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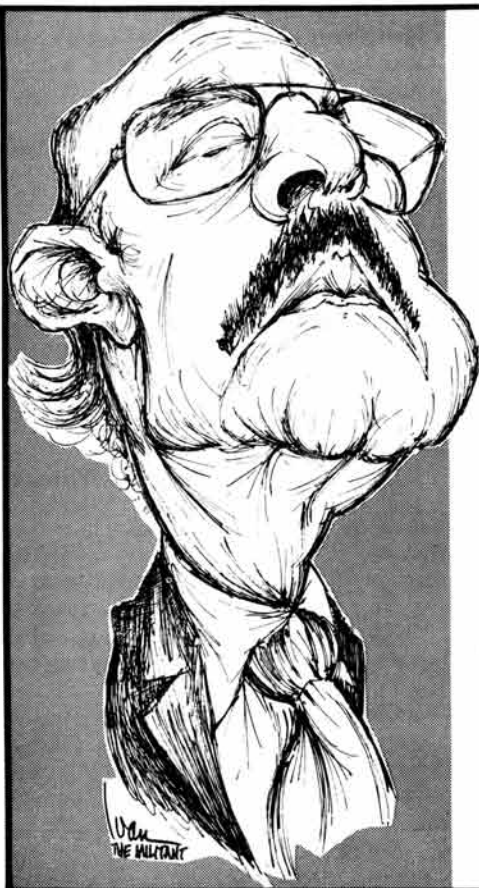
September 29, 1980

USA \$1

UK 30p

Washington
Stands Behind
Iraqi Attacks

HANDS OFF IRAN!



**'National
Jubilation'
Sweeps
Nicaragua**

**Israel
Changing
Attitudes
Among Jewish
Workers**

**China
Demand
Release of
Four Jailed
Editors**

NEWS ANALYSIS

Why Washington, Baghdad Attack Iran

By Janice Lynn

September 22—World working-class opinion must be mobilized to demand an immediate end to the military attacks against Iran. The all-out offensive launched today by the Iraqi regime, following several weeks of escalating border attacks on Iran, is part of the drive by U.S. imperialism to crush the Iranian revolution.

Iraqi warplanes are reported to have carried out a bombing raid on Tehran's Mehrabad international airport. A commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the *pasdaran*, said that airports were also hit in the cities of Ahwaz, Hamadan, Tabriz, Dezful, Tolumbeh Sabz, and Bushehr.

The early edition of tomorrow's *New York Times* reported that ten Iranian airfields were confirmed to have been hit.

A military communique broadcast by Tehran radio said that yesterday, September 21, Iraqi artillery fire had hit an oil reservoir in Abadan, the site of Iran's major oil refinery. Tehran radio also reported damage to the Abadan airport, as well as to the oil-exporting port at nearby Khorramshahr.

The Iraqi military offensive began without any provocation by the Iranian government. The assault followed a declaration by Hussein on September 17 that a 1975 agreement giving Iran partial sovereignty over the Shatt al Arab estuary was henceforth "null and void." The estuary lies between Iran and Iraq near the Persian Gulf; it forms part of the western border of Iran's oil-producing Khuzestan Province. Hussein's statement vowed that Iraq would recover the territory by force.

A few days earlier, Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had condemned Iraq's stepped-up assault on its borders. "We are at war with America," Khomeini said, "and today the hand of America has come out of the sleeve of Iraq."

The latest major escalation has strengthened the conviction in Iran that U.S. imperialism stands to gain the most from the Iraqi aggression. Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of Iran's parliament, declared that "the Iraqi attack against Iran is part of a U.S. plot."

Rafsanjani added that the attacks would certainly affect the situation surrounding the U.S. hostages. Rafsanjani repeated that a decision on release of the hostages depends on Washington's agreement to the legitimate demands of the Iranian people, "especially our demand for the return of the Shah's wealth."

On the very same day that the Iraqi regime launched its full-scale assault, U.S. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, speaking before the United Nations General Assembly, hypocritically urged the Iranian parliament to consider the "human face of the hostage problem." Once the hostages have been released, he said, Washington is "prepared to deal, on a basis of mutual respect and equality, with all the outstanding issues and misunderstandings between Iran and the United States. . . ."

But no amount of tired or hollow promises can substitute for meeting Iran's reasonable demands. And no amount of "conciliatory" language can counteract the record of Washington's ongoing complicity with counterrevolutionary pro-shah forces now based in Iraq.

These reactionary forces include Shapur Bakhtiar, the shah's last handpicked prime minister, as well as the shah's former top generals, Gholam Oveissi and Ahmed Palizban. Oveissi, notorious inside Iran as the "butcher," was directly responsible for the "Black Friday" massacre of peaceful anti-shah protesters in September 1978.

William Sullivan, who was U.S. ambassador to Iran during the 1978-79 revolution, has recently documented in *Foreign Policy* magazine that the Carter administration sought to maintain this gang of murderers in power to the bitter end.

And Washington is still banking on these same rightist forces to overturn the current Iranian government and put a halt to the deepening of the revolution.

Since Oveissi fled Iran in early 1979, he has spent a good portion of his time in the United States. Washington officials acknowledge that they have met with Oveissi, but they have refused to comment on their discussions.

After several visits to Iraq and a meeting with Iraqi President Hussein, Bakhtiar hooked up last June with both Oveissi and Palizban. *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent John Cooley disclosed that the three reached agreement on military operations based in Iraq. Iranian émigré sources told Cooley that both generals had been gathering forces and arms for an Iraqi-supported attack against the Iranian revolution.

Oveissi has set up bases in Iraq, and there are reports that the Hussein regime has supplied him with money, arms, and other military equipment. Oveissi has also established a radio transmitter in Iraq to

beam anti-Khomeini messages into Iran.

It is hardly unreasonable to suggest that funding for Oveissi comes from the same source as funding for similar anti-Khomeini broadcasts beamed from Egypt. U.S. officials acknowledged last June that the Egyptian operation is bankrolled by the CIA.

Washington's "Iraq option" is one aspect of the same overall policy that led to its abortive attempt last April at a raid on Tehran. Despite U.S. claims that it was a "humanitarian rescue mission," the raid clearly had much broader aims, in line with Washington's goal of overthrowing the Iranian government and replacing it with one more accommodating to imperialist interests in the region.

Governments throughout the Islamic world condemned this U.S. military attack on Iran, including even such servile rightist regimes as that of Gen. Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan. In Iraq, however, the state radio derisively described the raid as play-acting orchestrated between Tehran and Washington. In a shameless display of hypocrisy, the Iraqi regime accused *Tehran* of opening the door to American military intervention in the Persian Gulf!

Then, the very next day after Carter's raid, Hussein publicly attacked Khomeini at a rally in Iraq, saying that his government was ready to defeat Iranian forces.

Fewer than three months later, in mid-July, the Iranian government succeeded in breaking up a coup attempt. Two former generals from the shah's regime reportedly confessed that they had plotted to bring Bakhtiar back to power. The Iraqi military was directly implicated in this plot.

The recent revelations by U.S. columnist Jack Anderson of a "top secret plan to invade Iran with a powerful military force" sometime in October raise questions about how the Iraqi regime's military offensive may be connected with the exposed invasion plans.

Relations have traditionally been strained between Washington and Iraq since the revolution in 1958 that toppled the Iraqi monarchy and scuttled the pro-imperialist Baghdad Pact. Subsequent Iraqi regimes had aligned themselves with the Soviet government, and have maintained a public stance of opposition to any compromise with Zionist Israel, Washington's key ally in the Mideast.

Over the past several years, however, U.S.-Iraqi relations have eased, and this has been especially true since the overthrow of the shah in February 1979. This shift in U.S. policy has become increasingly clear since the turn of the year.

"We see no fundamental incompatibility of interests between the United States and Iraq," Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, declared in April.

An article in the May 3 U.S. weekly *New Republic* pointed out that Hussein "has done nothing to discourage US attentions, and in fact has encouraged them. He has

increased Iraq's oil exports to the Western nations, has proposed 'liberating' South Yemen from its Marxist traces, and has offered himself as the protector and guarantor of Saudi Arabia's stability and as the preeminent bulwark against radical Islamic forces."

The June 4 *Wall Street Journal* explicitly spelled out Washington's interests in promoting an Iraqi "rapprochement with the United States."

"With revolutionary Iran creating so much tension in the Middle East," the *Journal's* reporter Bill Paul wrote, "Washington would clearly welcome any role that the Iraqis might play in stabilizing the Persian Gulf."

Recognizing the Iraqi regime's fear of revolution within its own borders, Washington has correctly gauged Hussein's eagerness to aid Iranian counterrevolutionaries.

At the same time, the Iraqi government has grabbed onto Washington's hostility towards the Iranian revolution as a lever to help accomplish its own territorial designs in the region.

By encouraging the Iraqi government's attacks against Iran, Washington also sees an opportunity to exacerbate divisions in the Muslim world to its own advantage. It seeks to isolate Iran from other semicolonial countries dominated by world capitalism.

In a September 12 statement, Khomeini condemned this trick by Washington and appealed for international solidarity with the Iranian revolution. All countries, Islamic and non-Islamic, sharing oppression under imperialism should be fighting their common enemy, not one another, Khomeini explained.

Khomeini exposed the U.S. government's attempts "to make Moslems fight each other," saying that this just allows Washington "to continue with its plunderings in Moslem countries."

In response to today's air attacks, Khomeini called on the Iraqi nation and army to overthrow President Hussein, adding that "if this is not possible, they should leave the army and not fight against Islam."

Aware of the damage that the Iran-Iraq conflict can create for the oppressed throughout the Middle East, the Palestine Liberation Organization travelled to Tehran September 18 to try and mediate an end to the fighting between the two countries. They met with Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr and delivered a message from PLO leader Yasir Arafat.

Several months earlier, before the stepped-up Iraqi attacks, Cuban President Fidel Castro had urged a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two countries. Castro is also chairman of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, to which both Iran and Iraq belong.

In his May Day speech in Havana, Castro said:

"In Iran a real people's revolution has taken place. . . . And it is our duty to support Iran, to solidarize ourselves with Iran. . . ."

"At the same time, we must work to try to get the conflicts between our Iraqi brothers and the Iranian brothers to cease. We must work to see they resolve their problems through diplomatic means, because these conflicts are only grist for the imperialist mill."

The Iraqi government's war against Iran in no way benefits the oppressed masses of Iraq or anywhere else in the Arab world. To the extent that it deals blows to the anti-imperialist revolution in Iran, the Hussein regime helps strengthen the stranglehold of the world's wealthiest

bankers and businessmen over workers and peasants throughout the Middle East.

The war policies of the Iraqi regime are a blow to the Palestinian people, who were inspired by the Iranian revolution, and a boon to Zionist Israel, whose best friend in the region had been the shah. Only weeks after the successful Tehran insurrection last year, the new Iranian government cut off all oil supplies to Israel, as well as to the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Working people throughout the Middle East and the world must demand that Washington end its plots to overthrow the government of Iran. All Iraqi military assaults against Iran must halt immediately.

Hands off the Iranian revolution!

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'National Jubilation' Sweeps Nicaragua

By Lorraine Thiebaud

MANAGUA—The only regret in Nicaragua on September 17 was that bloody dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle was not brought to justice here.

As word spread of the bazooka blast in Asunción, Paraguay, that permanently deposited Somoza in the garbage can of history, Nicaragua exploded in a nationwide outpouring of joy.

All commercial activity ground to a halt as people huddled around their radios. When the news was confirmed by the FSLN National Directorate, people began hugging each other, patting each other on the back, shaking hands with total strangers. They raised their fists and shouted, "The buzzard is dead!" All Nicaragua seemed to be smiling.

Arms linked and standing beneath a photo of Rigoberto López Pérez, the national hero who shot and killed Somoza's father in 1956, the nine FSLN Commanders of the Revolution issued a statement to the people of Nicaragua:

"Having confirmed that the genocidal tyrant Anastasio Somoza Debayle has been brought to justice, the National Directorate of the FSLN joins the people of Sandino in national rejoicing. We feel ourselves fulfilled in this heroic deed, achieving our rights and our desire for justice and vindication against the one who massacred thousands of Nicaraguans and plunged our country into misery and ignorance."

The FSLN statement hailed the "combative, self-sacrificing, valiant, and heroic" commandos who carried out the attack on Somoza. They embodied, the FSLN said, "the implacable will of Rigoberto López Pérez."

Joining the popular celebrations, the revolutionary commanders led a demonstration through the streets of the capital in open jeeps. They drove through streets of poor and working-class neighborhoods where the bombed-out remains of buildings are mute testimony to the hatred Somoza wrought among his own people.

The scenes were almost indescribably euphoric. People rushed into the streets waving red-and-black Sandinista flags and ran alongside the car caravan. They shouted greetings and slogans and applauded the commanders, who flashed victory signs and reached down thousands of times to shake outstretched hands.

'Thank God They Killed That Wretch'

The multitude paused in front of the Eastern Cemetery, where many of Somoza's victims are buried. An old woman

expressed the common sentiment: "Thank God they killed that wretch who murdered our children."

As they passed the offices of the Managua daily *El Nuevo Diario*, Commander Tomás Borge paused to embrace the paper's editor Xavier Chamorro, brother of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the victim of a Somoza-organized assassination in January 1978.

The Council of State, upon receiving word of Somoza's end, voted to declare September 17 the "Day of National Jubilation." Fiestas and parties were held in homes throughout the country. The Sandinista Defense Committees organized burnings of Somoza's effigy, while women read his official death sentence.

Late into the night, bonfires lit up the streets, and the sound of firecrackers and marimba music was heard.

The most popular song was Julio Iglesias's *Paraguayan Night*: "Wherever you go, I will follow you. . . ."

Heavy boots did not keep the young men and women of the Sandinista People's Army from dancing among the throngs that gathered in the Plaza of the Revolution in central Managua. Defense Minister Humberto Ortega had issued orders authorizing those who had risked their lives to unseat Somoza to join in the celebrations.

News reaching here from other countries of the reaction to Somoza's demise fell into two categories—those who shared the happiness at the elimination of the dictator, and those like Ronald Reagan who said that it was "a sad loss." The 5,000 ex-National Guardsmen camped in Honduras were reported greatly demoralized at the loss of their commander-in-chief. David Hall of the U.S. State Department said only, "This is a problem of the Paraguayan authorities." Pinochet of Chile refused to comment.

On the other hand, Rafael Menjivar, executive director of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador, called the bringing to justice of Somoza "an example and a precedent for all other tyrants."

The End of Somoza

Anastasio Somoza Debayle, fifty-four years old, had been spending his exile in Paraguay since August 1979. He lived in a replica of his Managuan "bunker" in an elegant section of the capital, Asunción. He was protected by thirty well-paid bodyguards, as well as by the repressive apparatus put at his disposal by dictator Alfredo Stroessner.

On September 17, during one of his rare excursions away from his small fortress, Somoza's Mercedes-Benz was trapped by two cars. The occupants of one of the cars began firing machine guns. An exchange of bullets between the commandos and Somoza's bodyguards was cut short by a bazooka blast from the second-story window of a nearby house. Somoza's car exploded. Killed instantly along with Somoza were financial adviser Joseph Peittner and chauffeur César Gallardo.

Dinorah Sampson, Somoza's mistress for the past eighteen years, identified his remains. His body had twenty-five bullet holes.

Paraguayan authorities blamed the attack on two Argentines, allegedly members of the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), Hugo Alfredo Yrurzun and Silvia Mercedes Hodgers. The Paraguayan police claim to have killed Yrurzun in a two-hour shootout in Asunción the night of September 18.

Rigoberto López Pérez

While Nicaraguans rejoiced, they also took time to recall September 21, 1956. On that night a young poet, Rigoberto López Pérez, shot the founder of the Somoza dynasty, Anastasio Somoza García, father of Somoza Debayle. Nicaraguans were undoubtedly happy then also. But they had to suppress their emotions during the wave of repression that followed the assassination. National Guard commander Anastasio Somoza Debayle and his brother Luis sought revenge against the people of Nicaragua and their political opponents. Thousands were imprisoned, 3,000 in Managua alone—among them Carlos Fonseca Amador, who was to found the FSLN six years later. One hundred peasants were summarily executed, and children were tortured in front of their mothers.

U.S. imperialism provided the dynasty with technical assistance. A top CIA agent named Van Wyncle was sent to establish the National Security Office (OSN) shortly after López Pérez's deed. Washington also sent medical specialists to try to save the life of the tyrant, who died in a U.S. Army hospital in the Panama Canal Zone.

Today, repression like that of twenty-four years ago is being suffered in Paraguay. Dictator Stroessner asked for and received the aid of the Argentine dictatorship, which immediately sent marines to stop and harass small fishing boats and passengers in transit in the Paraná River. Stroessner sent troops to occupy the Asunción airport and sealed the borders. He offered a reward of 4 million *guaranís* (US\$30,000) for information on those who brought Somoza to justice.

Miami Resting Place

Somoza's son, Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero flew from New York to Paraguay to accompany his father's remains to

Miami. The funeral was to take place in an elegant chapel owned by a Cuban counter-revolutionary. Members of Assault Brigade 2506, who were trained in Nicaragua in 1961 before invading Cuba at the Bay of

Pigs, along with ex-members of the U.S.-created National Guard of Nicaragua, were to form an honor guard at the ceremonies.

Somoza was killed soon after he had

declared to a West German magazine that "I feel full of strength and ready to fight." The interview was published the day of his death, 412 days after he fled the victorious Sandinista insurrection. □

Frame-up of Sandinistas in the Works?

Stroessner's Cops Fuel Anti-Nicaraguan Drive

By Fred Murphy

The Stroessner dictatorship in Paraguay and other enemies of the Nicaraguan revolution lost no time in trying to use the death of Anastasio Somoza Debayle to discredit the revolutionary Sandinista government. Police statements in Asunción purporting to link the September 17 action there to the FSLN have received wide play in the big-business news media in the United States.

According to a September 19 dispatch from Asunción to the *New York Times*, Paraguayan police officials claimed that "they had traced the rocket and grenade launchers and automatic weapons used in the Wednesday ambush to Nicaragua."

Stroessner's secret police chief Pastor Coronel displayed to the press on September 19 the body of a man he claimed was an Argentine guerrilla named Hugo Alfredo Yrurzun. A dispatch in the September 20 *Washington Post* said Coronel declared "he had proof that the guerrilla had recently come from Nicaragua. . . ."

Even before the assertions of Stroessner's cops reached the news wires, the *New York Daily News* was giving prominent coverage to the statements of Congressman John Murphy. The *New York Democrat*, who attended the LaSalle Military Academy in the United States with Somoza and remained a personal friend of the dictator, "said 'it was absolutely clear' that the Sandinista government was responsible for the assassination of Nicaragua's former president."

"There's no question that this is Communist-inspired, part of an international conspiracy," he added. Murphy is among those in Washington who have most strenuously opposed even the Carter administration's token aid to Nicaragua. He and other right-wingers will no doubt seek to use Somoza's death as the excuse for further moves to block U.S. assistance to the Sandinista government.

While the revolutionary authorities in Nicaragua have made no effort to hide their immense joy at the tyrant's passing, they have not taken credit for it either.

From the first day they were in power, the Sandinistas have scrupulously observed legal norms and even shown considerable generosity in dealing with loyalists of the Somoza regime. Not one Somozaist criminal has been executed; all are being given trials with the right to

appeal and to have a defense attorney. Not a few Somozaist suspects have been acquitted and released by the revolutionary courts.

As for Somoza himself, the Managua government initiated extradition proceedings in Paraguay shortly after the tyrant fled there. Aldo Díaz Lacayo, Nicaragua's ambassador to Mexico, pointed out to the

More Details Emerge in Plot to Kill Sandinistas

By Claudio Tavárez

MANAGUA—Further details have become available here on the assassination plot against leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) that was broken up in early September.

The chief suspect in the conspiracy is Bernardino Larios, an ex-colonel of Somoza's National Guard. Larios led a coup attempt against the dictator in 1978 and then fled to Costa Rica, where he offered cooperation to the FSLN. He was named defense minister when the revolution triumphed in July 1979, but was given no real power. He was removed from the post last December.

Larios was arrested by State Security agents here on September 9. Much of the evidence against him has been provided by ex-National Guard Lt. Francisco Antonio Martínez Rodríguez, who was detained around the same time.

According to Martínez, Bernardino Larios functioned as the coordinator of all counterrevolutionary activities in Managua, the Nicaraguan capital. He said Larios proposed to him "the recruitment of ex-guardsmen, with the main goal being the formation of nine groups of twenty-five men each. These would be given the task of assassinating members of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front." (The National Directorate is a nine-member body.)

Martínez added that Larios had assured him that "we had the support of private enterprise for training the men, and that we would be provided with weapons once everything was organized."

According to Martínez, thousands of córdobas were spent on organizing another armed band of counterrevolutionaries in Masaya, Nicaragua's second-largest city.

Mexico City daily *Uno más Uno* September 17 that the killing of Somoza "frustrates my government's intention to extradite, try, and sentence him."

The Stroessner regime had placed obstacles in the way of the extradition effort, even expelling two Nicaraguan diplomats from Paraguay in August of this year.

Dictators like Stroessner and their friends in Washington and New York like Murphy will continue seeking ways to discredit and pressure the Nicaraguan revolution. Its supporters, on the other hand, should find fresh inspiration for opposing these attempts. We should redouble our efforts to demand unconditional aid to Nicaragua. □

Eighty-two ex-National Guardsmen said to have been involved in this operation are now being sought by State Security.

Martínez also said that Larios had expressed certainty that Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero, the son of the tyrant recently brought to justice in Paraguay, would soon be joining the counterrevolutionary groups inside Nicaragua. Also involved in the conspiracy are said to be a number of Somozaists now living in Miami—top henchmen of the dictator such as Juan Lee Wong, Noel Genie Amaya, Eduardo Román, and Enrique Bermúdez.

An ex-member of the Infantry Basic Training School (EEBI)—the elite battalion commanded by Somoza Portocarrero—has been arrested and charged with serving as courier between Larios and the Miami Somozaists.

When Bernardino Larios was arrested and before the charges against him became public, the capitalist daily *La Prensa* here accused the FSLN of harassing him for being "an honest and upright military man who doesn't swallow Marxism-Leninism."

La Prensa even printed the text of a letter from Larios to Interior Minister Commander Tomás Borge in which the one-time Somozaist officer declared, "I am a Christian and a democrat, and I will always stand up for my religious and political convictions since I am staunchly anti-Marxist."

Borge was questioned later by reporters about rumors that *La Prensa* and the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) were involved in the Larios plot. Borge said the two capitalist institutions were not directly mixed up in it, but that individuals linked to them were. □

'Central America Must Unite Against Intervention'

[We have reported in earlier issues of *Intercontinental Press* (September 1 and 8) on the speech given by Commander of the Revolution Humberto Ortega at the mass rally in Managua on August 23, which was held to celebrate the successful completion of Nicaragua's National Literacy Crusade. Those articles focused on the FSLN's response—announced by Ortega—to the bourgeoisie's demand for immediate elections. They also took up Ortega's remarks on the revolution's economic perspectives for the coming year.

[Below, we are reprinting excerpts from the section of Ortega's speech in which he indicates the Sandinistas' response to the threat of imperialist intervention in Central America. We have taken the text from the August 24 issue of the FSLN daily *Barricada*; the translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

We want to say, although the reactionaries may not like it, that *we will continue to extend our unconditional solidarity with the Salvadoran people*—a heroic people that is being massacred by a junta that claims to be democratic and Christian. Those "Christians" are not Christians. Christians are the ones like Gaspar García Laviana¹ who shed their blood for the revolution.

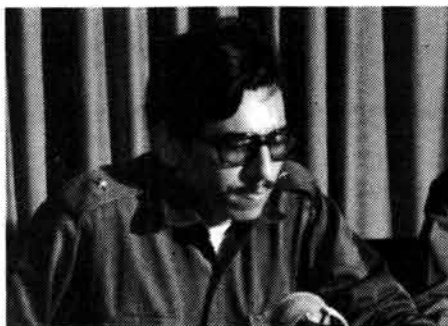
We will go on condemning the "gorillas" of Bolivia and the "gorilla" Pinochet in Chile. We will continue to be in solidarity with the heroic people of Túpac Amará, the heroic people of Uruguay, and the heroic people of Paraguay—as well as with our brothers in Guatemala, who just as in El Salvador are facing a long string of crimes that can only be stopped with the armed power of the people. That is what we learned from our people: that to stop these aggressors it is not enough to simply paint slogans on walls—the aggressors themselves must be put up against the wall.

Let it be heard clearly: This deep revolution is seriously threatened, because it truly is a revolution.

There is a crisis in El Salvador. Certain sectors, including some newspapers that have sold themselves to the reactionaries, have been claiming that we Nicaraguans are to blame for the crisis in El Salvador, that we are sending Soviet arms and even tanks.

Why do they say that? Why do they invent such stories? They know the Salvadoran people are valiant enough to smash their own tyrants. They know that

1. A Spanish priest who became an FSLN commander on the Southern Front and was killed in action during the liberation war.—IP



Fred Halstead-IP

HUMBERTO ORTEGA

the Salvadoran people will win, just as the Nicaraguan people did, not because they have arms but because of their morale and their determination to win.

So why do they talk about such things? They do so to justify armed intervention against the Salvadoran people. We say right now that we will be the first to denounce this maneuver. We denounce it right here from this platform. And we will also be the first to show solidarity with the Salvadoran people in their struggle against intervention, which is the only thing that could hold up the certain triumph, which will not be long in coming, of the heroic and revolutionary, democratic and popular, Salvadoran process.

We are not warmongers. But let us remind our enemies that we can be good warriors. The biggest victory we can win now is to avoid war. But if we cannot

avoid it, we are warriors enough—as the heroic people of Monimbó showed—to win once again in any trench against imperialism and Somozaism.

It is necessary to recall that our peoples are against intervention. Right here, we have a representative of a people that confronted intervention in Nicaragua with their own blood, the heroic people of Costa Rica.² In the last century they raised their weapons against William Walker and helped the Nicaraguans to defeat that intervention.³

We are certain that the people of Costa Rica are still faithful to that anti-interventionist spirit, and that they will be at the side of their fraternal peoples of Central America in the struggle against the danger of invasion and against the invasion itself.

Sandino said: "Central America must unite against the invader instead of supporting the governments that enter into alliance with the foreigners." □

2. Ortega is referring to Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo, who was present at the August 23 rally. Carazo, a Christian Democrat, supports the ruling junta in El Salvador.—IP

3. At the head of a motley force of pro-slavery adventurers (or "filibusterers"), the American William Walker invaded Nicaragua in 1855, declared himself president, and tried to have the country annexed to the United States. Walker was driven out in 1857 by the combined military forces of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras.—IP

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Nicaragua's Historic Victory Over Illiteracy

By Lis Angus and Phil Courneyeur

MANAGUA—On International Literacy Day, September 8, news reached here from Paris that Nicaragua had been chosen to receive UNESCO's prestigious Nadezhda K. Krupskaya Literacy Award for 1980. The prize recognizes Nicaragua's achievement in reducing illiteracy from more than 50 percent to nearly 13 percent in an intense five-month campaign—a unique accomplishment in educational history.

The Krupskaya award—named in honor of the famed Soviet educator—includes a cash prize of \$12,000. The Nicaraguan Ministry of Education will devote the money to adult education, a priority of the next phase of literacy efforts here.

UNESCO awarded Nicaragua its Hassin Habib Literacy Award as well. Taken together, the two awards testify to the international interest and acclaim that Nicaragua's National Literacy Crusade has achieved.

500,000 Learn to Read and Write

The facts and figures of Nicaragua's literacy drive speak for themselves. In just five months some 406,000 of Nicaragua's poorest and most deprived people over ten years of age have learned to read and write. By early 1981 this number should rise to more than half a million, once the campaign among the non-Spanish-speaking minorities of the Atlantic Coast region is completed.

Nearly 100,000 persons participated directly in the nationwide mobilization. The teachers included 52,180 "brigadistas"—primarily high-school and university stu-

dents, organized in the People's Literacy Army (EPA). Another 25,846 workers and housewives taught in the cities, both in work places and neighborhoods.

A special primer in braille was developed in order to enable blind people to participate in the campaign.

Including supervisory and support personnel, nearly 70,000 persons traveled from cities and towns into the countryside and mountainous regions, where they lived with peasant families for five months. Many parents visited their brigadista children during the crusade, thus further increasing the number of urban Nicaraguans who have learned first-hand of the extreme rural poverty and exploitation that is imperialism's legacy to Nicaragua.

"The city and the countryside each brought forth their own values," the Ministry of Education's balance sheet on the campaign said. "More than half a million persons—peasants, urban workers, and housewives—were at one and the same time pupils and teachers. The peasants taught the young *alfabetizadores* about all their rich experiences acquired throughout centuries of contact with nature. The teacher was a student, the student a teacher—a revolutionary transformation in education."

The interchange between city and countryside affected class relations within the revolution. The majority of the brigadistas and supervisors came from middle-class urban families with access to education, culture, and leisure time. For the first time, many came face to face with the poverty,

hunger, and degradation that have trapped the rural poor in servitude, ignorance, and desperation. The urban youth have learned much more profoundly why the revolution is necessary and why its gains must be defended to the end.

At the same time, the crusade brought the peasants a deeper appreciation of the goals and meaning of the Sandinista revolution.

Teaching More Than Literacy

The Nicaraguan people took on much more than the task of teaching and learning how to read and write during the crusade.

The brigadistas worked side by side with their adopted campesino families, performing many of the daily tasks of the countryside. *El Brigadista*, the paper of the July 19 Sandinista Youth (JS-19), said in its September 6 issue:

"In five months of the crusade, we held 2,398 political and cultural meetings and 1,620 rallies; harvested 17,134 manzanas [29,573 acres] of coffee, beans, corn, rice, and vegetables; milked 2,500 cows; and constructed 5,195 latrines, 55 houses, 11 roads, 128 wells, 195 bridges, 271 schools, 14 communal baths, one canal, 53 health centers, 12 churches, 2 sports fields, 12 plazas, 28 parks, and 4 monuments."

Separate EPA health brigades traveled the countryside, setting up preventive medical care, treating common diseases, teaching hygiene, and surveying rural medical needs. A plan to eradicate malaria was set in motion.

Cultural brigades, set up by the Ministry of Culture and the JS-19, also toured the country. Besides performing songs, dances, and theater productions, they collected the legends, popular songs, and oral history of the campesinos and mountain people. One product of this work will be a comprehensive history of the liberation war.

A census was undertaken on diverse aspects of the country's demography. The brigadistas also assembled samples of flora and fauna and collected archeological artifacts and mineral samplings.

Brigadistas helped set up local units of the FSLN-led mass organizations where they did not already exist—the Rural Workers Association (ATC), Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), Luisa Amanda Espinoza Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMNLAE), and the Sandinista People's Militia (MPS).

Nicaragua's Second National Literacy Congress was held in the Rubén Darío

Literacy and Solidarity

MANAGUA—Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrión addressed the Second National Literacy Congress here on behalf of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

Carrión was interrupted with prolonged applause when he pointed to the connection between the successful literacy campaign and Nicaragua's commitment to defend liberation struggles in other countries:

"From inside the four walls of this meeting place we extend a message of hope, a message of optimism to all peoples of the American continent who are struggling and fighting so that they too might carry out a national literacy campaign of their own. . . ."

"Now that the danger of foreign imperialist intervention in Central America is increasing, now that the imperialists' threats against the hundred-times-heroic people of El Salvador are mounting, we must unite our hearts and our determination to say to the enemies of revolution in Latin America that here in Nicaragua there is a people that defends liberty, independence, and sovereignty. . . ."

"Nicaragua will not permit the bloody hand of imperialism to stop the Central American revolution. And the soldiers of the literacy campaign are also soldiers of the homeland when it comes to armed defense of the revolution."

People's Theatre in Managua on September 5 and 6. More than 1,000 delegates came from all parts of the country to review the lessons and achievements of the crusade and discuss the major tasks of the next stage of popular education in the country.

The delegates to the congress reflected the broad spectrum of people who participated in the crusade. They included brigadistas and other literacy teachers, representatives of the newly literate, training and support workers, members of the mass organizations, members of the army and the militia, and representatives of the government and the FSLN National Directorate. A number of international organizations and solidarity committees were also represented.

The mood of the congress was animated and militant. At many points in the proceedings, participants spontaneously initiated chants that were picked up by the whole body. Some of these chants were popular ones from the crusade itself, such as "Puño en alto—libro abierto!" (Fist high—book open!). Others were invented on the spot, and included many slogans of solidarity with the liberation struggles in El Salvador, Guatemala, Bolivia, and other countries.

Speakers at the congress stressed that the crusade could not have been carried out without a massive mobilization of the whole population behind this "second war of liberation."

"We learned that when all the popular organizations concentrate all their efforts on achieving a single goal, nothing can block them," Carlos Carrión, the FSLN's chief representative to the crusade, told the conference. "One of the greatest lessons the crusade taught people and leaders in outlying areas of the country is that the fundamental factor in solving their problems is precisely their own collective determination and action to solve them."

Reactionary Attacks

Not all Nicaraguans supported the literacy campaign. Sectors of the bourgeoisie saw from the beginning that the crusade would advance the overall revolutionary process.

Opposition ranged from passive resignation to outright hostility and even terrorism. Rumors and slanders were spread in the countryside about how the brigadistas were coming to take away the peasants' land and tell them not to believe in god.

Nine brigadistas were murdered by counterrevolutionary gangs. Along with another fifty brigadistas who died from accidents or illness, they are today honored in Nicaragua as heroes and martyrs of the crusade and the revolution.

Carlos Carrión replied to the counterrevolutionary slander campaign in his address to the congress. He focused particularly on those slanders designed to play on

the strong religious beliefs of many Nicaraguans.

"The revolution has confronted these absurdities and lies with the truth," he said. "Instead of taking away land, we have given land, and technical and credit assistance as well. Instead of telling people not to believe in god, we taught them to read and write so that they could choose their own beliefs. . . ."

"Certain sectors are trying to convince Christians that they can't be Christians and revolutionaries at the same time. The true Christians have not wasted time in these theoretical discussions: Through their participation in the crusade they have shown in practice that to be a good Christian you must be revolutionary."

Carrión also took up the charge that Nicaragua is undemocratic and well on its way to totalitarianism:

"How can a government be called totalitarian that never hesitated, in face of technical and financial obstacles, to undertake a literacy crusade? How can we be called a totalitarian dictatorship when we have left in freedom many of those who collaborated with the genocidal forces?"

"How can we be called a totalitarian dictatorship when we put arms in the hands of our people so they can defend themselves? We defy the Bolivian dictatorship to put their guns in the hands of the miners of Bolivia."

Only the Beginning

The main work of the congress was carried out in four workshops that met simultaneously. They examined and drew the lessons of four aspects of the crusade: pedagogical work, technical and logistic support, the work of the mass organizations, and the upcoming post-crusade phase. Each workshop discussed, criticized, and amended draft reports, which will be combined into a final assessment of the literacy crusade. Discussion was lively, and participants freely contributed their opinions and experience.

The post-crusade workshop was used to set plans for the consolidation and extension of the crusade's achievements. This work will involve three stages in the coming months—sustaining the literacy levels already achieved, following up to reinforce literacy and mathematics skills, and preparing students for the third stage, special primary education for adults. The new Vice-Ministry of Adult Education, headed by Francisco Lacayo, will oversee this work.

People's Education Collectives (CEP) have been established throughout Nicaragua to ensure that the newly literate are fully involved in the post-crusade programs.

The CEPs are based on the local mass organizations; setting them up was one of the responsibilities of the brigadistas. The CEP coordinators have been chosen from and by their own communities—many are

recent graduates of the literacy campaign.

The work of the CEPs will be supported by a body of itinerant teachers (some of them former brigadistas), as well as by radio programs, newspapers, and other resources.

Another measure being instituted to sustain literacy is the waiving of postage on letters between brigadistas and their former students. This correspondence is encouraged as a way of maintaining the important emotional and social ties that were established between urban youth and their rural compatriots.

The Vice-Ministry for Adult Education will also be carrying out programs to further reduce the nearly 13 percent illiteracy rate still remaining in Nicaragua. The most important of these is the program to extend literacy among the non-Spanish-speaking peoples in the Atlantic Coast—the Miskito, the Sumo, and the Criollo (or English-speaking, largely Black) population.

A total of 60,000 are expected to become literate in the Atlantic Coast program. It has already gone through a pilot phase and will be initiated on a full-scale basis at the end of September, to be completed in four-to-five months. Classes will be conducted primarily by people from the Atlantic Coast communities, in the three respective native languages.

The final report of the post-crusade workshop issued a call for international support to the new programs. Funds as well as materials are urgently needed. Radios, tape recorders and tapes, mimeograph machines, paper, and newsprint are required, as well as mules, jeeps, and motorcycles to provide transportation for the itinerant teachers. Funds to help pay salaries for teachers and support staff are also needed.

From the beginning, Nicaragua's National Literacy Crusade appealed for and won international solidarity and aid. Teachers and experts came from many countries, especially Cuba. International governmental and nongovernmental aid provided more than two-thirds of the \$12 million cost of the crusade.

Bourgeois Forces Challenged

In the closing speech of the congress, Carlos Carrión challenged the bourgeois forces of Nicaragua to prove through deeds that their calls for increased democracy are not mere phrasemongering:

"At the first literacy congress [held in June 1980] we invited the so-called democratic parties to show in practice their supposed democratic qualities by participating in and supporting the National Literacy Crusade. They have still not responded to this challenge. We now call on these sectors again to put aside personal and group interests and save their electioneering for 1984. For the first time in their history of betrayals and sellouts,

let them do something concrete to benefit the people."

Nicaragua has not only shown how to achieve a literate population. It has also shown that a revolution is required in order to do this—a revolution that can galvanize and mobilize the united effort of an entire people. Furthermore, Nicaragua has shown how a literacy crusade can itself profoundly deepen and consolidate the revolution.

Nineteen years ago, Cuba's literacy campaign made history.

The Cuban campaign received little international publicity or recognition at the time. The news of its success was suppressed for many years, in what the American educator and author Jonathan Kozol has called "an intellectual embargo."

But it has not been possible to suppress the news of the Nicaraguan campaign, or to block its international recognition.

The Nicaraguan campaign is far from being a carbon copy of the Cuban one, though it bears many similarities to it. The Nicaraguan campaign has already achieved a percentage reduction in illiteracy about twice what Cuba reached in 1961—and in five months rather than a year. Furthermore, Nicaragua's campaign involves working in four different languages, one of which (Sumo) had never been written down prior to the campaign.

The Cuban Council of Ministers sent Abel Prieto to speak at the Second Nicaraguan Literacy Congress. He stated clearly that Nicaragua's achievement is unique, adding, "What is certain is that in the not too distant future many peoples of Latin America will come here to find out how, in five months, Nicaragua defeated illiteracy."

Carlos Tünnermann, Nicaragua's Minister of Education, drew the balance sheet of the campaign in his opening address to the literacy congress:

"A new education has emerged from all this enormous experience. It is our great laboratory from which we will extract a unique educational approach. . . .

"From the pedagogical point of view, Nicaragua has become a great communal school, because we have consolidated a permanent school for a revolution that is also permanent." □

Grenadians Learn From Nicaragua's Campaign

Among the international delegations present at the August 23 rally in Managua that celebrated the completion of Nicaragua's National Literacy Crusade was one from Grenada, headed by Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Kendrick Radix.

Grenada's revolutionary government has begun planning a literacy campaign similar to Nicaragua's. The Centre for Popular Education has been set up on the island to carry out this task.

Despite Own Damage

Grenada Sends Relief Aid to Hurricane Victims

Hurricane Allen, which left a trail of destruction throughout the Caribbean in early August, severely damaged Grenada's agricultural production, Agriculture Minister Unison Whiteman disclosed on August 15.

Especially hard hit were Grenada's three main export crops, bananas, cocoa, and nutmeg. Whiteman estimated that 40% of the banana crop had been destroyed, 27% of the nutmeg crop, and 19% of the cocoa crop. In addition, about 12% of the corn crop was damaged.

Total loss of export revenue as a result of the hurricane's destruction will amount to EC\$16 million (US\$6 million), Whiteman said, while damage to housing was estimated at an additional EC\$670,000 (US\$254,600).

Coming on top of last year's especially heavy rains, which resulted in a 25% decline in agricultural output, Hurricane Allen will further reduce the island's agricultural production for 1980 to less than half of its normal annual level.

The revolutionary government of Grenada has taken a number of steps to revive agriculture in the wake of the hurricane and provide assistance to farmers whose crops were damaged.

Whiteman announced that the People's Revolutionary Government would seek assistance from governments and international organizations, both in the Caribbean and elsewhere, to obtain material aid for Grenadian farmers, particularly fertilizer and insecticide. He also said that a top-level committee of government officials and farmers had been established to devise further means of bringing relief to the farmers.

In addition, the government is currently initiating a land-reform program aimed at bringing unutilized land into production, so as to significantly increase the production of food and other agricultural crops.

Although Grenada suffered considerable damage from Hurricane Allen, other islands were even more severely hit. Nearly

the entire banana crops of St. Vincent and St. Lucia were destroyed, as was three-quarters of Dominica's. Sixteen persons were killed in St. Lucia, and thousands of persons throughout the Eastern Caribbean were left homeless.

In Haiti, the country hardest hit, at least 220 persons died and about 150,000 were



Free West Indian Homeless children in St. Vincent.

left in need of assistance. Tens of millions of dollars in damage was caused in Jamaica, including the destruction of 95% of the island's banana crop. Four persons died in Cuba, and 200,000 had to be evacuated from seven provinces.

The Grenada government quickly responded to the suffering in these neighboring islands by pledging its active solidarity, despite the damage that Grenada itself had sustained. On August 4, the day after the hurricane swept through St. Lucia and St. Vincent, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop promised to send assistance to those two countries.

The Grenada National Relief Committee, which was set up last year in the wake of Hurricane David, appealed to Grenadians to contribute money, blankets, cooking utensils, and canned foodstuffs. Special accounts were set up at the National Commercial Bank for donations.

On August 15—the same day that Unison Whiteman revealed the extent of the hurricane damage to Grenada—a cargo vessel left the Grenadian harbor in St. George's loaded with food, milk, sugar, rice, folding chairs, and other supplies that had been donated for the people of St. Lucia and St. Vincent. □

Halt the Murder of Kim Dae Jung!

By Janice Lynn

A South Korean military court has sentenced oppositionist Kim Dae Jung to death by hanging. In a six-minute session September 17, the military judges also sentenced twenty-three of Kim's co-defendants to prison terms ranging from three to twenty years.

Kim was framed up on charges of attempting to overthrow the South Korean government, sedition, and other charges. He was also accused of fomenting the student-led demonstrations in Seoul last May, as well as the Kwangju insurrection later that month. In Kwangju, some 200,000 workers and students took control of the city for nearly a week demanding an end to martial law and bloody repression.

The claim that Kim "fomented" this mass rebellion is the typical rationale for tyrannical regimes, which cannot afford to acknowledge that such uprisings are the product of action by the oppressed to throw off intolerable conditions. No "conspiracy," let alone a single individual, can create such massive revolts.

The regime's charge is more ridiculous when applied to Kim Dae Jung. Far from being a fire-brand "communist" as charged, Kim is a moderate bourgeois opposition figure who received 46 percent of the vote in the 1971 presidential election.

The aim of the generals in targeting Kim is clearly to warn South Korean workers that if a death sentence can be meted out to a respected opposition politician, what should they expect if they raise *their* voices in opposition to the regime?

This mockery of justice immediately met worldwide condemnation. Japan's biggest labor organization, the 4.6 million-strong General Council of Trade Unions, decided to hold regional protest rallies and started a drive to collect 10 million signatures protesting Kim's death sentence.

The Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists also deplored the verdict and pointed to the absence of qualified legal observers at the trial, the arrest of Kim's three chosen defense lawyers, and the severe limitations on calling defense witnesses—only two were allowed.

Even the capitalist governments in a number of European countries felt compelled to take their distance from this flagrant human rights violation.

Notably absent, however, was any condemnation from the White House. Washington's attitude toward military rule in South Korea was made clear by Carter's recent statement that Koreans "are not ready" for democracy.

Although from the standpoint of its public image Washington would prefer dealing with a less openly repressive dictatorship, the U.S. government recognizes

that it has no alternative. It counts on the South Korean regime to help protect its interests in the region and to rein in any challenge from South Korean workers and students that could endanger regional stability.

At the trial, Kim and the twenty-three co-defendants all repudiated the "confessions" they had been forced to sign. They recounted the beatings, torture, and long hours of interrogation to which they had been subjected.

Latest Nuclear Missile Accident No Fluke

By David Frankel

For twenty years the U.S. government has been literally sowing a nuclear minefield of atomic weapons, reactors, and radioactive waste dumps throughout the United States. And American working people are beginning to reap the results.

The latest incident occurred September 19, when one person was killed and twenty-one injured in an explosion at a Titan II nuclear missile silo in Arkansas.

The early morning explosion blew apart a 750-ton door made of reinforced concrete and steel and supposedly designed to withstand a direct nuclear attack. It left a crater about 250 feet wide, and blew the missile warhead out of the silo.

Although the Air Force refused to comment, reports from the scene said that the nine megaton warhead—with an explosive power of 9 million tons of TNT, or more than 700 times the force of the bomb that devastated Hiroshima—landed about 200 yards from the silo.

Air Force Secretary Hans Mark insisted despite the force of the blast that there "was absolutely no evidence of radioactive debris in the area" and that "the warhead is not in danger of being ignited because it was designed with fail-safe devices."

Mark claimed that "the Titan missile system is a perfectly safe system to operate," calling it "a very good piece of hardware."

But the 1,400 residents of the area who were evacuated from their homes—most of them after the explosion had already taken place—had their doubts.

"If the missile fuel fouled up this time," asked one mother of three children, "what's to prevent the warhead from fouling up next time?"

"I hope it's all burned to the ground," she added. "It was too close to the school anyway, only a mile or so away."

Another resident noted that "we're in the same boat now as those Three Mile Island people."

Kim is expected to appeal the death sentence to a higher army tribunal, and then to the Supreme Court. Legal experts expect that the appeal will be rejected. Military dictator Chun Doo Hwan, who ordered Kim's arrest and prosecution, then has the final say.

An international campaign in solidarity with Kim and other victimized opponents of the repressive South Korean regime is essential to defense of democratic rights for all workers and peasants of South Korea. We must demand the immediate release of all political prisoners and the immediate lifting of martial law. Save the life of Kim Dae Jung! □

The local sheriff told reporters, "Last night the Air Force acted as if they wanted to cover up the [fuel] spill and were reluctant for us to order any type of evacuation."

Despite the government's claims, it has become crystal clear that the deadly nuclear missile systems set up by Washington are as much a threat to working people in the United States as to workers in the Soviet Union and the rest of the world. There have been hundreds of accidents involving the Titan II system alone, including about 125 fuel leaks between 1975 and 1979.

One leak in 1978 in Rock, Kansas, killed two people and injured thirty who were exposed to the poisonous fuel.

Nor is it just a matter of the Air Force's aging Titan II missiles. The explosion in the Titan silo came just four days after fire broke out on a nuclear-armed B-52 bomber. In that incident, five people were injured.

Three days before the explosion, a California congressman charged that high-level radioactive waste from 48,000 metal drums dumped by the government off the coast of California was leaking onto the sea bottom there.

And in the meantime, Congress is moving toward funding new chemical and bacteriological warfare projects, including the development of new nerve gases. Some of the things that gave such research a bad name in the past were leaks of nerve gas, resulting in the poisoning of livestock, and tests of chemical and bacteriological weapons on the populations of New York and San Francisco. In fact, the only documented germ warfare attacks against American working people have been carried out by the U.S. government.

It is in the interest of workers around the world, and especially of workers in the United States, to demand that the doomsday weapons deployed by the Pentagon be destroyed. If they are not, it is only a matter of time before there is a disaster. □

Free Trade Unions Sweep Across Poland

By Gerry Foley

In the few weeks since the victorious strikes of August and early September, the free trade-union movement has swelled into a flood sweeping Poland.

At the first national conference of these unions in Gdansk on September 17, organizers announced that 3 million workers from about 3,500 plants and institutions had applied to join the new democratic workers organizations.

Thus, in two-and-a-half weeks, the independent trade unions have signed up at least as many members as the official Polish Communist Party, which for thirty years has served as the representative of the social caste that holds a near monopoly on material privileges and possibilities of advancement.

In Szczecin, one local organizer reported, the democratic workers organizations are functioning at 90 percent of the plants.

Another delegate reported that in Cracow, representatives of 134 plants, including the huge Nowa Huta steelworks, had just held an organizational meeting to set up free trade unions.

A delegate from Katowice said that nearly 80 percent of the 20,000 workers in the steel plant there had signed up for the new union, and that the first issue of the union's paper had already been printed.

In Gdansk, the center of the movement, 80-90 percent of the workers are joining the new trade unions, Jonathan Spivak reported in the September 18 issue of the *Wall Street Journal*.

"And some groups, such as the dock workers and seamen, are moving lock, stock and barrel from the existing party-controlled structure to the new movement," Spivak reported. "Worker petitions to form new units arrive here daily."

Along with the growth of the new unions, the example of the earlier strikes continues to spread. In the September 20 *New York Times*, John Darnton reported from Warsaw:

"Many strikes have ended but new ones keep occurring. Today bus and tramway drivers in the Upper Silesian region stopped work, apparently in a demand for pay increases."

Spivak noted that the free trade-union movement has become the driving force of a mobilization embracing more and more sections of the Polish people:

While industrial workers focus on wages and working conditions, others flock to the independent unions with different objectives. Professors want the right to name the administrators of their universities; graphic artists want better supplies; translators seek the power to establish

higher standards for the profession; school-teachers hope to scrap the recently adopted Russian pattern of secondary education, which they say is inflexible; and farmers are organizing to increase crop prices and get better supplies.

Some labor experts even predict that the independent-union movement will lead to new organizations in other areas of Polish life, including the country's first consumer groups.

Flowering of Initiatives

The stage now opening in Poland is marked by the flowering of independent social initiatives and publications.

For example, the national confederation of free trade unions plans to begin publishing a nationwide daily with a circulation of a million copies. It would be named *Solidarity*, after the bulletin put out in Gdansk during the strikes.

Other local units of the new, worker-initiated trade unions are planning to put out newspapers of their own, such as the one already being published in Katowice.

Thus, the basis is developing rapidly for a snowballing of mass-circulation independent papers. Even if these publications do not directly defy the censorship, it will be extremely difficult for the censors to keep an eye on them all.

Moreover, in a country like Poland where the government is the main employer, it will be very difficult for these papers to avoid political questions. The likelihood is that they will tend quickly to become forums for all sorts of political currents and viewpoints existing among the workers they represent, especially those most ready to take initiatives, who are apt to be the most politically conscious.

Veterans of past political opposition movements in Poland have assumed leading roles in some of the new unions. One example is Karol Modzelewski, a leader of the antibureaucratic movement at the University of Warsaw in the mid-1960s. Modzelewski was an early associate of Jacek Kuron, a central figure in the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR), which has played an important role in the latest events. Together with Kuron, he authored the widely circulated 1964 "Open Letter" to members of the Polish Communist Party.

Modzelewski is now a leading activist in the Wroclaw free trade unions and was a delegate to the September 17 conference in Gdansk.

Discussion and Debate

Moreover, as the free trade unions and other mass movements grow, they will face more and more difficult tactical and politi-

cal problems that will have to be discussed. This was already apparent at the Gdansk conference.

A debate developed over the relationship and priority of building a centralized national leadership and building strong local unions. Differences on such questions can reflect divergences of general political views. It remains to be seen if that is true in this case.

Obviously the question of how to proceed in building the new trade unions poses a series of difficult tactical problems. The discussion in Gdansk seemed to center on these.

Walesa reportedly opposed forming a centralized confederation now on the grounds that such an approach would make it easier for the government to derail the movement. The reports are still too fragmentary to make clear exactly what Walesa's position or reasoning was. But he was quoted in the September 18 *New York Times* as saying, "We don't want to achieve unity too early; that could leave us outmaneuvered."

Perhaps some strike leaders feared that a formal national structure would offer a clearer target for repression, threats, and arm-twisting.

Proponents of a centralized organization reportedly argued that a strong national leadership was necessary to mobilize the support of the entire movement in defense of the free unions in areas where they were weaker, or were starting off from a lower level of struggle.

In particular, some free trade-union leaders are worried that the procedure and rules established for recognizing the new organizations give the government too much room to maneuver.

Applications have to be made in person by union leaders to the Warsaw District Court, and the court has the right to refuse recognition to organizations that it says are acting in violation of the Polish constitution. Furthermore, no deadline has been set for the court to render its decision, opening the way for delaying tactics.

A dispatch by Bradley Graham in the September 18 *Washington Post* reported the resolution of the discussion at the Gdansk meeting:

Faced with a potential split in their ranks, the union representatives held an hour-long closed door session of delegates from each of the regional committees.

In the meeting, the Gdansk group was persuaded of the need to form a central organization and it agreed to head a national federation.

"We didn't want to do it this way, but we were



Workers at Lenin Shipyard stand in front of crossed-out sign for government-controlled union.

forced to as a sort of defensive alliance," said Lech Badkowski, a writer and member of the Gdansk organizing committee.

Another discussion is also beginning among participants in the struggle, according to an account in *Le Monde*. Some Catholic intellectuals working with the free trade unions are reportedly in favor of the new workers organizations participating in factory "co-management" bodies with the bureaucracy, while the KOR is said to oppose this, seeing a danger to the independence of the new unions.

Attempts at Obstruction

In many localities, the party and government officials are still openly trying to obstruct the organization of free unions and to intimidate workers.

In Kielce, for instance, a local party official has taken a hard line against the new trade unions. Police in plainclothes were sent into a number of factories to put pressure on the workers.

At least one free trade-union activist, Andrzej Cuma, was arrested and detained for forty-eight hours, according to *Le Monde* of September 17.

The Gdansk leadership has been the spearhead nationally of the fightback

against these attacks and pressures. Spivak described this in his dispatch in the September 18 *Wall Street Journal*:

Mr. Walesa, whose sense of the workers' moods was a decisive factor in the success of the strikes, continues to function in an atmosphere of high crisis.

From behind the door of the headquarters office, Mr. Walesa is heard to shout, "If this continues, I'll call a general strike by Monday." He has just been shown pamphlets from official unions alleging that workers will lose their rights if they join the new independent ones. Journalists present are summoned into the office to be given details. . . .

Suddenly a message arrives from the telephone center. The government has agreed to make space available in the Gdansk paper for an MKZ [Interfactory Strike Committee] statement on independent unions' organizing rights. "We've won," the strike leader exults.

Stalinists on the Defensive

The power and spread of the Polish workers' upsurge has put world Stalinism and the Kremlin on the defensive politically.

One example is the tack taken by the Communist Party USA after the strike victories. During the struggle, this party played its usual role of the Kremlin's most

faithful guard dog, raising a howl about "antisocialist elements."

But in the September 13 issue of the American CP paper, the *Daily World*, Conrad Komorowski wrote:

"A notable feature of the Polish developments is that no anti-socialist or anti-Soviet slogans were raised. It was not socialism which came under attack in Poland, but the failure to carry it out."

Komorowski cited the new Polish CP head Stanislaw Kania as saying that since some workers wanted free trade unions, the party could not ignore their demands.

Even Brezhnev was enlisted in defense of the bureaucracy's retreat in Poland. He was quoted to the effect that "socialism and democracy are inseparable."

The Kremlin is continuing quiet attempts to intimidate the Polish masses, attested by reports of Soviet troop concentrations on the border. And it will intervene despite heavy political costs if it thinks the Polish bureaucracy is collapsing, or even short of that if it finds an opening. So far, however, it is lying very low. And that is a testimony to the power of the Polish workers movement, the capacities of its leaders, and the depth of the crisis of bureaucratic rule. □

'A Fight for Free Unions'

[The following statement is taken from the August 27 issue of *International Woodworker*, the newspaper of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), which has a membership of 125,000 in the United States and Canada. It is one of the largest unions in the northwest United States and in the Canadian province of British Columbia, and has a militant tradition. It is affiliated to the International Federation of Building and Woodworkers, which has 3 million members in fifty countries.]

* * *

We've noticed a great interest on the part of the press across the country concerning the current situation in Poland. The attitudes range from blatant, cold-war level, anti-communist rhetoric to genuine admiration for the brave struggle being waged by the striking Polish workers.

There are some common threads however. One is the pinning of a "hero" medal on the strike leaders who are standing up to their government and exercising the ultimate weapon workers possess for achieving their aims. Another is a constant reference to the Poles' demand for "free trade unions," a demand which appears non-negotiable.

We support the Polish workers and their efforts to bring free trade-unionism to their Communist country. We also support the struggles of workers in countries such as Bolivia and Chile, countries which are supposedly "friendlier" to Capitalism and struggles which don't rate much mention on front pages.

In fact, we find a certain hypocrisy about the whole thing and how it's reported.

Why is it, for instance "heroic" for workers to strike the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk, Poland when less than a year ago it was "irresponsible," indeed "criminal" for workers to strike Peninsula Shipyards in Newport News, Virginia? A free trade union is a free trade union, regardless of whether it's in Poland or Virginia. A lot of editorial writers and some conservative columnists seem to think there's a difference.

Then there is the matter of the Poles' winning their demand that the government speak to a negotiating committee representing all of the striking factories. Once again, this was greeted in American newspapers as a great victory for the valiant strikers.

We remember all too well, though, the recent experience of IWA members who were locked out by Georgia-Pacific in three southern states. Their similar demand for common bargaining was denounced in the press as "outrageous" and a "union grab

for power." Is there a difference? Are Polish and other East European workers more worthy or virtuous than their American Brothers and Sisters simply because they are fighting a totalitarian government instead of a profit-mad corporation?

We don't think so but it seems the press does.

Granted, there is always the threat of the Red Army and their Warsaw Pact allies taking on the role of strike-breakers, they've done it before. But the American military, especially the National Guard, has a few "battle stars"—and scars—they have earned on picket lines, usually to the applause of the press.

The M-16's being brandished about by State Police recently in Crossett, Arkansas at the behest of Georgia-Pacific are every bit as powerful and deadly as the Kalashnikovs the Kremlin will probably send to the Baltic Coast in Slavic hands. They are "Assault Rifles" and they kill workers whenever rulers give the order. And the press, on either side, will justify the order.

'It Will Happen Over Here Soon'

By Vivian Sahner

The successful struggle by Polish workers has inspired working people across the United States. At the September 2-10 convention of the million-member International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) held in Cincinnati, Ohio, a resolution was adopted that identified the IAM's fight to organize the unorganized and end union-busting in the United States with the example of the Polish workers.

The example set by the Polish workers also came up during discussion of another resolution, which mandated the IAM leadership to initiate discussions of "an independent prolabor party." This resolution passed after the delegates voted overwhelmingly against endorsing either Carter, Reagan, or Anderson as a presidential choice in the November election.

Under discussion on this resolution, a delegate from IAM Lodge 1005 declared:

We must return to the solidarity of the thirties; we must have the right to strike in our contracts; we must have the picket lines where we control who crosses these lines. Show this militancy, and the people will flock to the IAM as the Polish workers rallied to the leadership of the shipyard workers.

What would happen to the labor laws in this country if all of the Machinists on this continent were to lay down their tools at the same time? All we have to do is put our hands in our pockets and stand firm like the Polish workers did.

Like we said earlier, we find a certain hypocrisy about the whole thing and the way it's reported.

We appreciate the emphasis now being placed on "free trade unions" because of the Polish situation. We only hope that American workers learn from that struggle and appreciate what they have. Americans should also understand that union busters whether Communist bureaucrats or corporate "consultants," are the same the world over. They have the same goal, to deny workers the right to organize and use their collective strength for individual protection.

This Labor Day and in the days after Labor Day, take a moment and think about your Brothers and Sisters in Poland and the fact that they are fighting—and perhaps dying—to achieve what so many Americans take for granted: Free Trade Unions. Then, perhaps, you'll have a few words to say the next time someone tells you "unions aren't necessary any more."

Your international officers

In Marianna, Pennsylvania, members of Local 2874 of United Mine Workers (UMWA) District 5 sent a telegram to striking Polish miners. The resolution read, "Your victory has been an inspiration to us in our fight to organize the unorganized into the UMWA, against layoffs and inflation, for safer work conditions and for the right to strike. We wish you every success and solidarize ourselves with your struggle."

The local also sent a telegram to union President Sam Church, who is currently negotiating a new UMWA contract that comes due in March 1981. The message urged Church to settle for no less than what the Polish miners got.

Workers at the Avondale shipyard in New Orleans, Louisiana, the largest non-union shipyard in the United States, compared the fight led by the Polish workers to their own union organizing drive by the United Steelworkers of America.

One union supporter remarked, "It shows what you can do when you have some unity. When you've got enough organization, you can do anything you want."

Another added that the Polish workers "got the whole place shut down. . . . It'll happen over here soon. You can't buy a house today, can't buy a car even—it'll happen here." □

U.S. Government Shields Anti-Cuba Killers

More than a week after Félix García Rodríguez, a member of the Cuban delegation to the United Nations, was assassinated on a busy New York City street, police have still made no arrests.

Omega 7, the right-wing terrorist outfit that took credit for the murder, also threatened to kill the head of Cuba's UN delegation, Raúl Roa Kouri.

Instead of arresting the terrorists, the government has floated stories that García, the victim, "served some intelligence functions." The news media widely broadcast these slanders, hoping to relieve the pressure on the government to move against the terrorists.

To add insult to injury, three members of Omega 7's public front group, the Cuban Nationalist Movement (CNM)—currently in jail for the 1976 murders of Orlando Letelier, a former member of the Allende government in Chile, and Ronnie Moffitt, an American activist in the movement against the Chilean dictatorship—recently had their convictions overturned.

The September 15 court ruling came just days after Omega 7's brutal assassination of García.

Protests have been organized across the United States demanding that the U.S. government apprehend and prosecute the killers. In New York City, with literally only hours notice, more than 500 people showed up for a demonstration outside the United Nations.

Emergency picket lines were also held in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., San Jose, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Protest meetings took place in a number of other cities.

Thirty-five members of United Steelworkers Local 15271 in Chicago signed a petition to the U.S. attorney general demanding the immediate arrest and prosecution of the murderers.

Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, declared that responsibility for the assassination of García rested squarely on President Carter's shoulders.

"Regardless of who pulled the trigger," Pulley declared, "it is certain that behind the murderers stand the CIA, the FBI, the New York police, and the Carter administration."

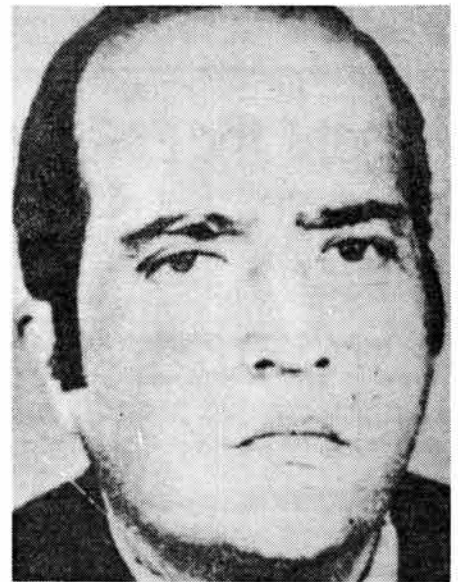
The claims of the police and FBI that they have "few leads" in the assassination is a patent fraud. "They know who these people are," Pulley pointed out. "They know where they are. The reason the cops don't find them and jail them is because the cops are in complicity with them."

The socialist candidate sent a message of condolence and solidarity to the Cuban

Mission to the UN and a protest to Carter. Pulley demanded the arrest of the terrorists and also called for opening the files of the CIA, the FBI, and various police departments to reveal the truth about their complicity with the right-wing hit squads.

Others expressing their outrage at this crime included Blacks, Latinos, and other civil rights supporters, groups in solidarity with the peoples of El Salvador and Nicaragua, the Washington Coalition Against Registration and the Draft, and the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

The initial picket lines and demonstrations protesting García's murder show the potential for a united action campaign to force the U.S. government to arrest and prosecute the Omega 7 gang. □



Cuban diplomat Félix García Rodríguez was victim of right-wing terrorist assassination.

Cuban Leaders Demand Guarantee of Safety

'Assassins Operate With Full Impunity'

[Below are the texts of two speeches by leaders of the Cuban revolution concerning the September 11 assassination in New York City of Cuban diplomat Félix García Rodríguez.

[The first speech was presented before the United Nations General Assembly September 12 by Raúl Roa Kouri, Cuba's permanent representative at the UN. The English text was released by the Cuban Mission to the UN.

[The second is the memorial speech for García Rodríguez delivered in Havana September 14 by Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, member of the Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party and vice-president of the Council of State. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Raúl Roa Kouri:

Mr. President:
Distinguished delegates:

Yesterday evening, a member of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations, Diplomatic Attaché, Comrade Félix García Rodríguez, was cowardly assassinated in New York City.

His assassins, counterrevolutionaries of Cuban origin living in the United States, cynically informed the New York press that that was an act by one of the gangs made up of a small group of terrorists without a fatherland which operate in this

country. They forecast that this would be the first in a series of aggressions.

These groups of professional assassins who not only act against the representatives of Revolutionary Cuba, but who impose their terror on all those who defend Cuba's rights, have several public offices in the country which hosts our international organization. The members and leaders of these groups publish their statements in the Hispanic press of New York City and convene public meetings in Manhattan, shamelessly boasting about their criminal intentions against the diplomatic representatives of the Cuban Revolution. They are the same who, in the course of the past two years, have bombed the premises of the Permanent Mission of Cuba on five occasions, causing serious damage to our office building and endangering the lives and security not only of Cuban diplomats and officials but of innocent passers-by and New York police agents on duty at the Mission as well. In short, they are the same elements who six months ago placed a highly potent plastic bomb under the car of the Permanent Representative of Cuba to this Organization.

They have now vilely murdered diplomat Félix García on a Queens roadway, inside his own car, in plain day light, at a scarce 15 minutes drive from the United Nations Headquarters.

They have acted with full impunity. They have acted, likewise, with the treachery, expertise and security of those who were trained to commit all kinds of criminal activities against the Cuban Revolution, its leaders and representatives abroad. Above all, they acted with the cowardice typical of these despicable petty gangsters.

Encouraged by the impunity which they have enjoyed and still enjoy, despite our reiterated denunciation of their acts to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the Common Relations with the Host Country, they resolved to slay Comrade Félix García once they ascertained he was alone and defenseless. Such is the nature of Cuba's enemies; such are their criminal methods; such is the indemnity with which they carry out their repugnant villainies.

Mister President:

The Permanent Mission of Cuba has received the condolences of the Government of the Host Country for this outrageous assassination. The Permanent Representative of the United States has assured us that all necessary measures to guarantee the security and physical integrity of Cuban diplomats and of our Mission would be adopted, and that all efforts would be made to apprehend the assassins of our comrade, Félix García.

But, unfortunately, Félix García has died because his cowardly assassins were not punished for their previous crimes. It is, therefore, an elementary duty to denounce his murder before this august body and reiterate the imperative need to put an end to the impunity enjoyed by these terrorists and assassins; that the Host Country, in accordance with its obligations from the Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the United States, fully guarantees the physical security of diplomatic personnel accredited to this Organization, of their Missions and properties. The international community cannot remain idle in the face of the repeated aggressions and terrorist actions against diplomatic personnel and Missions in New York City.

From the bottom of our hearts, we pay homage to our comrade, who fell in the fulfillment of his duties. No member of the Cuban diplomatic service can be intimidated. My Government demands that the authorities of the Host Country adopt the necessary measures to capture and try the assassins of Cuban diplomat Félix García, and expects the Member States of this Organization to demand the strict observance of the norms and conventions regulating the activities of our Missions and their personnel, inasmuch as they are diplomatic agents accredited to the United Nations and reside, for that reason, in the territory of the Host Country.

Thank you.

* * *

Félix García Rodríguez

The following biographical sketch of the slain Félix García Rodríguez is based on information issued by the Cuban Mission to the United Nations.

Born in 1939 of humble origins, García worked from his earliest years to help support his family.

As a student at the University of Havana, he was active in the movement against the Batista dictatorship, cooperating with the Revolutionary Directorate, a student organization, and the July 26 Movement, led by Fidel Castro. He was arrested twice by Batista's police during student demonstrations.

He graduated from the schools of diplomatic law and journalism at the university.

A member of a combat unit of the

people's militia, he participated in numerous mobilizations in defense of the revolution. He was also active in voluntary sugar harvesting mobilizations. As a member of the Ministry of Exterior Relations (MINREX) he participated in projects sponsored by the department for building new workers' housing.

He served as an official of MINREX and then worked as a journalist on the daily *Victoria*, published on the Isle of Youth, and on *Juventud Rebelde*, the Havana daily. He was then appointed a diplomatic attaché to the Cuban UN Mission. He was, since 1977, a protocol official.

He is survived by a brother, Domingo García Rodríguez, currently the Cuban ambassador to Egypt.

Carlos Rafael Rodríguez:

The anger of our people is mixed with sadness today. It is growing in face of the cowardice of those who vilely murdered our beloved comrade Félix García.

This crime comes from the desperation of defeat. It is vengeance, brutal but useless, by those who know they have been uprooted once and for all from this land that they betrayed.

Those who shamefully fled the face-to-face battle now attack recklessly, knowing they are safe from harm.

These gangster outfits know all too well that nothing will turn the Cuban people aside. They know that their hope that this revolution might be broken by foreign threat or internal decay has long since vanished.

They know, too, that no fighter of the revolution slackens when his brothers are murdered. More than once they have heard the victory cry—"The people united will never be defeated!"

But they were trained to kill. They are not ready to give up the job of assassin. They are looking once again for someone to hire them.

When they see retrograde forces appearing on the U.S. political scene, who base their aspirations for power on a call for a return to violence and a heavy hand in Latin America, these gangs lose no time in demonstrating their skill in carrying out such a policy, whose prototype was that of Pinochet in Chile.

If they are to keep on doing their dirty work, these gangsters cannot tolerate the American people hearing the true voice of Cuba or understanding the significance of our revolution and its policies. They hate our incorruptible diplomats who represent Cuba in the United States. But they show the same hatred toward those young people who were dragged away from this island as children and have now had their consciences awakened.

These youth, who see the prestige and respect the revolution has brought the homeland in which they were born, now feel it to be their own. They are rising up to proclaim their pride and to publicize the reality of renovated Cuba.

Thus the gangsters murdered Carlos Muñoz Varela with equal cowardice. As a member of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, Carlos contributed to improving the understanding of socialist Cuba. They killed him just as they killed Félix García, the Cuban diplomat at the United Nations who happened to be the easiest target.

In Félix García Rodríguez, Cuba loses a firm fighter. The Ministry of Foreign Relations loses a loyal and dedicated functionary. He came from among the people, and educated himself through his own efforts. For him, the revolution was both a joy and a duty. From the days of the Directorate and the July 26 Movement, he took part in the struggle against Batista's tyranny. He spent time in jail, and he knew dangers. The victory of the revolution allowed him to serve with dedication and passion the people from whom he came.

Whenever the homeland called on him, Félix García was there. He shared the trenches of day-to-day labor. He worked long and hard at voluntary tasks in agriculture and construction.

Everything about him called for life. Nothing gave him more satisfaction than to help his comrades. He did so with such enthusiasm that, while carrying out his continual and tireless work, he seemed instead to be at an unending fiesta. He radiated understanding and optimism; perhaps for that reason it was not difficult for the criminals to do their infamous deed.

His death hurts all the more because of the impunity with which the crime took place. Faced with the ongoing threats to our officials in New York, Cuba's official denunciations and warnings have not been lacking. Being the host country of the

United Nations imposes obligations [on the United States]. It demands that representatives of the countries that make up this organ of the international community enjoy safeguards that cannot be violated by unscrupulous gangsters.

The death of Félix García has been publicly condemned by the United States. They have also sent condolences to Cuba, in a message from President Carter. If Félix's death serves to put an end to the cowardly acts of those who uselessly seek to silence the revolution, intimidate its representatives, and strike blows against its defenders, this would be Félix's final



Harry Ring/Militant
Protest at UN condemns murder of Cuban diplomat.

service to the homeland and to socialism, which he loved so much.

We will await the test of events. Meanwhile, our people's anger and renewed combativity, as we gather around the body of Félix García and accompany it in an impressive procession, is the response to the miserable elements that carried out this crime. It answers as well those who call for aggressive policies against Cuba, who seek to intimidate Latin America, and who proclaim a return to the days of servitude. Let them all recall what Fidel said about the tears of the people on another sad day like this one.

From now on, Félix García's name is inscribed on the long list of those who have fallen for our homeland. He joins Adriana Corcho, Efrén Montegudo, and Sergio Pérez as another example of those who represent the revolution on foreign soil and who, knowing the enemy was lying in wait, never stepped back from their duty.

The people and the party will carry the name of this incorruptible fighter into history. □

'Democratic Movement Looks to Workers of the World'

China—Demand Release of Four Editors

On August 30, Chinese government officials in Canton staged a 3:00 a.m. raid on the home of Ho Qui, editor of the unofficial magazine *Road of the People*. Members of the city's Municipal Public Security Bureau arrested Ho, along with the editors of three other unofficial magazines: Zhong Yueqiu of *People's Voice*; Chu Jianbin of *Sound of the Bell*; and Zhang Jingsheng of *Republican Press*.

Like Ho, Zhong lives in Guangzhou province. Chu is from Wuhan, and Zhang from Changsha. Zhong, Chu, and Zhang were arrested on grounds that they were illegally visiting in Ho's house without reporting, while Ho was charged with receiving visitors illegally.

Formal trial charges had not been lodged against the four as of early September, however, and authorities had released no official information about their arrest.

An international appeal for the release of Ho, Zhong, Chu, and Zhang was issued September 7 by the Revolutionary Marxist League of Hong Kong, which is affiliated to the Fourth International. The appeal explained that the arrests are not an isolated incident, but "a further extension of the series of attacks and harassment of the democratic movement in China."

The RML cites the arrest, trial, and imprisonment over the past year of Wei Jingsheng, editor of *Explorations*; Fu Yuehua of *Human Rights Forum*; and Liu Qing, editor of *April 5 Forum*.

According to the appeal, the victims of the most recent arrests "are extremely key persons of the most active and important samizdats in the Central and Southern region of the country."

Behind the Crackdown

Following the appearance of Peking's Democracy Wall in November 1978, there was a proliferation of groups and magazines in China urging the expansion of democratic rights. After the death of Mao Zedong and the purge of the so-called Gang of Four in 1976, the Stalinist leaders of the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) allowed a margin of public dissent to develop. They hoped to defuse the discontent that had built up during Mao's last years and had exploded during the April 1976 demonstration at Peking's Tiananmen Square.

By early 1979, however, the Stalinist rulers had become alarmed by the spread of protests. Since that time, there has been stepped-up repression, including arrests, the closing down of Democracy Wall, and new restrictions on rights previously promised by Mao's heirs.

The RML's appeal calls on people around the world to "strongly denounce the CCP's crackdown on the democratic movement"; to demand that the CCP "implement the authentic rights of freedom of speech, thought, assembly, and press"; and to insist on the immediate release of Ho, Zhong, Chu, and Zhang. It asks that protest letters be sent to the CCP Central Committee and to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Peking.

Along with the appeal, the RML enclosed a January 5, 1980, autobiographical statement written by Ho Qui, one of the four editors arrested in Canton.

Ho explained that his family was a strong supporter of the Communist Party; his father had been a representative to the National People's Congress, formally the highest decision-making body in China.

Upon Ho's graduation from high school in 1965, he entered a vocational school. The following year, "with the onset of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, my opportunity for further study vanished once and for all." Ho joined the Red Guards for awhile, but became disillusioned by what he came to view as senseless "turmoil and disturbances."

Since all schools had been closed down, Ho took a job as an industrial worker. Getting the job, he says, was actually "a very fortunate event when compared with the arbitrary alternative that was imposed" on millions of urban young people who were sent to the countryside "as peasants not by their free choice."

Those disillusioned by Mao's Cultural Revolution, he said, could not help but "reflect deeply on the road towards socialism of the country for the past couple of decades." But Ho gradually came to see that the Cultural Revolution had nothing to do with "authentic socialism."

The Distortion of Marxism

"I came to realize that it was not Marxism that has brought ruin to my country," Ho wrote, "but only its distortion."

In 1973, Ho got into a political argument with his brother, who had come home for a visit. Later, Ho wrote a long letter to his brother, filled with quotations from Marxist classics. Ho criticized the Chinese government's foreign policy, especially "Mao's mishandling of the aid to Pakistan," an obvious reference to the Chinese support for the Pakistani regime against the Bangladesh independence struggle. He also condemned the policy of forcing urban youths into the countryside.

"Who could ever guess that this personal family correspondence would be screened

by the Public Security Bureau as evidence for a 'antirevolutionary' case?" Ho wrote.

Ho was subjected to a humiliating trial and sentenced to three years of "labor education." According to Ho, this involved "all sorts of humble and dirty work," but he was able to eke out a little time for further study of the Marxist classics. He even wrote a few essays and smuggled them out of prison, but his family burned them out of fear.

When he was released, he learned of the Tiananmen demonstration and the fall of the Gang of Four during his time in prison. He learned that the three authors of the "Li Yizhe" wall poster, which had created a sensation in 1974 by demanding workers democracy in China, had been released from prison under the pressure of the burgeoning democratic movement.

"I sensed strongly that it was time for a wave of drastic national changes," Ho wrote. "With the birth of the Democracy Wall in Beijing [Peking], an uprising of the people was clearly" under way.

Ho himself was "rehabilitated," along with many other people who had been jailed during the Mao years. Officials cited only the excessive sentence meted out to Ho, however, not the nature of the charges against him.

Ho joined the unofficial magazine *Voice of the People*. "Based on my personal experience, I deeply felt the urgency of the reassertion of the right of the people to freedom of speech, thought, and press." CCP Chairman Hua Guofeng and Vice-Chairman Deng Xiaoping, Ho believes, "started to build a new political system" based on principles that are "the negation of those under the feudal dictatorship of the Gang of Four."

While expressing substantial political confidence in Hua and Deng, Ho traced the root of the changes to the deep discontent among the Chinese toilers. By the time of Mao's death, Ho said, the "last bit of illusion" had vanished among the masses, and "they were forced to face the iron reality laid before them. Deeply and firmly, they felt the need to critically review the past development so as to clear the way for a realistic road for the country towards socialism."

Democratic Movement

"I have always maintained the position that our country is only on its way in the transition to socialism," Ho wrote. "The greatest and most urgent task of all in this transition period is to bring about a complete eradication of the social basis of the former authoritarianism—to proceed with the 'smash-up of the state machinery.' It is only on this basis that modernization and rapid progressive development is possible."

In September 1979, Ho and a couple of his comrades left the *Voice of the People* and set up *Road of the People*.

"We are not enlighteners or teachers,"

Ho wrote, "but students of the people, and honest and loyal servants! We hope to make this small and humble publication a means to promote discussion and exploration of the road to social transformation for the masses.

"Further, we want to make it clear that we are not 'dissent elements' of any sort. We share the same conviction and readiness to defend Marxism, as well as to fight for the construction of socialism, as the Chinese Communist Party does. We give full support to the correct leadership of the Communist Party.

"However, this support is never simple obedience, but only on the condition of accordance with scientific Marxism."

Ho said that those who portray *Road of the People* as antigovernment present "a most distorted and biased picture."

"The ones we are against are not the government as such, but the bureaucrats within it."

Proletarian Internationalism

Ho's autobiographical sketch makes clear that he has retained his internationalism from the days when he was jailed for criticizing Mao's foreign policy.

"There is an inseparable connection between the Chinese workers' movement and those of other countries," Ho wrote. While welcoming the recent opportunity for China to break through the economic blockade that imperialism imposed on it for more than two decades, Ho warned that this also opens China to "dangerous blows from global capitalism and its policies."

"If China is to obtain a steady path of progress to socialist construction," he wrote, "it can only be done through the merging of interests of our national proletariat and that of the international proletariat. This refers precisely to the interests between the peoples, and not between the various governments. Only in this way can China free herself from the spiral of international capitalistic struggle."

The basic demands of the democratic movement in China, Ho said, are "socialist democracy and its legal system, the ultimate goal of which is to liberate the forces of production (abolition of exploitation)."

This highlights the unity of interests between the democratic movement and the Chinese working class, Ho wrote. If these forces within China do not reach out to the international proletariat, they "will be subjected to undefended attack from world capitalism."

For this reason, Ho stated, "It must be made clear that the democratic movement does not demand any support whatever from the overseas bourgeoisie or its democratic current, as the two are of a radically different nature. The former identifies itself only with the international working class on their road to build socialism."

"The day when the workers of China obtain genuine management of their own

country," Ho wrote, "is exactly the time when China can have a huge share in contributing to the world."

Call for Worldwide Solidarity

Within this context, Ho wrote, "We firmly encourage our compatriots in Hong Kong, Macão, and overseas to commit themselves to the cause of the democratic movement in China."

As the arrest of Ho and his three comrades shows, this international support is more necessary than ever today, as the Peking regime escalates its efforts to stamp out opposition.

"New-born things always subject themselves to resistance or even attack from old forces," Ho wrote. "There is a definite hostility toward the people's publications from the bureaucrats, since the very hope of the former is exactly the negation of the latter."

Ho recognized that there will be further reprisals along the way, but his statement concluded: "The people will march forward and will struggle. No regret is needed for these sacrifices here, because the blood shed today serves to announce the beginning of a new era."

At about the same time that Ho wrote this statement last January, *Road of the People* joined with two other unofficial magazines in sending a mimeographed appeal to a broad range of groups and individuals in China urging a united response to the government crackdown. Citing the freedom of publication guaranteed under the Chinese constitution, the appeal urged the unofficial publications to seek legality through registration with the government.

To stress the need for a united response, the appeal asked: "Do we have to wait for all the chopsticks to have been broken before we start to pull them back together in one pile?"

This appeal for unity inside China must now be matched by support from the workers movement internationally. This underlines the urgency of responding to the call by the Hong Kong Revolutionary Marxist League for protest letters and telegrams demanding the release of Ho Qui, Zhong Yueqiu, Chu Jianbin, and Zhang Jingsheng. □

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Imperialists Prepare for New Mideast War

By David Frankel

Two years ago a beaming President Carter appeared on U.S. television to announce the Camp David accords. Flanked by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, Carter declared that "prayers have been answered far beyond any expectations." He promised a new era of peace in the Middle East.

Despite Carter's rhetoric, and notwithstanding the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Sadat and Begin, the Middle East today is as close to war as it ever was. In many ways the tensions in the area are greater than on the eve of the October 1973 war. And the Camp David accords, far from being a force for peace, have weighed on the side of U.S. military intervention.

'Roller Coaster to Disaster'

The very capitalist leaders who hailed Camp David and the subsequent Israeli-Egyptian treaty leave no doubt as to their assessment. "We are on a roller coaster to disaster," Henry Kissinger told a congressional committee this July. "Our future is now at the mercy of a precarious political status quo in what is probably the most volatile, unstable and crisis-prone region of the world."

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's national security adviser, sums up his recipe for a Vietnam in the Middle East by saying, "It is very likely that in the 1980s we will be involved in an unprecedented effort to assure stability, and therefore exercise deterrence, in the Persian Gulf area."

The diplomatic framework for this "unprecedented effort to assure stability" was set by the Camp David accords. Recent military moves within this framework include:

- The use of Egyptian bases to launch Carter's abortive commando raid on Iran last April.
- The presence in Egypt of a squadron of U.S. Phantom jets engaged in joint exercises with Egyptian forces. The Phantoms, which arrived in Cairo July 10, are scheduled to remain into October.
- The September 11 announcement that 1,400 troops of the Pentagon's new Rapid Deployment Force will be airlifted to Egypt for maneuvers this November.

Meanwhile, Wahsington is moving ahead with its plans to secure additional military bases in the region. In addition to obtaining new bases in Oman, Kenya, and Somalia, the Pentagon has budgeted \$1 billion for expanding its facilities on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia. Among the plans is widening airbase

runways to accommodate B-52 bombers.

According to Pentagon documents uncovered by *Washington Post* reporter George Wilson, U.S. forces will also be operating out of an Egyptian base at Ras Banas, across the Red Sea from Saudi Arabia. According to Wilson's August 7 report the Pentagon plans new military construction to upgrade the Ras Banas base.

"About 200,000 men plus perhaps 100,000 reservists have been designated for emergency operations in the Middle East. The preparation, over five years, will cost \$25 billion, not \$10 billion as had been thought," the *New York Times* reported September 20.

All these moves, along with massive new infusions of military aid for the Israeli and Egyptian regimes, have been carried out by Carter amid an unending barrage of "peace" proposals and negotiations. But it is no accident that while military preparations make rapid progress, there has not been the slightest movement toward ending the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, or toward even the most minimal gains for the Palestinian people.

Begin's Policy of Provocation

Far from leading to any improvement for the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation, the Egyptian-Israeli treaty has been accompanied by an increase in the pressures on the Palestinian population.

Begin's policy toward the Palestinians was symbolized by the opening of Nafha prison this May. Inhuman conditions there led to a hunger strike by Palestinian political prisoners. Two prisoners died in July after prison guards force-fed liquid into their lungs. As one prisoner declared when Israeli authorities finally allowed reporters to tour the prison, "We are freedom fighters. They have built this prison to destroy us physically and mentally."

In the occupied West Bank, Zionist vigilante groups terrorize Arab villages with impunity. Army officers have been provided by the government to help the rightist vigilantes, under the pretext of coordinating the organization of defense groups for Zionist settlements.

When the United Nations General Assembly demanded once again on July 29 that the Israeli regime withdraw from the occupied territories and reaffirmed its support for an independent Palestinian state by a vote of 112 to 7, the Begin government responded with a slap in the face to world public opinion and to Sadat in particular. It took the opportunity to pass a law

explicitly declaring that all of Jerusalem would remain the eternal capital of the Israeli state. Sadat had broken off negotiations in May to protest the introduction of this bill into the Israeli Knesset.

Begin followed up this move on August 14 with the announcement that three new Zionist settlements would be established on the West Bank, two outside the Arab city of Hebron and one outside of Nablus. This was Begin's answer to an appeal by Sadat for a moratorium on new colonies in the occupied territories.

In a letter to Sadat, Begin declared that the settlements "are legal and legitimate and they are an integral part of our national security. None of them will ever be removed."

On August 19, the Israeli Supreme Court upheld the government's summary banishment of two West Bank mayors and a religious leader. None of the three was accused of any crime, nor were any of the three who were thrown out of their homeland even given the right to appeal to a court before their expulsion.

Undercutting the Autonomy Talks

Even before these latest actions, the editors of the *Christian Science Monitor* had complained July 1: "Israel's entire course in recent months has served only to radicalize the Arabs in the West Bank, increase violence, and undercut the autonomy talks."

It is hard to escape the conclusion that the Begin government has decided that even the phony Palestinian autonomy scheme outlined in the Camp David agreements goes too far. Begin appears to be doing his best to scuttle the talks altogether, in order to clear the way for openly annexing the Arab territories occupied in the 1967 war.

An editorial in the August 3 *New York Times*, referring to ultraright Zionist Geula Cohen, declared: "The sponsor of Israel's gratuitous and provocative new law affirming Jerusalem as its capital is a fanatic. Her motives are clear, and her triumph in this case reveals the Government's weakness and bankruptcy."

What incensed the editors of the *Times*—and U.S. policymakers in general—was not the actual policy being followed by the Zionist regime in regard to Jerusalem. As the *Times* noted, the new law "in no way alters the already proclaimed annexation of East Jerusalem or Israel's development of the city in patterns that make a future division almost inconceivable."

By publicly reaffirming this policy, however, Begin was putting Sadat on the spot and giving ammunition to his opponents.

With the U.S. presidential election rapidly approaching, Carter was able to prevail on Sadat and Begin to temporarily patch things up. On September 3 a resumption of autonomy negotiations "sometime within the next few weeks" was announced, as was a November summit

meeting with Carter, Sadat, and Begin. But these moves merely represent a tactical adjustment by Begin.

Pushing Assad to the Wall

At the same time that is has been turning the screws on the Palestinians and humiliating Sadat at every opportunity, the Zionist regime—relieved of the need to counter the Egyptian army on its southern front—has been carrying out a policy of provocation against Syria.

On August 19, the same day as the Israeli Supreme Court ruling upholding the expulsion of the Palestinian mayors, Israeli forces knifed into southern Lebanon in their biggest raid since the full-scale invasion of March 1978.

Resistance from Palestinian guerrillas prevented the Israeli force from capturing its objective, a twelfth century Crusader fortress that overlooks the border region. But *New York Times* reporter John Kifner indicated the possibility of further attacks in an August 24 dispatch. According to Kifner, "Both the United Nations Command in Lebanon and the Palestinians report that large numbers of Israeli troops and heavy equipment, including tanks, have been massing during the week. . . ."

Kifner reported in a September 11 dispatch that the Israeli build-up was still going on. Israeli moves such as this are a direct challenge to Syria, which has an estimated 30,000 troops in Lebanon. The danger of an Israeli-Syrian confrontation was highlighted August 24 when Israeli jets shot down a Syrian plane over southern Lebanon.

Every time Zionist forces move into Lebanon and seize positions there, the Syrian regime must face the possibility that the Israeli moves are the beginning of a military thrust into Syria itself. The crushing burden imposed on the Syrian economy by the constant threat of Zionist aggression is indicated by the fact that one half of Syria's national budget is channeled into military spending. One out of every six Syrian men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five are in the armed forces.

Faced with Israeli threats on his southern border, with a hostile regime in Iraq on his eastern border, and with growing internal opposition, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad has been looking for support from Moscow. For example, Assad was one of the few Arab leaders who refused to fall in line behind Washington's propaganda barrage following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

He has also been forced to adopt a firmer anti-imperialist stance in the Middle East. Syrian relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization have warmed up; Syrian radio denounced Carter's commando raid on Iran last April as "an act of piracy and aggression"; and when the Libyan leader Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi called for a

union between Syria and Libya September 1, Assad responded immediately.

Relations between Qaddafi's regime and the main imperialist powers have been strained, as indicated by the burning of the U.S. embassy there on December 2, the torching of the French embassy on February 2, and the firebombing of the British embassy on June 13. Imperialist diplomats blame the Libyan government for these incidents. Qaddafi is also under pressure from Sadat, who has massed troops on the Libyan border.

The imperialists make no secret of their desire to see Qaddafi overthrown. However, as *Christian Science Monitor* reporter John K. Cooley admitted September 11, "Colonel Qaddafi has built a strong popular power base at home, despite dissent in his Army and civil service. He has done this by spending billions on housing, schools, social services, and in other useful and popular ways. . . ."

While Assad doubtless hopes to get economic and military aid from the oil-producing Libyan regime, he also hopes for some direct political benefits out of the announcement of Syrian-Libyan unity.

The Arab masses are well aware of the artificial divisions imposed on them by imperialism. They see the potential benefits that could be realized by pooling the resources of the Arab world, both on an economic level and in the struggle against Zionist aggression and imperialist domination. As a result, steps toward Arab unity have often been welcomed with great enthusiasm by the workers and peasants of the region.

Arab capitalist regimes have proven incapable of realizing this progressive demand, however, just as they have proven incapable of mobilizing the resources and populations of the individual countries they rule in the confrontation with Israel. The Arab masses will be watching Assad and Qaddafi to see if they can do any better than the previous attempts.

U.S.-Israeli Relations

How does Begin's reckless policy of provocation and pressure against Syria and against the Palestinians fit in with U.S. plans in the Middle East?

Many of the expressions of anger by U.S. officials in response to Begin's crude methods are genuine. Washington recognizes and supports the *fact* of Israeli occupation in the West Bank, but it wants the way to be smoothed by ongoing negotiations, not made rockier by provocative actions.

But the essential relationship between the U.S. ruling class and the Zionist state is marked by a growing convergence of interests; not the divergence claimed by liberals in the United States and in the Arab world.

Over the past several years, the pressure of the international class struggle has begun to bear down more strongly on the

Zionist state. This is reflected in Israel's growing international isolation, in its ailing economy, and in the rising combativity of the Palestinians living under Israeli rule. The general pressure of the class struggle exacerbates frictions between Washington and Tel Aviv over how best to advance their common overall goals in the region.

But it has not resulted in increased imperialist pressure on Israel. Just the opposite, the imperialists are giving *more* support to the Zionist state, not less. Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has received a total of \$21 billion in U.S. aid. More than half of the total—\$11 billion—has been given by the Carter administration in the last four years.

Israel is growing ever more central to U.S. war plans in the Middle East, especially since the overthrow of the U.S.-backed regime of the shah of Iran. Washington's expanding military cooperation with Sadat must be seen within this context, not as a move away from reliance on the Zionist regime. Even if the imperialists were able to stabilize Egypt socially—which they cannot—the Egyptian army would still be insufficient for their purposes.

Reporting from Cairo July 27, *New York Times* correspondent Christopher S. Wren said, "A Western specialist here reckoned that it would cost \$10 billion to \$15 billion to bring the Egyptian armed forces up to a rough parity with Israel."

Total U.S. military aid to Sadat so far has been \$1.5 billion.

Israeli officials are fond of pointing out the real relationship of forces. "When the chips are down," says former UN ambassador Chaim Herzog, Israeli troops "are the only really reliable forces in the area."

Results of Camp David

Far from providing a mechanism that would help to advance the interests of the Palestinian people and restrain Zionist aggression against the Arab masses, the Camp David accords have enabled the Begin regime to carry out new attacks. And they have allowed the U.S. government to provide the means for those attacks under the mantle of a "peace" process.

Naturally, the imperialists intend to milk the Camp David deal for everything that it is worth. "As imperfect as Camp David is, there is no conceivable alternative to it. The process of imposition by pressure suggested by the [UN] General Assembly is not a conceivable alternative," the editors of the *Washington Post* insisted July 31.

They prefer not to talk about the possibility of new revolutionary victories in the area as a "conceivable alternative." But such an alternative is not only conceivable, it is considered quite likely among U.S. policymakers, as is shown by Washington's feverish military preparations. □

'Israel Is in a Very Deep Crisis'

[The following interview with two members of the Israeli Revolutionary Communist League—Asaf and Ruben—was obtained in New York in August.

[The Revolutionary Communist League is the Israeli section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Question. Perhaps you could start by telling us something about yourselves and how you became involved in revolutionary politics.

Asaf. I was born on a kibbutz in Israel twenty-seven years ago and became politically active while in the army. In fact, Ruben and I were in the same army unit together. Both of us now work in a steel fabricating plant.

Ruben. I came to Israel from Argentina in 1970. When we entered the army in 1974 there was a lot of discussion among soldiers about how to achieve peace with the Arabs. This was not an academic question. It was right after the huge casualties of the 1973 war, which had caused a real shock in the Israeli population.

We, along with other soldiers, were looking for a credible answer to the question of how to achieve peace.

Asaf. In our army training unit there were about nine of us who were involved in these discussions. Later we met some people in the army from the Workers League, a group that calls itself Trotskyist and that is affiliated with the Lambertist current¹ internationally. Through our discussions we became convinced that the only way to achieve real peace was to fight for socialism and for a Palestinian state of Jews and Arabs. Three of us joined the Workers League while still in the army.

When we got out of the army in 1976, there was a big explosion of the Palestinian masses inside Israel. A discussion started inside the Workers League about how to relate to this rebellion, which we felt provided a big opportunity to work in the Arab villages, to work with and learn from the Palestinians. But the majority of the leadership of the Workers League could not relate to this new situation.

A split took place. We did not want a split, but there is no tradition of internal democracy within the Lambertist move-

ment. We formed the Palestine Communist Group, and soon began to work with the Revolutionary Communist League, which eventually led to a fusion of the two groups.

Q. What is the situation in Israel today?

Asaf. There is general agreement that Israel is in a very deep crisis, that things are getting steadily worse, and that next year will be even worse than this year. People know something is desperately wrong.

Q. Is this attitude a big change from previous years?

Asaf. Absolutely. After the 1967 war, Israel was caught up in a certain euphoria. There had been a quick, relatively painless military victory. This was followed by a jump in the standard of living, with the expanded markets for Israeli goods on the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Everyone had the feeling that nothing could stop Israel, that Israel could do anything.

Q. What is the reason for this present sense of crisis?

Asaf. The fundamental reason for the crisis is rooted in the basic premises of the Zionist system. The Zionist parties and Zionist establishment have tried to build a capitalist state in the Middle East—first in collaboration with the old colonialist powers and then with American imperialism—in opposition to the Palestinian people who already lived in Palestine.

In the last analysis, the present crisis is a reflection of the fact that this undertaking is hopeless. Of course, there are very concrete reasons why the crisis is so sharp at this particular moment.

One factor is the economic crisis of the world capitalist system. Although it is hitting the whole capitalist world, the economic crisis hits Israel harder than most places because of the Israeli economy's reliance on aid from imperialism. The inflation rate is the second highest in the world. It has been over 100 percent in each of the last two years.

Along with the inflation there is growing unemployment. And no one, not even the most fervent defenders of the capitalist system, predicts that there will be any big improvement in the next few years.

Ruben. It is important to remember that Israel was built within the framework of the Zionist policies of the Labor Party. The Labor Party said that Israel was a welfare state, meaning that you had certain rights and expectations within it. But you cannot

maintain a welfare state when the bourgeoisie is in an economic crisis.

Asaf. In addition to the economic crisis, there is a second factor that undercuts the viability of the Zionist state. That is the rise of struggles of oppressed people throughout the world, and especially in the Middle East.

When millions of workers, peasants, and oppressed minorities in Iran overthrew the shah, that was a big blow to the whole imperialist domination of the region, in which Israel plays a major part.

Israel's image internationally has suffered a big drop as a result of its role in cooperating with the shah, and then with Somoza in Nicaragua. People in Israel can feel that they no longer have the same support in world public opinion.

Ruben. Broad layers of the population have not yet begun to ask themselves what the roots of the crisis are. Instead, they react individually to its effects. They see the problems in their lives, the housing shortage, the inflation, the fact that for the first time a whole generation of Jewish youth see no prospects for building a future for themselves. And they say, "I made a mistake coming to Israel." Hundreds of thousands of people say this. But it is still "I made a mistake," not "What is happening to us?"

And people try to solve the problem individually. More and more people are either emigrating or considering it. Of course, this option is only open to the middle and upper layers in society. The workers do not have the economic resources to emigrate.

And, of course, the resurgence of Palestinian struggles on the occupied West Bank has played a powerful role in undermining the Zionist model for building Israel. For thirty years the Zionists have argued that there is no such thing as a Palestinian question, that there are no Palestinians.

Asaf. But the Palestinians on the West Bank have been struggling against Israeli occupation for more than a decade, under very difficult conditions. This forces Israel to confront the reality that the Palestinian struggle will not go away.

It's hard to maintain now, as Golda Meir used to, that there is no Palestinian nation when the Palestinians have been fighting for so long. You can say it for one year, two years. But eventually people recognize there must be something to this struggle if it continues for so long.

Israeli Jews now recognize that the people on the West Bank do not want us on their backs, that we cannot stay there forever because they will continue to fight us. Although Jewish workers remain hostile and suspicious toward the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which they see as a terrorist organization, they are increasingly ready to acknowledge that the Palestinians do exist and that their cause has at least some sense to it.

1. In 1963, when the Fourth International was reunified after a ten-year split, the French Internationalist Communist Organization (OCI), led by Pierre Lambert, was one of the groups that refused to participate in the reunification. Lambert's followers are organized internationally in the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

Ruben. So you can see that the two pillars of Zionist propaganda—that Israel could provide a prosperous existence for Jews, and that the Arabs in Palestine could be discounted—have both crumbled. People no longer believe either of these points.

Q. How is this crisis reflected in the concrete attitudes of the Jewish population?

Asaf. In addition to the objective crisis of Israeli society, there is also a very important subjective crisis of leadership, perspectives, and confidence in the political leaders and the capitalist parties. This is a reflection of the objective crisis, but not a linear reflection.

People were taught to expect that through collective effort and collective sacrifice Israel would move steadily forward and people's lives would improve. Working people were willing to fight very hard, to make many sacrifices, and not just in the army. Israelis have also made big sacrifices in terms of housing, education, and living standards, because they felt there was a collective effort, that everyone was in the same boat.

The big crisis today is not just that things are getting worse, but also that while things are going downhill, only the working class and the poor are making the sacrifices.

Ruben. Class differences have become much more obvious in Israeli society in recent years. We see more and more rich people, and more and more advertisements for luxury housing, while the government demands austerity from the workers. We're no longer "all in the same boat." Some people are in a much bigger boat than others.

One young woman, an Oriental Jew, was interviewed on television about the government's economic policies. She summed it up this way: "It's like a circumcision party. While the little ones are being cut up, the big ones are eating cake."

Asaf. People can see that the rich people control both the Labor Party and the Likud Party, and that whichever party is in office, it demands sacrifices from the workers while the rich are not touched.

In addition, people feel that both big political parties are hopelessly corrupt, that most politicians are lining their pockets while the people suffer from a declining standard of living.

Q. What is the reaction from the working class?

Asaf. One of the most significant developments in recent years was this year's May Day demonstration. The fact that more than 150,000 people came to the demonstration in Tel Aviv surprised everyone. The newspaper commentators and



Tel Aviv workers demonstrate against high prices. Illusions that Zionist Israel could provide prosperous existence for Jews are shattering.

the Histadrut,² which organized the march, had predicted that 40,000-50,000 would attend.

So it was more than three times as large as expected. But the breadth of the demonstration was equally significant. In Peace Now demonstrations there were sometimes as many as 70,000-80,000. But they were very homogeneous—middle-class youth, mainly of European origin.

The May Day demonstration was very different. These were working people, common people, probably the majority of whom were Oriental Jews rather than Europeans. They were young and old, women and men, from all over the country, each with a grievance against the government's austerity program.

Although the Histadrut tried to channel the demonstration into support for national security and for the Labor Party, the whole thrust was against the economic situation. It was a demonstration of dissatisfaction, demanding change, demanding jobs, housing, the chance to live a decent life.

There were some chants in favor of [Shimon] Peres of the Labor Party for prime minister, but you could see that most people viewed this as a way to say, "Down with Begin," rather than any strong support for Peres.

Another significant thing was the re-

2. The Histadrut calls itself a labor federation, but it was organized in 1922 as a Zionist organization that excluded Arab workers from membership and whose central function was to advance the Zionist colonization of Palestine. Although the Histadrut continues to operate a trade union department and to present itself as a trade union, it is also the largest employer in Israel. It owns two of the four largest armaments companies in the country, the largest industrial conglomerate, the main insurance company, the largest construction concern, and a chain of banks.

sponse to our leaflets and newspaper. The headline on our paper was against Begin's West Bank settlement policy. It wasn't on a narrow economic issue. But these people, most of whom had no previous exposure to radical newspapers, did not react with hostility. We were able to have good discussions. It gave us a real sense of the changes taking place in the country.

Q. What is the situation of the Oriental Jews, the Jews who came from the Arab countries?

Ruben. The changes taking place among the Oriental Jews is another example of the breakdown in the collective sense of Israeli Jewish society. There is tremendous tension between Oriental Jews and European Jews. The Oriental Jews suffer the worst conditions in housing, education, employment, and so on. In the factories you often find that all the managers, office staff, planners, and organizers are Europeans, while on the shop floor all the workers are Oriental Jews and Arabs.

The Oriental Jews are very conscious of the oppression they suffer. In fact, they closely follow and identify with the Black liberation struggle in the U.S.

Asaf. They are undergoing a very deep radicalization. The Israeli government used to say that the problems of the Oriental Jews, such as lack of housing, were temporary and would, in time, be solved. Today we see the third generation of poor Oriental Jews still living in the same "temporary" ghettos. They no longer believe the government's promises.

They see that the municipal governments do not want to spend money on the Oriental Jewish ghettos, do not provide them with adequate services, cut back on already existing services.

Oriental Jews were the biggest force

behind the victory of Begin's Likud Party, because the Labor Party had never done anything for them. Now they have turned against Begin too, because nothing has changed for the Oriental Jews.

Ruben. While the Oriental Jews live in terrible slums, the Begin government is building new housing for settlers on the West Bank and provides new housing for immigrants who come from European backgrounds.

The Oriental Jews in the ghettos of Tel Aviv don't want to go to the West Bank. They want new apartments built in their neighborhoods in Tel Aviv.

Q. Has there been a change in the attitude of Oriental Jews toward the Arabs?

Asaf. Among Oriental Jews there is a growing reconsideration of what actually happened to them in the Arab countries they came from. Under pressure from Zionist propaganda, they used to maintain that they suffered severe discrimination in the Arab world, just like the European Jews in Germany.

Now you increasingly hear Oriental Jews say that things are worse for them in Israel than they were in the Arab world. This is quite widespread.

This division between Oriental and European Jews is a time bomb. The Oriental Jews speak Arabic, they listen to Arabic music. As we said, they are beginning to reconsider their experiences in the Arab countries.

They feel more at home with the Arabs than with the European Jews. They live in ghettos where everyone speaks Arabic, so even later generations of their children speak Arabic as their mother tongue. On the job they speak Arabic with the Palestinian workers.

One interesting sidelight is the expansion of Oriental culture and music. This parallels a breakdown in the "official" Israeli culture, which was based on a militarized version of Western Jewish culture—militarized in the sense of being largely concerned with extremely nationalistic and chauvinistic topics. You could call it fanatic Zionist music.

Today, people don't want to hear all these war songs. They're tired of the old "heroic" nationalist themes, and this has made it possible for Oriental Jewish music and musical groups to gain in popularity.

Ruben. People outside Israel perhaps don't realize that in addition to the big Oriental ghettos in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem, the Oriental Jews are heavily concentrated in the border cities.

These are towns of 20,000-30,000, almost exclusively populated by Oriental Jews, with little connection to the cultural life of the country, no movie theaters, and so on. People have nothing to do after work but walk around the streets.

Many Oriental Jews were sent to those

towns when they first came to Israel. The government gave incentives to manufacturers to set up factories in those towns. But with the severe economic crisis these factories have been especially hard hit and many are closing, throwing the Oriental Jews out of work. Many have the feeling that the Israeli bourgeoisie sent them off to all corners of the country, and then as soon as there are economic problems they are left to their own devices without jobs, without anything.

Q. What do people think of the policy of establishing new Israeli settlements on the West Bank?

Asaf. It is very common for Jewish workers to oppose the settlements. People say that we are paying for a nice second apartment for these "settlers," because when most of them "settle" on the West Bank they also keep their apartments in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv.

The settlements are not economically viable. They are a political move by the government. And people often say: "We'll have to pay for these settlements twice. Once when we build them, and once when we have to dismantle them."

In the meantime, there is an acute housing shortage in Israel. People want to see the resources put to use in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv or Haifa or wherever.

Ruben. The reaction of Israelis to the shooting of the Kiryat Arba settlers in Hebron was interesting. The government put forward the line that the people who were shot were simply Jews, that it could have been you or me.

But the population increasingly feels that the settlers are the cause of the problem, that they wouldn't get shot if they didn't go to the West Bank, that they brought it on themselves.

Asaf. It was widely known that the

American immigrant who was shot in Hebron had a whole history as an extreme rightist, that he had been an eager participant in the Vietnam War and had come to Israel after the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, looking for another oppressed people to fight. People knew that two weeks before he was shot he had been smashing car windows of Palestinians in Ramallah. He was not seen as a hero or a martyr.

That's why no representative of the Labor Party attended his funeral. While some newspapers criticized the Labor Party for that, the majority of Israelis did not.

It's not that the Labor Party is against the settlements on the West Bank. In fact, the Labor Party itself set up Kiryat Arba ten years ago.

Q. Do Israelis have the same view toward the government's policy of establishing a greater Jewish presence in the Galilee?

Asaf. No. The question of settlements in the Galilee, or "Judaization" of the Galilee as it is called, is still seen as legitimate by most Jewish workers and youth. In fact, they feel that because the government spends so much on the West Bank it doesn't devote enough to Galilee.

Many people would go there to live because of the extreme housing shortage. They don't yet see it as something aimed against the Arab majority of the region. Rather they view it as part of the effort to develop "our country."

I think, however, that as the Arab resistance to the "Judaization" program grows, the attitude of Israelis will change. People will feel, yes, we need housing, but we cannot do it on their land because in the long run it simply won't work. It would mean that someday we'll have to fight the Arabs in Galilee, and we don't want to do that.



Oriental Jewish ghetto in Tel Aviv. While Oriental Jews live in terrible slums, Begin government builds new housing for West Bank settlers.

Q. Do you see a change in the attitude of most Israelis toward Arabs?

Asaf. I think that as part of the general breakdown of the Zionist conception of Israel, the violent feeling against Arabs is neutralizing. It's not so easy today, for example, to organize a pogrom against Arabs after fedayeen have planted a bomb in a supermarket or something. With all the news of the new settlements being established on the West Bank, there is more understanding of why the Palestinians are fighting.

Q. Is there a difference in the attitude of Jews toward the Arabs on the West Bank and those inside the 1967 borders of Israel?

Ruben. Not so much anymore. People are coming to realize that there is no basic difference between the Arabs on the West Bank and what used to be called "our Arabs."

Asaf. I'm not sure that's true. Israelis generally have more contact with the Palestinians within the 1967 borders. Those Arabs speak better Hebrew, they are Israeli citizens, and they have been working alongside Jews for a long time.

By contrast, the Israelis view the West Bank Arabs, even if they've worked within Israel for more than a decade, as temporary. Even though they have been under Israeli occupation for thirteen years, most Israelis feel that there will eventually be an end to the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and then those Arabs won't be with us any longer.

But it is true that because the Arabs on the West Bank and within Israel are drawing closer together and are increasingly identifying themselves as a single people, the Jews are beginning to make less of a distinction between the two.

The resurgence of struggle on the West Bank that we have seen this year has certainly penetrated into the Arab villages in Israel. You can feel it. There is a greater sense of confidence and identity with the struggle, a sense that they are the same people and are part of the same struggle.

Ruben. One very important aspect of the resurgence of struggle on the West Bank is the impact it is having on the Israeli occupation troops. Between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip there are more than 1 million people under Israeli rule who cannot in any way be reconciled to accept foreign domination from Israel.

This fact is now absolutely clear to everyone. The severe repression against the Arabs on the West Bank and in Israel—with the house arrests, the deportations of mayors, and so on—cannot silence the Palestinians. Even Begin understands this.

What we are seeing now, and what we will see more in the future, is that Israeli youth in the army are being sent to the West Bank to carry out massive repression



"Israeli youth in the army are being sent to the West Bank to carry out massive repression."

against the population. Participation in that repression affects consciousness more than reading a thousand pamphlets. It runs totally counter to the Zionist propaganda about the character of Israel.

Immigrants don't come to Israel from all over the world with the aim of serving as occupation troops. Young Israelis don't go into the army to serve as occupiers of another people. But that is what they are being forced to do! And being an occupation force has its own logic, a terrible and barbaric logic.

People are shocked at what eighteen- and nineteen-year-old draftees are ordered to do to put down Palestinian protests. Israelis didn't believe that their country would do such things to a civilian population.

There have recently been cases of groups of soldiers going to parliament or to newspapers to expose the kind of orders they have received.

There was also the dramatic case of what has come to be known as "The Twenty-Seven." Before induction into the army, twenty-seven young men declared that they would refuse to serve as occupation troops on the West Bank. And some of them are, in fact, now in military prisons for refusing orders.

Right now there is no widespread movement of refusal to serve in the West Bank. Refusal indicates that you clearly understand the struggle of the Palestinians and identify with it. If there were massive refusals, it would mean, I think, that Israel was on the brink of a prerevolutionary situation, which is certainly not the case.

But the experiences that people go through in the occupation are spreading throughout the army and into the heart of the working class as well, because the army is so pervasive in society, with everyone doing reserve duty until they are forty-five.

Q. How do you approach the Palestinian struggle with your Jewish co-workers?

Asaf. As the conditions of Jewish workers have gotten worse, we have found that there is a change in the way we can

approach the question of the Palestinians. We used to center our argument on the fact that the Palestinians are suffering injustice at our hands, that we are oppressing them.

Today, because of the sense of crisis that we mentioned, we can approach the Jewish workers from another angle. We start by saying, "Look, we all know that things are terribly wrong. We all understand that something has to change. What kind of future can we have if things go on like this, if we continue to support the Zionist parties, the Labor and Likud parties, that got us into this situation."

We explain to the workers and youth that if we continue to view the Arabs as before, that means eternal war against them, which won't solve a thing. What we need is a fundamental change.

We explain that Jewish workers have been looking at the question in the wrong way, seeing the question as "how can we, the Jews, deal with them, the Arabs." We try to explain that there are two peoples living in one country—what was once called Palestine and is today called Israel—and that what is needed to fundamentally solve the problem is to create a Palestinian state in which Jews and Arabs can live together.

We argue that the Arabs have similar problems to those faced by the Jewish workers, and that we must join together with them to fight to bring about a revolutionary change within this society.

At this point our proposal on how to solve the problem is not a big topic of conversation among Israeli youth and workers, or among most of the Palestinian movement. There is no big discussion about how to bring about a Palestinian state of Arabs and Jews.

But we can and do raise this proposal and have discussions about it. We can get a hearing for our explanation of what the Palestinians are fighting for and why justice is on their side.

We counterpose our proposal on solving the problem to the proposals made by the left-wing and right-wing Zionists. The left-wing Zionists—the Sheli Party, a small Zionist group with two members of parlia-

ment, and some members of the Labor Party—argue that we must “pacify” the Palestinians by finding moderate elements in the PLO and dealing with them in order to isolate the “extremists.”

The right-wing Zionists—the Likud and most of the Labor Party—say that no part of the PLO can be part of the process of pacifying the Palestinians.

But we reject the whole framework of a discussion about how best to “pacify” the Palestinians. We, as revolutionists and young workers, don’t believe that the Palestinians can be or should be “pacified.” For twenty years the Palestinians were “pacified” by the heavy defeats they suffered. What did that solve?

We tell our co-workers that the Palestinian revolt is a positive thing and that we should look for ways to link up with it and channel this tremendous force to rebuild this rotten society anew.

The real discussion, we point out, is not between left and right Zionists. It is between what *all* the Zionists propose and what we propose. The real discussion must be over how to bring about a radical change for Arabs and Jews, how to focus the political forces that can accomplish the needed changes in Israel.

Ruben. I want to emphasize something that was said earlier. At this stage in the discussion you cannot make *any* proposal about achieving peace with the Arabs that would seem credible to the Israeli masses. That prospect is not yet seen as real.

What we are talking about is raising these positions and arguing for them. We are not at the point yet where masses of Israelis will be won to them. But at least some are beginning to consider them.

In a nutshell, what we are saying to Jewish workers is that they have big problems, and the Palestinian masses have big problems, and that both those problems stem from the same source, the capitalist and Zionist character of the Israeli state. We should join our forces to change that.

Q. What is the main thrust of the Communist Party’s activity?

Asaf. The Communist Party is a strong force among the Arabs within Israel. They have a very small base among Jews.

The main work of the CP at this time is a big propaganda campaign about the danger of fascism in Israel, warning that fascism is just around the corner.

This campaign is directed primarily at the liberal milieu—liberal politicians, the more “dovish” Zionists, even within the Labor and Likud parties.

While it is simply not true that fascism is just around the corner, the CP does point to a very real development, the rise of aggressive right-wing groups that have a real base and support among sectors of the Likud Party. These rightists have their main base among the settlers on the West Bank who are subsidized by the govern-

ment, carry guns, and act as a semiofficial army there.

I was recently at a meeting where a leader of the CP spoke about the danger of fascism. Coincidentally, the very next day the CP distributed a workers’ supplement to their paper at the plant where I work. But there was not a single word in that supplement about fascism. It simply dealt with economic issues.

So either the CP doesn’t really believe that fascism is around the corner, or it doesn’t think the workers can do anything about it. The whole thrust of their antifascist campaign is not toward the workers, but toward the liberal political sectors.

Q. Has the CP’s base among Arabs been undercut by the rise of the Palestinian struggle on the West Bank?

Asaf. It’s hard to say. What is clear, however, is that they were forced to take some initiatives that went beyond what they would have normally done. There was some increase in CP activity under this pressure, especially under the pressure of more radical currents in the Arab villages, such as the Sons of the Village, which have grown.

But since there is no organized alternative that clearly points to a different perspective in the Arab villages, there is no mass opposition to or break with the CP. That won’t happen until a leadership develops that has the authority to show a different road for the Palestinian struggle.

Q. Does the CP focus on improving conditions for Arabs within the context of maintaining the Zionist state?

Asaf. Yes, but they don’t talk about it that way. They argue that Israel need not be a Zionist state, that it could be a state for all its inhabitants, and that there could also be a Palestinian state on the West Bank.

And they do lead fights for more rights for the Arab population and against discrimination.

We, of course, support those concrete demands. The problem with the CP’s outlook is not that it raises partial demands



Palestinians on West Bank.

for an improvement in the conditions of Arabs. The problem is that it doesn’t point out a way to really fight for these demands.

Instead of starting with the Jewish workers’ attitude toward the West Bank settlements and trying to use it to explain the Palestinian struggle to them, the CP ignores the Jewish workers as a political force, writes them off as hopeless.

The truth is that the Palestinian masses don’t feel that fascism is around the corner. They feel stronger than before. But the confusion that the CP sows, the misorientation regarding the potential of the Jewish workers, is an obstacle toward the development of an orientation that can overcome the problems in the attitudes of the Jewish workers.

Q. One final question. What is the attitude of immigrants from the Soviet Union in Israel?

Ruben. The attitude is quite mixed, depending on their social status in the Soviet Union, where they came from, and what their concrete experiences were.

We must remember that the Soviet Union is a contradictory society. It is a workers state, with all the social gains that that implies. But politically it is a totalitarian regime.

In the mid-1970s many of the Soviet immigrants were from the better-off layers—doctors, scientists, and so on. They were quite privileged when they got to Israel and were strong supporters of the Zionist state.

Today you are getting more workers. And many of them say that the Soviet Union was much better for them than Israel, and that they made a big mistake in leaving. If it were possible to go back, a great many of them would.

Asaf. We talk to many of these workers in Israel. They all maintain that the standard of living of workers in the Soviet Union is unquestionably higher than in Israel. All of them agree that on a material basis, life in the Soviet Union is better—in terms of education, healthcare, access to culture and sports, vacations, and so on.

On the other hand, as *Ruben* said, the Soviet Union is a contradictory phenomenon. Because of the absence of political rights, it is hard for many of the immigrants to say that Soviet society is better than capitalist society. Some may have had family members in prisons, and so on. Often their experience with the Soviet Union and Israel leads them to say, “Israel is not so good, but the Soviet Union is even worse.”

If there was a successful struggle against bureaucratic rule in the Soviet Union or some other Eastern European country, with the institution of real workers democracy, that would have a big impact on these workers in Israel, and of course on the other workers as well. □