union recognition.

The previous day, workers on several Standard Fruit banana plantations on Honduras' Atlantic Coast struck to demand better working conditions. When talks with management broke down a week later, the struggle spread and 8,000 members of the United Union of Standard Fruit Workers (SUTRASFCO) launched a general strike.

The banana workers strike received solidarity from broad sections of the working class. Leaders of the Northern Honduras Workers Federation and of the Union of Tela Railroad Company Workers—which together have more than 35,000 members—threatened the bosses with a general strike if SUTRASFCO's demands were not met. The union of Texaco refinery workers also came out in favor of a solidarity strike.

The banana strike, which ended February 21, took place in the framework of a series of struggles in northern Honduras. Peasants have been demanding that the government implement the agrarian reform that it has been promising for years. One peasant group called for the expropriation and distribution of Gen. Paz's own extensive landholdings.

The National Peasant Association of Honduras occupied some 25,000 acres of land in six departments in mid-February.

The workers and peasants in Honduras who are struggling for a better life take encouragement from the struggle now taking place in El Salvador and from the victory of the Sandinista National Liberation Front last summer in Nicaragua.

While the U.S. Pentagon hopes to turn Gen. Paz into a new Somoza, the Honduran masses are striving to create new Sandinos. In September 1979 a young Honduran, María Eugenia Ramos, wrote in *Tribuna Sindical*:

"We don't think that there is a single young person in our country who has not been deeply affected by the Nicaraguan experience. Their basic humanitarianism or, better yet, their class consciousness was stirred, awakened by the knowledge of what other young people have done next door." □



# Settlement Announced in British Steel Strike

By Gus Horowitz

The executive committees of the two largest British steel unions voted April 1 to accept a wage settlement proposed by a three-member arbitration committee, and to ask the 100,000 striking steelworkers to return to work.

The steelworkers had been on strike against the government-owned British Steel Corporation for more than 13 weeks. It was the longest nationwide strike in Britain since the end of World War II, and was marked by militancy and labor solidarity.

According to the *New York Times*, the settlement included a wage raise of 15.5 percent, with additional benefits bringing the package to about 17 percent. This was below the 20 percent demanded by the strikers, who face an inflation rate of 19 percent and need a big raise just to catch up.

But the company plan to slash 52,000 jobs, a third of the total work force, was an even more important issue.

The company still intends to go ahead with the cuts.

Dissatisfaction with the settlement was reflected in the 41-27 vote in the executive committee of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the main union in the strike. It is considered probable that some strikes will continue at the local level.

Union militants labeled the pact "a shabby compromise," and furious strikers waiting in the union hall during the vote shouted "Sellout, sellout!" as the union officials filed past afterwards. It was even reported that a fistfight ensued.

Most of the angry pickets came from Yorkshire and South Wales, where the company's plan to cut jobs is most serious.

The Wales Trades Union Congress, for example, estimates that the planned cut of 20,000 steel jobs in Wales would lead to the loss there of 80,000 jobs altogether, including 16,000 in coal. Faced with this threat, 200,000 workers in Wales had carried out a solidarity strike January 28.

Workers in other areas and industries also came to the defense of the steelworkers during the strike.

On March 21, dockworkers in Liverpool began refusing to handle steel, and called for a similar response by their fellow dockworkers throughout Britain.

The steelworkers had been trying unsuccessfully to halt the shipment of steel during the strike.

Solidarity actions had to contend with the authorities, however. Earlier in March the High Court ruled that railway workers could not refuse to handle steel that they had let pile up at railway depots.

Other court rulings tried to prevent the spread of the strike to privately owned steel companies. And militant solidarity

demonstrations or mass strike pickets came up against police violence.

The steel strike was becoming a real test of strength between the British workers and the Conservative Party government.

The militancy and solidarity required to win in this situation would have been far more than is usually practiced by the steel unions' leadership.

The turn in the strike came on March 21, when the union leaders agreed to ask the government to set up a committee of inquiry to arbitrate the conflict: one member to be named by the unions, one by the company, and one by the Tory government.

Reporting on this proposal in its March

24 issue, the *Wall Street Journal* called it "a major breakthrough," pointing out that "the company has sought all along" to refer the issues to arbitration, "but the unions have resisted."

The decision to arbitrate over wages, said the *Journal*, "was a setback of sorts for the unions, which had also wanted the inquiry committee to consider the corporation's plans to close plants and lay off some 52,000 workers by midsummer."

The Thatcher government's hard line stance during the steel strike indicates that the British working class as a whole faces a tough battle to maintain its standard of living in face of inflation and a government austerity drive. □

## Pulley to Mugabe: 'Solidarity With Zimbabwe!'

[The following message from Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, to Robert Mugabe, newly elected prime minister of Zimbabwe, was released by the Socialist Workers Presidential Campaign Committee.]

\* \* \*

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe  
Salisbury, Zimbabwe

Dear Brother Mugabe,

I am writing to express my full solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe in their determination to carry forward the fight for national liberation and social justice. The sweeping victory won by the Patriotic Front forces in the elections emphatically demonstrates the combativity and determination of the Zimbabwean toilers to rid their country of rule by the white-settler regime, and to win their fight for land, for education, health care, and an improvement in their standard of living.

This struggle has been and continues to be an inspiration to peoples of color, to workers, to the oppressed and exploited throughout the world.

The imperialist powers, including the government of the United States, have mobilized vast resources to block the Zimbabwe liberation struggle. For years they covertly backed the Rhodesian regime in its bloody war against the Black population of Zimbabwe. Unable to win that war, they were forced to schedule elections, through which they hoped to install a compliant regime. But their attempts to subvert the elections, through the use of harassment and intimidation, did not produce the result they wanted.

Now, although the imperialists in Washington, London, and Pretoria say that they

accept the results of the elections—what arrogance—they are at this very moment looking for ways to bring economic and political pressure on your government to divide and demobilize the Zimbabwean people, and even to intervene militarily to maintain their grip on the wealth of your country.

The most immediate threat of military intervention comes from the hated apartheid regime in South Africa, which still maintains hundreds of troops in your country, against the will of the majority of Zimbabweans. South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha has ominously warned that if your new government does anything to undermine the apartheid regime's "security," Zimbabwe will "face the full force of the Republic's strength." Pretoria, and its allies in London and Washington, are well aware that the struggle in Zimbabwe has been an inspiration to the toilers in Namibia and inside South Africa itself.

The tide of history is running against the exploiters all over the world. The revolutions in Nicaragua, in Iran, and in Afghanistan have shown anew that the workers and exploited farmers can fight against imperialism and *win*.

In this country, the sympathies of Black people, workers, and youth are with the Zimbabwean people. Working people here are opposed to any new imperialist adventures, as the massive opposition to drafting young people has made clear.

As an Afro-American, as a member of the Steelworkers union, and as the presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, I pledge to do everything to promote solidarity with the Zimbabwean people in the struggles that lie ahead.

In Solidarity,  
Andrew Pulley

# HKE Answers Slander by Stalinists

By Hassan Mehequeq

[The following article has been translated from the March 17 issue of *Kargar* (Worker), the newspaper of the Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

For the second time in the past two weeks, *Mardom*, the organ of the Tudeh Party,<sup>1</sup> has engaged in slander against socialist revolutionists.

The March 11 issue of *Mardom* carried a lead article entitled "Heed the Warning of the Tudeh Party!" This article accused several groups, including "the Trotskyists," of being behind a series of bombings and sabotage at oil installations in Khuzestan.

In the March 3 *Mardom*, the Tudeh Party leadership had published an article entitled "We Issue a Warning: Counterrevolutionary Groups Are Plotting in Khuzestan." The warning was addressed to "the responsible authorities." It was said

1. The pro-Moscow Stalinist party in Iran.

that the Tudeh Party had "reliable information" that several groups, including the "Trotskyists," were "preparing to stage acts of sabotage and incitement to rebellion in Ahwaz and other places in Khuzestan."

The Tudeh Party leadership claimed that the "Trotskyists" in Khuzestan were being "protected by SAVAK agents and feudalists." And worst of all, it said that "the Trotskyists" and several other groups were planning "attacks on state buildings and institutions, headquarters of revolutionary parties and organizations, . . . Radio Ahwaz; . . . bombing of bridges; attacks on . . . oil installations, naval bases; and mounting onslaughts against the cities of Ahwaz, Bandar Mahshahr, and Andinshak."

Babak Zahraie [a leader of the HKE] responded to these accusations in a letter dated March 4 to Ayatollah Mosavi Ardebil, the prosecutor of the Islamic Republic. On behalf of the National Committee of the Revolutionary Workers Party, he brought charges for slander against Nur-el-din Kianuri the general secretary of the

Tudeh Party, and against the Tudeh Party Central Committee.

Zahraie demanded a public exposure of the Tudeh Party's slanders against revolutionists. In his letter, he said, among other things:

This "warning" by the Tudeh Party was issued at a time when twelve of the socialist revolutionists imprisoned in Ahwaz have been released, and two of them have declared their candidacy for Ahwaz and Abadan seats in the Islamic parliament.<sup>2</sup>

These "warnings" by the Tudeh Party pose a danger to the lives of these sincere fighters, who were finally proved innocent after having to run a terrible gauntlet of suffering and anxiety in prison. The Tudeh Party is providing a pretext for assassination and assaults."

At the end of his letter, Babak Zahraie says:

We ask the honorable prosecutor to begin an investigation of the charges made by the Tudeh Party leaders. It is important to do this immediately in order to remove the danger to the persons and lives of these Revolutionary Workers Party militants.

At a time when we are engaged in a life-or-death struggle with American imperialism, when the occupation of the spy den is going into its fourth month, when the people of Iran are writing a new epic in the history of the struggle against world imperialism, the elimination of slanders and the exposure of the truth is part of fighting for the victory of the holy war against imperialism.

Despite the lodging of formal charges against them for slander, and in disregard of the way these slanders endanger the lives and persons of the socialist militants, the Tudeh Party leaders have continued their slander campaign.

In the March 11 *Mardom*, the slanderous article published in the March 3 issue is reprinted. Along with it, it reprints reports from the mass circulation papers about explosions in Khuzestan. The Tudeh Party leaders announce that the "correctness" of their previous warning has been demonstrated. They proclaim that this warning was a "responsible" one and that it was "entirely accurate."

But all the Tudeh Party leaders have done is repeat slanders they made before, and then spiced the dish up by rehashing reports of explosions at oil installations.

In fact, in the March 11 article, the Tudeh Party leaders get tangled in their own web and give themselves away. They conclude by saying: "We want the responsible authorities to give serious and urgent consideration to the counterrevolutionary activities of the groups mentioned above

2. The Tudeh party slanders echo false charges that were made against fourteen HKE leaders last summer, leading to their arrest. Currently, only two of the prisoners, both women, remain in prison. They are Mahsa Hashemi and Fatima Fallahi. Supporters of the Iranian revolution around the world are circulating a petition appealing for their release (see *IP/I*, March 24, 1980, page 280).

## HKS Parliamentary Election Campaign

By Gerry Foley

In the mid-March elections for the new national parliament in Iran, the Socialist Workers Party (HKS) supported a number of candidates who ran under the auspices of the Socialist Workers United Front. (For the pre-election statement of the HKS, see *IP/I*, March 17, 1980, page 255.)

According to the March 11 issue of the HKS's fortnightly newspaper *Che Bayad Kard* (What Is To Be Done), "In these elections, our party concentrated all its efforts on organizing a socialist workers united front, a common front of all parties, organizations, groups, and individuals standing on working-class, anti-imperialist, and anticapitalist programs."

The same issue presented four of the candidates: Mahmoud Shadabakhs, a construction worker running in Tehran; Ali Reza Hoseini, a member of the workers *shora* [committee] in the electricians department of the *Projet-ye Melli* company in Ahwaz; Yar Ali Purmeqem, a well-known playwright from Masjed Suleiman; and Yaqisa Karapartyan, a

worker in a Tehran textile factory. (Karapartyan ran for a seat in parliament set aside for minority ethnic-religious communities, in this case for Armenians.)

According to *Che Bayad Kard*, these candidates won support from co-workers in their factories, workers in other factories, and revolutionary-minded students. They stressed the need for independent working-class political action, a national confederation of labor, and self-determination for the oppressed nationalities.

The HKS paper also reports that several candidates of the front were ruled off the ballot by officials of the Ministry of Interior.

"We recognize . . . that this front is not the broader united front that could and should have been organized," explained a statement by the HKS. "At the same time, we must strive to broaden this front."

The electoral campaign was a step forward for this perspective, the HKS said.

[i.e., "the Trotskyists" and several other groups—Kargar]. We want these plotters, saboteurs, and wreckers to be smashed once and for all."

That is the only proposal that Tudeh Party leaders offer for dealing with the bombings and sabotage in the oil installations. This reveals their objective clearly. Their aim is not to prevent these explosions; it is to put shackles on their political opponents.

If the Tudeh Party leaders were really fighting against wrecking operations in the oil industry, they would call on the workers councils in the industry to set up guards to defend the installations. And they would get in touch with these councils and take up the question with them, giving them all their "reliable information."

Who is more concerned than the workers

## Hugo Blanco Ends Tour

Nearly 15,000 people heard Peruvian revolutionary leader Hugo Blanco during a twelve-day European speaking tour.

Blanco is the presidential candidate of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Peruvian section of the Fourth International, in Peru's May 18 elections. He spoke in Zurich, Geneva, Brussels, Barcelona, Milan, Stockholm, Göteborg, Copenhagen, Paris, and London.

Blanco spoke about the wretched conditions facing workers and peasants in Peru and explained the political answers being raised by his presidential campaign. In addition, he met with representatives of Latin American organizations in Europe, including Nicaraguan FSLN representatives in Switzerland.

A March 14 meeting in Brussels, attended by 400 people, raised nearly \$900 to help finance Blanco's campaign. In London, more than 900 people attended a March 21 meeting and contributed more than \$2,100 to the Peruvian campaign.

In Paris, several thousand packed the Mutualité for Blanco's March 20 meeting, organized by the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International. The LCR invited several other political groups in France to have speakers at the meeting, since virtually all the forces claiming to be Trotskyist in Peru are participating in the Blanco campaign.

Among the groups invited were the Internationalist Communist Organization (OCI) and the Internationalist Communist League (LCI). Both are members of a "Parity Committee for the Reorganization (Reconstruction) of the Fourth International."

As soon as the meeting began, members of the OCI and LCI began organized disruptive chanting from the audience (see box). Attempts to insult and drown out speakers continued throughout the evening. Blanco was not able to speak until 11 p.m. □

about the dangers created by sabotage of the oil pipelines?

The Tudeh Party could also turn over their "reliable information" to the responsible authorities, in fact it is duty-bound to do so. It should turn this information over to the prosecutor of the Islamic Republic, as Babak Zahraie said. Zahraie wrote in his letter:

The Revolutionary Workers Party is occupied with the work of explaining the socialist program to the masses and offering working-class solutions for carrying forward the struggle against imperialism. It is not equipped for uncovering spying and plotting.

All the documents, "reliable information," and counterespionage resources at the disposal of the Tudeh Party that have a bearing on this complaint against Mr. Nur-el-din Kianuri and the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party must be made available to the office of the general prosecutor of our country and the matter decided on the basis of an investigation conducted by this office.

The methods that the Tudeh Party has resorted to against its political opponents could be used tomorrow by agents of U.S. imperialism, not only against the socialist revolutionists but against the Islamic revolutionists and the leaders of the workers shoras [committees] in the oil industry.

So, it is in the interest of the shoras to pay serious attention to the problem of eliminating this sort of rumor mongering and character assassination. This is part of the fight to get the truth and to eliminate slander from the ranks of the workers and anti-imperialist movement.

Stalinist slanders of the type invented in Moscow must not be used against honest Iranian revolutionists. We demand that the office of the prosecutor of the Islamic Republic and of the Tehran prosecutor investigate this campaign of slander being carried on by the alchemists of the Tudeh Party. □

## LCR Statement on Disruption of Paris Meeting

[The following statement was issued by the Political Bureau of the Revolutionary Communist League, French section of the Fourth International, following the March 20 meeting in Paris. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

The behavior of the OCI and LCI during the solidarity meeting with Hugo Blanco was absolutely unspeakable. These two organizations had agreed to participate in this meeting, which the LCR organized in Paris to provide material support and the broadest possible active solidarity with the campaign of Hugo Blanco, the candidate of the PRT (the Peruvian section of the Fourth International), which is being supported in Peru by the PST and POMR [two organizations that are part of the same international grouping as the LCI and OCI]. Similar meetings were organized in principal cities of Europe by other sections of the Fourth International.

The OCI and LCI did not hesitate to totally sabotage the aim of this meeting by using methods that are unworthy of any working-class organization, much less organizations that call themselves Trotskyist.

A number of sympathizers, workers who are close to our organizations, came to show their solidarity with Hugo Blanco's campaign and to learn about the situation in the class struggle in Peru.

When they left they were disoriented, if not disgusted for all time, by the contemptible spectacle to which they were subjected by the OCI and LCI.

The OCI and LCI organized to break-up this demonstration of solidarity by continuously chanting slogans that had nothing to do with the purpose of the meeting, by devoting the clearest part of their speeches to polemics on tactical questions in France (although Lacaze of the OCI spoke for forty minutes—we had all agreed to keep to twenty minutes—he touched on Peru for only a few seconds at the end of his remarks), by ostentatiously refusing to take any part in the collection that had been decided upon (together!), and by subjecting Comrade Arlette Laguiller [of Lutte Ouvrière] to sexist jeering (which would not be tolerated in most mass working class-organizations).

We will not let ourselves be influenced by this miserable provocation against a joint demonstration of internationalist solidarity. Everywhere we will continue to confront the members of the OCI and LCI politically.

But it is quite clear that the LCR will not organize another meeting with these two organizations if it feels that the conditions that prevailed at the Hugo Blanco meeting might be repeated.

The leaders of the OCI and LCI, who debase their organizations by such activity, bear the entire responsibility for this before the workers and before their own members.

# The Proletarian Military Policy Today

By David Frankel

[Second of two parts]

For revolutionists, the new upsurge against the draft in the United States poses big opportunities. It also poses a number of important political questions.

Is there any truth to the argument that a conscript army is somehow more democratic than a volunteer army, or more advantageous to the working class?

What about the argument that if men are drafted, women should be drafted, too, in the interests of equality?

Such questions are being posed today by some liberal civil-libertarians, trade-union officials, and feminists, as well as by prodraft propagandists in the capitalist media.

To answer these questions, socialists begin from a stance of unalterable opposition to *any* imperialist military establishment, no matter how it is raised or what its form. The armed forces are at the core of the capitalist state; there are no reforms that can alter the nature or mission of a capitalist army. Choosing between conscription and a volunteer army is like choosing between the death penalty and the capitalist prison system. Socialists oppose them both.

More is involved, however, than simple opposition to the capitalist military machine, a position held by pacifists. A correct approach toward militarism and the military cannot begin with the question of policy towards the army. It must be based on a broader view of the class struggle.

Socialists start from the understanding that the working class must conquer political power in order to reconstruct society. But no ruling minority has ever given up its wealth and power peacefully. As the masses mobilize to fight for a better life, as the class struggle intensifies, the need for the workers to organize to defend themselves against attacks by the ruling class and its agents becomes more and more pressing, and more and more evident to the workers themselves.

We can see this process today in El Salvador, where trade unions and peasant organizations are subject to murderous attacks by rightist gangs and the National Guard. In this situation, the need for the workers and their allies to arm themselves and organize in their own defense is widely recognized by the Salvadoran masses.

Leon Trotsky, organizer of the October 1917 insurrection and head of the Red Army during the civil war, explained in the *Transitional Program* that the ques-

tion of *political consciousness* and *class organization* are the key elements in the military policy of the proletariat.

Proletarian military policy is *not based primarily on an approach to the capitalist army*. Like other aspects of revolutionary strategy, it is based on the mass organizations of the workers—the trade unions in particular. Trotsky pointed out in the *Transitional Program* that the political consciousness of the workers is raised as they have to defend their picket lines against scabs, and their meetings and union headquarters against rightist goons—in short, as they gain experience in the class struggle and draw its lessons.

The 1975 resolution of the Socialist Workers Party on “Prospects for Socialism in America” put it this way:

To protect their struggles and gains against murderous attacks by goons, cops, and fascist bands, the workers will have to organize and train their own forces and use them in the most effective way. Starting with defense of picket lines and the right to strike, the protection of their demonstrations or those of their allies, and proceeding to workers' defense guards, workers' militias, and the requisite arming of the working class, the working masses will learn from their own experiences what measures to take. The lessons of history, incorporated into the general strategy of the workers' movement, will prove invaluable on this life-and-death question.

It is primarily through the trade unions and other mass organizations of the working class—and not the army—that the actual process of arming the masses is carried out.

During the Russian Revolution, for example, it was the workers who took the initiative—first in the February demonstrations that led to the overthrow of the monarchy, and then in the October insurrection that established the Soviet government.

Of course, the success of both revolutions was ensured by the impact of the class struggle on the ranks of the army, and by the Bolsheviks' patient propaganda work aimed at the soldiers. But it wasn't the army that made the revolution; instead, the revolution paralyzed the army and undermined military discipline. A strategy aimed at somehow taking over the tsar's capitalist army—rather than shattering it and destroying its usefulness to the rulers—would have been bound to fail.

Later on, when it was necessary to defend the revolution, the workers organizations again played the central role. The Red Guards, organized within the factories, became the core of the Red Army.

Another example of the relationship

between the mass movement and the army was the Iranian revolution. Military discipline in Iran—as in Nicaragua, and indeed, as in every revolution—was the last prop of the rulers to give way. It was finally broken down by months of massive protests and propaganda. When the shah's Royal Guards attempted by force of arms to reimpose discipline on Air Force cadets in Tehran, the latter appealed for support to the masses in the streets. This sparked the insurrection, with the workers and urban masses breaking into armories and military bases to take the arms they needed to bring down the shah.

Socialist policy towards the military is a subordinate aspect of the overall class-struggle strategy of revolutionizing the trade unions, ensuring the political independence of the working class, and building a revolutionary combat party on the model of the Bolsheviks. Specific opportunities for work within the army, and specific demands and struggles—against the draft, against the victimization of soldiers, for the right of soldiers to exercise their democratic rights—are approached with this larger context.

### Military Policy in World War II

A good example of how the tactics of opposing the imperialist army and militarism change with the circumstances is the evolution of the proletarian military policy followed by the U.S. Socialist Workers Party.

Up until 1940 the perspective of the SWP had been to try to rally the radicalized American labor movement, symbolized by the rise of the CIO industrial unions, to prevent U.S. entry into the imperialist war.

The SWP opposed the extension of capitalist militarism and the war preparations of the Roosevelt administration with slogans such as “Not a cent for war.” At the same time, it pointed to the rise of fascism abroad and to the growth of fascist groups within the United States as a threat to the working class.

The SWP sought to popularize the kind of trade union defense guards that had been organized in Minneapolis as the initiative of Local 544 of the Teamsters. It encouraged other trade unions faced with rightist attacks or organized strikebreakers to form labor defense guards. This was seen as a step toward the arming and military organization of American workers and their unions.

But by 1940, events had overtaken the perspective of trying to prevent U.S. entry into the war. As Trotsky pointed out in August of 1940: “There is only one way of avoiding the war—that is the overthrow of this society. However, as we are too weak for this task, the war is inevitable. . . . Our people . . . must say: the war is inevitable, so let us have an organized workers' program for the war.” (*Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40* [New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973], p. 332.)

During the last months of Trotsky's life, leaders of the SWP participated in a number of discussions with him in regard to World War II and the need to adopt a policy geared to the reality of the war. Summing up the basic elements of the problem in June 1940, Trotsky declared:

Militarization now goes on on a tremendous scale. We cannot oppose it with pacifist phrases. This militarization has wide support among the

The imperialist war is not our war and the militarism of the capitalist state is not our militarism. We do not support the war and militarism of the imperialists any more than we support the capitalist exploitation of workers in the factories. We are against the war as a whole just as we are against the rule of the class which conducts it, and never under any circumstances vote to give them any confidence in their conduct of the war or preparation for it—not a man, not a cent, not a gun with our support. [*Revolutionary Strategy in the Fight Against the Vietnam War*

preparations, as is undubitably the case in the United States, mere negative agitation against the military budget and conscription cannot, by itself, yield serious results."

Furthermore, socialists agreed with the masses of workers that it was necessary to fight Hitler arms in hand. The problem was how to draw the class line, how to most effectively explain that it was suicidal to place political confidence in the ruling class to carry out that fight.

"We are absolutely in favor of compulsory military training and in the same way for conscription," Trotsky wrote, "Conscription? Yes. By the bourgeois state? No. We cannot entrust this work, as any other, to the state of the exploiters." (*Writings 1939-40*, p. 321.)

Instead of raising the slogans of "abolish the draft" or "no military spending," the SWP counterposed a series of proposals for the military organization of the working class to the measures being taken by the capitalist state. The resolution explained:

The revolutionary strategy can only be to take this militarism as a reality and counterpose a class program of the proletariat to the program of the imperialists at every point. We fight against sending the worker-soldiers into battle without proper training and equipment. We oppose the military direction of worker-soldiers by bourgeois officers who have no regard for their treatment, their protection, and their lives. We demand federal funds for the military training of workers and worker-officers under the control of the trade unions. Military appropriations? Yes—but only for the establishment and equipment of worker training camps! Compulsory military training of workers? Yes—but only under the control of the trade unions! [*Revolutionary Strategy in the Fight Against the Vietnam War*, p. 77.]

In keeping with its general approach of trying to reach the masses of workers, the SWP opposed the strategy of individual resistance to the draft, while defending the rights of those individuals who did refuse conscription. Cannon declared in this regard:

The great majority of the young generation will be dragged into the war. The great majority of these young workers will think at first that they are doing a good thing. For a revolutionary party to stand by and say "We can tolerate exploitation in the factories but not military exploitation"—that is to be completely illogical. To isolate ourselves from the mass of the proletariat which will be in the war is to lose all possibility to influence them.

#### The Draft and the Vietnam War

At the heart of the entire policy advanced by the SWP during World War II was the existence in the United States of a radicalized labor movement, expanding union organization, and the perspective of big class confrontations growing directly out of the war. Demands such as military training under trade-union control were intended to put that labor movement in the



March 22 antidraft demonstration in Washington, D.C.

Jon Hillson

workers. They bear a sentimental hatred against Hitler mixed with confused class sentiments. They have a hatred against the victorious brigands. The bureaucracy utilizes this to say help the defeated gangster. Our conclusions are completely different. But this sentiment is the inevitable base for the last period of preparation. We must find a new realistic base for this preparation. We must oppose sending untrained boys into battle. The trade unions not only must protect the workers in peaceful times and protect their industrial skill, but they must now demand the possibility of learning the military art from the state. [*Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40*, page 253.]

Based on the discussions with Trotsky, the SWP adopted a "Resolution on Proletarian Military Policy" in September 1940.

The central political problem that this resolution dealt with was how to advance the class independence of the workers and the arming of the working class under wartime conditions. The framework of the resolution was the inevitability of the war, the continued existence of a broad labor radicalization, the struggle against fascism, and the expectation that the war would give rise to social revolution.

The starting point for the 1940 resolution was the policy in which Lenin had steered the revolutionary wing of the international workers movement during the first imperialist slaughter a quarter century earlier:

(New York: Socialist Workers Party, 1975), pp. 76-77.\*]

But as Trotsky had said, it was not enough for the revolutionary party to merely declare its principles.

By September 1940 World War II had already been raging for more than a year. Peacetime conscription had been introduced in the United States for the first time in history, the U.S. military budget was up to \$15 billion, and Washington was only waiting for the most opportune moment to enter the war.

There was widespread support for the U.S. military buildup in the working class. Most workers simply did not see any other way to counter the fascist threat. Agitation against the draft in this situation was seen by the workers as pacifism at best, and at worst as a form of backhanded support to Hitlerism.

As the SWP pointed out in its resolution, "It is necessary to take capitalist militarism as an established reality which we are not yet strong enough to abolish and adapt our practical tactics to it. . . .

"As long as the masses accept the war

\*Available from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. US\$2.00.

strongest possible position as the expected class battles developed.

Revolutions did arise from the ashes of the war, but not in the United States. During the war, the U.S. ruling class was able to make big strides toward subordinating the trade unions to the state. The labor radicalization of the 1930s and 1940s finally ran out of steam as the long post-war expansion began and a class-collaborationist bureaucracy consolidated its hold over the unions.

Recognizing the change in circumstances, the SWP dropped the demand for military training under trade-union control shortly after the opening of the Cold War. Instead, the SWP began to emphasize the demand for an end to capitalist conscription.

Washington was waging colonial wars against the Korean and Indochinese peoples. Demands for proper training and equipment, for training of troops under the direction of the trade unions, and for the election of worker-officers were clearly not applicable.

Moreover, the attitude of the working masses towards these wars was not the same as it had been toward World War II. By the mid-1960s, the SWP was able to play a leading role in building demonstrations against the war in Vietnam.

During the movement against that war, the SWP sought to involve all layers of the population—including antiwar GIs—in the protests. In the early stages of the movement, many participants saw both GIs and industrial workers as hopeless at best and part of the enemy at worst. The SWP and Young Socialist Alliance, in contrast, sought to build the kind of movement that could draw the workers, unions, and antiwar soldiers into mass action against the war.

The central demand of the antiwar movement was for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. The demand to abolish the draft was also raised and was supported by the SWP—both as an immediate demand against the war, and from the point of view of general opposition to capitalist conscription.

While demanding abolition of the draft, the SWP was opposed to the strategy of individual resistance to the draft advanced by many in the antiwar movement. By voluntarily going into exile or into jail, antiwar activists would unnecessarily cut themselves off from contact with the masses of young workers in the armed forces. Thus, SWP members did go into the armed forces if drafted and sought to exercise their democratic rights as citizen-soldiers to speak out against the war and express their views on other questions.

At the same time, the SWP continued to support the rights of those who refused induction. It actively opposed the government's jailing of draft resisters and its harassment and intimidation that forced many young people to go into exile.

One objection that has been raised to the demand to end the draft is that a volunteer army is somehow a more reliable instrument for the ruling class than one composed of conscripts. A related argument is that socialists should be in favor of military training for the working class, therefore they should favor conscription over a volunteer army. Finally, there is the argument that conscription is somehow more "democratic" because otherwise only the poor will be forced to enlist due to economic pressures.

#### Do Rulers Prefer Volunteer Army?

Every one of these arguments is wrong. Bourgeois experts have been debating for years whether a volunteer or a conscript army would best serve their needs. The basic problem that they face is that *any mass combat force must be drawn from the ranks of the working class, and will be unreliable because of that.*

The *New York Times* complained about the volunteer army in a January 2, 1979, editorial, saying that "almost 40 percent of the Army's male recruits this fall were black. . . .

"The proposals to restore the standby draft and to provide incentives for college-oriented [i.e., white] youths to join the Army and its reserves are the minimum first steps needed now to face up to the problem."

Another problem pointed out by the editors of the *Times* "is that the volunteer army, prescribed as an alternative to the draft, is not working. There aren't enough volunteers." (September 4, 1979.)

These problems facing the rulers were pointed out by the SWP in its 1975 resolution, "Prospects for Socialism in America." That resolution explained that "modern wars cannot be fought without conscription; and attempts to reintroduce the draft in the future, as the ruling class will be obliged to do in new imperialist aggressions, will inevitably call forth a quicker and greater antidraft sentiment than appeared during the Vietnam war."

That prediction has been borne out by reality. The task of socialists now is to join in and build the mass movement against the draft, not to speculate about whether the ruling class is defending its interests in the most efficient way.

Equally sterile is the argument that socialists should support conscription as a means of assuring military training for the working class. This is related to the argument raised by some liberals that the officer corps might find it easier to carry out a military coup with a volunteer army.

Right now the U.S. ruling class needs a bigger army as part of its drive against revolutions in Iran, Afghanistan, Indochina, and Central America. It proposes to raise that bigger army by instituting a draft. If the American working class is successful in stopping this aspect of the ruling-class war drive, it will help the

world revolution. And it is the advance of the world revolution that will create the most favorable conditions for the advance of the class struggle in the United States.

The idea that the *form* of the capitalist army—as opposed to the level of consciousness and organization of the working class—will be a decisive factor in whether a military coup can be carried out, or in whether the working class can arm itself, has nothing to do with Marxism.

Furthermore, the need to oppose a military coup or for the working class to arm itself (tasks which must be carried out through the trade unions, not the army) is not posed by the actual level of the class struggle in the United States today. The fight to stop the reimposition of capitalist conscription is.

Finally, there is the question of whether a draft is more equitable than a volunteer army that depends on economic pressures on the poorest and most oppressed layers of society. This issue is raised by reformists who refuse to admit that under capitalism the workers and the specially oppressed will be victimized whether they are drafted or "volunteered."

Speaking on one side of the argument, Social Democratic leader Michael Harrington, who opposes the draft but supports maintaining a U.S. military force, told the March 22 antidraft rally in Washington, D.C.: "A volunteer army in a recession is the economic conscription of Black people, of poor people. A real volunteer army is possible only in a full-employment America."

Harrington neglected to mention that even a "real volunteer army"—a complete utopia—would be against the interests of workers, both in the United States and around the world.

On the other hand, the executive council of the AFL-CIO, the U.S. labor federation, candy-coated its support to Carter's registration proposal and the imperialist war drive by calling for registration to be carried out "in a fair and equitable manner."

Like Carter, the AFL-CIO bureaucrats tell the workers that the army is in their interest and that it should operate fairly. The role of the trade unions, they say, is to help ensure justice in the capitalist military.

But the repressive apparatus of a class-biased, racist, sexist society cannot help but reflect the reactionary ideology and practices of that society in their most concentrated form. Although the AFL-CIO's position is put forward in the form of a demand for equal treatment, its essence is acceptance of and support for the draft and for the capitalist army—a machine to slaughter young workers here and abroad on behalf of big business.

Socialists are against *anybody* being forced to carry arms in defense of imperialist interests, including middle-class youth. Rather than demanding that the draft

operate in a "fair and equitable manner," it is necessary to demand that there be no draft. Rather than demanding the elimination of specific exemptions, socialists demand their extension to everybody.

#### Women and the Draft

A big part of the debate over the draft has revolved around Carter's proposal to register women as well as men. This was a carefully thought-out move by the ruling class that had four objectives.

- It was aimed at shifting the focus of the debate from whether there should be any draft at all to whether women should be included in the draft.

- It was an attempt to divide men and women. Carter hoped that men would respond to opposition to the draft from women by arguing that women cannot expect equal rights if they are not willing to assume burdens such as the draft.

- It was a move to undercut the struggle for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution, and the entire women's liberation movement, by placing an equals sign between the ERA and the draft. Millions of men and women have said to themselves if *that* is what the ERA means, we don't want any part of it.

- It was an attempt to give a progressive facade to the imperialist army and the draft, in the same way that the government tries to present the armed services as champions of equal rights for Blacks. ("You can be Black and Navy too," was the slogan of a recent series of recruitment ads.)

Surely, an army that stands for equal rights for Blacks and women must really be a force for democracy around the world!

Carter hit on all of these themes in his February 8 statement on registration. Thus, he declared: "My decision to register women is a recognition of the reality that both women and men are working members of our society. . . .

"In every area of our national life, women are meeting the responsibilities of citizenship. . . . Just as we are asking women to assume additional responsibilities, it is more urgent than ever that the women in America have full and equal rights under the Constitution. Equal obligations deserve equal rights."

Of course, the converse of this argument making the ERA dependent on "equal obligations" is that if women are not subject to the draft, they do not deserve equal rights.

The AFL-CIO fell right in line with Carter's proposal, saying: "We support the registration of women as consistent with our belief in equal rights."

Right-wing opponents of the ERA, who have long used the argument that passage of the amendment for equal rights would result in women being drafted, gleefully seized on Carter's proposal as proof of their case. Trying to play on the progressive sentiments of men and women horri-

fied by the idea of young women being drafted for new Vietnam-type wars, the right-wing opponents of the ERA have raised the argument that women are not capable of combat.

But instead of answering these fake claims by pointing to the heroic example of women in Cuba, Zimbabwe, Iran, and Nicaragua, and then switching the discussion to the question of whether women have any *interest* in fighting for U.S. corporate interests, many feminist leaders have fallen into Carter's trap.

For example, Eleanor Smeal, the president of the National Organization for Women, has insisted that registration of men only would be a violation of the rights

The capitalist draft is a *violation of everybody's* democratic rights. Asking to have their rights violated equally is not in the interests of women.

Smeal ends up parroting the enemies of women's rights—yes, she says, the ERA *does* mean women being drafted. She arrives at this sorry position because her framework is one of reforming the imperialist army, of making suggestions "to improve the quality of the national defense," instead of opposing capitalist militarism.

NOW's newspaper, the *National NOW Times*, went so far as to assure its readers that "the person who pushes the button may be in a combat role, but does not



Cops harass picket line during strike by steelworkers at Newport News, Virginia, shipyard. Workers will learn from their own experiences what measures are necessary to defend their rights and organizations.

of women! The American Civil Liberties Union has taken the same position, and is threatening to challenge in court any registration plan that does not include women.

Smeal and the ACLU begin as opponents of the draft. But their position that registration of men only would somehow violate the rights of women—leads them to demand the *extension* of such registration plans to include women. In other words, they end up *advocating* registration for women. As a position paper issued by NOW puts it: "If a draft and registration is instituted, NOW believes it must include women."

What Smeal and the ACLU have done is to turn the whole question upside down.

require extraordinary strength to carry out her/his duties."

Is that the vision that will inspire women to fight for their liberation? An equal right to destroy the earth?

The draft and the army that needs it are aimed at crushing the gains of women in Nicaragua, in Afghanistan, and the rest of the world. American women cannot win their liberation by taking up arms against their sisters and brothers around the world. The interests of women—and of the working class as a whole—lie in opposition to the imperialist war drive.

And as the protests against the draft show, that is a lesson that is being learned by a growing section of the American people. □

# AROUND THE WORLD



## Solidarity With 'Women and Russia'

According to the March 21-27 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*, a new opposition journal saw the light of day in the Soviet Union last December. This mimeographed publication marks the first time that women under Stalinist rule in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe have addressed themselves in print to the concerns of other women.

*Almanakh: Women and Russia* reflects a diversity of viewpoints, as well as the political confusion common among Soviet dissidents due to their isolation. For example, alongside an article recalling the gains made by women after the October revolution, which Stalinism has tried to consign to the dustbin of history, there are statements such as, "In the West, the woman question is on the road to being resolved, because Western women occupy positions of responsibility (S. Veil, M. Thatcher)."

The women who have produced this new samizdat publication are writers, poets, and painters. Several have previously been jailed for their positions in defense of human rights in the USSR.

The Soviet bureaucracy immediately reacted to the appearance of *Women and Russia*, aiming to prevent the publication of future issues. On February 29, the apartments of Sofia Sokolova and Yulya Voznesenskaya were searched. The acknowledged aim of these searches was to look for a second issue of *Women and Russia*. Following the search, Sofia Sokolova was subjected to seven hours of interrogation and threatened with arrest. When Tatyana Goritcheva visited Voznesenskaya, she was frisked, and the writings she had with her were confiscated.

The situation of these three women is now very serious. They are subjected to continual pressures and harassment. They have let it be known, however, that the KGB threats have not intimidated them and that they will not give up their activities. They need the broadest possible worldwide solidarity.

### European MPs Demand Debate on H-Block

Three members of the European Parliament have raised demands for an immediate debate on the treatment of political prisoners in Northern Ireland, especially those held in the infamous H-Block of Long Kesh concentration camp. The three represent a wide political spectrum.

In calling for an inquiry into violations

of human rights in Northern Ireland, French Communist Party leader Georges Marchais denounced the Strasbourg assembly for hypocrisy. It was not interested in defending human rights, he said, when they were violated in any of the European Economic Community countries.

The March 22 issue of the Dublin weekly newspaper *An Phoblacht/Republican News* reported: "Addressing the parliament Marchais stated that the North of Ireland is enduring military occupation, torture and concentration camps."

Winnifred Ewing, a leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party, met with a delegation of women from Derry, who brought her a petition demanding an end to the "cruelty, and inhuman and degrading treatment" of the men in H-Block.

Ewing presented this petition to the president of the European Parliament, Simone Veil, who pledged that it would receive consideration.

A motion demanding an inquiry into the situation in H-Block and the special repressive laws in Northern Ireland was introduced by Neil Blaney, an independent nationalist member from the northwest of Ireland.

The resolution deplored the refusal of the British government to allow inspection of H-Block by the International Red Cross and Amnesty International.

### Support Grows for Right of Asylum for Héctor Marroquín

A number of prominent U.S. civil libertarians sent an appeal to U.S. Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti urging him to halt government efforts to deport socialist Héctor Marroquín.

Marroquín is a member of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. He fled Mexico in 1974 after being framed up by police because of his socialist views. Last April, a U.S. immigration judge ordered Marroquín to leave the United States.

If Marroquín returned to Mexico, he would face jail, torture, and even death. Amnesty International has found that the Mexican regime systematically violates the rights of its political opponents. Hundreds of people have been "disappeared" and those accused along with Marroquín have been either murdered by the police or kidnapped and tortured.

At a hearing before the Board of Immi-

gration Appeals on February 25, the government admitted it had been "incorrect" in denying Marroquín asylum on the grounds that he is a socialist. Although public support for Marroquín's right to asylum forced the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to back down from its legal argument that socialists can't get asylum, the government is still trying to deport him.

The Board of Immigration Appeals set no date for a ruling on Marroquín's case, which could take up to a year. If the deportation ruling is upheld, the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee plans to appeal to the federal courts.

Signers of the letter to Civiletti included Reverend Joseph E. Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Robert Lopez, international representative of the United Auto Workers Union; Alice Peurala, president of Local 65, United Steelworkers of America; U.S. Representatives Ronald V. Dellums and Mickey Leland; Aryeh Nier, past president of the American Civil Liberties Union; Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, and others.

"The attempt to deport Héctor Marroquín can only be seen as a further effort by the government to victimize socialists for their beliefs and lawful activities," the letter stated.

It urged the Attorney General "to order an immediate halt to the INS's ominous attempts to curtail the Bill of Rights."

### Irish Sportswriter Hits London's Olympic Boycott Hypocrisy

A sportswriter for the Irish-language weekly *Inniu* has called for support for participation by the Irish team in the Moscow Olympic games. *Inniu* circulates widely among young people in school learning Irish, which is compulsory in the formally independent part of Ireland.

In the March 21 issue, Seán Piondar wrote:

"Our government is not buying the anti-Russian line of Washington or London."

Piondar asked: "Wouldn't we get a fine going-over from Britain if our government decided not to allow Irish horses, trainers, jockeys, or spectators to go to the races in Cheltenham, Aintree, or other places in Britain until the British took their soldiers out of the Six Counties [of Northern Ireland]?"



## Suárez Routed in Basque Elections

By Gerry Foley

Franco's heirs have suffered a series of jarring defeats in three recent elections. All three were dominated by the questions of home rule for the underdeveloped regions and self-determination for the oppressed nationalities.

On February 28, the people of Andalusia, the impoverished southern region of Spain, voted overwhelmingly for autonomy.

The Spanish regime tried the same trick used by the British government when limited home rule for Scotland came up for a vote in March 1979. All registered voters who did not cast ballots, for whatever reason, were counted *against* the proposal.

Autonomy was to be granted only if more than 50% of all registered voters in Andalusia cast their ballots in favor. And more than that, the results had to be above 50% of all the registered voters in each of the eight provinces of Andalusia.

The government of Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez went all out to defeat autonomy. Although it had called the election itself, it urged Andalusians not to vote. Half the cabinet members toured the area, appealing for a boycott.

Despite these efforts, 2.4 of the 4.3 million registered voters (55.8%) cast their ballots for autonomy. In the main cities, such as Córdoba and Seville, the "yes" vote ran close to 90% of those voting.

Autonomy was defeated only because the "yes" vote fell under 50% in two of the most underdeveloped and sparsely populated provinces, Almería and Jaén. Even in these two provinces, the shortfall was only a few thousand. In Almería, for example, the deficit was 8,000 votes.

Even this result was clearly achieved by bureaucratic obstruction and fraud. The regional electoral rolls were inflated by including 52,000 youths aged seventeen who were registered but not allowed to vote. In addition, the names of dead people were not removed from the rolls. The Andalusian election board estimated that 15,000 of the registered voters in Almería were six feet under, and were therefore counted against autonomy.

Moreover, the emigration rate from this poor region is extremely high. And government officials did everything possible to obstruct the casting of absentee ballots.

The government's betrayal of its promise of home rule, and the crooked tactics it used to frustrate the clear will of the Andalusian people, created a groundswell of outrage.

"It is not surprising," stated the March 5-11 *Combate*, the weekly paper of the Revolutionary Communist League, Spanish section of the Fourth International,

"that the 10,000 people gathered on election night at the Casino de la Exposición in Seville responded with a single voice when they heard the results from Almería . . . 'We were robbed! Fake!'"

### Basque Elections

Suárez's dubious victory in Andalusia was followed less than two weeks later by an open rout in the Basque country. In the vote for the new Basque regional parliament, his Democratic Center Union was reduced to the status of a minor party. It got six out of sixty seats.

The parties identified with the demand for Basque home rule swept the elections.

The traditional Basque nationalist party, the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV), got twenty-five seats. And the radicalized nationalist groups, Herri Batasuna (People United) and Euzkadiko Ezkerra (Basque Left) won eleven and six seats respectively.

Thus, Herri Batasuna, which is closely linked to ETA (Basque Land and Freedom), a clandestine armed national liberation organization, which claims to have a revolutionary Marxist perspective, received nearly twice as many seats in the new parliament as the main party of the Spanish bourgeoisie, the Democratic Center Union.

Together, the two radicalized nationalist formations got 23% of the vote in the most populous and heavily industrialized Basque provinces, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa.

In contrast, in Vizcaya, the Democratic Center Union vote fell by almost 60 percent since the 1979 parliamentary election, while in Guipúzcoa, its vote was cut almost in half.

The Communist and Socialist parties have come increasingly into collision with the nationalist feelings of the Basque people. Both parties have tried more and more insistently to prove to the Spanish bourgeoisie that they can be acceptable partners in the Madrid government.

The CP was already unpopular in the Basque country. It had been reduced virtually to the status of a grouplet in the 1977 parliamentary elections, the first after Franco's death, in which its vote ranged from 3% to 6%.

In this election, the small CP vote was cut even further. In fact, the CP was almost frozen out of the Basque parliament altogether, getting only one seat.

The social and nationalist militancy in the Basque country represents a grave stumbling block for both of the main class-collaborationist parties in Spain.

From the time of the Franco dictatorship

to the current "strong" parliamentary government headed by Suárez, the Basque country has remained the cockpit of the struggle against the plans of the Spanish bourgeoisie.

Under the dictatorship, 80% of all political prisoners came from the Basque country, which accounts for less than 10% of the population. The struggle of the Basque people became the example for the new generation of revolutionary youth that came of age in the 1960s and 1970s.

The CP was never able to dominate the resistance movement in the Basque country, as it did in the rest of Spain. It was pushed aside by more radical forces coming out of the nationalist struggle.

In the transition period after Franco's death, as the Spanish bourgeoisie phased out the dictatorship, the CP concentrated on trying to persuade the workers and youth in Spain not to "rock the boat," to stay as quiet as possible so that Suárez could "democratize" the country.

But the Basques fought even harder. They mobilized in mass demonstrations, and in general strike after general strike, to demand full amnesty for the imprisoned nationalist fighters. The Suárez government tried to beat them back by escalating police violence.

On the eve of the 1977 parliamentary elections, the CP was embracing Suárez while he was carrying out systematic terror against the Basque people. The party itself was doing everything it could to demobilize and isolate the Basque struggle. And it paid the price when the votes were tallied.

At that time, the SP was making more of a pretense than the Stalinists of opposing Suárez. It had been very weak under Franco and was reorganized shortly before the end of the dictatorship by fresh faces who tried to give it an image attractive to newly radicalizing layers.

The SP emerged from the 1977 elections as the single strongest party in the Basque country, just ahead of the PNV. But no sooner had the SP made its electoral breakthrough, than its leadership began turning openly to the right in an attempt to demonstrate its trustworthiness to Suárez and the Spanish bourgeoisie.

In the recent election, the SP campaigned for Spanish national unity. García Damborenea, who headed up the SP slate in Vizcaya, declared that "the PNV is the main enemy of our people."

Such scare-mongering was not directed at this traditionally moderate nationalist party itself; in fact, after the elections the SP announced that it would be happy to join in a coalition government with the PNV.

The SP's fire was aimed against the determination of the Basque people to throw off the oppression of the Spanish bourgeoisie. And it is undoubtedly this same deep sentiment that led many Basque voters to cast their ballots for the

oldest and largest of the groups identified with the demand for Basque home rule.

The PNV had refurbished its nationalist image in mid-January by withdrawing from the Spanish parliament in protest against the government's backpedaling on promises of autonomy.

The PNV's vote went up substantially in all three of the Basque provinces included under the autonomy statute. At the same time, the SP's vote dropped substantially in all three.

Herri Batasuna outdistanced the SP in every one of the three provinces. In terms

of active support, it humiliated the SP even more thoroughly.

For example, correspondent Tom Burns reported in the March 8 *Washington Post*:

It was standing room only on Saturday night in the vast indoor cycling arena in San Sebastian as the extremist Basque nationalist coalition party, Herri Batasuna, reached its climax. Some 7,000 fanatical supporters shouted: "Independence! Independence!"

During the clamor, two hooded men appeared at the top tier of the stadium holding up a placard identifying them as members of the Basque terrorist organization ETA. The slogans

then switched to "Long Live ETA—The people are with you."

Burns contrasted this with a rally held the next day in the same arena, where local SP leader Txiki Benegas proclaimed to half-empty rows of seats, "We are not afraid of ETA."

The CP, which had less to lose, went further than the SP in attacking the militant nationalist groups. Roberto Lertxundi, general secretary of the Basque CP, inaugurated his party's campaign by throwing out the phrase: "Anyone who votes for Herri Batasuna is loading the pistols of the ETA terrorists."

The SP and the CP had tried to coax the PNV into an "antiterrorist" coalition, a "Front for Peace." Although the moderate party had previously joined in condemnations of ETA, this time it did not bite the apple.

The party leadership was evidently aware that a lot of its support would come from people with militant nationalist feelings.

#### Voting in Catalonia

The elections for the Catalan parliament on March 24 brought another defeat for Suárez and for the class-collaborationist parties.

The big losers were the Democratic Center Union and the SP. They got, respectively, eighteen and thirty-three seats in a 135-seat legislature. Suárez's party, in fact, was reduced to a marginal role, getting only about 10% of the vote. The SP vote dropped by 10% since the 1977 parliamentary elections.

The CP vote remained essentially stagnant in an area where it has previously scored its greatest electoral successes.

The winners were the bourgeois nationalist parties. *Convergencia Democrática*, led by Barcelona businessman Jordi Pujol, got forty-three seats. The *Esquerra Republicana*, the vestige of the old moderate nationalist party of the civil war era, got fourteen seats.

The trend in Catalonia was the same as in the Basque country and Andalusia: against rule from Madrid, against the unitary Spanish bourgeois state. To express this, Catalan voters cast their ballots for the established home rule parties.

However, in Catalonia the profile of these parties is different from those in the Basque country. Both the PNV and *Convergencia Democrática* are bourgeois parties in program. But no supporter of "national unity" would point to Pujol, even demagogically, as "the main danger to our people," as the SP branded the PNV in the Basque elections. If anyone did, they would probably be laughed off the stage.

*Convergencia Democrática* is directly linked to a powerful section of the capitalist class in Catalonia. It has proved time and again that its commitment to the

## Trotskyists: 'No Deals With Right in Catalonia'

[The following are excerpts from the statement of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR, section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state) on the results of the March 20 elections for the Catalan parliament. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

For the first time, the workers parties in Catalonia have lost their electoral majority to bourgeois forces arrayed in a broad front including *Convergencia Democrática*, the Democratic Center Union (UCD), and the *Esquerra Republicana*. These bourgeois forces can now dominate the parliamentary political scene in Catalonia acting in their own name.

In our opinion, the result of the elections was not so much a victory for the right, for the bourgeois forces, as it was a defeat for the policies of the Socialist and Communist parties.

These policies have been carried out under various names and in various forms. But the fundamentals have always been the same—a willingness to collaborate with the right in government, an underlying acceptance of the line of austerity and restrictions on democratic rights that has been pushed by the UCD, with the explicit support of Jordi Pujol's *Convergencia*.

It is this policy of the CP and SP that has led to demobilizing sections of the working class.

Whole sections of the working class found that the big left parties in Catalonia were incapable of carrying any other policy, of taking any other option than those of the right. So, they decided not to vote, or even to vote for *Convergencia* or to vote for the *Esquerra Republicana*.

The bourgeois forces put their weight behind *Convergencia* this time, considering it the best instrument to use to block the left. The UCD was reduced to a token force. At the same time, the

extreme right was virtually wiped out.

The employer's association, *Fomento de Trabajo*, organized a campaign to fight "Marxism." It accomplished its objectives. The employers lined up the bulk of the bourgeois vote behind *Convergencia*, presenting it as a moderate nationalist alternative. They indicated that this party was ready to make deals with the UCD on all the key questions. At the same time, they strengthened the *Equerra Republicana* as an auxiliary for *Convergencia* that could gather the votes of the petty bourgeoisie and middle layers unhappy with the policies of the SP and CP.

The next few days will be decisive as regards the formation of the new Executive Council and the election of the new president of the Catalan government [the *Generalitat*]. In these first parliamentary battles, the SP and CP should draw the lessons from their electoral defeat. They must take a new course toward restoring the unity of the workers movement and rejecting any collaboration with the right in the parliament or the government.

The SP and CP must not give any support to *Convergencia*. They must not make any maneuvers with the *Esquerra Republicana*. This would only confuse the workers and the masses in Catalonia.

The SP and the CP must abandon the so-called Pact for Progress that they made with *Convergencia* in the municipal governments.

The strength that the workers parties have in the city governments must be brought to bear by a common policy of forthrightly defending the interests of the workers. On the basis of the positions the workers parties hold there and in the unions and neighborhood associations, broad unity can be built, a broad opposition front. This will make it possible to get the right out of the *Generalitat* without having to wait four years and to really win Catalonia for the workers.

status quo overrides all other considerations.

But no radical alternative to Convergencia Democrática has yet established itself.

In Catalonia, unlike the Basque country, national demands have historically been taken up by important sections of the bourgeoisie. And the masses have not yet had enough experience in active struggles for their national rights to differentiate between those who will fight consistently for these rights and those who are fundamentally committed to the capitalist system, and therefore to the bourgeois unitary state.

In fact, the readiness of the Catalan bourgeois nationalist leaders to make deals with Suárez has been a key factor in his ability to ride herd on the political situation in the country.

The petty-bourgeois or bourgeois political character of the nationalist parties that are on the rise in the oppressed regions offers room for maneuver to the Suárez government. The responsibility for this lies with the default on the national question of the class-collaborationist workers par-

ties. Their reformist policies retard the intertwining of the workers' class and nationalist consciousness and the development of that consciousness in a revolutionary direction.

At the same time, the increase in the vote for parties identified with the demand for home rule and self-determination increases the difficulties of the Spanish bourgeoisie in achieving stable forms of rule. Thus, it opens up the way for revolutionary forces in the workers movement to put forward their solutions, which do not subordinate nationalist aspirations to political deals with the capitalist parties.

The attempts of the Democratic Center Union and the SP to minimize their setbacks in the recent elections by pointing to a high rate of abstention only reveals their own weaknesses, since they are now reduced to claiming that they represent a "silent majority."

In fact, the abstention rate has steadily increased as the workers have found that bourgeois parliamentary democracy is doing nothing for them and that their living standards have been dropping as a result

of the impact of the international capitalist crisis inside the Spanish state.

The oppressed nationalities and underdeveloped regions are especially threatened by the economic crisis. Its effects are compounded by the tendency of the capitalists to shift investments away from areas where the combativity of the working people is high, particularly from the Basque country.

The rate of unemployment in the Basque country, according to the March 21 issue of the Spanish financial magazine *Actualidad Económica*, is now the highest in the Spanish state, higher even than in Andalusia.

In the past, because of industrialization, the per capita income in the Basque country was the highest in Spain. Now it has fallen below the all-Spain average. And it is still declining.

The economic crisis is hitting hard at heavy industry, which tends to be concentrated in the Basque country and Catalonia. And for such traditionally underdeveloped areas as Andalusia, the prospects are bleaker still. □

## International Defense Campaign for Edmund Zdrozinski

# Polish Working-Class Dissident Sentenced to Prison

By Janice Lynn

Edmund Zdrozinski, a Polish working-class dissident, was sentenced to three years in prison March 14.

Zdrozinski is a member of the editorial board of the opposition journal, *Robotnik* (Worker). *Robotnik* has a circulation of about 15,000, mostly in large factories.

He is also a member of the Committee for Social Self-Defense/Committee to Defend the Workers (KSS/KOR). It grew out of the KOR, established to defend workers who were victimized following strikes against food price hikes in June 1976.\*

Zdrozinski is a foundry worker in the city of Grudziada, about 150 miles northwest of Warsaw, where he was active in the 1976 strikes.

Zdrozinski was formally charged with theft and violence against his family. His son testified against him, but later repeatedly retracted his testimony, declaring it was obtained under pressure.

Almost all the imprisoned dissidents in Poland have been charged with these kinds of "criminal" offenses. The Polish bureaucracy has thus been able to declare that there are no "political" prisoners in Poland.

In addition to three years imprisonment, Zdrozinski was fined 70,000 zlotys (about \$2,300). He had been held in prison for eight months before his trial began February 25.

The Gierek regime's campaign of repression, timed to coincide with the February 11-15 congress of the ruling Communist Party and the March 23 Polish elections, also included forty-eight hour detentions of other dissidents in Warsaw, Gdansk, and Wroclaw. Among those detained was Jacek Kuron, a founder of the KOR.

The KOR had called for a boycott of the elections. Despite intimidation, it was able to distribute some 300,000 leaflets. This was the first time the Polish dissident movement had called for a boycott of elections.

Another dissident group, the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), had named a symbolic slate of candidates in protest of the elections.

In Geneva, in response to an appeal to all workers' organizations by the publishers of *Robotnik*, a Committee for the Release of Edmund Zdrozinski has been formed. It includes the Geneva Socialist Party, the Socialist Solidarity Committee with Dissidents from Eastern Countries,

the Revolutionary Marxist League (LMR—Swiss section of the Fourth International), the Committee Against Repression, and the Trotskyist Group of Switzerland.

*La Brèche*, organ of the LMR, reports that as of March 5, 2,200 signatures had been collected on petitions for Zdrozinski's release.

The LMR sent a letter to the Polish Mission to the United Nations urging Zdrozinski's immediate release and protesting the Polish government's refusal to allow a Swiss attorney, sent from various human rights groups, to observe the trial.

Already in Switzerland, the civil service unions from the cantons of Vaud and Geneva and the Federation of Metalworkers and Watchmakers have called for Zdrozinski's release.

The French weekly *Rouge* reports that in France, representatives of the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), the National Education Federation (FEN), and Labor Force (FO) joined a delegation of the International Committee Against Repression (CICR) to the Polish embassy.

In Italy, the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL) and the Italian Federation of Trade Unions (UIL) have also urged Zdrozinski's release. □

\* See *IP/I*, March 19, 1979, page 277, for positions of the KSS-KOR.

## Martinicans Protest French Troops and Colonialist Insults

By Janice Lynn

The French government is worried about what it terms "Cuba's spreading influence" in the Caribbean. Its concerns have been heightened over the past year by a wave of strikes, demonstrations, and anti-colonial protests that have swept one of its Caribbean colonies, the island of Martinique.

As a result, on March 7 Paris dispatched 200 riot police to the island.

During the last several months alone, insurance workers in Martinique conducted a militant four-week strike; agricultural workers demonstrated to protest joblessness and demand unemployment compensation; metalworkers in seven companies called a strike to protest racist harassment of one of their union leaders; women organized to protest physical assaults against them by their colonialist employers; and youth from the high schools and colleges conducted militant struggles against the racist and colonialist educational system.

The official unemployment rate in Martinique stands at 20 percent. And, discontent with the French colonial government is on the rise.

The islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe—4,400 miles from France—are still considered départements (administrative districts) of that country.

### 'Whether They Like It or Not'

At the beginning of March, Paul Dijoud, France's overseas territories and départements minister, visited Martinique. On his March 3 stopover in Fort-de-France, the island's capital, he declared:

I think the Martinicans are tired of these demonstrations, strikes, confrontations, and all the violations of law and order that have been multiplying over the last several months. Martinique is a French département and will permanently remain a French département whether it likes it or not, and order will be maintained here as in any other département of France. . . .

Dijoud accused Cuba of being behind the troubles. He said that France and its allies are determined to "halt the march of international communism in the Caribbean." More French troops could be rushed to Martinique "at 10 hours' notice," he warned.

### Quick and Angry Response

Dijoud's declaration, and the intervention by French troops, provoked an immediate and angry reaction from the Martinican trade unions and opposition parties. The very same day that the troops arrived, fifteen political and workers organizations

met and issued a joint statement "against this brutal reinforcement of oppression."

They declared in part:

We say no to this violation of workers' rights, this intimidation, this threat of military repression, this contempt so cynically expressed by Dijoud, and this attempt to keep the Martinican people imprisoned.

A mass protest meeting was called for March 13. The call was signed by the Martinican Communist Party (PCM); Martinican Progressive Party (PPM); Socialist Federation of Martinique (FSM); Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), Antilles section of the Fourth International; Workers Combat (CO); and almost every major trade union organization.

More than 400 Martinicans showed up at

the meeting, and a general strike was called for mid-April to protest the intervention from Paris.

Dijoud sent a letter to the meeting requesting a dialogue on the economic and social problems facing Martinicans: unemployment compensation; operation of the Lareinty sugar mill in Lamentin, which the government recently closed down; aid to the agricultural workers; and the question of municipal workers' wages, which were recently cut.

In a March 18 reply, the Coordinating Committee of Martinican Trade Unions explained that if any negotiations were to take place, the riot police must first be recalled from Martinique. They also stated they had begun to coordinate their efforts

## Revolutionists in Antilles Answer French Threats

[The following statement appeared on the front page of the March 15, 1980, issue of *Révolution Socialiste*, weekly newspaper of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), Antilles section of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

The French ministers who rule the Antilles have always said whatever they wanted, anything at all. But they used to take precautions to cover their intentions with a demagogic and democratic veneer.

In the present situation of colonialist France, this veneer is shattering and the historic contempt of French colonialism for the colonized people of the Antilles—for us, the Antilles working people—is showing through. "The Antilles will remain French, whether they like it or not."

This language radiates the conceit and self-confidence that three centuries of colonization has given to those who know that they are the masters. For Paul Dijoud, the people of the Antilles are not human beings. The people of the Antilles don't think or have any needs. They should just keep quiet and obey.

For Paul Dijoud, the workers of the Antilles have nothing to say about whether they want a system of exploitation and colonial dependence that brings with it unemployment, a high cost of living, factory closings, forced

emigration, contempt for our culture, and racism. The people of the Antilles are fit only to grovel and submit before their masters.

In a world where the workers of many countries have been victoriously struggling to end exploitation, Dijoud wants Guadeloupe, Guiana, and Martinique to remain a prehistoric example.

The French minister's declaration is an insult to our people. Pride, justice, and the interests of the working class impel us to respond.

The French government's Caribbean interests that Stirn and Dijoud are trying to develop are not our interests, nor the interests of workers throughout the Caribbean. We must fight those interests.

The order that Dijoud wants to establish in our country is the order of the gun, of repression, of hounding the organizations of the workers movement, of increasing regimentation of youth, including those in the high schools and universities.

This order also involves a very broad offensive against the standard of living and working conditions of the toiling masses, against their struggles around their demands.

This order must not be instituted.  
Hands Off the Workers Movement!  
French Troops Must Leave Our Country Immediately!

For a United Struggle for an Independent and Socialist Antilles!

with the people of Guadeloupe and Guiana (another French colony, on the northern coast of South America). The statement reaffirmed the call for an April general strike.

Visitors to Martinique report that a multitude of posters have appeared on walls and poles throughout the island demanding the withdrawal of the French troops and an end to French domination.

#### What Paris Plans

The French and U.S. governments are alarmed by developments in Central America and the Caribbean over the last year. Events in Grenada, St. Lucia, and Dominica have provided inspiring examples to the neighboring islands in the Antilles. The internationalist role of Cuba, as shown by its generous aid to Grenada and Nicaragua, has been especially troublesome to the imperialist powers.

The islands of the Lesser Antilles are located along the maritime routes to the Panama Canal. They enclose the strategically important Caribbean Sea, the route for one-fourth the oil shipped to the United States and the site of major oil refineries in Aruba, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

A March 7 item in the weekly *Paris-Match* openly stated the French governments' aims:

A top secret plan of struggle against subversion in the French Antilles is being prepared by the Ministry of Overseas Territories and Départements. Security will be reinforced and intelligence services will be better coordinated, especially in regard to Cuban infiltration.

France's Deputy Foreign Minister Olivier Stirn visited Barbados, Trinidad, and Grenada earlier in the year, where he warned that the French government would protect Caribbean "stability" against "outside interference." He promised that French assistance to the Caribbean would triple in 1980.

The Trotskyist GRS warned against being fooled by Stirn's promise to "our Caribbean neighbors." In the March 1 issue of its weekly *Révolution Socialiste*, the GRS declared:

In a period where revolutionary developments are taking place in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Grenada, and right next door in St. Lucia and Dominica where the situation is touch and go, the duty of revolutionary Marxists is to oppose the "stability" proposed by French and U.S. imperialism.

We must spread the word in our country and throughout the world about the struggles in the Caribbean. . . .

Stirn was also the architect of a 1975 plan to settle thousands of whites in Guiana. But this plan had to be abandoned because of protests in the Caribbean. A more subtle, but similar, plan of "genocide by substitution" also seems to be underway in Martinique.

The economic policies of the French

## 'We Shall Do Our Duty'

Philippe Pierre-Charles, a leader of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), Antilles section of the Fourth International, was a speaker at the March 13 meeting to protest French military intervention in Martinique.

Those who speak about "Cuban infiltration," Pierre-Charles pointed out, are the very same people who just sent to Martinique "more than 200 armed infiltrators in full riot gear."

French government official Paul Dijoud "talks about a Caribbean plot? Well let's openly increase our contacts with our Caribbean brothers!" Pierre-Charles declared.

"Yes, we will defend our rights," he said. "And the best defense of our right to strike is to strike en masse! The best defense of our right to demonstrate is to demonstrate! The best defense of free speech is to speak, hold meetings, and put out leaflets and posters!"

Pierre-Charles pointed out that while U.S. imperialism might have superior military strength, it could not prevent the victory in Vietnam. All the technological might of the shah's army in Iran—the fifth most powerful army in the world—could not hold back the revolutionary process there. And the powerful military machine of Somoza, equipped and financed by the U.S. government, could not prevent the overthrow of the hated dictator in Nicaragua.

Pierre-Charles ended by citing Cuban President Fidel Castro's famous statement that "it is not for revolutionists to sit in the doorways of their houses waiting for the corpse of imperialism to pass by. It is the duty of every revolutionist to make the revolution."

"We shall do our duty!" pledged the GRS leader.

colonists have forced an estimated 400,000 youth from the French West Indian colonies to emigrate to France to seek employment. They are being replaced by white French colonists, an estimated 60,000 of whom have come to Martinique.

#### Cuban 'Intervention'?

Towards the end of March, Stirn also visited Cuba to work out an economic and technical agreement between France and Cuba.

In the course of the meetings, Cuban President Fidel Castro responded to the French government's charges that Cuba was providing "financial and political support to the independence forces in Martinique." In a March 27 interview, Castro declared that Cuba "has not and will not intervene" in France's affairs.

Several reports in the big business press in France and the United States implied that Cuba and France had worked out some sort of deal at the expense of the independence struggle in the Antilles. But this is wishful thinking on their part.

The position of the Cuban government on the Antilles was stated clearly by Castro at the Nonaligned Conference in Havana last October when he declared Cuba's support "for the anticolonial struggle of the people of Guadeloupe and Martinique."

This is the same position of revolutionary solidarity that Cuba expresses toward the struggles in Puerto Rico, El Salvador, and elsewhere in the Caribbean and Central America.

And such internationalism, as Castro correctly states, has nothing to do with "intervening" in the affairs of another

country. Only French and U.S. imperialism are guilty of that offense.

As the GRS points out in the March 22 *Révolution Socialiste*, "All this fuss about the 'Cuban presence' is nothing but hot air." The GRS explains that what Dijoud and others really fear:

. . . is not "foreign infiltration" but the development of mass actions around economic demands and democratic rights. What they are really afraid of is that the Martinican workers will not passively accept the inevitable deterioration of their standard of living and working conditions. So, before it is too late, they want to break the back of the mass movement and totally paralyze it through intimidation, provocations, and repression.

#### Impact in Martinique

As a result of the events over the last months, leaders of the pro-autonomy Martinican Progressive Party (PPM) have begun speaking out on the need for independence for Martinique.

PPM head Aimé Césaire, a well-known poet, who is also the mayor of Fort-de-France, was quoted in a March 28 *Paris-Match* interview as saying: "Colonies are like fruit, when they are ripe, they fall. . . . Just look on a map and see where we are located: Dominica, St. Lucia, Grenada have all achieved independence. . . . Whether Dijoud wants it or not, Martinique will become independent. . . ."

Césaire hedged, however, saying that Martinique should first obtain autonomy. Independence would be too big a shock for Martinique right away, he claimed.

In contrast, the GRS explains the need for immediate independence from France and calls for a united struggle for an independent and socialist Antilles. □

# DOCUMENTS

## Speech by Fidel Castro

### 'Grenada, Nicaragua, Cuba Are Three Giants Rising Up'

[The following is a portion of a speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro at the closing session of the Third Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women. The speech was given on March 8, International Women's Day. The full text from which this is taken appeared in the March 16 issue of the weekly English-language *Granma*, published in Havana. Further sections of the speech will appear in a future issue of *IP/I*.]

\* \* \*

Allow me to say a few words about the international situation.

In the last few weeks, the international situation has become worse. There has been a significant step backward in the gains made in halting the arms race, promoting international détente and the search for peace as a result of imperialist policy, of the actions of the most reactionary imperialist elements that have made the situation worse as of a few months ago.

You will recall the hue and cry that went up at the time of the 6th Summit regarding the presence of Soviet military personnel in Cuba, personnel that had been in Cuba for 17 years. All the U.S. administrations knew about it, everybody knew about it. However, they started a campaign and mounted a big scandal around this issue to justify their hostile policy toward Cuba, to combat Cuba's influence and also to justify interventionist moves in the area and to delay the ratification of SALT II.

After that, they renewed their spy flights over our country; they organized a task force in the Key West area, a military task force; they organized some landings in Guantánamo Bay. That's with regard to our country.

Internationally, they moved to set up military bases in the Indian Ocean; they used the events in Iran as an excuse to send naval squads to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf area. In NATO they agreed to deploy 572 medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, trying to change the balance of forces and obtain the upper hand militarily. What's more, the imperialists took advantage of the events in Afghanistan, which they themselves provoked with their intervention from abroad, to increase international tension to the utmost; to approve big military budgets and spending; to continue on the path of setting up bases to try to upset the balance of forces; to plunge the world into the cold war era once again; to justify the aggressive policy of imperialism all over the world.

Naturally, all of these developments are cause for concern, because such situations of international tension affect everybody, and now the world is faced with a series of crises: economic, energy, inflation, recession. What might the consequences be if we add a return to the cold war accompanied by an upsurge in the arms race, as far as the peoples of the world are concerned, as regards all peoples without exception? All these problems are extremely serious especially for the underdeveloped countries. At a time when we must struggle most for peace and international cooperation, at a time when we must mobilize economic resources for the development of many countries—which is what we proposed at the UN—this really serious and worrisome situation for all peoples of the world has arisen.

We wonder if the world can afford to embark on a new arms race and a cold war, given its economic problems.

The arms expenditures which Vilma mentioned in the Final Resolution already come to more than 400,000 million dollars a year—400,000 million dollars a year! It's truly incredible amidst

the economic problems and poverty that affect thousands of millions of people. It is madness.

The present situation also affects us.

Recently Carter's main adviser said that, if there was a problem in any other area of the world, they would decide the area which was most convenient for maneuvering. The Washington observers feel that he meant Cuba, that he had Cuba in mind. Nobody in the U.S. Government denied it, by the way. It was a clear threat to our country, implying that if a conflict broke out in the Persian Gulf they would respond by attacking us.

Of course, to attack us they must reckon with us, they must also take us into account! (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "FIDEL, FOR SURE, HIT THE YANKEES HARD!") This shows that the imperialists just don't learn the lessons of history. I think that this is a shameful way to threaten our country. They have forgotten about prior problems, the problems which gave rise to the October [1962 Missile] Crisis and which were at the root of the Crisis, and the measures Cuba adopted because of the threat of an invasion.

Of course we aren't going to get nervous. (SHOUTS OF "NEVER!") Twenty-one years of Revolution have passed, and the imperialists' threats have yet to cause us sleepless nights. The danger? We know that we have lived with danger; we know the price of our Revolution. We have had to live with 21 years of danger, yes indeed. Sometimes the danger has been greater, sometimes less, depending on the president, his advisers and other factors. That was a clear reference to Cuba.

What's more, they are encouraging illegal departures from the country and the seizure of boats. They all but give those who seize boats a hero's welcome. There have been several cases, and we have protested to them and warned them. The last time some people drowned on the journey, but we said, "It isn't our fault since we didn't impose the restrictions." We have asked and demanded that they take measures to discourage that sort of thing, because all the consequences are well known.

That was how the hijackings started, and then there was no way of stopping the flood of planes that were hijacked and brought here from the United States; while it's true that there are lunatics everywhere, there are many more there than here. (APPLAUSE) There were times when there were three U.S. planes here. Then I imagine that they won't have the nerve to demand that we take measures—as we are doing—against plane hijackers; if they don't act against those who hijack boats. (APPLAUSE)

We also trust they will take measures to discourage illegal departures from the country; otherwise we would also have to take measures. We did so once, but we aren't going to take measures against those who want to leave illegally while they're being encouraged by the imperialists. We were compelled to take measures once. We have also warned them, because we had to open up the port of Camarioca once.\* We think it shows lack of

\*The Cuban government has always followed the policy of allowing those who want to leave the country to do so freely. Between 1959 and 1962 tens of thousands left Cuba. Following the 1962 missile crisis, however, the United States government outlawed the daily flights between the U.S. and Cuba.

In October 1965 Cuba announced that it was turning the small port of Camarioca into an emigration center for Cubans, and invited Cuban exiles in the U.S. to come in boats to Camarioca to pick up their relatives and

maturity on the part of the United States to create similar situations once again, because we hold the view that this revolutionary association is voluntary, voluntary! (APPLAUSE) The struggle for socialism and communism is a voluntary one: that was, is and will be our view. So I trust we won't be forced to take such measures again. They shouldn't feel that we don't have answers to their policies.

The United States' plans for intervention everywhere but especially in this area are evident, in the Caribbean and Central America. They are planning to intervene in Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Cuba; the Caribbean and Central America. Their plans for intervention to contain the revolutionary movement are very clear.

They tried it in Nicaragua and encountered strong resistance from the nations of Latin America. They are maneuvering to foil the revolutionary process in El Salvador as well. Their intentions are clear, they're evident. However, this won't stop the process of the peoples' drive to obtain independence in this hemisphere. In one way or the other, on one path or the other, the peoples must move towards independence and have the chance of doing what we have done and what the Nicaraguans have done, or are doing.

Women from Canada, the United States, France, Spain have spoken here and explained the problems they have, the social problems, the situation of women in those countries, how they are subjected to discrimination and injustice; I heard them speak here from this tribune.

Why? Why shouldn't the peoples of our continent have the right to freedom and independence? There were too many centuries of colonial and imperialist oppression, and it simply wasn't going to last forever. It can't last forever. They will have to give up their imperialist policies, their policy of intervention in this hemisphere. They will have to renounce that and resign themselves to the reality that the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean have the right to be free, to be the masters of their own destiny and to make the changes they deem necessary, because they will never be able to prevent it.

They might well create a colossal Vietnam in this hemisphere; if they try to hold things back, they'll create a colossal Vietnam in Central America, or bigger still, in the hemisphere; because they will not be able to brake the peoples' struggle, the peoples will not be intimidated, no people ever will. Revolutionaries have not been afraid for a long time now, and the Sandinistas proved that; (APPLAUSE) the Sandinistas proved that in a heroic, impressive way, and now the Salvadorans are proving it in their heroic, impressive way. (APPLAUSE)

And nothing can stop that spirit. They can make the struggle costlier, they can make it bloodier and more painful, but there's no way they can prevent it. They could still have the historical sense of what's inevitable being inevitable and resign themselves to the reality that our peoples seek to become, and will never stop until they have become, absolutely independent and free, the masters of their own destinies.

Yes, one must have a sense of history to know what that means, what revolutions mean here, next to the imperialist monster; yes, what the Cuban Revolution and its firm, unwavering line has meant. One needs a sense of history and of realities to understand the merit of the Sandinista Revolution, the merit of the Grenadian Revolution. Grenada, Nicaragua and Cuba are three giants rising up to defend their right to independence, sovereignty and justice, on the very threshold of imperialism. (APPLAUSE)

Only the peoples who are capable of doing that can be called giants. And the number of giants will inevitably grow until the day when our America is a giant, (APPLAUSE) and then, if you wish, there will be two giants: them and our peoples. (AP-

PLAUSE) But we have a right to live, we have a right to develop, we have a right to justice, we have a right to progress! And not the way it's been up to now, when we've been treated in the most miserable and abject manner imaginable. The way they did last century with Mexico, and with Central America. And we know there are risks. In the face of the threats and insinuations as to our being victim to invasions, we shall respond by strengthening our defenses (APPLAUSE) and furthering our awareness, (APPLAUSE) we shall respond as we have always responded in the past. (APPLAUSE)

We regret this should be so, because it will take a long time for them to understand these realities, to resign themselves to the reality of Cuba, to resign themselves to the realities of today's world. We'll have to wait a long time for that.

There's something we're certain of. We've spent 20 years in these conditions, 21. And 21 years is a long time: 21 years of the blockade, the blockade against Cuba; 21 years of threats against Cuba; 21 years of them not resigning themselves to Cuba. And now I don't know whether they're getting nervous as they watch other peoples follow the road to independence and the road to revolution, to their own revolution, not the Cuban Revolution. People make their own revolution, in their own way. We made it our way; the Nicaraguans, their way, the Grenadians, theirs. And each new revolution makes a new contribution to revolutionary experience. The Sandinistas are making their contribution, the Grenadians are making theirs. What characterizes us is precisely our own spirit of independence; what characterizes us is the defense of our countries' sovereign principles, our peoples' desire to fight, to wipe out illiteracy, poverty and unemployment, the lack of medical attention, indignity. And there was plenty enough of this in our country, including prostitution, gambling, the drug traffic. All these indignities our people wiped out, as other peoples are doing now. And, I repeat, it's going to take a good long time. We must be prepared for it taking a long time. I'm convinced of that.

This does not mean that we should give up our struggle for peace. We do not follow a policy of provocations; we're not interested in creating conflicts; we're aware that it is our country's duty to fight for peace, to do its part in helping to prevent the international situation from becoming worse, to prevent the return of the cold war. We're aware that this is one of our duties, not only as an independent country, an aware country, a revolutionary country, a socialist country, but also a country that has a responsibility toward other countries in the Non-Aligned Movement. We know of the world's problems; we know how necessary it is to insist on the quest for peace, on international cooperation, on the solution to economic problems, to developmental problems of the world. We know this is our duty, our obligation, and we will not give up the fight. We will not give up fighting for that. We will not give up making an international contribution in the struggle for peace, in the struggle for détente; that is, we will not give up making these efforts. It is our duty to make them. But we must be realistic, for it isn't enough that we follow one international policy while another type of policy is being used against us. We can't move from this hemisphere. And even if we could, we wouldn't, as a matter of honor and dignity. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) We're really satisfied with our geographic location.

We're not following a deliberate head-on policy as regards the United States. We're not even reluctant to talk; we are not against making an effort to improve relations, if this in any way helps bring about a climate of peace in the hemisphere or in the international arena. In other words, it's good that we set forth our policy so that nobody can get us wrong, so that there's no room for mistakes. But we can indeed guarantee and assure everybody, our adversaries, that this country can never be threatened, can never be intimidated, can never be made to acquiesce, can never be forced to give up a single one of its principles. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "THERE ARE NO TWO FIDELS AND THERE ARE NO TWO CUBAS")

That's our position □

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friends. At the same time Cuba called on the U.S. to negotiate on setting up regular air lifts between Varadero Beach and Miami to take out the bulk of those wishing to leave.

As a result of the Cuban pressure, flights between Cuba and Miami were reestablished in December 1965 and continued for seven years.

# STOP NUCLEAR POWER!

## Swedish Antinuclear Movement Vows to Keep On Fighting

By Arnold Jeppsson

STOCKHOLM—Who were the winners in the Swedish nuclear referendum?

They were Curt Nicolin, head of the Swedish Employers Association, and Marcus Wallenberg, the country's biggest capitalist. These two figures had been fighting for a long time to expand the nuclear power industry to twelve reactors. Now they are even talking about increasing their investments.

But Olof Palme, the leader of the Social Democratic opposition, gave them a big boost.

Line 1, the proposal of the Moderate Party (the Swedish right) and the nuclear industry, received 18.7% of the vote. It called for putting twelve reactors into operation over the next twenty-five years.

Line 2 got 39.3%. This proposition was supported by the Social Democrats, the People's Party (liberals), and the trade-union officialdom. It called for putting twelve reactors in operation over the next twenty-five years, which would then be phased out. All reactors were to be owned by the state (80% of the industry is already state-owned).

Together, these two pronuclear positions got 58% of the vote.

The antinuclear movement supported Line 3, which called for dismantling the six reactors now in operation in a maximum of ten years. It was also supported by the Center Party (the party of Premier Thorbjörn Fälldin) and the Left Party of Communists (VPK). This proposition got 38.6%.

But the result was only a temporary defeat for the antinuclear movement in Sweden. Already on the night after the referendum, leaders of the movement announced that opponents of nuclear power would continue the struggle until the last reactor is dismantled.

And the vote of 1,815,083 Swedes for Line 3 was an impressive display of opposition to nuclear power. It bodes well for the future.

But why did the antinuclear movement lose the vote? This is one of the biggest mass movements in Swedish history. It has drawn hundreds of thousands of people into the streets.

The answer is clear. The reason is the role of the Social Democratic leadership in confusing many Swedish working people who have grave questions about nuclear power but still look to these misleaders for answers to social and political problems. It

is estimated that of those who had not decided how to vote on the day before the referendum, 70% ended up voting for the Social Democrats' proposal, Line 2.

Palme used sleight-of-hand to present an *expansion* to twelve reactors as a "sensible policy" to "phase out" nuclear power. He claimed that a vote for Line 3 would mean chaos for jobs, wages, and living standards.

Despite all this, more than 15% of the Social Democratic voters cast their ballots for Line 3. In Göteborg, a major center of the automotive industry, Line 3 got 41%, the largest single vote. Line 2 got only 35.1% there, and Line 1 got 20.6 percent. This is a major advance for the antinuclear forces.

Nonetheless, in other centers of heavy industry—Sandviken, Karlskoga, and Surahammar—Line 2 got nearly an absolute majority. This shows that the antinuclear movement has an important task ahead in convincing industrial workers of the need to halt nuclear power.

On the night of the referendum, Premier Fälldin announced that he would follow the results and administer the expansion of nuclear power. The next day, however, he began to hesitate. In view of the number of

people who voted for Line 3, he said, the twelfth reactor would not be fueled.

This infuriated Fälldin's coalition partners, Ola Ullsten, leader of the People's Party, and Gösta Bohman, leader of the Moderate Party.

Right now the Swedish antinuclear movement—the *Folkkampanj*—is beginning discussions about how to carry the struggle forward. The highest priority is to stop the Barsebäck reactor. Since this installation directly threatens Copenhagen, the Danish antinuclear movement, including several unions, is also fighting to shut this reactor down.

The Swedish antinuclear movement will also be building opposition to the fueling of the Forsmark 1 and Ringhals 3 reactors, which are now ready to go into operation.

In addition, the company that wants to mine uranium in Sweden is now saying it will definitely begin digging before the end of the year in Västgötland, just outside Skövde in southern Sweden.

So, the Swedish antinuclear movement has plenty to do in mobilizing *in action* the enormous antinuclear sentiment demonstrated in the referendum and convincing hundreds of thousands of others to join in.

## Protest Marks Three Mile Island Anniversary

One year ago, the Unit 2 nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania, overheated and began spewing radioactive gas into the atmosphere. On March 28 and 29, thousands of central Pennsylvania residents turned out to mark that grim anniversary, and to protest plans to release more radioactive gas from the crippled reactor.

A series of actions—a vigil, a speak-out of local residents, a nationally televised debate on nuclear power, and a candlelight march—culminated in a rally of more than 8,000 people.

Nancy Cole, from the U.S. socialist weekly, the *Militant*, was on the scene. She reported in the April 11 *Militant*:

"There is a striking difference between the mood I observed here one year ago and that of today. [For Cole's report immediately after the accident, see *IP/I*, April 16, 1979, p. 382.]

"Last year the unthinkable accident had just happened. Thousands had been evacuated from their homes. The conspiracy

between Met Ed [the company that operated the reactor] and the government agency entrusted with protecting the public was becoming painfully evident.

"Fear was the prevailing sentiment, along with helplessness in the face of such powerful adversaries.

"The fear is still there, as it should be considering the unpredictable nuclear monster still inside the Unit 2 reactor.

"But the people here genuinely believe they will win out over Met Ed and the government.

"The accident has transformed housewives into full-time movement organizers. Apolitical fathers into antinuclear activists. Grandmothers into traveling demonstrators."

The spirit found by Cole was expressed by one woman at the speak-out who declared: "I'm sick and tired of being lied to. . . . And I intend to fight. I'm going to stay, I'm going to work with groups. I'll do anything in my power." □