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Carter Targets Iranian Revolution ... and Misses



NICARAGUA

Sandinistas Announce Worker-Peasant Majority in Council of State

Dutch Working Class at a Turning Point?

Carter's Target: Gains of Iran Revolution

By Fred Feldman

Why did Carter do it?

That the "rescue mission" was undertaken with complete disregard for the lives of the U.S. hostages in Tehran is clear.

In fact, Carter's actions against Iran have never had anything to do with the safety of the hostages.

From the first months of 1979, when millions of Iranians succeeded in driving the shah from power, Washington's goal has been to reverse the revolution and to prevent other peoples from following the example of the Iranian workers and farmers.

Down to the last days of the shah's reign, Carter declared full confidence in this butcher.

Washington backed the shah because he helped preserve and multiply the profits of the big U.S. corporations—above all, big oil.

The shah also acted as a policeman for Washington, protecting big oil's interests throughout the Persian Gulf.

When the shah was toppled, all that began to change—fast.

Iran's workers, peasants, and oppressed nationalities began to make major gains, winning democratic freedoms and improvements in their social and economic conditions. The Carter administration wanted to stop this process, fearing that it could lead to a socialist revolution. The U.S. rulers have watched with dismay as the revolution deepened. They do not believe that the Iranian government is capable of bringing things under control.

So, Washington wants to get rid of the current government and replace it with a dictatorial regime like that of the shah—one that can halt the revolution and crush Iranian working people.

Washington faces two big obstacles, however.

One is the unprecedented mobilization of tens of millions of Iranians, and their readiness to risk their lives for the gains they have won.

The other is the deep opposition of the American people to any new Vietnams.

To overcome these obstacles, Washington has been making a concerted effort—beginning well before the embassy was occupied—to whip up hatred of the Iranian revolution.

The Iranian people have been portrayed as mad fanatics, while the shah was pictured as a modernizer.

American workers were told that Iranian oil workers were the cause of oil "shortages," long gas lines, and soaring prices.

That lie has fallen apart. The identity of the real culprit is evident in the multi-billion dollar profit figures of Exxon, Texaco, Mobil, and the other oil giants.

Then last November, Carter provoked the embassy takeover by inviting the shah to this country. U.S. diplomats in Iran had warned that hatred of the shah was so strong that this could provoke an embassy occupation.

Since then, Carter's moves have blocked the road to a just settlement of the dispute.

He began by trying to whip up an anti-Iranian frenzy in the United States. The U.S. government harassed and threatened to deport Iranians, encouraging racist attacks against them.

Carter refused to negotiate with any Iranian officials.

As extradition proceedings against the shah were about to begin in Panama, where he had been placed after leaving the United States, the U.S. State Department arranged to have him spirited away to Egypt.

When some Iranian officials began making conciliatory statements, Carter declared that Washington would never apologize for imposing and supporting the shah's regime.

A tightening economic blockade was imposed on Iran and increasing pressure put on Washington's allies to go along with economic sanctions.

And a drumfire of military threats including the positioning of a U.S. naval armada off Iran's shores, kept tensions at a high pitch.

But the American people did not react as

Carter hoped. After the initial shock and anger many experienced after the embassy was occupied, they have been finding out more about the crimes of the shah and Washington's role in Iran.

They don't want war with Iran, or with any other people fighting for a better life.

More and more American people are coming to realize that it is Carter who endangers the lives of the hostages by his support to the shah and his military moves against Iran.

To try to block the spread of knowledge about the real situation in Iran, Carter on April 17 banned travel to Iran and tried to curtail U.S. news coverage from there.

Adding to Washington's problems, it has gotten little support from its imperialist allies in Western Europe and Japan for tougher sanctions against Iran, much less military action.

In response to Washington's moves, Iran announced new trading agreements with the Soviet Union, Romania, and East Germany. Tehran radio announced April 23 that in the event of a naval blockade by Washington, the Soviet Union had agreed to supply Iran by land.

It was in this context of a steadily weakening position that Carter undertook the gamble of sending U.S. troops into Iran. The White House may have hoped that the death of some or all of the hostages—a certain consequence of a raid on Tehran—would galvanize public sentiment behind its aggressive course.

But whatever the real military objectives of the disastrous mission, which cannot be fully known at this time, the political objective was certainly to reverse the ebbing of U.S. public support for the anti-Iranian campaign.

In this regard the mission can already be counted a fiasco for Washington. Its aftermath is certain to be the realization by more and more Americans that the way to end the embassy crisis peacefully overnight is to grant the simple and just demands of the Iranian people. □

U.S. Story Raises More Questions than It Answers

By Gus Horowitz

At least eight American troops died and five more were injured on Iranian soil April 24 as a military operation ordered by President Carter against Iran ended in failure.

The operation, presented by Carter as an attempt to rescue the hostages in Tehran, was said to be only in the initial phase, at a staging area in the Iranian desert, 360 miles from Tehran, when helicopter malfunction caused it to be canceled. The deaths and injuries occurred when a helicopter collided with a C-130 transport plane, engulfing both in flames, according to U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown.

The account of the debacle presented afterwards by Carter and Brown received a distrustful and disbelieving response throughout the United States and internationally.

How could a "rescue mission" be carried out without serious fighting and much loss of life, including the lives of the hostages? To this obvious question, asked twice at his news conference, Brown could only answer by evasion.

The initial staging operation in the desert involved, according to Brown, six huge C-130 transport planes, eight helicopters, and almost 200 troops. He refused to

say how much more force would have been used in the more difficult part of the operation in Tehran, merely saying that it would have been successful.

But a military operation of this type would have had to include contingency plans. For example, the U.S. troops seized and held a busload of fifty Iranians who happened to be riding by. What would they have done in an encounter with Iranian troops?

Such an encounter was a certainty if the U.S. force moved toward Tehran. Washington would have had to be preparing for a clash involving hundreds, probably thousands of troops. The chances that many hostages would survive were slim.

Clearly, the Carter administration had a broader objective in mind.

Carter hinted at it when he tied the timing of the operation to "the steady unraveling of authority in Iran."

Brown was more explicit when he talked of the "considerable disorder in the streets in Iran."

Carter and Brown were alluding to the continuing revolutionary ferment in Iran that threatens imperialist interests in the area.

"The crisis," Brown said, "has been heightening tensions in what is already a volatile and vital region. There is a need to resolve that crisis. . . ."

"I am convinced that a successful rescue would have affected [the situation] favorably."

The main purpose of the operation, in other words, was to deal a blow to the Iranian revolution.

The result of the debacle, however, adds to the discredit of U. S. imperialism in the region.

And it has further exposed the duplicity of the Carter administration in the crisis over Iran. Iranian Foreign Minister Sadegh Ghotbzadeh called Carter's move "an act of war"—an opinion that many in the region share.

Planning for the adventure was begun in November, Carter and Brown now admit. There were "many practice exercises," said Brown, and "training was exhaustive."

All the while, Carter repeatedly promised the American people that he had ruled out that type of military operation as too risky.

The exposure of that big lie raises a series of additional questions about the whole affair.

Exactly how big an operation was planned? How far was Carter willing to go in his contingency plans?

Are there any American forces still in Iran, as Iranian radio has charged? Was Brown lying when he said that there were no U.S. troops in Iranian uniform and no U.S. equipment with Iranian markings? What about those who spoke excellent Farsi, the main language of Iran, as described by the Iranians held captive?

What governments allowed the C-130s to land on their way? Were they Egypt, Israel, and Bahrain, as reports in the news media indicated? What is the explanation for reports that the West European embassies in Tehran were evacuated a few days beforehand? How far does international complicity extend?

Even prior to this adventure, the American people had become increasingly opposed to any military action in Iran.

This is the explanation for the reaction in Congress, where several representatives and senators recently charged Carter with

violating the 1973 War Powers Resolution requiring congressional approval before committing American troops to combat.

The War Powers Resolution was passed during the Vietnam War, over then-President Nixon's veto. It was an attempt to assure the American people that there would be no repetition of the government lying and double-dealing that were used to drag us into the Vietnam War.

Now that Carter has proved those assurances to be hollow, it can be expected that public opposition will grow to Washington's conduct in the crisis over Iran. □

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Iranians Celebrate Failure of Carter's Military Raid

By Janice Lynn

As word of Washington's abortive military raid spread throughout Iran April 25, the national mood was one of jubilation.

Spontaneous crowds gathered in the streets chanting, "Islam is victorious, America is destroyed!" More than 10,000 people converged on the U.S. embassy to demonstrate their joy. That night, people shouted the popular chant "Allah-u Akbar! [God is great!] from windows and rooftops. (During the revolutionary upsurge against the shah last year, this was one of the main slogans signifying massive defiance.)

The marches continued throughout the next day, as well.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini immediately went on radio to denounce the U.S. military aggression. In a statement broadcast April 25, he declared, "Carter still has not realized what sort of nation he is facing." Khomeini reaffirmed that the Iranian nation "spares no sacrifice to achieve its freedom, independence and for the cause of dear Islam."

"Carter must realize that attacking Iran is tantamount to an attack on all Moslem countries," Khomeini continued, stressing "that world Moslems are not indifferent to this."

He called on "the army and the gendarmerie and the corps of revolutionary guards" to "go on alert." And above all, he called on the "20-million strong army, having already equipped itself," to "be ready to sacrifice itself for Islam."

On April 26 the students moved the hostages out of the embassy to various locations throughout Tehran. They announced that the hostages would be moved from there to other cities and towns throughout the country "so that we shall not have to kill the spies in case of a repetition of a foolish act by the American Government."

The students explained:

In order to remove any pretext of aggression from the criminal Carter and in order for the entire brave Iranian nation to have a direct role in keeping the hostages, and so that the U.S. will know that such filthy methods will not result in the release of the hostages, we decided to keep the hostages in different cities throughout the country.

The militants called on the "revolutionary youth of Islam in every city" to beware of any plots and suspicious moves. From the beginning of the embassy occupation, the students have had the support of the Iranian masses, who have repeatedly turned out by the hundreds of thousands in anti-imperialist mobilizations.

In defiance of Washington's aggression,

the students are continuing to rely on this mass support by sharing responsibility for guarding the hostages.

Iran's envoy to the United Nations, Mansour Farhang, labeled Carter's actions "a blatant act of invasion." Farhang made a point that is beginning to dawn on growing numbers of Americans when he said that "the United States Government is ready to sacrifice the hostages in its continuing attempts to destabilize and discredit" the Iranian revolution.

Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr asserted at an April 26 news conference that the invasion was part of a larger plot by Washington to overthrow the Iranian government. Joining Bani-Sadr at the news conference was Barbara Timm, the mother of Kevin Hermening, the youngest of the Americans in the embassy.

"We deeply regret the actions of our President," Mrs. Timm told Bani-Sadr as the cameras rolled. "We would like to apologize for that action."

Adding that she was also speaking for the family of hostage John Graves, Mrs. Timm said: "We have been welcomed into your community. We have felt safe in your town before the action of the President and we feel safe now."

At the press conference, reporters asked President Bani-Sadr to comment on the possibility that some Iranians in Tehran had been involved in the U.S. plan. He

replied that there were indications of that.

Revolutionists inside Iran report widespread popular suspicion over the fact that the Iranian army and air force had not detected the American planes or helicopters as they crossed into Iranian territory. U.S. officials have admitted that CIA agents and special American military forces had been infiltrated into Tehran early this year using forged foreign passports and that these agents were working with Iranians inside the country opposed to the revolution. Many Iranians believe that there are still pro-shah forces at the top levels of the Iranian officer corps.

On April 26, Iranian officials sent a squad to the remote desert area where the U.S. aircraft had landed. They filmed the scene and then blew up the helicopters that the U.S. raiding party left behind. In the process, one Iranian was killed and two others wounded.

American officials had indicated that classified documents with details of the mission may have been left behind in the wreckage. Some maps and other material was displayed for reporters at the U.S. Embassy April 27.

Iranians are searching the area surrounding the desert landing spot in case any U.S. military personnel remained behind. They are also on the lookout for the U.S. agents who had infiltrated into Tehran. □

'One Reckless Step After Another'

Worldwide Anger at U.S. Raid on Iran

By David Frankel

Except for Washington's imperialist allies and a handful of its most subservient clients, governments throughout the world forcefully condemned the U.S. military attack on Iran. An important factor in the sharp reaction was the fear that such actions on the border of the Soviet Union could lead to a broader war.

Strong support for Iran was immediately expressed by the Soviet government. "President J. Carter takes one reckless step after another," warned the Soviet news agency Tass.

Blasting Carter's "dangerous road," Tass said, "The hostages are only a pretext for pursuing an aggressive, hegemonistic American policy aimed at making Iran submit to its imperialist diktat and

bolstering the American presence in the Near and Middle East."

This marks a significant shift for Moscow, which had initially backed U.S. diplomatic initiatives in the United Nations and condemned the occupation of the U.S. embassy as a breach of international law.

Moscow was not alone in its reaction to the U.S. attack on Iran. The Indian government expressed "concern and regret" at Carter's "military adventurism," which it said threatened "the stability and peace of the West Asian region."

Declaring its "shock and dismay" at Washington's "adventurous" move, the Pakistani government pledged to stand by Iran in its "struggle to defend its sovereignty and national honor."

Cuban President Fidel Castro vowed "fraternal solidarity" against the "serious threats of armed aggression by the Yankee imperialists." In a message to Ayatollah Khomeini, Castro said that "you and your people can count on the sympathy and support of the Cuban revolution."

Syria's official radio called the U.S. commando raid "an act of piracy and aggression" against the Iranian revolution.

In Lebanon, guns were fired in celebration over the U.S. defeat, and congregations at Friday prayers were told that Carter's failure showed that "Allah is on the side of the Moslem people of Iran."

The Palestine Liberation Organization declared its support of "the Iranian revolution against such aggressive American attempts."

Reflecting the popular sentiment in the Arab world, the government-controlled press in the Persian Gulf oil states were highly critical of Carter's move. The Saudi newspaper *Al Jazira* said there was no justification for military moves against Iran, while the Kuwaiti paper *Al Rai al-Aam* called the raid on Iran "an act of terrorism." Newspapers in the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain said the action had endangered the stability of the region.

Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency, carried reports on the U.S. attack, but failed to make any statement of solidarity with Iran.

Although none of Washington's imperialist allies openly condemned the raid, there was an obvious lack of enthusiasm on the part of many. The French government said nothing at all, except to note that it had not been informed of the move in advance.

A front-page editorial in the influential Paris daily, *Le Monde*, called the commando action "the poor man's Bay of Pigs," saying that as a result of the failure "the credibility of the United States will suffer again. . . ."

"What is one to think of the effectiveness of a military apparatus upon which the security of half the planet depends if it is incapable of landing two planes in a desert even before the enemy has intervened? What remains of the Carter doctrine that claims to protect Western interests in the whole region of the Gulf?"

As expected, Carter received strong support from the Tory government in Britain. But the opposition Labour Party warned that the U.S. action was a threat to world peace. "The world will be holding its breath this weekend. It is important that the governments of the West make plain to the United States that warlike measures will not work," said party foreign affairs chief Peter Shore.

"Shock and anger" was the way *New York Times* correspondent James P. Sterba described the reaction in Japan.

According to *Washington Post* correspondent Leonard Downie, "Japanese For-

eign Minister Saburo Okita described the U.S. action as 'regrettable,' and said Japan found it difficult to understand. The Italian government said Italy had expressed its 'clear opposition to the recourse to actions of force in any circumstance for the liberation of the hostages.'"

But Carter was able to count on unstinting support from one head of state. Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat told reporters April 25 that the U.S. debacle in Iran

Americans Express Anger, Fear, Distrust

As news of the U.S. commando raid on Iran was learned in the United States, top Democratic and Republican party leaders and the capitalist media tried to cushion the effect of the debacle at home.

"Whatever our other differences, we are one nation in our commitment to the hostages," said Senator Edward Kennedy.

Ronald Reagan, the front-runner for the Republican Party presidential nomination, declared it is "a time for us, as a nation and as a people to stand united."

"Good try" was the opinion expressed by an April 26 editorial in the *Washington Post*. "At this point," said the editors of the *New York Times*, "we can regret only the failure, not the attempt."

But even in these high circles, few were eager to be too closely identified with the abortive operation, as shown, for example, by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's apparent decision to resign. Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Frank Church, and other powerful figures raised questions about Carter's failure to consult more broadly, about the timing of the raid, or about his violation of the War Powers Act, which requires the president to clear military action with Congress.

Among the masses of American working people, there was widespread anger over the danger to the hostages caused by Carter's move. There was also fear over the possibility of an escalation of military moves leading to war. And there was distrust of the government's motives.

Anger was expressed most sharply by families of the hostages. Barbara Timm, mother of hostage Kevin Hermening, was in Tehran at the time of the raid to visit her son in the embassy and gain a firsthand understanding of the situation there.

"There is absolutely no need to have military action," Mrs. Timm said after hearing of the raid. "I'm angry that our president would move in with military force. . . . I think it's time the American people started asking what the cause of the [embassy] takeover was."

Sarah Rosen, the mother of hostage Barry Rosen, said of Carter: "He's trying to kill them." She continued: "This Carter. This Carter. It seems like all he's interested in is running for the White House.

"should not dishearten more action to free and rescue the hostages." Sadat continued:

"I have promised the American people that I shall give facilities for the rescue of the hostages and for the rescue of any Arab state on the Gulf. This is my policy."

After this latest "rescue," however, Sadat would do better to ban the use of Egyptian bases for such adventures. That would be a real favor to the American people, and to the people of the world. □

"What has he done? What has he done to my boy Barry? His politics has got my boy's life in a stranglehold."

Bonnie Graves, wife of hostage John Graves, responded to news of the raid by asking: "Eight deaths for what? I hope to God that the Iranians are capable of restraint in the situation."

Turning to Carter's decision, Graves declared: "I just can't imagine how he could do such an ignorant thing."

Louisa Kennedy, whose husband is a hostage, said she was "appalled" by the raid. "Military action to us means that we probably would not get our people home," she said.

These sentiments were widely echoed by American working people. "In Denver, a radio poll showed that many citizens were furious with the President because they believed the rescue was an impossible mission that risked the lives of the hostages." (*New York Times*, April 26.)

In Washington, D.C., antidraft and antiwar activists picketed the White House, bringing out 100 people on three hour's notice.

In New York, a dozen organizations and individuals held a news conference to denounce the U.S. aggression. Women Strike for Peace condemned the action as "bringing us closer to a military confrontation which, in a nuclear age, can mean a nuclear war."

The U.S. Peace Council insisted that Carter should "facilitate the return of the shah and his stolen wealth to Iran" and urged "an immediate and complete withdrawal of all U.S. military forces from the Middle East."

The Socialist Workers Party responded quickly and vigorously. A special four-page supplement to the *Militant*, was put out on one-day's notice and sold at an antinuclear demonstration of some 25,000 held in Washington, D.C., April 26.

Speakers at the rally who blasted Carter's military action against Iran were especially well received, and the next day's *Washington Post* coverage of the action was headlined "Nuclear Power and Iran Raid Condemned."

Among those most upset by the outcome of Carter's attack on Iran were employees of the Pentagon. "The mood was dark,"

reported *New York Times* correspondent Bernard Weinraub after checking things out there April 25.

"It's unbelievable," said an Army lieutenant colonel. "Can't we have military

operations without an accident? Can't we have helicopters that work? I mean, it's unbelievable!"

Another Pentagon employee plaintively asked, "Can't we do anything right?" □

Lies, Lies and More Lies

By Janice Lynn

"The President has made no decision, not even a tentative decision, to embark on such a course. . . ."

—White House chief of staff Hamilton Jordan, April 23, referring to Carter's military options.

The very next day, Carter ordered U.S. troops into Iran.

The lies and secrecy about the latest U.S. aggression are part of a consistent pattern of lies by Washington. Throughout the Iran crisis it has tried to deceive the American people about its real actions and aims.

Lie Number One

"No one in the government of the United States has apologized to anyone in the government of Iran because we have nothing for which to apologize," Carter said last month.

Nothing to apologize for?

On March 2, one of the most widely watched television programs, *60 Minutes*, carefully documented every major charge the Iranian people have made against the U.S. government:

- how the CIA put the shah back in power in 1953;
- how the CIA organized SAVAK, the shah's secret police, and trained its agents in "interrogation techniques";
- how torture on a massive scale was practiced under the shah.

Lie Number Two

Washington repeatedly denied it had any intention of interfering with the new government that came to power after the shah was driven out last year.

On April 20, the *New York Times* revealed that Carter had sent General Robert Huyser to Tehran to try to organize a coup that could block the victory of the antishah revolution. U.S. officials admitted, "The purpose was to install a military government."

Huyser was ordered to draw up plans for a coup and Washington ordered a navy tanker to stand off the coast to supply fuel to the shah's military forces, if needed. But Washington's plans were foiled by the struggles of the Iranian masses, and General Huyser left Iran.

Lie Number Three

"Completely false" was how American officials reacted to charges of U.S. spying in Iran.

Yet these officials admitted April 25 that "American intelligence operatives" had "infiltrated into Tehran during recent months" in connection with the planned invasion.

When the students occupied the embassy last November they found: classified documents labeled "Top Secret"; shredded papers; a shredding machine; pieces of electronic equipment. The Iranian people labeled the U.S. Embassy the "spy nest."

Washington vehemently denied these charges. It maintained the embassy personnel were merely diplomats.

But the students persisted. They released secret documents. They exhibited forged passports and displayed memoranda showing how various embassy posts were just covers for intelligence operations.

Washington still denied the charges.

Then on April 9, one of the hostages appeared on television and revealed a hidden bundle of wires he explained were used by the CIA to monitor Iranian radio and computers. He told how the defense attaché had set up a spy ring in Iran. He explained how the computer building had been disguised as a supply depot. And he told how aerial surveillance was organized out of the embassy.

"Hardly credible" said State Department spokesperson David Passage.

But on April 9, U.S. government officials were forced to admit that it is taken for granted "that embassy personnel and facilities are engaged in intelligence-gathering activities."

Lie Number Four

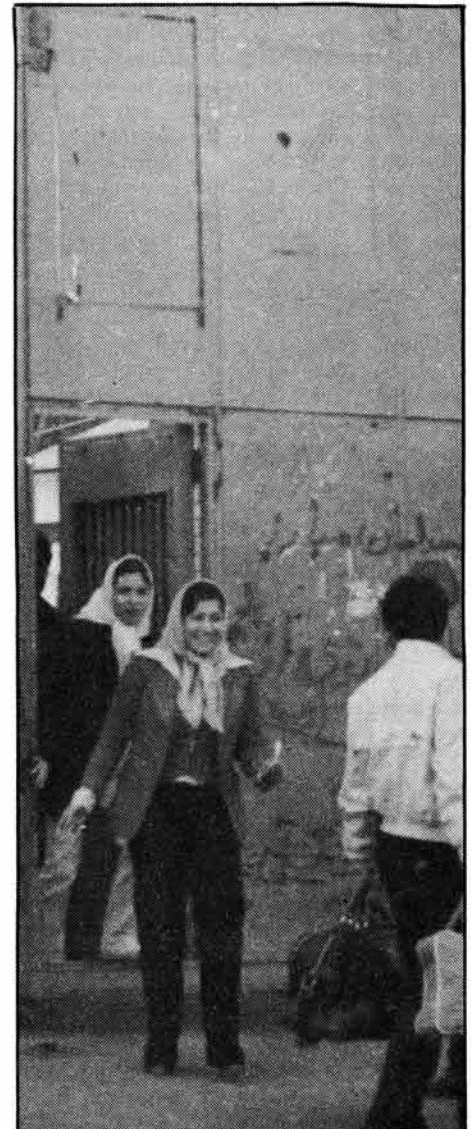
Carter continues to insist that the shah was admitted to this country for "humanitarian reasons"—that he was "a dying man."

A letter in the April 22 *New York Times* from a staff member of *Medical World News* reveals that the shah's "urgent, life-threatening problem was gall stones—not cancer"—a simple matter that could have been easily taken care of in Mexico.

Lie Number Five

From the beginning, Carter maintained that the hostages were being tortured. The Iranian students and Iranian government said no.

Then representatives of the International Red Cross and American clergy visited the hostages. They contradicted the



Kargar
HKE members, Fatima Fallahi (right) and Mahsa Hashemi leave Evin prison upon their release April 14. Deepening of Iranian revolution led to this victory.

lurid tales circulated by the State Department.

"I saw fit people to whom I could talk to normally," the Red Cross representative reported.

On April 21, Barbara Timm, mother of hostage Kevin Hermening, visited her son. "The government has said these people are brainwashed, but I can't agree," reported Mrs. Timm after her visit. She confirmed that Kevin seemed in "excellent physical health" and emotionally unchanged.

* * *

In every instance what the Iranian people have been saying has shown to be true, while Washington's allegations have turned out to be nothing but lies, lies, and more lies! □

Why Carter Fears 'Unraveling Authority' in Iran

By Janice Lynn

In his 7 a.m. televised address April 25, President Carter referred to "the steady unraveling of authority in Iran" as a major factor behind his decision to take military action there.

"Time does not seem to be on the side of stability in Iran," editorialized the *New York Times* the following day, defending Washington's aggression.

And Secretary of Defense Harold Brown explained the "timeliness" of the raid by pointing to "the deteriorating security situation" and "considerable disorder in the streets" of Iran.

The imperialist rulers are clearly worried about the deepening of the Iranian revolution. They are frightened that Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr will not be able to contain the aspirations of the Iranian people or halt the advance of the Iranian working people who are continuing to fight for their demands.

Bani-Sadr Tries to Assert Authority

The occupation of the U.S. Embassy last November gave a big impetus to the anti-imperialist struggle throughout Iran. It spurred forward the struggles by workers for increased control over decisions in the factories and other workplaces; the struggles by peasants for land; and the struggles by the oppressed nationalities for their national rights.

The government of President Bani-Sadr, recoiling against the tendency of these struggles to go beyond the capitalist framework, is desperately trying to establish its authority.

Earlier this year, Bani-Sadr launched bitter verbal attacks against the militant students occupying the embassy, accusing them of behaving like "a government within a government." When massive demonstrations assembled outside the embassy to support the students, however, the government was unable to make any moves against them.

In another attempt to assert its authority, the government has relaunched an offensive against the oppressed Kurdish nationality. But here again, government forces have met stiff resistance from the Kurdish population (see page 449).

And the government has begun stressing more insistently that the workers *shoras* [committees] in the factories have outlived their usefulness. Oil Minister Ali Akbar Moinefar recently fired several leaders of the oil workers shora in Abadan. When these workers came to Tehran to protest the firing, they were thrown into jail.

This was the background to recent events on Iranian campuses that led the government to step in, hoping to prevent a further deepening of the revolution and any further erosion of governmental authority.

Fact and Fiction About Campuses

Reports of these campus events in the capitalist media around the world have been totally distorted and confused. An account by Iranian socialists of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) stands in stark contrast to those in the bourgeois press.

Members of the HKE report that this is how the events began.

Groups of anti-imperialist students called Islamic Student Organizations (ISOs)*—connected with the militants occupying the U.S. Embassy—conceived of a plan to revolutionize the universities throughout Iran.

Many ISO members are the same students who, through the mosques, organized massive demonstrations in late 1978 and early 1979 that succeeded in overthrowing the shah. With the success of the revolution, they put their energies into working to rebuild the country.

These militant anti-imperialist young people quickly saw that former Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan was neither moving towards genuine independence for Iran, nor taking measures to solve the country's problems. Following Bazargan's widely publicized but closed-door meeting with top U.S. officials in Algiers—at the very time that Washington was playing host to the shah—a group of these students took decisive action; they occupied the U.S. Embassy to protest Washington's admission of the shah and to demand his extradition to Iran.

The Bazargan government was forced to resign.

Following Bani-Sadr's election as president in January, many ISO members hoped that he would take decisive measures to further the revolution. But they have been frustrated at Bani-Sadr's inaction.

As a result, the ISOs decided to take another initiative on their own to spur the revolution forward. They formulated a plan to occupy the universities and trans-

form them into centers to serve the needs of the anti-imperialist struggle. They planned to mobilize the masses in support of their actions. They held meetings in the working-class neighborhoods to explain the necessity of transforming the universities.

The ISOs explained that the universities should be teaching needed industrial, agricultural, and technical skills and carrying out literacy campaigns to fulfill the present needs of the country. They said that the campuses should also be centers for training the army of 20 million in defense of the revolution.

According to the HKE, the first ISO-led occupation began at the University of Tabriz. Within the next few days, occupations extended to other campuses throughout the country.

The ISOs declared that the campuses should be closed down and the students sent out to work on revolutionary projects. Meanwhile, the educational system should undergo a revolutionary transformation and be put at the service of the oppressed.

How Various Currents Responded

The HKE and its youth group, the Young Socialists, called on "every anti-imperialist militant to support the action of the ISOs."

However, a wide spectrum of forces opposed the ISOs' occupation of the campuses. According to an April 21 statement by the HKE, "The Tudeh [pro-Moscow Stalinist] Party, Mujahedeen, Fedayeen, Paykor and other so-called Marxist organizations, which always start from their own narrow, sectarian interests, have essentially opposed this brave action. These forces, under the pretext of defending the 'barricade of freedom' (these organizations think that reaction has taken over the country and that the campuses are the last bastion) have mobilized against the action of the ISOs."

The HKE pointed out that most of these organizations had also "remained outside the anti-imperialist barricades" during the mobilizations at the time the U.S. embassy was occupied late last year. "The logic of their sectarian opposition to the occupation of the spy den led them to see the occupation of the campuses by the ISOs as a 'reactionary wave' and to fight against it," the HKE statement explained.

In contrast to the position of these groups, the HKE declared:

The demand to revolutionize all the institutions inherited from the monarchy, which were under the control of capitalism, and to put all of them at the service of the advancement of the

*In this article the term ISOs (Islamic Student Organizations) is used to refer to two closely linked organizations: Anjomanha-ye Islami Daneshjooan-e (Islamic Student Councils) and Sazmanha-ye Daneshjooan-e Muselman (Muslim Students Organizations).

revolution and the struggle against U.S. imperialism has conquered the hearts of millions of oppressed Iranian people. The occupation of the campuses is a step toward the realization of this demand.

Revolutionary Council Steps In

The ruling Revolutionary Council feared that the government would lose even more authority if the ISOs succeeded in taking control of the universities. So, seeing the divisions between the ISOs and groups such as the Fedayeen as a convenient opportunity, the Revolutionary Council issued an ultimatum to all political organizations (including the ISO) to evacuate the campuses. This move, the HKE said, "was aimed at confusing public opinion and at the same time stopping the revolutionary action of the ISOs."

Bani-Sadr publicly criticized the ISOs for taking this initiative, accusing these students once again of weakening the authority of the government. He complained that such actions relegate the government to the role of spectator.

In the April 20 Tehran daily *Azedagan*, ISO members at the College of Social Communication and Sciences clearly differentiated the aims of the ISOs from the government's ban on political organizations:

Our aim is to transform the educational system rather than to prevent the activity of different groups. If tomorrow anyone poses the problem otherwise, they must know that by occupying the campuses our aim is to transform the incorrect educational system. The Revolutionary Council has made a mistake in posing the problem in a different way.

Taking advantage of this situation, the Iranian capitalists mobilized right-wing goon squads to attack the students of the Mujahedeen and Fedayeen, who remained

on the campuses in defiance of the government's evacuation order.

The HKE explained:

The 500 capitalist families, and all the capitalist politicians . . . want the institutions of society to be under their control and at the service of their interests. . . .

They fear that the occupation of the campuses will lead to the occupation of the factories, confiscation of the land by the peasants, and occupation of the ministries inherited from the time of the dictatorship. They are afraid of imperialism being uprooted from Iran.

It was these right-wing squads—not the Islamic students, as the bourgeois press would have us believe—who were responsible for the violence, including some twenty deaths, on the campuses. According to the HKE, on many campuses the ISOs left the universities, either at the time of the government order or as soon as confrontations broke out. On other campuses, the ISOs participated in defending the students from the rightist attacks.

The HKE strongly denounced the role of the capitalists in creating the confrontations and attempting to distort and misrepresent the intentions of the Islamic students. And the socialists strongly denounced the government's order banning political groups from the campuses.

"This action, which was against freedom and against freedom of speech, was not what the ISOs wanted," the HKE statement declared.

The HKE also pointed out that by opposing the ISOs occupations, the leaderships of the Tudeh Party, Fedayeen, and Mujahedeen not only "showed their bankruptcy," but also played into the hands "of the 500 capitalist families and their underground hit squads."

ISO members appeared on nationwide television to debate about the occupation

with leaders of the Fedayeen and Mujahedeen youth. They also defended their plan before thousands of Iranians at Friday prayer meetings throughout the country.

Contrary to press accounts, the HKE says, there is no escalating anticommunist campaign or witch-hunt against the Mujahedeen or Fedayeen in Iran today, despite attempts by the capitalists to create such a situation. There is anticommunism, including among some anti-imperialist militants, and there are victimizations by government and rightist forces. But the general revolutionary ferment has created a political atmosphere open to debate and discussion of differing viewpoints.

Purge Heritage of the Shah

"The experience of more than a year since the victory of the insurrection," the HKE said, "has shown that the government is not willing or able to fundamentally transform the society and break from the capitalists.

"And in the case of the universities, the government has no inclination at all to do this."

Given this situation, the HKE statement explained:

"The issue of the day is to purge the campuses of the heritage of monarchy and transform them into anti-imperialist fortresses. This will be the beginning of the struggle to revolutionize all institutions and put them at the service of the struggle of the oppressed against the influences of the imperialists and capitalists."

Calling on the workers shoras and popular organizations, the statement concluded, "Today we must organize support for the ISOs everywhere and come to the aid of these vanguard anti-imperialist militants!" □



Iranians at U.S. embassy congratulate students on failure of U.S. military raid.

Iranian Socialists: 'Halt Attacks on Kurds'

By Gerry Foley

Clashes have recently escalated between Iranian government forces and Kurds fighting for their national rights in that oppressed region of western Iran.

In the third week of April, the Iranian army mounted a major assault on the mountain town of Saqez, which was also the site of one of the first battles of the August-October 1979 Kurdish war.

Saqez is one of the largest towns in Iranian Kurdistan. It lies midway on the region's main north-south road. This is also the main road leading to the area along the Iraqi border where the Kurdish guerrilla redoubts are located.

Artillery bombardment of Saqez reportedly began on April 19 and was still continuing on April 22. A report issued by the Kurdish Democratic Party said that fifteen people inside the town had been buried under the wreckage of a dozen houses.

According to the April 22 *Le Monde*, Iranian military forces invaded the town, seized the hospital and communications center, and set up positions on the surrounding hills.

Kurdish sources in Tehran, the report continued, claimed that ten Kurds—eight civilians and two guerrillas—and forty Iranian soldiers had been killed in the fighting.

On April 19, a company of Iranian soldiers tried to break through a Kurdish blockade and march from an airport near Sanandaj, the capital of Kurdistan province, into the city. It was ambushed by guerrillas. About twenty soldiers died in the fighting.

Kurdish representatives in Tehran, *Le Monde* reported, said that about thirty persons had been killed in the clashes occurring around April 18-22.

Despite this renewed fighting, and the hopes of the imperialist press, it is not yet clear that a general conflict has resumed in the Kurdish areas. But clashes have been growing ever since at least the end of January. In early February, Revolutionary Guards attacked and occupied the town of Kamyaran, on the main road between Sanandaj and Kermanshah, the largest city in the Kurdish area, forcing most of the inhabitants to take refuge in Sanandaj.

On March 27, rural police, accompanied by armed civilians, attacked the Kurdish village of Qalatan near Ashnuye in the province of West Azerbaijan. Sixteen villagers were killed, and ten others were hit by bullets.

It was a systematic massacre. There

were only twenty-six people in the village at the time of the attack, mostly women and old men. The other inhabitants were working in the mountain fields. The people of the surrounding villages fled into the mountains to escape similar attacks.

The Kurdish national-religious leader, Sheikh Ezzedin Hosseini, issued a statement saying that local landlords had organized the raid.

In its April 2 issue, *Kargar*, the weekly paper of the Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE), raised an alarm about the increasing clashes in Kurdistan, as exemplified by the massacre in Qalatan.

The Kurdish people were part of the Iranian revolution, *Kargar* said. The attacks against Kurdistan were creating a division in the ranks of the Iranian people at the very time they face a deadly threat from U.S. imperialism.

"Why . . . are the army and rural police being sent into the Kurdish areas? Why are disasters like the slaughter in Qalatan

Kurdish Leader Says:

'We Will Defend Iran Against Iraq and Washington'

"The Kurdish people will defend Iran against any attack from outside, whether it comes from America or the Baathist regime in Iraq," declared Kurdish leader Sheikh Ezzedin Hosseini when the Iraqi government began stepping up its pressure against the Iranian revolution in early April.

"The Kurdish people throughout history have fought against aggressors," Hosseini said, "and today the guerrillas of Kurdistan will respond decisively to any attack on Iran."

Washington is using the rightist Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein as a pawn against the Iranian revolution. This makes conflicts between Tehran and the nationalities living along the Iraqi border particularly dangerous.

The Iraqi regime, which has been carrying out a campaign of genocide against the Kurdish population in its own country, has been trying to exploit the clashes in Iranian Kurdistan.

The fact that the Iranian military drove large numbers of Kurdish refugees into Iraq during the 1979 Kurdish war gave Baghdad a golden opportunity to get a foot in the door. It organized a phony Kurdish guerrilla force under its control, the Ruz-

taking place? Why isn't the army being sent to the Persian Gulf coast where our revolution faces the threat of the U.S. navy?"

"All the working people in every Persian city must raise their voices to demand that the Kurds be granted their national rights," *Kargar* said. "Victory in the struggle against imperialism demands the elimination of all forms of oppression and exploitation. This question must be put on the agenda of all the workers shoras [committees]."

In its April 9 issue, *Kargar* noted that the clashes in Kurdistan were escalating, and this now amounted to "a fratricidal war that the overwhelming majority of the Iranian people want ended."

What had led to these incidents, *Kargar* explained, was that the army was "staging maneuvers" in the Kurdish areas. The military had been ordered by President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr to disarm the population, *Kargar* commented.

"So, at a time when every rifle is needed for the fight against the Great Satan, American imperialism, and when there is an urgent need to build the army of 20 million people that the Imam has called for, Bani Sadr has decided to disarm an oppressed nationality that has suffered under the yoke of imperialism." □

gari army. It has also tried to use the conflict in a political campaign against the Iranian government.

However, as shown by Hosseini's statement, Kurdish leaders have maintained a solid front against the Iraqi government's maneuvers. They have demonstrated a clear understanding that victory in the fight against national oppression and exploitation in their area depends on the advance of the Iranian revolution as a whole.

The occupation of the U.S. Embassy was immediately hailed by the Kurdish fighters. Demonstrations in solidarity with the Tehran government took place, for example, in the Kurdish political center, Mahabad, which had only shortly before been liberated from central government occupation troops by a mass insurrection.

When the Kurdish people of Kamyaran were attacked, they turned for help to the working people throughout Iran.

Unfortunately, Iranian government officials have not responded in kind. As Hosseini pointed out:

"If the government would deal with internal problems such as the one in Kurdistan by means of discussion, it would be better able to take decisive action against American imperialism." □

Washington Stalls for Time in Mideast

By David Frankel

Another round in the seemingly endless Camp David diplomacy occurred in Washington in mid-April. Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin met separately with President Carter. The White House, as expected, claimed new progress toward an agreement on Palestinian autonomy. To bolster the illusion of progress, Begin announced non-stop negotiations until the May 26 target date for an autonomy agreement.

If there was ever an exercise in hypocrisy, it is these negotiations on the future of the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

The autonomy promised under the Camp David accords has been rejected by the Palestinians themselves from the very beginning as a travesty and as a conscious attempt to deny them their national rights. It is merely another name for Israeli rule.

Begin's renewed invasion of Lebanon the week before his U.S. visit, followed by stepped-up terrorist activity by Zionist-backed Lebanese rightists, further exposed the Camp David fraud. The Zionist regime claims the right to intervene in Lebanon whenever and however it chooses. How much autonomy will it grant Arab lands already under permanent Israeli occupation?

In fact, the Washington meetings offered no hope for even the kind of face-saving agreement on the Palestinians sought by Sadat. Begin told reporters that not only would Zionist colonization in the occupied territories continue, but that Carter had not even raised this issue with him during their two days of meetings.

Why, then, the never-ending meetings?

As the editors of the *New York Times* admitted April 18, those involved in the Camp David deal are "doing the only thing possible: stalling for time."

Washington's room for maneuver in the Middle East has narrowed since the fall of the shah of Iran last year.

On the one hand, almost all of the Arab regimes feel threatened by the Iranian revolution and would like to follow Sadat's example and lean on U.S. imperialism for support against their own people. On the other hand, the impact of the Iranian revolution among the workers and peasants of the region has made the taint of association with Washington riskier than ever. This has prevented the Jordanian and Saudi Arabian regimes from endorsing the Camp David deal.

At the same time, the threat of revolution increases Israel's importance to the imperialists as their only reliable outpost

in the Mideast. Yet U.S. support to the Israeli state constantly undermines Washington's diplomatic position in the Arab world and the legitimacy of the Arab regimes closest to Washington.

These are not conjunctural problems for Washington. The contradiction between imperialist domination of the Middle East and the interests of the oppressed peoples of the region is basic. It has been evident for decades—through U.S. support to the Zionist state, through U.S. support to the most backward and dictatorial regimes of the region, and through direct U.S. military intervention against the threat of popular revolution.

All these general problems have now taken on a new immediacy.

"For the time being," Joseph Kraft noted in the April 17 *Washington Post*, "the real question [for U.S. policymakers] is whether upheaval can be avoided in the interim necessary for development of a more favorable set of circumstances."

With the capitalist world heading into a new recession, however, and with the continuing influence of the Iranian revolution, there is no reason to think that a "more favorable set of circumstances" for imperialism is around the corner.

Everywhere they turn, Carter's advisers find new trouble spots. The capitalist press is openly speculating about which will be the next to erupt.

New York Times correspondent Youssef M. Ibrahim reported March 30: "President Sadat's repeated promises about 1980 being the dawn of prosperity for the hard-pressed Egyptians have failed to materialize. The new decade is beginning with inflation running at about 30 percent a year, signs of increasing repression by the Egyptian regime, and an almost total reliance on the United States for aid, food and weapons."

Egyptian workers lack decent housing—the government estimates that 12,000 houses collapse in Cairo every year.

While Sadat imports M60 tanks from the United States, Egyptian workers have to cling to the outside of buses to get to their jobs.

Wages are miserably low—meat is a luxury, and shortages of subsidized basic foodstuffs are common.

Sadat and his U.S. backers have not forgotten the January 1977 protests over food prices that brought Cairo, Alexandria, and other major cities to a standstill. These were the biggest antigovernment actions in Egypt since those in 1952 leading to the overthrow of the monarchy.

Despite this, international bankers are

demanding that Sadat again try to cut food subsidies.

"Western economists insist a major overhaul of the subsidy system is needed if Sadat wants to reduce a budget deficit of \$2.5 billion, about one-fifth of the Egyptian gross national product. The International Monetary Fund has made such a reduction a condition for new credits in negotiations now under way." (*Washington Post*, March 31.)

And Sadat's shelter of the shah has done nothing to increase domestic stability, as shown by the protests following the deposed tyrant's arrival there in late March.

Saudi Arabia also has the imperialists worried. Because of its great oil wealth, the Saudi monarchy is not as vulnerable as Sadat to pressures generated by the world economic crisis. But if anything, the social and political discontent may be greater than in Egypt.

Ferocious repression by the Saudi regime did not prevent the rebellion in Mecca last November, nor antigovernment protests in the eastern part of the country at the same time. Opposition to the monarchy, to its notorious corruption, and to its ties with Washington surfaced in all of these actions.

Pervasive corruption is "creating friction in Saudi society that could undermine the stability of the monarchy," *New York Times* correspondent Philip Taubman warned April 16.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad has been facing a growing opposition movement. *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent Helena Cobban recently reported "a rash of workers' strikes," including one by 15,000 oil workers in the northern Syria town of Rumeilan.

Despite the airlifting of commando units to Aleppo—an industrial and commercial center of some 2 million—a two-week general strike was carried out there in March. A second strike closed down Aleppo and the neighboring city of Hama on March 31. The demands were for freedom of expression, release of all political prisoners, free elections to a representative parliament, and a new government.

As in other semicolonial countries, political opposition in Syria has been heightened by inflation and shortages of basic consumer goods.

Although Assad's regime is not aligned with Washington on the diplomatic plane, revolution in Syria would not make things any easier for U.S. imperialism. On the contrary, such an upheaval would surely spill over into Lebanon, which remains poised on the edge of civil war. Nor could

the Jordanian monarchy escape the effects of such an event. Israeli intervention and a new Middle East war would be likely.

Sharing Syria's northern border and Iran's western border is Turkey. There, too, the impact of the Iranian revolution and the downturn of the world economy have resulted in a political crisis. The country, *Wall Street Journal* reporter Eric Morgenthauer declared April 16, "appears on the brink of chaos."

Inflation is running at about 100 percent a year, unemployment stands at about 25 percent, and shortages—especially of fuel—are endemic. Izmir, Turkey's third largest city and its main port, was recently paralyzed by a series of strike battles and clashes between workers and students and the police. The army had to be called in to put down the protests. Solidarity strikes tied up Istanbul and other cities, as well.

An April 15, a group of sixteen imperialist governments agreed to a \$1.2 billion loan to Turkey, based on the regime's plan for further austerity measures. As in Egypt, however, these measures are sure to lead to new protests. "For the Turk on the street," Morgenthauer noted, "the new austerity plan often means, as much as anything, huge increases in prices, which previously were controlled."

Moreover, as the editors of the *New York Times* pointed out April 21, the \$1.2 billion package "is less than half of what Turkey will need, annually, for the next five years to save it from economic and political disaster."

Of all the countries in the Middle East, Iraq appears right now to be the most stable. The Iraqi revolution of 1958 swept away the monarchy—one of the most servile proimperialist regimes in the world—and with it, some of the worst social abuses. In 1975 the Baghdad government, with the cooperation of the shah of Iran, was able to suppress the Kurdish nationalist movement that had previously fought the central government to a standstill. Finally, the regime's huge oil revenues have so far insulated it from the worst effects of the economic crisis.

But precisely because of this relative stability, the Iraqi regime is being pushed to the fore as the main regional force confronting the Iranian revolution.

With the cutback in Iranian oil production, Iraq is now the second-largest exporter of oil in the world. The Baghdad regime has worked together with the Saudis to hold down prices, seeing this as a way of undercutting Iran's economic position. The Iraqi regime has also offered to increase its oil production and to supply buyers who boycott Iranian oil.

Following the recent escalation of border clashes with Iranian forces, the Baghdad regime—acting with its customary cynical brutality—expelled some 20,000 people of Iranian descent. At least some of those expelled appear to have been Iraqi citizens.

As a cover for its moves to counter the Iranian revolution, the Iraqi regime—the butcher of Kurds within its own borders—has hypocritically postured as a champion of the oppressed Arab minority in the oil-producing region of Iran.

Not surprisingly, U.S. officials, according to reports from Washington, are "keeping a close watch on the Iraqi-Iranian dispute," and are "interested in exploring a new diplomatic opening with Iraq." (*New York Times*, April 10.)

At most, however, the Iraqi regime can only play an auxiliary role in holding back social revolution in the Middle East—a fact that is widely recognized in Washington.

The U.S. rulers know that in the last analysis they can only rely on their own troops and firepower against the rebellious workers and peasants of the region. That is why they are carrying out a military buildup in the area while working to turn around the deep antiwar attitudes at home that have tied their hands since Vietnam.

An indication of the unfavorable relationship of forces that Washington faces is that the Pakistani regime has already announced that it will back Iran in the event of U.S. military moves. General Zia, who turned down Washington's offer of \$400 million in economic and military aid following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, obviously has little confidence in U.S. imperialism's ability to control events. The sentiments of the Pakistani masses were made clear when they burned the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad last year.

It is doubtful if Washington could get even the sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf to go along with a military attack on Iran. As

Edward Cody put it in the April 17 *Washington Post*, "the presence of U.S. warships enforcing a blockade could set off a wave of outrage in the Arab world and force the gulf oil countries into measures they would rather avoid."

Former British Prime Minister Edward Heath warned against any U.S. attack on Iran in an article in the April 16 *New York Times*. "Without discreet Western policies," Heath said, "it will be difficult for moderate Arab regimes to pursue policies that are compatible with Western interests. . . ."

"Moreover, by failing to act discreetly, we could find ourselves unsettling the very societies whose cooperation we need. This is one of the main reasons why I support President Carter's reluctance to use military force in an attempt to free the hostages in Teheran."

Carter, of course, has been threatening to use precisely the military measures that Heath warned against. But these threats are being made after repeated setbacks for U.S. policies in Iran, not from a position of strength. And the fear is expressed—not just in European capitals, but in Washington as well—that military moves by Carter could bring down the whole house of cards.

At the same time, U.S. policy-makers—who, unlike Heath, shoulder the main responsibility for protecting imperialist interests around the world—confront more directly the vexing problem of what will happen to their world system if they are repeatedly unable to go through with their threats.

This is the real context of the diplomatic exchanges regarding the Camp David accords.

Sadat and Begin can meet with Carter, issue optimistic press handouts, and hold nonstop negotiating sessions until May 26 and beyond. But the real problem they face in arriving at a deal on the Palestinians that they can make stick is that the counterrevolutionary alliance agreed on at Camp David is being undercut by revolution more rapidly than it can be firmed up.

And the governments involved feel the sand shifting under their feet. One U.S. official summed up his impression by saying: "We are inexorably marching to a disaster. . . ." □

Step Forward for Anti-Zionist Forces in Israel

Activities Mark Fourth Anniversary of 'Day of the Land'

By Jan Vogt

HAIFA—Sunday, March 30, marked the fourth anniversary of the "Day of the Land," the day on which the whole Palestinian population within Israel rose up with

a single voice against the expropriation of Arab land. The general strike in 1976 resulted in six dead—protesters gunned down by the Israeli security forces.

But what was March 30? Why was there a general strike of the Palestinian population? What are the land expropriations?

The principal area affected by the expro-

priations is the Galilee, where the bulk of the Palestinian population is concentrated. That population has one of the highest birth rates in the world and has become a majority in the Galilee. This has worried the Israeli government, which is doing everything it can to colonize the area and create a Jewish majority there.

One of the methods, similar to what is being done in the West Bank, is the establishment of settlements—Jewish cities constructed in the heart of Arab areas. The land needed for these settlements is expropriated from the Arab owners. The government's intention of "Judaizing the Galilee" is now referred to as "developing the Galilee"—a more modern sounding and less openly racist term. But this "development" is for Jews only, and it is carried out on Arab land.

A classic example is the city of Carmiel, in which only Jews live on land that belonged to three Arab villages (Dir-el-Assad, Najef, and Bi'na). While Carmiel had electricity from the time it was founded in 1964, Dir-el-Assad and Bi'na lacked this basic service until 1977. Carmiel was constructed for Jews, and for Jews only. Every time an Arab tried to buy a house there, the request was rejected. Things reached the point of people collecting signatures against Arabs trying to move in.

The demographic problem is a very serious one from the point of view of any Zionist government. The Palestinians within Israel are seen as a time bomb. They represent 15 percent of the population (their numbers grew from 150,000 in 1948 to 620,000 in 1980), and the regime sees no way of stopping this growth or even neutralizing it, since not even partial solutions of the Carmiel type are making any progress.

In the Negev the situation is different because of the character that the expropriations took and the weight of the old patriarchal leadership. The Bedouins were also affected by the expropriations, since the cities of Dimona and Arad were built on their lands. In the beginning there were no protests, but with the passage of time the weight of the sheikhs (clan leaders) has been declining, and a new generation has been taking their place.

For a long time the sheikhs were loyal to the Israeli state, receiving all sorts of material benefits in return. However, the form of wealth most valued by the Bedouins is the land, since without that they cannot carry out agriculture or stock raising. Despite the loyalty of the Bedouin chiefs, the regime continued its policy of expropriations, which led in the latest instance to protest demonstrations by Bedouin youth, supported by Arab students from the University of Beer-Sheva.

Now that the "peace" with Egypt has been signed, the situation has become intolerable, since lands occupied by about 10,000 Bedouins are wanted for the con-

struction of the new civilian-military airport to replace those in the Sinai. But the state is not satisfied with the 80,000 dunams (one dunam is about one quarter acre) that it needs for the airport, and it is already trying to expel other families by force.

March 30, 1976, was the first time that the Palestinian people organized, went into the streets, and demonstrated against one of the many racist aspects of the Jewish state. The strike was not only against the expropriation of land, but objectively represented a struggle against Zionism.

The upsurge of the revolutionary movement around the world, and especially of the Palestinian resistance in the Middle East, along with the "reunification" [under Israeli rule] of the Palestinian people after the 1967 war, has had an impact on the Palestinians within the pre-1967 borders of Israel, resulting in a radicalization that is still on the rise.

The general strike organized by the "Council for the Defense of Arab Land" (dominated by the Israeli Communist Party, Rakah) was a total success and represented a repudiation of all the laws favoring the Jews at the expense of the Arabs. The fact that six demonstrators were killed reflected the amazement and confusion of the government and the "security forces," whose only response to such a demonstration was brutal repression, which further increased the opposition already existing among the Palestinian masses.

Four years have passed since the Day of the Land. The negotiations with Egypt are paralyzed; Begin is not ready to deal with the Palestinian problem, which is forcing Sadat to retreat, and forcing the U.S. government to exert public pressure on Israel.

Perhaps the U.S. government is now in the most difficult situation, since exerting meaningful pressure on Israel would weaken Washington's main political bastion in the Arab region. Clearly, this is not in its interest, especially now that the shah has fallen.

Sadat has the eyes of the Arab masses on him, especially those of the Egyptian people, who were deceived by the illusions of peace and a flourishing economy promised by him. If the U.S. government does not pressure Israel, Sadat might be forced to take his distance from Washington.

At the same time, the Jewish state faces an unprecedented economic crisis.

Inflation in Israel has reached the point where the price of basic products such as sugar and cooking oil has increased 374 percent and 456 percent respectively in the year since March 1979! (*Ha'aretz*, March 12, 1980.)

The standard of living is being drastically lowered. There are more than 40,000 families living in conditions of poverty, and juvenile delinquency is constantly

increasing. This is the paradise of the Jewish state! It is a real trap for the Jews themselves, not only for the Palestinians.

Despite all this, the Jewish workers have not yet gone into the streets, nor is there a process of radicalization among the Jewish population, which is still tied to its chauvinist interests above all, to the interests of the Jewish state as such, even at the cost of economic disaster. The historical interests of the Israeli Jews are in unity with the Palestinians, and their immediate interests are in increasing contradiction with their desire for a Zionist state.

There is not enough in the budget for hospitals, for housing, for education, but there is plenty for religious installations, for warplanes, and for everything relating to the "security" of the country.

The struggle against the expropriations was not restricted just to the Palestinian population inside Israel. The solidarity demonstrated by the Palestinians in the occupied territories shows that their combativity has not decreased, and that more than ever the Palestinians are a single people with a single destiny, rejecting all imperialist and Zionist attempts to divide them.

Although the Day of the Land specifically protested expropriations inside the 1948 borders of Israel, a general strike also took place in the occupied territories, especially in Hebron and Nablus, where all the stores were closed. For the Palestinians in the occupied territories, the Day of the Land means above all the reunification of the Palestinian people through their common struggle against Zionism, which has never differentiated between Palestinians in Israel or in the occupied territories as far as oppression is concerned.

The general strike of 1976 had such a massive character that in many cases it went beyond the control of its organizers. The Palestinian masses wanted to continue the struggle for their rights, to make the Day of the Land a symbol of struggle.

As part of its policy of pacts with Zionist forces, the Communist Party—which was the main organizer of the Day of the Land demonstrations—tried to change their character, turning them into memorial ceremonies for the six victims from 1976 instead of combative demonstrations. That is why there were no more strikes, and why in each demonstration Zionists are invited—Zionists who "proclaim" the rights and equality of the Palestinians and fight in parliament against the settlements in the occupied territories, calling instead for their placement in the Galilee and the Negev! But neither the Galilee nor the Negev are empty.

This policy of Rakah is giving rise on the one hand to the depolitization of its ranks and periphery, but on the other hand it gives impetus to the radical forces within the Palestinian villages and the universities. These forces are represented

mainly by Abne-al-balad (Sons of the Village) and by the Progressive National Movement within the universities. These are steadily growing and developing more clearly as a revolutionary alternative to Rakah.

Last year in the various Day of the Land demonstrations, these movements had formed a large contingent with the Revolutionary Communist League [RCL—the Israeli Trotskyists, also known by the names of its Hebrew and Arabic newspapers, *Matzpen-Marxisti* and *Sharara*].

As a result of that show of strength, this year for the first time Rakah was forced to invite a common representative of these groups, which were viewed as a bloc, to each of the four ceremonies that were held.

This was an unprecedented step forward for the radical forces, which, not content with having a place on “the stage of honor,” organized big contingents in the villages of Taibe and Kfar Kana, making

up respectively more than 50 percent and 30 percent of the participants in each place. As a result, the radical forces could not be thrown out of the demonstrations—as the CP would have liked—because of the relatively small forces mobilized by that party compared to those of the radical forces.

The perspective of an anti-Zionist front based mainly on Abne-al-balad, the Progressive National Movement, and the RCL is closer to reality each day. This March 30 represented a qualitative and quantitative leap for the anti-Zionists.

But the fruits of the Day of the Land can only be reaped to the extent that the anti-Zionist front becomes a reality and succeeds in drawing around it all those who consistently fight for the rights of the Palestinians; all those Jews and Arabs who have a common enemy—Zionism—and a common future.

April 1, 1980

Washington ‘Freezes’ Official Relations

Liberian Regime Overthrown

By Ernest Harsch

On March 13, Liberian President William R. Tolbert vowed to crush leftist opposition groups in that West African country “at all costs” and to “stop them in such a way that they will never rise up again.” Just a few days earlier, his regime had detained more than eighty members of the opposition Progressive People’s Party (PPP), which was later banned. In early April, posters headed “Wanted: Dead or Alive” were put up, listing the names of twenty other PPP members.

Tolbert’s repressive crackdown backfired, however.

Early on the morning of April 12, Liberian troops, headed by Master Sgt. Samuel K. Doe, seized the executive mansion in downtown Monrovia. Tolbert was killed in the coup, along with a number of other officials and military officers.

As news of Tolbert’s overthrow spread, crowds of Liberians celebrated in the streets.

The new authorities set up a fifteen-member People’s Redemption Council, composed of sergeants, corporals, and privates. Twenty-eight-year-old Sergeant Doe became chairman and the new head of state. Most of the members of the council, including Doe, are of “indigenous” background, as opposed to the small minority of Americo-Liberians—the descendants of freed American slaves—who have dominated Liberia since it was founded 133 years ago.

One of Doe’s first acts was to free the

imprisoned PPP members. Four leaders of the party—which professes “African Socialism”—were named to the new cabinet, including PPP Chairman Gabriel Baccus Matthews, who became foreign minister. Two leaders of the leftist Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) were also appointed to the cabinet, MOJA Chairman Togba-Nah Tipoteh becoming minister of finance and planning.

More than ninety officials of the ousted Tolbert regime were rounded up and some were quickly brought to trial on charges of “high treason, rampant corruption and gross violations of human rights.” Thirteen of them were found guilty and sentenced to death. Rejecting pleas from the American and other Western embassies for clemency, the new government executed the thirteen in Monrovia on April 22, as thousands of soldiers and civilians cheered.

The overthrow of the Tolbert regime and the popular reaction to it was a reflection of the deep discontent that had been building up in Liberia for some time.

Liberia has long been a beachhead for American imperialism on the African continent. The economy is largely dominated by American firms, especially the Firestone Rubber Company, which owns large rubber plantations. Liberia does not have its own currency, it uses the U.S. dollar. Washington has important communications and intelligence facilities in the country and has used Liberia as a staging

post for military air traffic.

Since its foundation, Liberia has been run by the dominant caste of Americo-Liberians, who comprise just 3 percent of the entire population. While protecting American imperialist interests in the country, Americo-Liberian officials used their monopoly of the state apparatus to enrich themselves through widespread graft and corruption. Tolbert’s True Whig Party was the only legal party in the country.

The indigenous peoples, who have lived in the region since before the first Black settlers from the United States arrived, were discriminated against. The vast majority of them were not allowed to vote, since the franchise was given only to those who owned a certain amount of property.

Discontent with the regime began to surface in the 1970s, with the formation of the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) and the Movement for Justice in Africa. Both groups denounced the corruption of the Tolbert regime, pressed for various social reforms, and claimed to speak for workers, farmers, and students.

In April 1979, the regime announced a sharp increase in the price of rice. The PAL organized protests against the hike, bringing thousands out into the streets of Monrovia. Police fired into the crowds, killing more than 100 demonstrators. In reaction to this unprecedented massacre, youths attacked government buildings. Troops from neighboring Guinea were flown in to help Tolbert put down the unrest.

Despite government repression, the opposition groups continued their activities. The PAL applied for legal recognition as a political party eligible to run in elections, and won recognition in December under the name of the PPP.

Amid continued harassment and detentions of party members, PPP leader Matthews on March 7, 1980, called for a general strike to oust the Tolbert regime. He was soon arrested along with other party members, many of whom were reportedly beaten in prison.

Significantly, Tolbert also arrested some members of the armed forces, indicating that opposition to the regime had begun to spread to the ranks of the army, a majority of whom are of indigenous origin.

Shortly after seizing power, Doe denounced the corrupt and repressive policies of the Tolbert regime. “The Tolbert Government failed to respond, in a meaningful way, to the problems of the Liberian people,” he said. “It failed to respond especially to the problems of poor people, the masses. This new Government shall undertake to bring about equal economic and social opportunities for all.”

Although Doe also stated that his regime wanted to maintain friendly relations with Washington, the U.S. State Department announced that official relations between the two countries had been frozen. □

FSLN Announces Worker-Peasant Majority in Council of State

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—The April 21 announcement that a substantial majority of delegates to Nicaragua's Council of State will represent the mass organizations of workers and peasants was greeted by bourgeois forces here with howls of alarm, threats, and resignations from government posts.

According to the initial Program of Government issued by the FSLN-led Junta of National Reconstruction last July 9, and the Fundamental Statute promulgated immediately after it took power July 19, the Council of State was to "share legislative powers" with the five-member junta and could veto, with a two-thirds vote, measures taken by the junta.

The council's composition as set forth in the Program of Government was based on the coalition of opposition social forces that came together in the last months of the Somoza dictatorship. The council was to have thirty-three members, and representation was disproportionately weighted toward the bourgeois sectors of the anti-Somoza front.

The total collapse of Somoza's National Guard and the widespread mobilization and organization of the workers and peasants under Sandinista leadership, however, opened the way for the FSLN to take a decisive share of governmental power immediately following the powerful July insurrection in Managua and other cities. A bourgeois drive for a rapid convocation of the Council of State—which the capitalists hoped to use as a brake on the revolution—failed when the junta announced in mid-October that the council would be "restructured" and postponed until May 4, 1980.

Worker-Peasant Majority

The decree announced April 21 by junta members Moises Hassán and Sergio Ramírez amends the Fundamental Statute, broadening the Council of State to include decisive representation for the FSLN and the mass organizations that it leads, while still providing some seats to the capitalist organizations and parties that were originally included. In fact, the bourgeois parties are still being offered considerably more representation than the popular support for them would justify.

According to the decree, nine of the council's members are to be chosen on a regional basis by the Sandinista Defense Committees, which exist throughout the country and are elected on a block-by-block basis in most cities and towns.

Eight representatives will be chosen by Nicaragua's five trade-union federations: three from the Sandinista Workers Federa-

tion (CST), which organizes the majority of urban workers; two from the Independent General Workers Federation (CGT-i), which is led by the pro-Moscow Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN) and is based mainly on the powerful construction workers union; one from the Confederation of Trade Union Action and Unification (CAUS), led by the ultra-left Stalinist Communist Party of Nicaragua and based mainly among Managua textile workers; one from the Confederation of Trade Union Unification (CUS), whose leaders are tied to the AFL-CIO bureaucracy in the United States; and one from the Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers (CTN), which is controlled by an anticommunist Christian Democratic current.

The toilers of the countryside will be represented in the Council of State by three delegates to be chosen by the Sandinista-led Rural Workers Association (ATC). Other labor organizations to be included—each with one seat—are the teachers' union ANDEN, the health workers' union FETSALUD, and the Union of Nicaraguan Journalists (UPN).

The Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMN) and the July 19 Sandinista Youth will each select one representative. Also directly represented for the first time in any Nicaraguan government body will be the Indian minorities of the Atlantic Coast region—the Miskitos, Sumos, and Ramas. Their organization, MISURAFATA, will choose one representative to the council.

The Sandinista armed forces—the armies, militias, and police that are based on the workers and peasants—will have one representative in the Council of State.

The FSLN itself has been allotted six representatives in the council. Six other smaller political parties will have one representative each. These include one other working-class party, the PSN, and two petty-bourgeois groupings that have been collaborating closely with the FSLN—the Independent Liberal Party and the People's Social Christian Party.

A minority of seats have been set aside for the organizations that represent the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. The Social Christian Party, Democratic Conservative Party, and the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement led by ex-junta member Alfonso Robelo will each have one representative. The six organizations of industrialists, landlords, merchants, and big farmers that make up the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) will each get one seat.

Rounding out the Council of State will be one representative each from the Catholic

clergy and the university system.

"The Sandinista front and its organizations have a majority in this Council of State," Sergio Ramírez acknowledged when the new decree was made public. "This corresponds to a concrete and objective reality—the balance of political forces that exists in the country."

A council that failed to recognize "the majority forces of the FSLN in the revolutionary process would have been a fragile composition precisely because it would have been far from reality," Ramírez said.

By providing representation not only to political parties but also "popular organizations, trade-union organizations, and organizations of private enterprise, we seek to achieve a sort of total representation of what constitutes the country at this moment."

No Pact with Bourgeoisie

The bourgeoisie was upset last October when the FSLN first made clear its intention to make the Council of State "not a parliamentary organ but rather the expression of the power of the organized people" (*Barricada*, November 13, 1979). A lengthy declaration sent by the COSEP to the junta at that time complained of the "marginalization of the private sector" and pointed to the "capital importance" of the Council of State "as the nation's legislative organ where the various economic, social, and political forces converge. . . ."

Pressures to move up the convocation date and preserve the council's original composition did not succeed. When the FSLN's final decision to deprive the bourgeoisie of its undemocratic majority became known in the days leading up to the April 21 announcement, the public statements of capitalist spokesmen took on a shriller tone.

Expanding the Council of State, they warned, would signify breaking a "pact" supposedly made between the Sandinistas and the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, shortly before the victorious insurrection last July. This so-called Puntarenas Pact was said to have been signed under the auspices of the Andean Pact governments¹ and other Latin American regimes that had extended diplomatic recognition and other support to the Junta of National Reconstruction.

According to the April 20 issue of the bourgeois daily *La Prensa*, representatives of capitalist parties and the COSEP who attended an April 18 meeting at the Social Christian Party's headquarters declared

1. Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela.

that "increasing the number of representatives to the Council of State . . . would cause discredit to the government both inside the country and abroad.

"A precipitous decision . . . on the structure of the Council of State would harm the image of revolution since it would put in doubt the government's willingness to comply in other respects."

These references to the Andean Pact and the revolution's "image" abroad echoed statements by Venezuelan President Luis Herrera Campins during an official visit here in late March. Herrera pledged to supply Nicaragua's petroleum needs on easy credit. But he added that Latin American governments were willing to help "to the extent that Nicaragua advances in the process of democratization."

In the name of "democracy," the national bourgeoisie in Nicaragua and its allies in Latin America demand giving a small minority more representation than the overwhelming majority.

But the decree on the Council of State showed that the FSLN would not bend to the capitalists' pressures for political concessions. As for the alleged pact, Sergio Ramírez declared April 21:

"No such Puntarenas Pact or anything like it exists. I think some persons in this country, in accord with the old mentality that held sway in Nicaragua in Somoza's times, still think in terms of pacts. But the word pact has been erased from the political dictionary of Nicaragua, or at least from the Sandinista dictionary. In this country, pact meant selling out to the interests of Somozaism. . . . So it would be quite absurd to assert that the Sandinista front or the junta of government . . . ever signed any kind of pact."

As for the notion that other Latin American regimes had sponsored any agreements, Ramírez noted that in the past "signing pacts also meant signing them in the presence of foreign representatives or dignitaries. Perhaps what we are now being reminded of is that we made a commitment in front of foreigners. But however friendly such persons have been to Nicaragua's cause . . . we never entered into any kind of concessions or pacts."

The COSEP reacted by declaring itself in "permanent session." It issued a statement expressing its "total disagreement with the violations of the foundations of the Program of Government of National Reconstruction and of the Fundamental Statute of the republic that have occurred on a number of occasions and most recently with the government junta's decree altering the composition of the Council of State."

For weeks there had been rising complaints from the COSEP and its affiliates against further confiscations, such as the April 11 seizure of Nicaragua's largest brewery; the government's refusal to repurchase peasants who occupied land without

authorization; the criminal charges for decapitalization brought against the owners of the country's largest private construction company; and the growing role of the Nicaragua Enterprise for Basic Foods (ENABAS) in distributing foodstuffs at prices lower than those charged by private merchants.

So the alteration of the Council of State to provide more real democracy to the workers and peasants has been taken by many capitalists as the final confirmation that the Sandinista-led government cannot be subordinated to the needs of private profit.

Exit Chamorro and Robelo

The decision by the big bourgeoisie was reflected in the April 22 resignation from the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction by Alfonso Robelo Callejas. Robelo, a millionaire industrialist, had been publicly criticizing the Sandinistas since mid-March, after having collaborated with them during the early months of the revolution.

By relaunching his party, the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN), Robelo has tried to step to the head of the mounting bourgeois discontent with the revolution's anticapitalist course. He has sought to use the prestige as a member of the government that has carried out many progressive measures to win a following for himself and the MDN among the masses.

In his letter of resignation, Robelo charged that "essential parts of the basis of unity" had been broken—that "without counting on the indispensable consensus, crucial changes have been imposed in our plan of government and steps have been taken that deviate from the goals of our revolution. . . ."

Robelo's move followed by three days the withdrawal from the junta of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, its only other non-FSLN member. Chamorro bowed out gracefully, citing fatigue and failing health; according to Robelo, however, she too had opposed the changes in the Council of State.

Coinciding with Robelo's resignation, the MDN National Council issued a statement complaining that "recent political events" and actions "that contradict the fundamental principles of the plan of national reconstruction" had made it "more and more difficult for our participation to effectively guarantee social peace, true political pluralism, and authentic liberty. . . ."

The statement said the MDN had "tried to prevent the restructuring of the Council of State" in order to maintain the council's "original equilibrium." The decree altering the council, the MDN charged, "revived . . . the overwhelming totalitarian-style apparatus that brings back such unpleasant memories to Nicaraguans."

In other words, the MDN claims that by giving the workers and peasants a major-

ity in the Council of State, the FSLN is trying to restore a Somoza-style dictatorship! For the bourgeoisie, allowing the masses democratic representation is a "totalitarian" act.

The MDN declared finally that it would not participate in the Council of State and that it was withdrawing from the Revolutionary Patriotic Front (a loosely organized bloc of parties that support the revolution and work with the FSLN; the front now includes the FSLN and the Socialist, Independent Liberal, and People's Social Christian parties).

The junta responded to Robelo's move with a statement read over national radio and television by Sergio Ramírez. "The working people of Nicaragua," it declared, "along with all the honest and patriotic sectors of our country . . . should be confident that the Government of National Reconstruction will go on fulfilling without vacillation the duties the people and their Sandinista revolution have conferred on it. . . ."

"We announce to the people of Nicaragua that the decision to install the Council of State on the Day of National Dignity² is an irrevocable decision."

On April 23, the day after Robelo's resignation, FSLN Commanders of the Revolution Bayardo Arce, Jaime Wheelock, and Humberto Ortega held a news conference to outline the position of the FSLN National Directorate.

A statement read by Arce noted that when the Sandinistas first organized the Junta of National Reconstruction, Robelo had been included "as an expression of its openness and political flexibility in the spirit of national unity."

His resignation came as no surprise to the FSLN, however, since "we were conscious of how difficult it is to carry out social and economic changes in favor of the people while harmonizing diverse interests, which involve sectors that, held back by their own selfishness, oppose all modification of the unjust socioeconomic reality that the dictatorship left us and from which they benefitted."

Robelo was seeking "to cover up the true causes of his resignation with the pretext of the Council of State," but "the essence of the problem lies in the fact that Robelo could not identify himself with a political platform that limits indiscriminate enrichment and benefits the dispossessed majority of the country."

Both the statement of the junta and the FSLN emphasize the need to maintain "revolutionary national unity" in face of the challenge by Robelo and the MDN. "National unity turns around two great

2. On May 4, 1927, General Augusto César Sandino rejected a U.S.-sponsored pact between Nicaragua's two bourgeois parties and launched his fight against the U.S. Marines. The Council of State is scheduled to convene on May 4.

forces in the country," Jaime Wheelock explained at the April 23 news conference, "the workers in the city and the workers of the countryside. That is the center of national unity."

Robelo's resignation might appear as a threat to such unity, Wheelock continued, but actually "what has happened is the abandonment of a revolutionary position on the part of Robelo, as well as by certain sectors that accompany him but that have never been in the revolution nor upheld national unity."

Nicaragua's private capitalists still control key sectors of industry and agriculture, and the Sandinistas have stressed the need for their cooperation in meeting the ambitious goals of the 1980 Plan for Economic Reactivation. In the coming weeks,

the crucial 1980-81 cotton crop must be planted; much of the cotton industry remains in the hands of big private growers.

Behind the demands for political concessions by the COSEP and the MDN and other bourgeois parties stand the threat of production boycotts, sabotage of the economic plan, decapitalization, and the consequent hardships for the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

Refusal to produce "would be a suicidal attitude," Commander Bayardo Arce warned the bourgeoisie April 23.

"Our revolution has made a political and moral commitment to our people to rectify their social situation. We are going to do that—with the help of the private sector, without the help of the private sector, or against the private sector." □

wing journalists to enter and leave freely.

Xavier Chamorro denied that he had resigned. When he arrived at *La Prensa* on the morning of April 21, he was immediately surrounded by a crowd of strikers chanting "Xavier Yes, Anyone Else No!"

A union statement issued April 26 denounced the attempt to remove Xavier Chamorro as part of a plan "to convert *La Prensa* into the voice of antipopular, privileged, and minority interest."

"We support the critical, pluralist, and revolutionary position the daily has maintained," the statement added. It noted that this policy had been due "fundamentally to the leadership of Xavier Chamorro Cardenal."

Labor Minister Virgilio Godoy tried to get negotiations started between the board of directors and the union. The board majority flatly refused to talk, however, and instead issued a lengthy statement (sent first to the foreign press) warning of the "political and economic consequences" of the strike. It portrayed the strike as a grave threat to "freedom of expression" just as bad—if not worse—as the repression the paper suffered under the Somoza dictatorship. The directors falsely accused the union of using "violence." Finally, they demanded that the FSLN "take measures" to end the strike.

The COSEP backed up *La Prensa's* owners, warning that the strike was "seriously compromising the free and pluralist character of our revolution."

The aim of the strike, the union retorted in an April 23 statement, was precisely to assure "that *La Prensa* not be converted into what the COSEP gentlemen want—an instrument of minority economic groups that are neither independent nor pluralist, nor democratic."

On the morning of April 25, the striking workers and journalists gathered for another assembly at *La Prensa's* offices. Danilo Aguirre Solís, assistant managing editor of *La Prensa* and president of the Union of Nicaraguan Journalists, reported on the persistent refusal of the owners to try to resolve the problem through talks with the strikers. Therefore, he declared, "we are going to withdraw. We are going to leave them these installations. Let them produce their newspaper. . . ."

"But we are going to produce the paper that we want, the paper we consider the continuity of the line left us by Dr. Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal."

The workers voted to remain at the *La Prensa* installations until the owners have fully paid them their back vacation pay, year-end bonuses, and other benefits due them by law, and until Xavier Chamorro is repaid his full share of the value of the stock he owns in *La Prensa*. Then with all the latter as the initial capital, a cooperative will be set up to publish, as Danilo Aguirre put it, "the real *La Prensa*."

As of April 26, the owners had made no public response to the workers' decision. □

Announce Launching of New Daily

'La Prensa' Workers Strike Over Firing of Editor

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—A move by one section of the Chamorro family, owners of the capitalist daily *La Prensa* here, to replace managing editor Xavier Chamorro Cardenal and shift editorial policy rightward was met on April 20 with a strike by some 95 percent of the paper's workers and journalists. Faced with intransigence on the part of the majority of the *La Prensa* board of directors, the strikers decided on April 26 to resign en masse and launch their own paper.

Conflicts had been brewing for months inside the Chamorro family over the editorial policy followed by Xavier Chamorro. Xavier is the brother of long-time *La Prensa* publisher Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, who was assassinated on orders of the dictator Anastasio Somoza in January 1978.

As his brother had done in the last years of his life, Xavier Chamorro kept the paper's pages open to FSLN supporters. He allowed journalists broad freedom to write as they pleased—which often meant favorable stories on worker and peasant mobilizations of the revolutionary government.

At the same time, the editor frequently bowed to the wishes of the right-wing majority on the board of directors. He allowed publication of lengthy items on the complaints of capitalists and landlords, the activities of bourgeois parties, and the statements of capitalist organs such as the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP).

Free reign was also given to the reactionary foreign news editor, who usually filled the international page with sensational

wire-service propaganda against Cuba, Iran, and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

As class conflict mounted in Nicaragua in recent weeks and the bourgeois forces grew more nervous and belligerent, *La Prensa* directors Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Barrios and Jaime Chamorro Cardenal (the slain publisher's son and another brother respectively) were no longer satisfied with the paper's "pluralism." They stepped up the pressure on Xavier Chamorro to convert it into an open organ of right-wing anti-Sandinista propaganda.

Meanwhile the Union of *La Prensa* Workers was preparing a set of demands for contract negotiations. The demands were made public April 19 and included a call for formal union representation on the paper's editorial board.

Xavier Chamorro expressed his opinion that this was a reasonable formalization of a policy that already existed. His support for the proposal apparently brought things to a head in the family dispute.

As the April 21 edition was being prepared during the afternoon of April 20, two of the paper's directors suddenly appeared at the *La Prensa* offices with a last minute news item for the front page, announcing that Xavier Chamorro had "resigned" as managing editor.

The union immediately called a "general alert." After a quick discussion, journalists, typesetters, production workers, and office staff halted work to demand the immediate reinstatement of Xavier Chamorro. The workers carried out a peaceful occupation of the premises, while allowing the owners and a few non-striking right-

Carter Prepares New Provocation Against Cuba

By David Frankel

Although virtually ignored by the capitalist media, forty-two U.S. warships, 350 planes, and more than 20,000 military personnel are scheduled to begin three weeks of maneuvers in the Caribbean May 8. Called Solid Shield 80, the operation will include the landing of 2,000 Marines on Cuban soil at the Guantánamo Naval Base, and the transportation of an additional battalion of 1,200 soldiers to the base.

As the Cuban daily *Granma* pointed out, the landing of U.S. military forces at Guantánamo—a part of Cuba occupied by imperialist forces against the will of the Cuban people—can only be interpreted as “a brazen provocation and a threat against Cuba.”

Seeking to emphasize the seriousness of its threat, the Pentagon is evacuating civilian personnel at the Guantánamo base in a move that *Granma* called “unprecedented.” In addition, the number of ships in the exercise will be more than twice as great as in a similar exercise last October.

“The idea of a possible real attack on Cuba is behind such operations,” *Granma* warned.

Command of the maneuvers will be in the hands of the special Caribbean military task force set up by Carter last October as part of his propaganda campaign around the handful of Soviet troops in Cuba.

Behind that anti-Cuban propaganda offensive was U.S. imperialism's fear of the victorious revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada. Nothing has happened since then to allay that fear. An April 10 Agence France-Presse dispatch on the U.S. maneuvers complained that in Jamaica and Grenada there is “a pro-Castro feeling which Washington finds worrying,” and noted that other “small islands of the Antilles such as Dominica and St. Lucia seem willing to join the Soviet-Cuban ideological camp.”

Even more worrisome for the imperialists is the rise of the revolutionary wave in Central America. The new U.S. maneuvers, *Granma*, pointed out, “are unquestionably an attempt to intimidate the revolutionary movement in El Salvador with the possibility of military intervention.”

Nor was the Iranian revolution left out of consideration. B-52 bombers will take part in Solid Shield 80. Their mission? To practice techniques for mining sea-lanes from the air.

U.S. policymakers had apparently hoped that the Caribbean maneuvers would coincide with a successful smear campaign to

portray revolutionary Cuba as a concentration camp.

But the Cuban leadership effectively scuttled Carter's propaganda ploy by opening the port of Mariel to boats from Florida announcing that they could pick up anyone who wanted to leave the island.

“Castro Turns the Tables” was the headline on a story in the April 25 *New York Times* by correspondent Jo Thomas. Reporting from Havana, Thomas said that Western diplomats there believe that “Mr. Castro has tossed Havana's problem in Washington's lap.”

An angry State Department official told reporters April 23 that those taking part in the sealift were “playing into the hands of Cuban authorities.” He warned that boat owners could face jail terms of up to five years for “the transportation of undocumented persons to this country.”

The U.S. Coast Guard issued a statement the same day saying that the sealift was illegal and that “violators may be arrested and vessels seized.” And the Immigration and Naturalization Service said April 24 that it had “served notice of intent to fine” on two boats and that others would be fined as well.

Such threats, however, have not stopped some 700 small boats from setting out for Mariel. By April 24, according to *Granma*, more than 800 Cuban emigrants had already left for Florida.

“I want to see them arrest these hundreds of Cubans,” said José Pérez, captain of a boat that was about to depart from Miami. “I want to see them arrest me

for going to get my parents. I want to see them arrest me and keep me from feeding my children.”

The motives of other boatowners were less sentimental. Many are charging exorbitant sums for the trip. *New York Times* reporter John M. Crewdson provided insight into the character of some of these entrepreneurs when he interviewed one boat captain who wasn't eager to see his name in the newspapers. “I run a little grass [marijuana] sometimes,” he told Crewdson, “I don't need any publicity.”

So, instead of the propaganda coup expected by Carter, millions of people have seen that it is Washington—not Havana—that is responsible for restrictions on emigration from Cuba. And *Times* correspondent Thomas reported that in Havana, “No longer are people . . . discussing the rift between Cuba and Peru. They are speculating about the rift between Washington and Miami.”

Meanwhile, the date for Solid Shield 80 is moving closer. Cubans are planning a mass demonstration in Havana May 8 that will march past the U.S. Special Interests Section there. Like the massive march of one million past the Peruvian Embassy April 19, this will be another powerful answer by the Cuban people to the counterrevolutionary maneuvers by Washington and its Latin American allies.

“Plans to mount a great show to weaken the high international prestige of the Cuban revolution have fallen like a house of cards,” the Cuban Communist Party daily *Granma* commented April 24. □

Cuba Stands Up to Imperialist Smears

By Ernest Harsch

As part of its smear campaign against the Cuban revolution, Washington has gone all out to dramatize the “plight” of the several thousand Cubans at the Peruvian Embassy in Havana.

They are portrayed daily in the big business press as victims of political persecution by a “totalitarian” regime, clamoring to escape Cuba for the “free world.”

“Our heart goes out to the almost 10,000 freedom-loving Cubans,” President Carter declared on April 9.

But when it came to acting on their “heartfelt” sympathies for these Cubans, the response of Washington and its Latin

American allies has been at best half-hearted.

Even though the Cuban government has said that all Cubans who want to leave the country can do so—a policy it has followed for years—the White House said that it was willing to admit only up to 3,500 Cubans. Peru has agreed to accept 1,000, Spain 500, and Costa Rica 300. That means that several thousand of those who went to the Peruvian Embassy would be left behind.

In response to Washington's hypocritical unwillingness to accept all those at the

embassy, the Cuban government also announced that Cubans wanting to leave could be picked up by boat.

This action by the Cuban government in opening the port of Mariel has thrown the spotlight on Washington's reluctance to accept the Cuban "refugees." Carter's response to Castro's open door policy raises an obvious question: If Carter is really so concerned about the Cubans who want to emigrate, why *limit* the number allowed into the United States?

Because Carter's real aim is not to help "freedom-loving Cubans," but to manipulate the issue of Cuban emigration as a propaganda tool to try to discredit the Cuban revolution. This becomes particularly important at a time of rising revolutionary ferment throughout the region, when working people in the Caribbean and Latin America are looking more and more to the example of the Cuban revolution.

The main political aim of Washington and the bourgeois regimes of Latin America was especially evident in the way in which the situation at the Peruvian Embassy was originally provoked.

Cuba, Peru, and other Latin American governments have an accord under which their respective embassies may grant asylum, and safe conduct out of the country, to those they decide are *political* refugees.

In recent months, the Peruvian government, as well as several other Latin American regimes, made it known that those who entered their embassies by force would—by virtue of that fact—be accepted as political refugees.

An Agence France-Presse dispatch in the April 9 Newark, New Jersey, *Star-Ledger* admitted that "the possibility of obtaining political refugee status . . . from these diplomatic missions has been respon-

sible for the spate of Cubans attempting to crash their way into the Peruvian and Venezuelan embassies. . . ."

The Colombian Embassy was also receiving requests for asylum, but, the dispatch went on, "paradoxically, Colombia will only accept those would-be refugees who crash their way into its compound."

Such incidents, of course, provide ammunition for Washington's claim that the "repressive" Cuban government is trying to prevent Cubans from leaving the island—when in fact its policy is to let them go.

On April 1, six Cubans stole a bus and crashed it through the gate of the Peruvian Embassy, resulting in the death of a Cuban soldier, Private Pedro Ortiz Cabrera. The Peruvian authorities refused to turn the six over to the Cuban police.

The Cuban government responded that it could not continue, under these circumstances, to protect the embassy. It withdrew its guards and announced that anyone who wanted to leave Cuba could apply at the Peruvian Embassy.

Many who went did so for economic reasons. Given the legacy of Cuba's semi-colonial underdevelopment, living standards there are unquestionably lower than in the United States. This is true despite the impressive social and economic gains made possible by the revolution, even in face of Washington's economic blockade.

Nonetheless, the fact that a *million* Cubans marched past the Peruvian Embassy April 19 showed that the vast majority of the population are committed to the revolution and ready to fight to defend it.

Underlining the vast improvements in Cuban living standards—as compared to those in other Latin American countries—an article in the April 20 issue of the

English-language *Granma* weekly pointed to the abysmal poverty and wretched living conditions that most Peruvians face.

One Peruvian diplomat was quoted in the April 18 issue of the London *Latin America Weekly Report* as commenting, "If tomorrow the US embassy in Lima were to say that all those who wanted to emigrate would be accepted as political refugees, I'm afraid half the country would get out."

Others went to the Peruvian Embassy for political reasons. An estimated 400 are former counterrevolutionary prisoners, who had been released over the past few years. All such former prisoners have been allowed to leave, but not all have been accepted by the U.S. government.

Yet others were criminals. According to the *Latin America Weekly Report*, "There have been reports of a sharp drop in crime since the embassy invasion. One Havana artist in search of his regular marijuana 'joint' (cannabis, though illegal, is easy to obtain in Cuba) complained this week that he was unable to find any of the usual street-corner retailers."

Some were also there against their will. The April 20 *Granma* weekly carried an interview with a seventeen-year-old Cuban who was taken to the embassy by his parents. He later escaped.

Altogether, 476 Cubans at the embassy had changed their minds by April 14 and decided to stay in the country.

The Cuban people, in response to the U.S. threats and political pressures, have begun to mobilize massively in support of the revolution and the Cuban government. Cuba has also received expressions of support and solidarity from numerous trade unions and political parties around the world, including Vietnam, Puerto Rico, Peru, and Nicaragua.

A front-page editorial in the April 14 *Granma* summed up Cuba's determination:

"We have resisted heroically for 21 years, and our enemies must resign themselves to the idea that we will resist until the final victory of the sister peoples of our hemisphere—especially now that we are not alone!" □

Miami Protests Demand Asylum for Haitians

On April 19 and 20, two demonstrations of one thousand people each were held in Miami, Florida, in support of the right to political asylum in the United States for Haitian refugees.

The actions were supported by Black community and church groups. The April 19 march was led by Rev. Jesse Jackson, the national president of Operation PUSH.

Thousands of Haitians, fleeing the bitter repression and terrible poverty in their country, have risked an 800 mile sea journey in small boats to come to the United States. The U.S. government, however, refuses to grant them political asylum, since it does not want to admit the repressive character of the Duvalier dictatorship that it supports.

Speaking at the April 19 rally, Rose Ogden of the Socialist Workers Party

(SWP) scored Carter's hypocrisy in granting political asylum to Cubans while denying it to Haitians.

The following day, a young member of the Cuban community in Miami was invited to the platform of the rally and held up a sign that read, "Cubans for human rights for our Haitian brothers."

On April 19, the Miami Socialist Workers Party sponsored a public forum in defence of the Cuban revolution. The main speaker was Miguel Pendás, a member of the SWP National Committee, who is a Cuban-American.

Pendás noted that it is Washington, not Havana, that puts obstacles in the way of Cubans who want to come to the United States. Condemning Carter's hypocrisy, Pendás demanded that the U.S. government open the door both to Cubans and to Haitians fleeing poverty and oppression under Duvalier.

Correction

New information, based on a telephone call to Havana, has reached *IP/I* in regard to the April 19 demonstration of more than one million Cubans. Since the demonstration was held in support of the Cuban government, President Fidel Castro and other government leaders did not participate, as was mistakenly reported in the April 28 *IP/I*. Also, internationalist fighters were in the contingent guarding the Peruvian Embassy, not at the head of the march as reported.

Statement on Bogotá Embassy Takeover

[The following is a declaration by the Executive Committee of the Colombian Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR) on the occupation of the Dominican Republic's embassy in Bogotá. The translation is by *IP/I*.]

* * *

The regime's escalating use of the military and of repression, which began with the [Liberal Party] Turbay Ayala government, has resulted in increasingly ferocious persecution of the political organizations of the workers movement and of the leaders of trade-union, student, and peasant organizations.

The arrests, torture, raids, and assassinations perpetrated under the protection of the State of Siege and the Security Statute* have aroused widespread protests by the parties of the left, the National Trade Union Council, and the student, peasant, and neighborhood organizations, as well as women's groups, and by figures of the bourgeois parties themselves. The [March 1980] municipal council elections have provided a forum for denouncing all these government outrages. All the mass organizations have agreed to build a second Citizens' National Strike in order to mount an organized fight against the economic, social, and political measures taken by the regime.

The M-19 group's move in occupying the Dominican Embassy and taking hostages was a reaction to the regime's repression. But it cannot be justified as a means of carrying out the struggle of the working class and the masses against the ruling regime. All attempts to substitute determined actions by brave but mistaken revolutionaries for action by the masses result only in giving the reactionaries a chance to move forward, better prepared to deal blows to the leaderships of the mass organizations and to unleash a wave of rightist terror. Because of this, revolutionary Marxists oppose all terrorist acts and individual action. These actions demobilize the masses and expose them to the blows of reaction.

The first step toward solving the problem of the occupation of the Dominican Embassy is to block the schemes of the U.S. agencies to unleash a bloody assault on the building and make the hostages into martyrs. What the Conservative Party rightists and the Liberal Party press want

leads in this direction. The result could only be the sort of course taken by the Guatemalan government in responding to the occupation of the Spanish Embassy there. This is why we are raising the alarm about the Israeli commandos and the CIA agents arriving in our country.

It is clear that the government must be pressed to solve this problem through negotiations, and that this requires granting an amnesty to the political prisoners jailed under the Security Statute. The government must also guarantee to respect the lives of the embassy occupiers and to facilitate their departure to another country.

Carter's Olympic Boycott Flim Flam

More Press Lies on Afghanistan

[The following article by Lars-Erik Nelson appeared in the April 5 *New York Daily News*.]

* * *

Washington (News Bureau)—The Carter Administration's increasingly shrill campaign for a worldwide boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympic Games was undermined slightly yesterday when U.S. officials reported that some of America's charges against the Russians might not be true.

Specifically, officials said, they knew of no basis for a widely reported accusation by Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher last week that the Russians or their Afghan henchmen were executing 50 political prisoners a night.

If anything, one official said, the number of executions in Afghanistan has decreased since Soviet troops entered Afghanistan in late December and "put an end to the excesses" of ousted—and slain—Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin.

Government specialists also said they were skeptical of reports that the Russians had used lethal nerve gas against the Afghans.

The exaggeration of Russia's misdeeds, one official said, did not diminish the illegality of the Soviet invasion. And most government officials agreed that 85,000 Soviet troops are still in Afghanistan trying to suppress an insurrection by Islamic fundamentalists.

But one official conceded that the failure of the United States to attract broader support for a boycott of the Summer Olym-

The mass struggle must not be held up by these events. Today, more than ever, we have to struggle to block the wave of reactionary repression that [Conservative Party leader] Alvaro Gómez Hurtado and [Minister of Defense] Camacho Leyva want to unleash. Alvaro Gómez in particular has called for launching civil war against the left and the prominent political figures who are for maintaining democracy. And Alvaro Oriban, a member of the DLN [Liberal Party national directorate], has called for a firm hand and categorically rejected any negotiations.

The political and trade union organizations of the workers movement, the peasants organizations, the student movement, the women's groups, and the neighborhood committees must mount a united and coordinated campaign to build the second Citizen's National Strike and to put the focus on the methods of the mass struggle instead of terrorism. □

pics had lent a new shrillness to the Carter administration's rhetoric.

U.S. spokesmen reported that 30 countries had given official assurances that they would not participate in the Moscow Games. But these assurances do not speak for the private Olympic committees in each country, and it is not yet clear whether any countries, except possibly Saudi Arabia, actually will boycott the Moscow Games.

State Department spokesman Hodding Carter 3d suggested that failure to boycott the Moscow Olympics could threaten international security. "The United States has said, through its President, that there must be a meaningful and sharp response to the events in Afghanistan. In not responding adequately to what is done in Afghanistan, we raise the very real risk that another act of aggression is equally tolerable."

Aware that a large number of foreign countries, even allies, were not taking that threat as seriously as the United States, one official said, "It's true that we have raised our voices, perhaps too much."

Among the past inconsistencies or exaggerations in the U.S. propaganda drive have been:

- The assertion that the Afghan army, numbered at 40,000, is crumbling. They still say there are 40,000 troops involved.

- The assertion that Soviet troops in Afghanistan are astride the traditional invasion routes to Tehran. They are not. They are bogged down in Eastern mountain passes. And Iran has not been invaded from Afghanistan. □

*See "For a Campaign Against the Military Trials" in the January 28, 1980, *IP/I*, p. 76.—*IP/I*

Statement of the Fourth International

Defend the Salvadoran Revolution Against Imperialist Intervention and Bloody Repression!

[The following statement was adopted April 10 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

The tremendous rise of struggles by the Salvadoran masses, which caused imperialism and the oligarchy to get rid of General Romero on October 15, 1979, have continued to spread throughout the country since then. The rise in the struggle reached a first climax in the gigantic January 22, 1980, mass demonstration of a quarter of a million people in the capital, called by the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses (CRM).

Despite the constant step-up in repression, there have been two general strikes since then. One was on March 17, 1980, with workplace occupations, and the other took place in response to Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero's assassination.

At Romero's funeral, hundreds of thousands of people again demonstrated in the streets of the capital. At the same time, land occupations by day-laborers, landless agricultural workers, are increasing. The ruling class and imperialism are in turn stepping up their acts of terrorism and intimidation against the mass movement.

All this gives evidence of an extremely explosive situation that is rapidly evolving towards a showdown.

Imperialism and the oligarchy, learning from the precedent of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) victory in Nicaragua and the total destruction of Somoza's regime and repressive apparatus, are doing their utmost to prevent a repetition of the Nicaraguan revolution in El Salvador. To this end, they installed a "democratic" junta that promised "reforms," seeking to defuse the revolutionary and anticapitalist potential of the mass upsurge. They made every effort to win support from several sectors of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois opposition.

One segment of the Christian Democrats, in fact, continues to support the junta to this day, despite the massacres for which the junta is responsible (more than 1,000 deaths in less than six months). The Communist Party and its legal arm the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN), as well as the liberal bourgeois Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR)—which is formally a member of the Second International—had also initially participated in the government.

This maneuver of establishing a façade of "liberalization" totally failed. Owing to the exacerbation of the social contradictions and the growing strength of the

revolutionary organizations, the mass struggles and mobilizations did not diminish, did not just wait for "reforms" to be announced. On the contrary, the struggles spread.

The junta responded to all this with increased repression, which left no room for any reformist illusions. For example, the junta's "agrarian reform" was accompanied by the proclamation of a state of siege. Its actual result was simply that the army occupied the large agricultural estates and launched bloody repression against the agricultural laborers and poor peasants.

Moreover, it was these notorious massacres that led Archbishop Romero to call on soldiers to no longer obey their officers' orders to kill. Romero's appeal was described as "criminal" by army spokesperson Col. Marco Aurelio Gonzalez, sealing the fate of the archbishop of San Salvador. On March 24, 1980, Romero was gunned down by a hired assassin of the far right.

The Salvadoran class struggle has clearly reached a new stage following the failure of the "liberalization" maneuver.

Imperialism, the oligarchy, and the Salvadoran far right are making preparations to try to physically destroy the revolutionary organizations and those sectors of the masses who support them. To carry out this goal, the Salvadoran reactionaries can count not only on a well-trained army that imperialism continually reinforces, but also on the private militias of the oligarchy and the various right-wing terrorist organizations, such as the Democratic Nationalist Organization (ORDEN). These forces, composed of thousands of people, are based on backward layers of the peasants. They were created and trained by the leading cadres of the army and police and are closely linked to them.

The counterrevolutionary forces are therefore much larger and stronger than what existed in Nicaragua, and they are the political expression of the Salvadoran oligarchy. Whatever tactical differences exist in the oligarchy, it has had considerable experience in carrying out bloody repression. In 1932 the oligarchy crushed an insurrection led by the young Communist Party, killing 30,000 poor peasants and agricultural laborers.

The well-known "fourteen families"—who own 60 percent of the land, and control a good portion of industry, finance, and wholesale trade, as a result of which they have developed ties with broad layers of the bourgeoisie—are not about to give up their wealth and power to the people

without a struggle to the death. There is no limit to the crimes and massacres they are prepared to commit.

Imperialism, especially American imperialism, is deeply involved on the side of the oligarchy in battling against the rising Salvadoran revolution. Not only is imperialism continuing to provide a flow of economic aid to the junta that it brought into being, in order to counter the effects of the massive exodus of capital in recent months. It is also increasing its arms and ammunition shipments to the army, hypocritically using the argument that Cuba is aiding the leftist guerrillas.

Imperialism is exerting a lot of pressure on the bourgeoisies of Central America and the "Andean Pact" countries to prevent them from adopting a policy of "non-intervention" or refusing to support the junta. This pressure already has had considerable success in Costa Rica and Venezuela, where the bourgeoisies have shown very clear hostility towards the Salvadoran revolutionary organizations. By contrast, in Nicaragua they provided a certain amount of aid to the FSLN against Somoza, in order to try to keep the FSLN within the framework of the capitalist system through replacing Somoza in a way that would not call into question that framework.

A more direct counterrevolutionary intervention by imperialism cannot be excluded in coming weeks. Already a big U.S. military mission has arrived in El Salvador, composed of a large number of "advisers." We should remember that American imperialism's massive intervention against the Vietnamese revolution in the early 1960s also began with the sending of large numbers of American "military advisers" to help the Saigon dictator Ngo Dinh Diem.

An army of 10,000 counterrevolutionary Cubans and former members of the Nicaraguan National Guard is across the border in Guatemala, ready to intervene.

In face of these numerous threats and provocations against them, the Salvadoran working masses and the four revolutionary organizations that have been established—the United People's Action Front (FAPU), the February 28 People's Leagues (LP-28), the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR), and the People's Liberation Movement (MLP)—are confronted by greater difficulties than those the FSLN had to face in Nicaragua. But they also have some bigger advantages.

Among the difficulties they face are:

- The ruling class in El Salvador is better organized, more highly armed, and has a bigger base in the petty bourgeoisie than was the case in Nicaragua;

- The layout of the land (a big plain) is

less favorable to a massive guerrilla struggle than is Nicaragua's geography;

- The revolutionaries cannot set up an armed base just across the border;
- There are greater differences among the revolutionary organizations themselves, and some of them have a sectarian tradition in their dealings with each other;
- There are no real united rank-and-file bodies in the neighborhoods and villages.

Among the advantages for the development of the Salvadoran revolution are:

- The positive effect that the fall of the Somoza dictatorship and the gains of the Nicaraguan revolution have had on the combativity of the masses throughout Central America;
- The Salvadoran proletariat is larger than the Nicaraguan proletariat, and has greater experience and traditions of struggle;
- The semiproletarian character of a large part of the rural population (80 percent of the rural population earn a living primarily through wages, even though they are only seasonal), who are accustomed to trade unions or semiunion organizations;
- The more developed tradition of class struggle in El Salvador than in Nicaragua, where direct confrontation between the "oligarchic" and "nationalist" bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the disinherited masses on the other hand, has long been instilled in the ideology and strategy of the revolutionary organizations. (This was also partly because of the greater weight of a rightist CP, that is still up to its neck in the strategy of class collaboration).

In the present stage, the principal task of the Salvadoran masses and their revolutionary organizations is to put an end to the bloody repression from the junta, from the far-right organizations, and from the direct representatives of imperialism and its Israeli and South Vietnamese mercenaries. In order to accomplish this, there must be the broadest unity in action among the workers and peasants organizations, not only at the top—where on January 11, 1980, the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses was created—but also and especially at the rank-and-file level. Unification of the mass organizations and trade unions is the most appropriate means to go beyond the stage where each revolutionary organization formed its own "mass front" that excluded members or sympathizers of other organizations or those who were not affiliated with any party. That kind of unification is also indispensable for the development of massive self-defense bodies, supported by all the urban and rural masses, as was the case in Nicaragua with the development of united committees of civil defense.

The tasks of self-defense and protection against repression and counterrevolution are closely linked to the vital immediate tasks of the Salvadoran revolution itself, which can only be achieved through a

general people's insurrection. These tasks are by-and-large summarized in the "Programmatic Platform of the Revolutionary Democratic Government," published on February 28, 1980.

The tasks in the CRM's platform include: the complete destruction of the political-military machine of the dictatorship, which has been in existence for half a century, i.e. the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus; a definitive break with economic, political, and military dependence on imperialism; the guarantee of democratic rights; a radical agrarian revolution; and, through nationalizations and the creation of collective enterprises and cooperatives, the transfer into the hands of the people of the basic means of production and distribution, especially the companies that produce and distribute electricity, the oil refineries, the financial sector (banking and insurance companies), and the large industrial, foreign trade, distribution, and transportation companies.

This program, which is more radical than the FSLN's program during the final phase of the struggle against Somoza, clearly opens the perspective of a revolution that will pass, without interruption, from anti-imperialist and antioligarchic tasks to the anticapitalist tasks of the revolution.

A government that carried out all these measures could no longer serve the capitalists and the military caste, but rather would be a government that defends the interests of the workers, peasants, and other exploited layers.

Revolutionary Marxists struggle consistently and uncompromisingly for this perspective—for a workers and farmers government, without bosses or generals. To achieve this perspective, the broadest mobilization, organization, and arming of the masses is called for. This process could lead to a large network of democratically elected peoples committees in the cities and in the countryside. These in turn could deal the final blow to the bourgeoisie's entire economic and political power, a bourgeoisie that as a class shares responsibility with imperialism and the oligarchy for the last half-century of suffering by the Salvadoran people and for all the crimes committed against them.

While imperialism and its stooges are laying the groundwork for carrying out their policy of bloody, large-scale repression, they are also trying to change the orientation of the revolutionary organizations. This pressure will become even greater if the mass upsurge continues and the repressive policies fail. The enlargement of the forces preparing to create an alternative government to the junta could be the occasion for such a maneuver.

Any political bloc with the bourgeoisie that hinders the unified mobilization and independent organization of the masses to accomplish the central tasks mentioned above would constitute a brake on the

Salvadoran revolution and not an advance. It would objectively facilitate the ruling class's efforts to replace the state apparatus of the dictatorship, which the revolutionary organizations and the masses are ready to destroy, with some other form of bourgeois state apparatus.

On April 1, 1980, the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses issued an appeal for international solidarity with the struggle in El Salvador. The Fourth International calls on the workers movement and the anti-imperialist movement in Central America and throughout Latin America, in the United States, in Europe, and in all other imperialist countries, to organize a massive campaign to get out the truth on the situation in the Caribbean, on the bloody repression that is taking place, and the threats of even greater repression and direct imperialist intervention that hang over the Salvadoran revolution, and it calls on the workers and anti-imperialist movements to organize a broad campaign of international solidarity with the Salvadoran revolution.

Imperialism wants at all costs to create a hermetically sealed ring around the Nicaraguan revolution in order to prevent it from spreading throughout the region. If imperialism succeeds in doing this, the danger that the Nicaraguan revolution could be strangled, as well as the danger of a new attack against the Cuban revolution, would increase.

But if the Salvadoran counterrevolution is defeated and if the revolution scores a decisive victory, the whole counterrevolutionary triangle—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—could be broken up. This would be a giant step forward for the entire Latin American revolution, when added to the effect of the Nicaraguan revolution.

All revolutionaries, all working-class and anti-imperialist activists must be fully conscious of the stakes involved in the showdown that is brewing in this small Central American country.

This is why it is our duty to mobilize all our forces and throw all our resources into staying the criminal hand of imperialism and the Central American oligarchy.

Hands off the Salvadoran revolution!

Immediately halt the dispatch of arms, "advisers," and imperialist mercenaries to El Salvador!

Not one cent for the junta, the army of assassins, or the paramilitary gangs such as ORDEN!

Immediately lift the state of siege and restore all democratic rights with no restrictions!

We must defend all those who are battling imperialism and the oligarchy and all victims of repression!

Solidarity with the four revolutionary organizations of the Salvadoran masses: the BPR, LP-28, FAPU, and the MLP!

All power to the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses! □

Dutch Working Class at a Turning Point?

By Jan Hensgens

AMSTERDAM—The struggle by Dutch workers against attempts to drive down their real wages has been growing over the last three years. It reached a high point on March 20 in the second national Day of Action called by the Dutch Trade Union Federation (FNV), the country's largest labor organization.

The FNV called on workers to take the day off and come to Amsterdam to join in a mass protest. More than 100,000 marched through the city. It was the biggest demonstration in the history of the Netherlands.

Amsterdam was almost completely shut down. About 150,000 workers throughout the country took part in the one-day strike. (The Netherlands has a population of about 14 million.)

Because of the halfheartedness of the

FNV leadership, however, March 20 was only a partial success.

In particular, the railroad strike, the first since 1903, which was called in the framework of these actions, was a failure. Only 3,000 of the roughly 26,000 personnel struck, and service was not affected.

The FNV failed to mobilize the workers in a sufficient show of strength and determination to force the government to back down from its wage freeze. In fact, the FNV had been obliged to call for a national mass demonstration when its previous attempt at a show of force, the first Day of Action on March 4, failed to persuade the bourgeois coalition government to back off from its attempt to push through a law imposing wage controls.

The March 4 protest had been called for the eve of the debate in parliament on the

government's wage-control bill. This move, moreover, came on the heels of a wage freeze decreed at the beginning of the year. In some sectors, such as meatpacking, where workers had won increases through strikes, their raises were rescinded by the government's intervention.

The government claimed that the freeze was necessary to give it time to readjust its social and economic program in the light of the Central Planning Bureau's figures for 1980, which showed much higher prices for energy and a worsening of the situation in international trade.

About 400,000 working people took part in the March 4 action, striking or participating in work stoppages. In a number of areas, the strike amounted almost to a general walkout.



March 20 demonstration of more than 100,000 in Amsterdam.

Foto buro 7S

The Belgian unions called on their members working in the Netherlands to join in the FNV actions.

Demonstrations also took place throughout the country March 4. The largest were in Amsterdam (35,000) and Rotterdam (25,000). On March 5, the big dailies either failed to appear or came out in limited editions.

Despite these actions, the government pushed its wage-control bill through the Dutch parliament, the Tweede Kamer. It also declared that wages would be frozen for the rest of the year at January 1980 levels.

Thus, the employers got the main objectives of their offensive—an end to cost-of-living increases for the workers and the start of a general rollback of real wages.

The bosses' offensive began after the mid-1970s, spurred by the onset of the international capitalist economic crisis.

In February 1977, Dutch workers staged large-scale strikes to warn the employers to keep their hands off the cost-of-living increases. The FNV leaders were forced to call these actions by pressure from below.

The bosses had to retreat. The workers learned that it was possible to win through action.

In 1978, tens of thousands of public workers joined in actions against planned budget cutbacks, from which they would be the first to suffer. The public workers union, the General Association of Civil Servants (ABVA), however, took a defeatist stance. It said that it was willing to accept "reasonable economy measures" so long as new jobs were created.

The parliament ignored the protests and passed the cuts. The ABVA then ended all protest actions, saying that it had to accept the "democratic decision-making process."

In December 1978, there were new mass actions by public workers. Some sections, such as the postal workers and traffic controllers, went on strike in defiance of the law that bans such recourse by public employees.

The ABVA bureaucracy held back these actions and accepted a rotten compromise. But the continuing radicalization of the rank and file and a turnover in the local leadership obliged the union tops subsequently to begin shifting their position to the left.

In June 1979, renewed protests were staged by the unions against further cutbacks. Payments to public workers and the unemployed were reduced by 2 percent. At the same time, education, public health, and social welfare services were cut.

The entire FNV came out behind these protests, which for the first time, were directed against the bourgeois coalition government's whole austerity program. Also for the first time, civil servants became involved in a struggle of the labor movement, as part of the working class.

How the IKB Participated in the March 20 Action

AMSTERDAM—The International Communist League (IKB—Dutch section of the Fourth International) distributed 30,000 leaflets in the March 20 demonstration here. The leaflets called for organizing factory committees to mobilize the workers against the government's antilabor laws and austerity program. They raised the slogan of a twenty-four-hour general strike.

A number of concrete demands were also put forward, such as a thirty-five-hour, five-day workweek and bonuses to make up for buying power already lost to inflation.

The IKB is starting a campaign in the unions for a special national union conference to discuss an action program to fight the austerity program and the capitalist crisis.

The FNV called a mass protest in Utrecht. About 40,000 people rallied there, most of them shouting "Action! Action!" For the union leaders, however, this demonstration was nothing more than a way of letting the ranks blow off steam. They did not follow up on it to build the protests. They backed off from a confrontation with the government.

But on last August 23, dockworkers in Rotterdam staged an unauthorized strike. It was initiated by the workers at the Smit Internationale towing company. They demanded a rise of 50 guilders (about US\$25.) to compensate for buying power lost through inflation.

The courts ruled the strike illegal. But this had the effect of spreading the walkouts. Some 7,000 other dockworkers went on a solidarity strike.

Nonetheless, the unions refused to give official sanction. They blocked payment of any strike funds to the workers involved. So, finally, after seven-and-a-half weeks, the workers were forced to go back, with very little to show for their long struggle.

Despite this defeat, the dock strike sent shock waves through the FNV officialdom. These were felt particularly in the leadership of the IB-FNV (Industrial Unions), which was under especially strong pressure from an increasingly militant membership.

So, in an attempt to regain some authority, the IB-FNV leaders decided to call a strike at the Shell Oil refinery in September 1979 to back up the demand for a thirty-five hour workweek. But since they were not ready for a fight, this led to a grave defeat. The picket lines were broken by a gang of scabs specially recruited by the company. Faced with this, the IB-FNV appealed to the workers to return to their jobs in order to prevent an "escalation of violence."

Moreover, as the confrontation between the government and the labor movement sharpened, a cleavage began appearing clearly in the union movement. The other major union, the Christian National Union Federation (CNV) started to denounce the FNV as "radical."*

The CNV refused to join in actions called by the FNV against antilabor laws on the grounds that it wanted to keep the union movement "out of politics." It even

called for passage of a strike code to protect the rights of nonstrikers.

At the same time, the FNV cannot provide the sort of leadership the workers movement needs. It refuses to rely on the struggle of the workers themselves and tries to channel conflicts into negotiations with the government.

Up until the end of 1979, however, even the sporadic, scattered, disunited and indecisively led resistance of the labor movement was sufficient to hold the capitalists' offensive in check. The attack on the cost-of-living increases had been halted. And the austerity plan for 1978 had been undermined.

But then at the beginning of 1980, the capitalist offensive was raised to a new level. The government declared its wage freeze and drew up the law for wage controls.

In this situation, the lack of a political alternative is becoming more acute. The Labor Party (PvdA), which is supported by most union members, offers only a somewhat less severe austerity program. The PvdA leaders say that they cannot guarantee that they can defend the workers' buying power in the coming year. And the Communist Party coattails the policy of the FNV leadership.

At the same time, the workers' militancy is continuing to grow, and this puts increasing pressure on the union leaders. Some unions are threatening to mobilize the workers around specific demands in negotiations with the employers organizations, as a way of getting around the new compulsory arbitration law. The union leaders are also talking about the possibilities of strikes in specific industries.

Both the FNV and the CNV are demanding that the workers be given compensation in January 1981 for the income they lose this year as a result of the wage freeze.

The Netherlands is heading for escalating class confrontations. □

*The FNV, with 1.1 million members, is the largest union federation in the Netherlands. It represents a fusion of the former Social Democratic union federation and a radicalized Catholic one. This fusion was seen as part of a process that could lead to the unification of the Dutch labor movement. The CNV, however, has not joined in this process.

STOP NUCLEAR POWER!



French Workers Demand Job Safety at La Hague Recycling Plant

By Benny Åsman

Workers at the big nuclear waste processing plant at La Hague on the Normandy coast in France are waging a struggle around job safety and nuclear pollution of their community.

The production of nuclear energy generates tremendous amounts of radioactive waste products. The factory in La Hague is a recycling facility that treats nuclear wastes in order to extract and recycle the uranium and plutonium from them.

When wastes arrive at La Hague, they are ground down into a powder and then chemically diluted into a liquid. The uranium and plutonium are then separated out of this liquid for processing and refining. The remaining wastes are then divided into highly radioactive and slightly radioactive wastes. The highly radioactive wastes are prepared for long-term storage, while the less radioactive wastes are stored on the premises or released into the atmosphere or the sea.

The reprocessing plant employs some 2,500 workers. Half work for COGEMA, the company that runs the facility, and half for subcontractors. Nearly all the COGEMA workers belong to the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), the second-largest union federation in France.

I spoke with Jean-Pierre Lhermite, who works at the La Hague plant and is a CFDT leader there, about the problems involved with processing nuclear wastes. These include pollution of surrounding areas, as well as health and safety problems within the plant itself.

Against nuclear power. "Our starting point is that nuclear power exists," Lhermite

said. "It's a pity, but it's a fact of life. We therefore think that it's better to process the nuclear waste and separate it into its original elements than to try to store all the waste for long periods. There's no way of knowing what problems may arise from storing the wastes, and we have no right to leave those problems to future generations."

Lhermite added that "on that basis, we in the CFDT have said that the work we do is a form of public service that has been made necessary by the political decisions in favor of nuclear power in parliament."

When the factory was first built, it only processed the wastes from French nuclear power plants. But later it was turned over by the French Atomic Energy Commission to a commercial company, COGEMA, which decided to look for commercial contracts to process nuclear wastes from all over the world.

As a result of this change, Lhermite points out, "the argument that we are providing a public service for France no longer is valid." He noted that the existence of the La Hague facility is making it easier for governments all over the world to push forward with nuclear plants, because they can reassure their own populations that "the waste will be sent to La Hague, where they know how to handle it."

The workers at La Hague find this argument unacceptable. The French government claims that all the reprocessed wastes are returned to their country of origin. The CFDT leader points out that "while this is certainly true of the plutonium, which has a strategic weapons value, all the liquid and gaseous by-

products are released into the environment right here in Normandy."

The result, says Lhermite, is that "our region is being turned into a nuclear garbage dump for other governments that cannot sell their own people on storing the wastes in their own countries."

Today La Hague is one of the biggest waste treatment installations in the world, receiving wastes from all over Europe and from Japan. In all, COGEMA has signed contracts to receive 6,000 tons of wastes by 1985.

But Lhermite points out that the factory does not have the capacity to handle all the wastes COGEMA has signed contracts for. Thus far, the existing installation has handled only 150 tons of waste in the three years it has been operating, and it has had constant technical problems. An expanded facility is so far only on the drawing boards.

"COGEMA is taking big risks in order to prove its industrial capacity," Lhermite maintained. "They're selling out safety in order to boost their profits. The equipment is getting old and worn out, and we have demanded that the plant be closed for six months to carry out the needed repairs. But the company refuses."

The very mode of functioning of a nuclear facility makes it difficult for workers to carry out effective trade-union work. As Lhermite explains, "those who control nuclear power have made an institution out of lying, and there is no way for us to check on what they say, since they have a monopoly over the laboratories. They ask you to take what they say on faith, as if it were religion. "These are difficult questions, which you cannot be expected to understand. But we promise we are telling you the truth."

Lhermite notes, however, that the few times the workers have been able to check on what they were told, they found that management had been lying.

Worker safety is a big issue in the plant. The company calculates exposure to radioactivity in such a way as to make it appear that the workers' exposure has been steadily declining. They take the 700 rems that has leaked into the plant and divide it by the total workforce, as though all workers had equal exposure.

In fact, however, exposure levels vary a great deal. There are some 200 subcontracted workers who do the most dangerous repair work and receive much higher

La Hague Fire Results in Nuclear Contamination

On February 15 a fire at the La Hague nuclear fuel reprocessing plant resulted in a shutdown of the facility and contamination of one of its buildings. The fire, which burned for several hours, began with a short circuit in one of the two 90,000 volt transformers and resulted in a loss of power to the plant.

As a result, ventilation and cooling systems stopped functioning, leading one cooling water holding tank to boil.

Temporary generators have been put into service to restore the ventilation and cooling facilities while repairs to the electrical system are made.

On April 16 the plant's trade union unit, the CFDT, issued a statement pointing out that "once again experience shows that not everything can be foreseen, including the consequences of the most commonplace accident." It called for a full investigation of all aspects of "this new incident."

than average exposures, while others are working on outside construction sites and get no exposure at all.

The company's interest in profits rather than in safety can also be seen in the plans for the new unit that will be built. The designer of the unit had originally drawn up plans calling for workers to receive no more exposure to radioactivity than the population in general. COGEMA's response was that the costs had to be cut by 50 percent, at the expense of the safety of the workers.

The CFDT has raised several demands in relation to the La Hague facility. The first is that the plant should be closed for six months for needed repairs. The second is that all foreign contracts for reprocessing nuclear wastes should be cancelled, and that operation of the plant be restricted to reprocessing French nuclear wastes as a public service.

"We are also demanding," Lhermite told me, "that plans for new nuclear facilities

in France be postponed for three years in order to bring the creation of nuclear wastes into line with our ability to reprocess it with minimum risks."

The CFDT is also demanding that major resources be devoted to research into alternative energy sources.

"It's clear," Lhermite argues, "that if an equal amount of money had been spent on solar energy as on nuclear energy, the picture would look very different today. In addition, there is a tremendous waste of energy. Take the example of cars. They have been produced for some eighty years, so we should know how to make them so they would last thirty or forty years. Instead, the capitalists produce crap that is lucky to hold together for ten years."

"But," Lhermite concludes, "this raises another problem. As long as the factories are owned privately, what counts is their volume of production and their profits, not quality and safety, and that goes for nuclear power as well as cars." □

years ago, are vigorously fighting it.

No scientific way has been found to use nuclear energy safely, even when it is taken out of the hands of the capitalist rulers. However, there are still big world reserves of oil, natural gas, and most especially coal that can be used safely. And possibilities may exist of developing other safe energy sources.

In spite of these facts, and in the face of massive worldwide protests, plans to expand the use of nuclear power are being driven forward. In the advanced capitalist countries, big profits are reaped from the huge investments in nuclear energy. The capitalist rulers are not going to give these up without a fierce fight.

They lie about the dangers and cover up the facts about accidents. They dismiss the fears and violate the democratic rights of the majority of people. One year after the Three Mile Island disaster, they belittle its harmful consequences. They charge working people there with "paranoia and panic" for worrying about "trivial amounts of radioactive krypton gas" being pumped into the atmosphere as part of the "cleanup" of the plant.

The antinuclear movement must answer each and every lie with the truth. It must continue to reach out and convince millions more to join its ranks. Crucial to building a really powerful antinuclear movement, one that can actually halt nuclear power, is taking the campaign into the unions and other mass organizations of the working class.

The next big opportunity for doing this is on May 24-26, the dates selected for International Days of Protest by the International Conference of Coordination of the Antinuclear Movement. (This is the same body that called the successful, internationally coordinated protests last June.)

Major actions are already scheduled for these dates in many countries, including Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Holland, and near the Plogoff site in Brittany.

Some actions have already occurred in the last month, especially around the first anniversary of the Three Mile Island accident. Protests were held in over fifty cities in the United States on March 28 and 29, and the largest antinuclear action yet in Britain was held in London on March 29.

Other important actions are scheduled for dates around the same time. In the United States, a march on Washington, D.C. and a parallel action in Phoenix, Arizona, are set for April 26.

The French movement plans a big demonstration at the La Hague plant on June 28 and 29.

The Fourth International is doing its utmost to help build these actions and make them as successful as possible. We are participating around the demands:

Close Down All Nuclear Power Plants!
No more Harrisburgs!
Leave the Uranium in the Ground!
No Nuclear Weapons!

Fourth International: 'No to Nuclear Power!'

[The following statement was issued April 11 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

It has been one year since the near meltdown at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania. For millions of people throughout the world, this accident brought the first real awareness of what nuclear power has in store for us. For many others it reinforced their commitment to the struggle against this menace. The impact of this accident, one of the most serious in the history of nuclear power, served to give new urgency and impetus to the antinuclear struggle in every country as shown by the huge protests in the past year—from Australia to Germany, Switzerland to Spain, and France to the United States. It was also shown by the large votes against nuclear power in referenda recently held in Sweden and Austria. The international antinuclear movement is now genuinely massive, and until the nuclear menace is stopped, has become a permanent part of the struggle for socialism.

The nuclear danger is many-sided. The mining of uranium, the processing of nuclear fuel, the routine operation of nuclear power plants, and the transportation and storage of wastes all subject millions of people to the hazards of radioactive poisoning. Much of the waste is transported by rail, which is particularly dangerous because of the high rate of derailments. And no safe way has yet been discovered to store the accumulating wastes, which remain hazardous to life for thousands of years.

There is also the risk of meltdowns and explosions at hundreds of nuclear plants throughout the world, many of them near big population centers. Such accidents could release deadly radioactive clouds into the air for miles around.

Totally intertwined with the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity is the production, testing, storing, and disposal of nuclear weapons. The largest portion of nuclear wastes is created by military production. Without an end to the production of nuclear arms, there can be no end to the nuclear danger.

It is for this reason that the antinuclear struggle helps to increase awareness about the dangers of nuclear weapons and imperialist militarism. For example, in the states of Utah and Nevada in the United States—where twenty years ago atomic bomb tests exposed thousands of people to radiation from which may have died and continue to die—there is today big opposition to establishing MX mobile missile bases.

The struggle against the nuclear danger is also interconnected with struggles against unsafe working conditions and environmental destruction. Millions of working people who have long been fighting hazards on the job easily recognize the dangers they face in mining, hauling, and handling radioactive wastes, or in working and living near nuclear facilities.

In Brittany, the French government is attempting to get approval to construct a nuclear power plant at Plogoff. But the Bretons, whose anger was primed by the world's worst oil spill along their coast two

AROUND THE WORLD

Brazilian Metalworkers Defy Military Regime

Some 225,000 Brazilian metalworkers walked off their jobs April 1. Hundreds of factories in the industrial suburbs of São Paulo have been shut down tight, among them auto plants belonging to Ford, Volkswagen, General Motors, Saab-Scania, and Mercedes Benz.

Although some of the workers voted to accept a court-ordered settlement that gave them wage increases of up to 47 percent, about 160,000 are holding out for additional demands. These include a one-year employment guarantee, a reduction in the workweek from forty-eight to forty hours, and the right to elect shop stewards.

As the strike entered its third week, a regional labor court declared it illegal. The military regime's minister of labor, Murillo Macedo, threatened to arrest leaders of the metal workers union and to occupy its headquarters. Referring to Luis Inácio da Silva (Lula), the president of the São Bernardo metalworkers union and a nationally known workers leader, Macedo drew his finger across his throat and said: "I'm going to cut off his head."

Despite such threats, the April 18 *Latin American Weekly Report* indicated that "the strike has been so solidly supported

that there has been no need for pickets."

At stake for the Brazilian government is a newly developed wage policy that the regime proposed after experiencing 140 major strikes in 1979. The policy is supposed to offer automatic wage increases to compensate for inflation, plus other increases tied to productivity. However, the government's inflation index has regularly proved to be below the actual cost of living in the country's ten leading cities.

The strike of the ABC metalworkers (so-called because of the names of the major suburbs—Santo André, São Bernardo, and São Caetano), comes on the heels of a strike by more than 12,000 dockers in Santos, Latin America's largest port.

Santos is designated a "national security" area in which strikes are illegal, but the workers walked out anyway when they were offered a 3 percent productivity raise. They demanded 15 percent and, after carrying out a solid strike despite military occupation of the port, voted to accept 10 percent.

Assessing the prospects in the ABC strike, the April 4 *Latin America Weekly Report* concluded: "Given the workers' aggressive mood . . . the government can



hold out little hope of an easy settlement and peaceful industrial relations in the near future."

Eight Taiwan Dissidents Sentenced

A Taiwan military court handed down guilty verdicts against eight opposition leaders April 18. Shih Ming-teh, the manager of *Formosa* magazine, was sentenced to life in prison on frame-up charges of plotting the overthrow of the government and of harboring the "seditious intent" of promoting Taiwan's permanent separation from China.

Huang Hsin-chieh, the founder and publisher of the opposition magazine, and a member of the Taiwanese parliament, was sentenced to fourteen years in prison. The six other defendants received twelve year sentences.

In addition to the jail terms, the court ordered the confiscation of all property of the defendants aside from that judged essential to the support of their dependents.

Fraudulent Election in Honduras

The first national elections in nine years were held in Honduras April 21, amid praise from the Carter administration and the mass media in the United States. The elections are being hailed by Washington and the Honduran rulers as the first step in a gradual transition to democratic rule. The reality, however, is different.

So determined was the regime to prevent the emergence of any real opposition in the electoral arena that even the Christian Democrats were barred from taking part! Also banned from participation was the Honduran Patriotic Front, a bloc of workers', students', and teachers' organizations.

On April 16, according to the Mexico City daily *Uno más Uno*, secret police agents arrested at least twenty-five members of the Christian Democratic Party in various cities. Party leader Hernán Corrales Padilla, a former rector of the Autonomous University and a former minister of education, declared that the election was "corrupted," and that the regime was preparing "the vilest fraud in the history of the country."

Not even Liberal Party leader José Azcona Hoyos was safe. Although his party eventually won out over the equally venal National Party, Azcona Hoyos was attacked in broad daylight April 15 by a gang of National Party thugs while he was attending a meeting of the Board of Elections.

Meanwhile, Washington has promised



Brazilian police use rifle butts to dislodge striking metalworkers from union headquarters.

\$4 million in military aid to protect this new-found Honduran democracy.

13 Tunisian Dissidents Hanged

Brushing aside international appeals for clemency, the Tunisian regime of President Habib Bourguiba hanged thirteen dissidents at dawn on April 17.

The thirteen were among fifty-nine persons accused of having taken part in a guerrilla attack on an army barracks and police station in the town of Gafsa in January. That attack was put down only after French military transports and helicopters airlifted Tunisian troops into the area.

Of the other accused who were found guilty by a state security court, five were sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor and fourteen drew lesser prison terms. In addition, seven defendants who had escaped the country were sentenced in absentia.

100,000 Black Students Protest Racist Education in South Africa

Ending a two-year lull in Black student protests in South Africa, tens of thousands of high school students in Cape Town and other cities across the country walked out of their classes in mid-April to demand an end to the apartheid regime's racist system of segregated education.

The call for the nationwide student strike was issued on April 19 by a meeting of student representatives from more than sixty Black schools in the Cape Town area.

By the time the call was issued, some 25,000 students were already boycotting classes. By April 22, the number had reached more than 100,000, and the strike had spread from Cape Town to Johannesburg, Durban, Pretoria, Kimberley, Bloemfontein, and other cities. Most of the students were between thirteen and eighteen years old, but some universities and teacher training colleges were also affected by the boycotts.

The bulk of the protesters were Coloureds (of mixed ancestry), who are concentrated for the most part in Cape Province. The protests, however, also involved students from the African and Indian populations, the other two components of South Africa's Black majority.

In an effort to build stronger unity among the three sectors of the Black population, Coloured student leaders have appealed for greater African involvement in the boycott. At a rally of 5,000 students in a Coloured township outside Johannesburg, one student leader said, "We should stand together and we therefore call upon you [Africans] to support our liberation cause."

Another student declared, "We must tell the Government that we want to determine our own destiny. The Government has done everything to humiliate us by giving

us inferior education."

Fearing that a sharp crackdown on the student protest might simply aggravate the ferment—possibly leading to a repetition of the mass youth revolts of 1976 and 1977—the regime has ordered police to maintain a low profile.

However, police have on several occasions attacked student marches. On April 22, they fired tear gas into a crowd of 8,000 demonstrators in Cape Town and the following day used tear gas and clubs to break up similar marches in Johannesburg and Durban.

Rights Group Accuses Argentine Regime

The Inter-American Human Rights Commission, which had been invited to Argentina by the country's military regime, released its report on conditions there April 18. Instead of the whitewash that the Argentine rulers had apparently expected, the report gave a damning account of the regime's savage record.

Since the military came to power in a March 1976 coup, the commission found that at least 7,000 people (Amnesty International estimates at least 10,000) have disappeared after being detained by government forces. These missing persons, the report said, "can be presumed to be dead."

In addition to its finding that government agents "have killed numerous men and women after detaining them," the report accused the regime of "systematic torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading practices."

These practices, moreover, "were not unknown to persons occupying the highest positions in the Government and armed forces."

Such a report from an official body of the Organization of American States can only help put the Argentine regime on the defensive and aid in the defense of its victims.

The fruits of this pressure have already been seen with the release of two trade-union leaders, Diego Ibáñez and Lorenzo Miguel. Ibáñez, the former secretary general of the Federation of State Petroleum Workers, and Miguel, who headed the Metallurgical Workers, had been held without charges for more than four years.

Soviet Rulers Rearrest Chornovil

Amnesty International reported April 16 that Ukrainian political prisoner Vyacheslav Chornovil was rearrested by the Kremlin rulers three months before his eight-year term was to have ended. He had been sentenced in February 1973 to a term of five years imprisonment and three years internal exile for "anti-Soviet activity."

As a journalist in Ukraine in the fall of 1965, Chornovil was assigned to cover the trials of Ukrainian intellectuals. Outraged at the illegalities of the trials, he protested the sentences and refuted the charges. In

his writings, published abroad as *The Chornovil Papers*, he showed that the defendants were not "anti-Soviet criminals," as the prosecution claimed.

Because of his writings, Chornovil was arrested and in November 1967 sent to serve a one-and-a-half-year term.

Following his release, he, like hundreds of other young Ukrainians in the late 1960s, opposed the Stalinist policy of Russification in Ukraine. He denied the Kremlin's charge that they were "bourgeois nationalists" and considered that, on the contrary, in defending Ukraine from Russification he was following Lenin's policy on nationalities. The Kremlin, he stated, in imposing Russian on Ukrainians was reviving the Great Russian chauvinist policies of the Tsarist period that Lenin fought against.

The 1972 KGB crackdown was aimed at smashing this Ukrainian Marxist current. Chornovil, like many of the others arrested and sentenced with him, has retained his militant commitment to his ideas. In the summer of 1979, he announced his intention to join the Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group.

Amnesty International has issued an "Urgent Action" call for telegrams and letters to be sent to Soviet authorities demanding Chornovil be freed.

Corrections

The English text of the "Draft Resolution on the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan," supported by a minority of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International at its January 26-29 meeting, did not include an amendment appearing in the final French text. (See *IP/I*, March 3, 1980, page 214.) The first two sentences in the last paragraph of the statement should have read:

"Revolutionary Marxists must take part in and promote actions by the anti-imperialist and workers movement to politically press the Soviet Union to immediately withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. In doing this, they must fight all forms of boycott against the Soviet Union and oppose all characterization of the Soviet Union as imperialist."

* * *

In the special supplement to *IP/I* on the 1979 World Congress of the Fourth International, the list on page 4 of comrades who had died since the previous congress omitted the name of American socialist Bill Kitt, who died in 1975.

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DOCUMENTS

Speech by Fidel Castro

'Society Must Develop and Use the Capabilities of Women'

[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 March 8, International Women's Day. Another section of the speech, dealing with the revolutionary rise in the Caribbean and Central America, appeared in our April 14 issue. The full text from which this excerpt is taken appeared in the March 16 issue of the weekly English-language *Granma*, published in Havana.]

[An article assessing the results of the FMC congress and the significance of Castro's speech will appear in an upcoming issue.]

* * *

One of the issues that was discussed the most while the Main Report was being drawn up—and it was discussed at the grass roots—one of the things that most concerns us has to do with the participation of women in the economy of the country. I want to discuss this and some of the concerns I know have cropped up on this subject.

There is no doubt that we have made great progress in this respect in the past years. This is shown, for example, by the fact that prior to the Revolution there were 262,000 working women—I think that's the 1953 figure—and now there are 800,600. As Vilma explained in the Report, it's not just a matter of numbers but a change in the composition since formerly many of those jobs were as servants, in bars and jobs of that sort to which women were relegated under capitalism. That is in contrast to the many qualified women now working: teachers, doctors, architects, nurses, intermediate technicians; 78,000 qualified women have joined the work force in the last few years. That alone shows the true nature of the change.

In the last five years some 200,000 women have started working, that is, women have joined the work force at a faster rate than men; that is logical because employment levels for men were higher. Now 30 percent of the work force consists of women.

In coming years it won't be easy for our country, for our Revolution, to keep up that pace; for an underdeveloped country 30 percent is a high rate; of every 100, 30 women.

This comes at a time when the young people who made up the population boom are coming of work age. The boom made itself felt at the schools, in the efforts required to build elementary schools to cope, and then in the intermediate schools where we now have an enrollment of 1,100,000. When Fernández spoke here he said there had been an increase—I think he said 15 times.

JOSÉ R. FERNÁNDEZ.—Twelve times.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO.—Twelve times, but if you said 12 you're wrong, Fernández, (LAUGHTER) because there were only 70,000 and some: it doesn't make it. . . .

He says there were 88,000. All right, 12 times, which is no small feat. One million one hundred thousand! Just think of what is required to cope with all the students we have. An enormous effort!

Now, we can't say that we are in a position to ensure—just as we guaranteed schools and medical care—increased jobs to keep pace with that growth, because it requires investments and new job opportunities. Therefore we will have some job problems as this enormous number of young people come of work age.

We feel that the Revolution has the duty, the Party and state have as their first duty doing all they can to come up with

answers, with solutions to the employment problem.

This may also coincide with the quest for economic efficiency and productivity. It means savings in human resources, because efficiency in part means economizing on human resources. We are seeking greater efficiency. It is not a case of solving the problem by creating jobs per se, jobs which do not mean a service or benefit; putting 50 in an office to do work that can be done by 25 or 30, for example. You understand what I mean. That wouldn't be the right solution and to create jobs based on inefficiency would be anti-economical.

We've been making an effort to raise productivity and have been achieving this; we've been making an effort for efficiency and have been achieving this; but we still have a lot to do, a lot to accomplish in this field. I recall there came a certain time when there weren't enough men in the Havana port to unload the boats, at a time when there was a flat rate, the same for loading five tons as for loading ten. In some jobs, linking work to wages has helped considerably in boosting productivity. There were never enough men around and the Havana port became a bottomless pit demanding more and more and more hands. And yet you have to see what has been achieved in productivity in the ports and in many other activities.

And so we now have greater efficiency, greater productivity, with a population explosion nearing work age.

It wouldn't be wise, it wouldn't be honest to make easy promises here, for we're very aware of what's needed in investments to come up with an immediate answer to that mass of young men and women; the amount of economic resources that is required, and which we lack, and we can't say that in the next five years we'll be investing three times more, for we'll be investing only what we can invest. Now we must also think about the ways and means to provide useful employment. That's our duty. That's our responsibility. We must find them, and find them we will.

Recently at the National Assembly a form of electricity payments, a form of monthly payment was discussed and recommended; it was asked that it be monthly and the conclusion was reached that it be monthly. Up to then it had been quarterly but calculated on a monthly average. The point was to go and take a reading and see exactly how much had been consumed each month, instead of going by averages. This requires a number—to take as an example—of persons to do the reading and collecting. Which won't be quarterly; what will be quarterly are your FMC [Federation of Cuban Women] dues. (LAUGHTER) Monthly. And you know what a lot of walking is involved (LAUGHTER) and how much our electric workers will have to walk. But this is necessary, the people are asking for it, it is considered more convenient. It generates a number of jobs, a job that can largely be done by women, and we mustn't forget that. (APPLAUSE) I give you this as an example.

And I can give you other examples. The textile industry is operating an average of 280 days every year, but it could operate 335 days a year and turn out more cloth on the basis of one more shift. An additional shift would mean the factory would not stop the week round. It would only stop for repairs during one period of the year. And that would generate more jobs, jobs to be filled by women. This is just to give an example.

I can give you another. You know how it is in the sugar mills where the work is hard and goes on for 150 days. Some day we'll also have to consider ways in which the worker can rest during



There have been many complaints about stores, laundries, and other facilities not being open after normal working hours, which imposes an added burden on working women. Castro notes: "I haven't yet heard a single man . . . protest about that. Not a single one! And there must be some reason! Despite the Family Code!"

the harvest months, for it is very hard, very rough work. There'll come the time, when we've achieved greater efficiency, that this may be necessary. We haven't done so yet because there was a shortage of labor. Other things have been done to benefit the sugar worker, a basic was to make the job a stable one. And this has been a demand dating back to the early years of the Revolution; but we haven't been able to meet it. When things are a bit easier we'll be able to do some of these things. That is, it is possible to create more jobs in the factories we have now. Who knows how much can be done in small handicraft shops in terms of goods for home consumption and for export. Maybe the Sandinistas can help us on that score, because they have wonderful handicraft workers. Just look at the gift they brought for the Federation today.

This is, of course, apart from the new factories now going into production. Recently, the Santa Clara textile plant started operations and this created jobs for thousands of people in Santa Clara. Right there the machine plant is being built, an important plant that will manufacture machinery for the sugar mills, such that the greater part of the components of a new sugar mill can be produced in Cuba. Now we're manufacturing nearly 50 percent and we'll be reaching 70 percent. We will be turning out complete tandems. Two big cement plants will begin production this year. And there are other new plants we've been building that will be going into production. There are new industrial investment programs, services which will be developed.

Naturally, sometimes the problem we run into is that jobs are not evenly distributed. There are places where we need workers now, where there won't be enough and in other places we have a surplus. It is in eastern Cuba that we have the problem of the greatest surplus, because, to go back to the population explosion, the explosion was greatest in the eastern provinces; the number of births there far exceeded that of the western provinces, for instance. The western provinces can't and shouldn't emulate with the eastern provinces where population is concerned. (LAUGHTER) In some areas we have problems of more workers than jobs available. But when the time comes to develop an area like Moa, personnel has to be brought in from all over the country. There are thousands and thousands of builders from all the country. When the time comes to build more in Cienfuegos, now that we have to build the first atomic power plant, many thousands will have to work there. When we start building the steel plant on the north coast of eastern Cuba, we will also have to mobilize thousands and thousands of construction workers.

So the problem that presents itself is a real, objective one, but this does not exonerate us in any way from the sacred, elementary duty of searching for formulas to solve the employment problem, and in this, as regards women, we've been making a good deal of progress.

But, mind you, no matter what, in all that we have made progress, what we have to avoid is falling back in any way. That's very important! (APPLAUSE) That there be no falling off of that

30 percent; and if it's possible to advance some, we will advance as far as reality permits.

Needless to say, in the developed socialist countries this percentage is higher, some 40 percent and more. But this is not yet our case.

We have to go carefully and analyze this problem well.

Of course, we are decidedly in favor of having preferential posts for women in work places, decidedly in favor. I think we should keep that up.

I know that other questions have been discussed here, related, for example, to some jobs which are not authorized for women. That's a different kind of problem because, let's say, it is a medical problem, a health problem; you just can't take any decision on a problem of this nature. It can, however, be brought up for review, because as technology is developed and more equipment used, as work conditions change, the number of jobs women can't fill now will be fewer and fewer. See how in many activities already, in construction, for instance, women are taking an increasing part; in the sugar mills, there are more and more women.

So these jobs to which women have no access are on the decrease, as the conditions of production are changing.

In my opinion the fact that management can freely take on workers does not prevent them from consulting with organizations, consulting with trade unions, consulting with the Federation (APPLAUSE) during the selection process for personnel to be taken on directly by the enterprise, for it's not a matter of placing an ad in the paper, of going about it secretly. To hire somebody you must know who you're hiring, who you're selecting.

There might be two cases: two women who offer the same but one has family income problems while the other doesn't. The case could arise. And this must be borne in mind. (APPLAUSE) We can't go just by a strictly economic criterion, without ever taking into account a question of social justice. We're not capitalists; we're socialists, and we want to be Communists. (APPLAUSE) And I think that would help; it doesn't have to be an obstacle.

Direct hiring of workers means that there be no more centralized allocation of the work force, but it doesn't mean that the manager is accordingly given complete free rein. I think that the practical, useful thing is for him to consult: he has the trade union, the Federation. I think that would help in making the best selection of personnel, of this I haven't the slightest doubt, without violating the principle of direct hire.

I think we must be very careful in that certain situations do not lead us to retrace our steps in what we have gained for women, which is a lot. We must consolidate this and progress more.

If we analyze the number of women who are studying, particularly in many of these activities, like teachers, nurses, middle-level technicians in the health sector and in general, those studying in the universities, where there's a high percentage of women, there's no doubt that there will continue to be a considerable increase in women's qualifications and their potential access to many techni-

cal jobs. Many women comrades are distinguishing themselves in this respect.

I believe you appointed today to the National Committee a distinguished woman comrade who heads a research center, who in the past and at this very moment is directing work to combat African swine fever. And more and more women are earning a place for themselves in technical jobs. The outlook on that front is positive.

I was saying that we had to be careful not to fall back on what we have achieved so far, for we've had to work very hard and struggle very hard against incomprehension and prejudice to bring about a climate of equality, to overcome prejudice, backward ways of thinking. And, of course, if we fall back as regards jobs, if we fall back in the economic field, we will start going back on everything else we've gained.

And I sincerely think that it is our duty, the duty of the Party, the duty of the state, the duty of the trade unions, to concern ourselves over this, and the duty also of the women. It is one of the tasks, the functions, the goals of the Federation, which is not just working for the Revolution, not just helping in the health field, in education, in the fight against crime, in all the tasks in which women participate. Not only does the Federation play a very important role in economic tasks and in the services; it also has the duty to pay close attention to all the questions that concern women, that are of interest to women, and to defend those interests in the Party and in the state.

See how you yourselves have come up with some solutions. Some time ago, whenever a meeting of the light industry sector was held, the workers there—and many of them are women—invariably raised the problem of schools and complained that the schools closed at 4:30 p.m., and that day-care centers closed at such and such a time and that Saturday mornings were a headache and you yourselves began to come up with the solutions, with the idea of teacher's aides.

Today there is talk—although in some provinces there are still some basic problems, it would seem from what has been said here—of a better selection of teacher's aides. But you yourselves thought up solutions to the problem, because there really was a contradiction between the time school was over and the time you finished work; you started seeking formulas. And now you've been discussing not the problem but how the solution which you found is coming along.

In the same way, the Federation must strive to think of everything that can help in terms of the job situation and solving all the problems you have raised here. And this is very important; it's one of the tasks the Federation of Cuban Women must pay attention to, in connection with the problem of jobs I'm talking about and taking part in the economic life of the country, although, realistically speaking, we can't continue with the same growth rate as over past years for the reasons we have explained.

New sources of employment are opening up. We already have thousands of men and women comrades, for instance, working in other countries, getting qualifications. We have several thousand in the GDR and Czechoslovakia; we have thousands of comrades working abroad as technicians—thousands!—or as construction workers. Of course, in these types of activities—I don't know whether I'll be accused of discriminating—if we have to send ten thousand builders, then logically, because of the kind of work involved, most of them will be men. And so we can send fundamentally men for some of these activities, since women are sometimes discriminated against. They don't want them sometimes in war, they just don't want them, in spite of the fact that they have shown their ability to participate. (APPLAUSE)

If there are openings for the nation to engage in overseas work of an economic nature, we can use our reserve of men, without excluding the women of course, without excluding them; but we're aware that when women must leave the family behind, the human sacrifice is greater than when a man leaves. We're aware of that.

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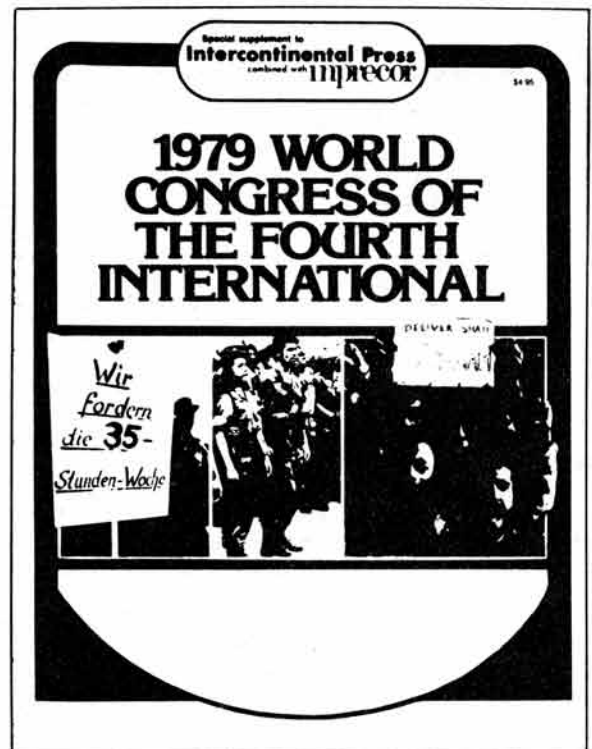
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We all have the duty of seeking out wise, just solutions to these problems. And you can trust in the Party, for this will be the line the Party follows.

There's been plenty of talk here about the promotion of women in political and administrative posts. I think this subject is still of the greatest importance. In some fields we have fallen back. For instance, in the People's Power elections fewer women were elected in the second election than in the first election. There were fewer women the second time round. In the National Assembly there was a good proportion, but in the grass-roots elections, in the circumscriptions, there were fewer than in the last elections. This, naturally, must give us food for thought and cause for concern, the way we have fallen back, especially when we were complaining about the results of the first. We were hoping for progress and instead we fell back.

Of course, there are some explanations that can be given; some were given here, the many responsibilities women still have, how difficult things become. But, isn't there some prejudice too? Isn't there some prejudice, even among the women who go to the polls and vote prejudiced? I'm not saying that women must be voted for just because they're women. When one goes to the polls, the vote should be given to whoever, in the citizen's opinion, is better prepared, and better qualified; but no one should not vote for a woman because she happens to be a woman or through prejudice. All the same, I think that the percentage of women elected in the People's Power elections, in the grass-roots elections, is really low.

In other fields we have progressed. It was said, for instance, how women constitute more than 40 percent of trade union leaders. I think that when the last Congress was held the figure was less, some 30 percent. That is, it's remarkable how women have gone from making up some 30 percent to over 40 percent of trade union leadership. This speaks highly of how our workers have confidence in women.

I wasn't able to personally hear Comrade Landy's speech, but I was told later that he mentioned some figures, on the situation in the Young Communist League, on how women already make up 40 percent of membership. They jumped from 29 to 40. I think this is a meaningful jump. We've advanced in the Party. We've already reached 18.9. I understand that, for instance, in the Federation of Students of Intermediate Education, 65 percent of the leaders are young women. In the Pioneer organization—and perhaps this is what is most promising—girls hold 75 percent of the positions of responsibility, 75 percent! (APPLAUSE) Remarkable! You can see the children are not prejudiced; (LAUGHTER) when they're going to choose, they choose girls. I think this is really promising and interesting.

But neither the Party nor the government can give up—they can't give up for a second—the struggle on behalf of the advancement of women. I am absolutely convinced that society stands to gain insofar as it is able to develop and make use of the moral, human and intellectual qualities and capabilities of women. I'm absolutely convinced of this. And this is precisely what sets a just society, a socialist society apart from a capitalist one.

But I'm by no means convinced that the idea of equality has even triumphed on a world scale. There aren't many examples. And I'm including the socialist countries. I think women should be promoted more at the state and Party level, I honestly do. (APPLAUSE)

It is our duty to create the conditions to develop that awareness. It is our duty, our moral obligation, and all the more so when I think that our Party is still largely a Party of men, and our state is still largely a state of men. Perhaps here on the platform we don't have a majority supporting that thesis. (LAUGHTER) I'm looking at some male comrades and I don't know what they think. But I really believe this. And I say, aren't we still prejudiced no matter how much we declare war on those prejudices?

That is another very important theme taken up at this Congress, in the Main Report and in the Theses. As I said, we have progressed but we still have a long way to go and we have to prevent any falling back in this historic—and it is historic—struggle.

Various problems affecting women, especially regarding the services, were dealt with at the Congress. In promoting equality we have clearly progressed institutionally, with the Family Code, the Code on Youth and the Constitution. We have progressed juridically, but we have to progress in practice too. What constitutes an unfair burden for women, what can alleviate that burden? And that's why problems with services reflect always, especially on women workers, and why they have been brought up. I really have my doubts as to whether we are going about things in the right way. When the hairdressers closes at such and such an hour and that's that. And then the working woman can't go to the hairdresser. (APPLAUSE) I give one example, the hairdressers, which is by no means the most basic. But the problems of laundries was raised here also.

So this has been put forward, and put forward strongly. The stores were brought up. I know, at least in the Report it says that when they stopped [special opening hours]. . . (APPLAUSE) It says in the Main Report that that was a step backwards and that when some experiments they were doing were stopped the Federation wasn't consulted at all; it wasn't asked for its opinion. (APPLAUSE) It says that in the Main Report.

I think we should reflect on whether we aren't able to solve such problems. We started out trying to solve the problem of the schools by bringing in teacher's aides. Why can't hairdressers be open after normal work hours? (APPLAUSE) Don't bus workers work at night? Don't doctors and nurses and other hospital staff work at night? (APPLAUSE) Don't electric workers work at night keeping up output at peak hours? (APPLAUSE) Because if it really. . . ? Because even if few people go it does mean more time for people, even those not working; what there does seem to be is a need for it.

And of course what Vilma said in the Report I've heard too: that absenteeism, authorization to receive those services during work hours, has practically been legalized. It has been legalized, (APPLAUSE) because there's no way of solving those problems any other time; they have to be solved during work hours. And, listen, there are 800,000 women working, 800,600 according to the figures.

If they have those problems why can't we think up other, more reasonable solutions? Services that do function at other hours. And haven't we been saying that we're going to have some employment problems? Well, that means more jobs in the hairdressers and other centers, more jobs. (APPLAUSE)

The formulas can vary: opening hours can vary, there can be more shifts, it depends on what it is and what is most advisable. Because the point is that if they don't go to the hairdressers they'll be doing their hair at home, and if they do go to the hairdressers they'll be paying for the service they receive. And not all the employees have to be there, as say, during peak hours. The whole staff doesn't have to be around at 8:00 or 9:00 at night. There can be just one or two. That'll have to be studied. And why can't the laundries be working at night, if it's a service that's being paid for? (APPLAUSE) People are going to pay for that service; they're going to pay for it!

We have to think up practical solutions. We don't have to be dogmatic, inflexible about it. We must do things that will help people with their problems; we understand that.

I haven't yet heard a single man, let me tell you, protest about that. (LAUGHTER) Not a single one! (APPLAUSE) And there must be some reason! Despite the Code! (LAUGHTER) They are arguments being put forward by women workers, basically, and they have to do with a reality. It's being said all over the place. Why shouldn't we be open to looking for other solutions and providing useful services? I am talking about a service that is useful to the population, services that are paid for. And that's a reality.

I believe that the comrades in charge of these fronts should analyze such issues more carefully and come up with reasonable, fair solutions to these problems; they should help create the conditions so that women workers don't go out of their minds. □

Protest Assassination Attempt Against Panamanian Socialist

PANAMA CITY—Well-known Panamanian socialist Dr. Miguel Antonio Bernal was the victim of an assassination attempt here April 9. A bomb was placed in his car. Fortunately, however, the explosives failed to go off simultaneously, permitting him to escape without injury.

At 9:50 p.m. Bernal stepped out of a meeting in defense of democratic rights in Panama. He started his car and had driven 500 yards when an explosion set off a fire under the hood. As he jumped from the car, a second explosion went off. The front of the car was burned and destroyed.

People in the surrounding homes came out to help and called the police, who did not show up for over fifteen minutes. The police have so far refused to make any investigation.

This is the second attempt on Bernal's life in only four months. On December 19, 1979, a group of National Guardsmen attacked Bernal, beating him for fifteen minutes until he lay unconscious. The guard beating took place at a demonstration that Bernal helped organize to protest the welcome given the shah of Iran by the Panamanian government.

After the beating, the National Guard arrested Bernal and took him in a semi-conscious state to jail. Only the intervention of a doctor at the prison saved Bernal from possible death. He suffered permanent brain damage, requiring continuous medication and limiting his activities.

These attacks are the culmination of a campaign by the Panamanian government to silence Bernal's criticisms of its antilabor policies and violations of democratic rights. Bernal is a leader of the Socialist Revolutionary Movement (MSR), which is affiliated to the Fourth International. He became especially popular in Panama because of his half-hour daily radio program, "Alternative." When the radio station was unable any longer to finance the program because no capitalist concern would buy advertising, Bernal appealed to listeners for financial support. The result was overwhelming, literally purchasing the survival of the daily broadcast.

But the Panamanian government could not tolerate even this small half-hour of open discussion; so it moved through other channels to stop Bernal's program. His license as a radio commentator was cancelled on March 3 by the government, which charged that "Alternative" violated "the public order" and "national security."

Ever since Bernal publicly criticized aspects of the Panama Canal treaties that violated the sovereignty of Panama, exposing the "nationalist" hypocrisy of the Torrijos regime, he has been at the top of the Panamanian government's enemies list. Deported from Panama for two-and-a-half years, he was allowed to return in April 1978, but was blacklisted from work. In 1979, backed by pressure from the

student body, Bernal was able to return to teaching at the university. Recently, however, the university has begun to eliminate Bernal's courses, and he has been the victim of threatening telephone calls, surveillance, and other harassment.

The opposition newspaper *Ya Tienes la Verdad* reported the terrorist attack on Bernal in its April 11 issue. It warned that Bernal may be the first victim of an extension to Panama of the right-wing terrorist campaign that is daily murdering leftists in El Salvador and Guatemala.

Trade unions, civil liberties groups, and

individuals in Panama have protested the attacks on Bernal. The teacher's union federation, for which Bernal has acted as a legal consultant, has been outspoken in his defense.

International messages of support are urgently needed to pressure the Panamanian government to halt its illegal campaign of intimidation and terrorist violence. Messages should be sent to: President Aristides Royo, Palacio Presidencial, Panama, Panama, with copies to Miguel Antonio Bernal, Apartado 4677, Panama 5, Panama. □

New Attack on Job Rights for Women in Quebec

By Janice Lynn

Three Quebec women who have gathered impressive union support for winning back their jobs at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Ltd. have now been laid off from their new jobs as well.* This is a further attack against the right of women in Quebec and English Canada to hold industrial jobs.

On April 11, Suzanne Chabot and Wendy Stevenson, employed at Canadair for the last two months, were laid off for "administrative reasons." The same day, Katy LeRougetel, the only woman working in the machine shop at Canadian Marconi, was laid off due to a "work shortage."

Despite the employers' excuses, these layoffs are clearly linked to the sexist firings at Pratt & Whitney. Canada's federal government has announced a contract for construction of an F-18 fighter jet that would result in *increased hiring at both Canadair and Canadian Marconi*. In fact, job offers for machinists at Canadair recently appeared in the newspapers.

In response to these latest attacks the Committee to Defend the Three Women Fired From Pratt & Whitney called an emergency news conference April 15. Speaking along with the three women were Claude Vincent, vice-president of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 510 at Pratt & Whitney, and Grant Hargrave, a UAW Local 510 member.

Hargrave revealed that Pratt's director of industrial relations had mentioned the case at an April 2 information session for new employees. In answering a question about why the three women had been laid off, while the company had been hiring other workers, this Pratt official said that "the three girls" were a "threat to industrial relations."

Chabot, Stevenson, and LeRougetel are members of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), Canadian section of the

*See *IP/I*, April 7, 1980, for background on the Pratt & Whitney case.

Fourth International. They were well-known to their Pratt & Whitney co-workers as feminists and as political and trade-union activists.

UAW Local 510 has filed a complaint with the Quebec Human Rights Commission challenging the Pratt layoffs as discriminatory. At its April 13 union meeting, Local 510 voted to send protest letters to Canadair, Canadian Marconi, and the federal government regarding the latest firings, as well.

In a further victimization of union activists, Pratt recently fired a Local 510 union delegate for pointing out to workers how the company was trying to shirk its responsibility for safety in the plant. The local is circulating a petition protesting this.

Lodge 712 of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Canadair voted unanimously April 16 to support the right of the three to get back their jobs at Pratt & Whitney.

Other new support for the three women has come from several New Democratic Party (NDP) Members of Parliament (the NDP is Canada's labor party); the executive committee of Montreal's blue collar city workers; the Ontario NDP women's committee; and numerous other union officials and activists.

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