

# Intercontinental Press

combined with **IMPREGOR**

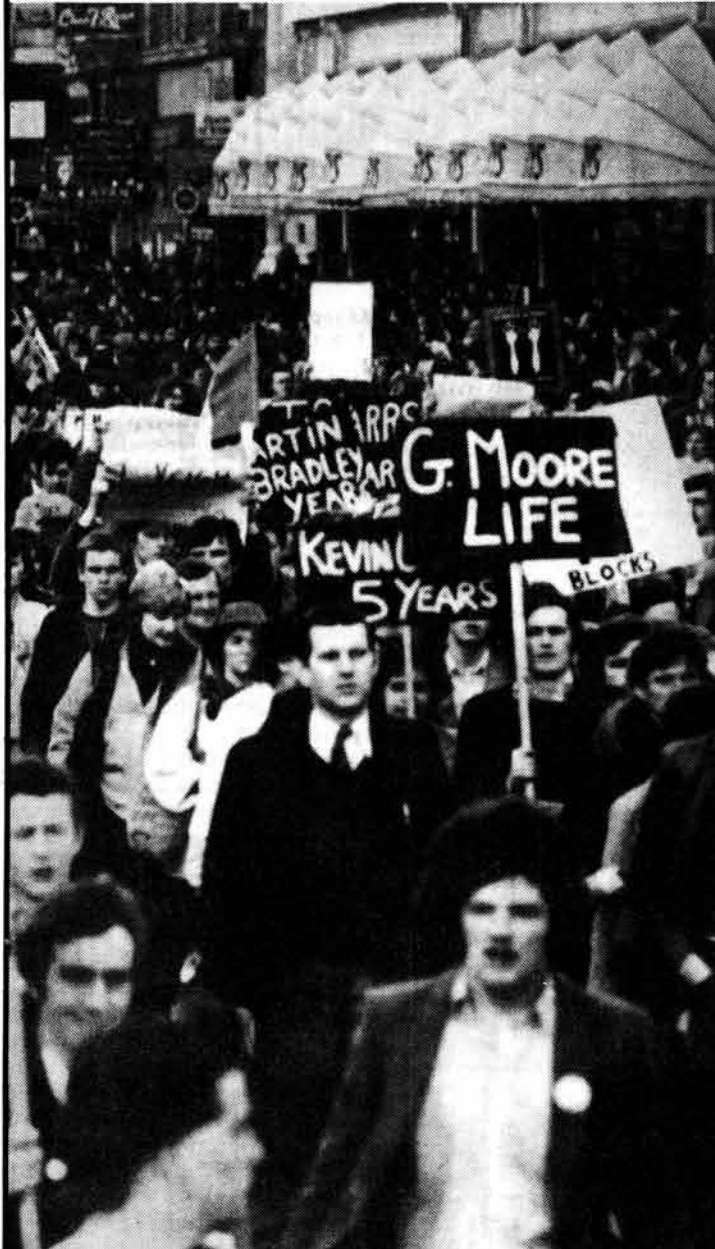
Vol. 18, No. 47

December 15, 1980

USA \$1

UK 40p

## **Save Lives of Irish Political Prisoners! H-Block Hunger Strike Enters Seventh Week**



An Phoblacht/Republican News

November 22 demonstration in Dublin supports demands of H-Block hunger strikers.

**Murder of Four American Women  
Puts Carter on the Spot**

## **Washington Suspends Aid to Salvadoran Junta**

**SPECIAL FEATURE:  
State Department  
Document Reveals  
Carter's Secret War  
in Central America**

**As Workers Movement Advances**

## **Moscow Threatens Polish Invasion**

# NEWS ANALYSIS

## Events in Poland and the Threat From Moscow

By Gerry Foley

A decisive confrontation is looming in Poland. The totalitarian rule of the privileged, petty-bourgeois bureaucracy is crumbling. The question of who is to hold power in society—the working class or the bureaucracy—is rapidly coming to the fore.

What happens when the Stalinist system of rule breaks down is by now quite well known to all the forces that have interests at stake in the Polish crisis.

In the last two decades, this process has been seen several times. In one case—Hungary in 1956—it went as far as the destruction of the entire apparatus of bureaucratic rule, which had to be restored by a massive, bloody Soviet invasion and occupation.

The advance of the present Polish crisis and the response by the Kremlin should by this time have eliminated illusions that there has been any basic change in the terms of the problem since Hungary in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The fundamental fact is that the privileged bureaucratic castes that run Poland, as well as the Soviet Union and the other East European countries, can survive only by depriving the workers of all rights to express themselves and to organize themselves.

### Fragility of Bureaucratic Rule

Since the Stalinist bureaucracy is a parasitic formation that impedes the economic and social development of the workers state, and since it does not have the historical and social roots that a ruling class has, its rule is fragile. Once the workers begin to feel their own power and assert their right to control society, the bureaucratic caste crumbles rapidly. It can be propped up under such circumstances only by an outside force.

For the Stalinist rulers in the Soviet Union, however, the survival of bureaucratic rule in Eastern Europe is a life or death question. It would only be a short time before the Soviet workers would be inspired to follow the example of their sisters and brothers in Eastern Europe if workers democracy were to be established in any country there.

Because of this, there is hardly any price the Kremlin will not pay to shore up bureaucratic rule when it begins to crumble in the East European countries.

While the imperialist powers masquerade as defenders of democratic rights in the bureaucratized workers states, they too are deadly opponents of any antibureaucratic revolution by the workers. Such a

revolution and the establishment of workers democracy in Eastern Europe would serve as a beacon for the workers in the imperialist centers as well as for the workers of the Soviet Union.

In the present crisis the U.S. government has threatened reprisals against Moscow if it occupies Poland. Washington has warned that a Soviet invasion would endanger détente and East-West trade.

This diplomatic stance is not a sign of support for the aspirations of the Polish working class. It is merely a convenient propaganda point that the imperialists are using as part of their militarization drive. They are playing up Moscow's threats against Poland to portray the Soviet Union as an aggressive power and to argue in favor of bigger arms expenditures.

The American rulers are also trying to take advantage of the exposure of bureaucratic dictatorship and Kremlin overlordship in Poland to divert attention from their own trampling on the national rights of peoples under their domination, such as the people of El Salvador.

### Brzezinski Tells Workers to 'Cool It'

In this respect, the Soviet threats against Poland provide a welcome cover for the U.S. intervention in Central America, just as the Soviet invasion of Hungary did in 1956 for the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt.

Washington's attitude toward the struggle in Poland was illustrated December 4 when Zbigniew Brzezinski, one of the most hawkish U.S. policymakers, called on the Polish workers to display "compromise, restraint and moderation."

According to Lars-Erik Nelson, writing in the New York *Daily News*, Brzezinski "conceded that his message amounted to an appeal to Polish workers to 'cool it,' and said it was dictated by 'objective historic and geographic realities.'"

The capitalist media is even less bashful about urging the Polish workers to "cool it." One of *Time* magazine's December 8 headlines on Poland was "Strike-happy unions continue their risky game with Moscow."

*Time* quoted one "worried East bloc specialist" who said of the workers' demands against abuses by the secret police: "This is absolute foolhardiness."

### Who Represents Socialism?

Denunciations of the Polish workers by the Soviet bureaucrats and their allies in Eastern Europe center on charges that the

workers are controlled by "antisocialist elements" plotting to restore capitalism. The Czech government paper charged that "counterrevolutionaries" are carrying out an "insidious plan—to set in motion and strengthen antisocialist aggressive trade unionism."

Such charges ooze contempt for working people. The bureaucrats claim that only they—with their fancy cars, villas, servants, and slush funds—represent "socialism." The workers become "counterrevolutionary" as soon as they speak their own minds.

The opposite is the case, however.

The Polish workers have no desire to restore capitalism. They know that the expropriation of the capitalists and the establishment of a planned economy in Poland in the late 1940s represented a great advance for them. They want to build on the progress that the establishment of a workers state in Poland made possible. But bureaucratic rule in Poland has blocked the way to further advances toward socialism.

The demands of the Polish workers—for improved wages and working conditions, for giving priority to the needs of workers and farmers in economic planning, and for abolition of bureaucratic privilege and misrule—run against the grain of capitalism.

### Moscow Prepares Invasion

It is obvious from the statements of U.S. government officials that they expect and hope that either there will be a successful Soviet invasion of Poland or that the workers movement will be beaten back by various bureaucratic maneuvers, reinforced by Soviet intimidation.

There is no doubt that the Soviet bureaucrats are preparing for an invasion of Poland. They must have been doing that from the time it became clear how powerful the workers movement was, from some time in August at least.

But the way in which the Polish workers movement responds to the present escalation of threats will weigh heavily on Moscow's scales. It is hardly an accident, for example, that the step-up in Soviet threats comes at the time of a tense plenum of the Polish CP Central Committee. The Polish CP leadership also obviously used the Soviet menace to try to stiffen the resistance of the bureaucracy to the pressure of the workers movement and to intimidate the workers.

That is the explanation for Central Committee spokesman Jozef Klasa's statement that the government might invite the Soviets in if things got out of hand. Remarks of this type are not the way to win popularity or convince the Polish workers that the government has changed its spots.

The pattern of the Kremlin's response to threats to bureaucratic rule has been shown by the Hungarian and Polish

events in 1956 and the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

### Examples of Hungary and Czechoslovakia

The Hungarian CP lost its grip on the society. The masses began to organize. The Kremlin launched a war against the Hungarian workers councils. Hungary is a small country. The Soviet bureaucracy knew that it could bring overwhelming force to bear. So, it moved quickly before the Hungarians could build up their organization and leadership. The Hungarians were defeated after a strong fight.

But even though the Soviets were able to militarily subdue the Hungarians, they felt it necessary to make large economic and political concessions. As a result, Hungary still enjoys one of the highest living standards in the Soviet bloc and, except for the case of Poland after the victories won by the recent mass struggles, the freest atmosphere.

At about the same time they intervened in Hungary, the Kremlin started preparing for an intervention in Poland, where there was also an antibureaucratic upsurge. But it did not send in its armies.

There were two differences in the Polish case. A reform CP leadership was able to maintain political leadership of the masses. So, intervention was not immediately a life or death matter for the survival of the bureaucratic rule. Second, the Polish reformers began to arm the workers. So, the Kremlin knew that it would face a fight if it went in. It backed off.

In important respects, the antibureaucratic upsurge in Czechoslovakia in 1968 had not gone as far as the 1956 Polish October. The reform CP leadership was only beginning to lose control. But the Kremlin knew that it had no stomach for armed resistance. So, Moscow apparently decided that the lesser risk was immediate military occupation of the country.

### Moscow Probes for Openings

In Poland today, the Stalinist bureaucrats are probing for possible lines of cleavage in the workers movement. That is shown by a guest column in the November 29 *New York Times* by Daniel Passent, a journalist for *Polityka*, one of the slickest of the bureaucracy's publications. He refers to all sorts of people resigning from Solidarity because of the "radicalization and politicization" of the independent union confederation.

The claims of the Western press that the Solidarity leaders have been intimidated by the Soviet threats because they are calling on the workers to avoid confrontations now have to be seen in the context of a situation where it is vital to maintain unity and not give the bureaucracy any pretext for attacking the movement.

Whether or not the Solidarity leaders are intimidated will be shown by whether they flinch from doing what is necessary to

defend and advance the independent organization of the workers. So far they have obviously not done that. And it is this

work that will determine the outcome of the decisive confrontation that is coming. □

## In This Issue

Closing News Date: December 8, 1980

IRELAND	1300	Women in Armagh Jail—"Fighters for Their People"—by Gerry Foley
	1301	Save the Lives of the Irish Prisoners!
PERU	1303	Left Makes Big Gains in Municipal Elections
EL SALVADOR	1304	Washington Forced to Suspend Aid to Salvadoran Junta—by Fred Murphy
	1306	"Dissent Paper" Reveals U.S. War Plans —by David Frankel
NICARAGUA	1318	Ties Between Capitalists and Somozaist Gangs Revealed—by Fred Murphy
COLOMBIA	1319	Turbay Extends Rural Terror —by Socorro Ramirez
	1319	Demand Release of Colombian Socialists
GUATEMALA	1320	Indians Joining Guerrilla Struggle —by Anibal Yáñez
ITALY	1322	Communist Party Takes Part in Trotsky Symposium
URUGUAY	1325	Referendum Rejects Military Rule
USA	1327	All Charges Against Klan-Nazi Killers Dropped —by Steve Craine and Greg McCartan
HAITI	1328	Duvalier Arrests Hundreds—by Ernest Harsch
STATEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL	1303	Meet Demands of the Irish Hunger Strikers!
DOCUMENTS	1308	Washington's Secret War in Central America
	1323	The Role of Religion in the New Nicaragua
	1326	Debate in Poland
NEWS ANALYSIS	1298	The Events in Poland and the Threat From Moscow—by Gerry Foley

Intercontinental Press (ISSN 0162-5594). Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Published in New York each Monday except the first in January and the third and fourth in August.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

Editor: Mary-Alice Waters.  
Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: Steve Clark.  
Editorial Staff: Gerry Foley, David Frankel, Ernest Harsch, Janice Lynn, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.

Business Manager: Sandi Sherman  
Copy Editor: David Martin.

Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, Black, and women's liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned

material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

**To Subscribe:** For one-year subscriptions in the U.S. or Canada send \$35.00 (41.00 Canadian dollars) to Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Write for rates for first class and airmail.

For air-speeded subscriptions to Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box K208, Haymarket 2000. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 3774, Auckland.

For airmail subscriptions to Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe send \$50 for one year; \$25 for six months. Write for subscription rates to all other countries.

Subscription correspondence should be addressed to Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.



## Women in Armagh Jail—'Fighters for Their People'

By Gerry Foley

On December 1, three of the women political prisoners being held in Northern Ireland's Armagh jail went on a hunger strike. Their protest parallels the one begun October 27 by seven of the male political prisoners held in Long Kesh concentration camp.

In announcing their action, the women said: "We have reached this decision after several years of cruel and inhuman treatment. We are prepared to fast to the death if necessary."

The three women—Máiréad Farrell, Máiréad Nugent, and Mary Doyle—are all in their twenties. Like the men in Long Kesh, they were chosen from among volunteers by their fellow prisoners to begin the hunger strike.

The British authorities have been trying to force all political prisoners arrested in Northern Ireland since March 1976 to accept criminal status.

Before the start of the Armagh hunger strike, Rose McAllister, a recently released political prisoner from Northern Ireland, toured several cities in the United States.

I talked to her in New York on November 28 before the Armagh women announced their decision.

### Arrested on a Demonstration

Rose McAllister is a West Belfast woman in her forties, the mother of four children. I asked her how she had come to be a prisoner in Armagh jail. She said:

"I was arrested in 1971 on a political demonstration. Thirty-eight other women were arrested along with me. We were protesting against a law rushed through the British Parliament that made it illegal to wear a combat jacket and carry a hurling stick. That was supposed to be an 'illegal uniform' It was blatant discrimination against the nationalist population, since hurling is a nationalist game.

"I and another woman were members of Sinn Féin, the republican party. We refused to recognize the court, since it represented a foreign government. And so we were remanded to Armagh jail.

"My first experience of entering a jail was to be stripped and forcibly bathed, taken across a courtyard with a blanket round me, and given a uniform, put in a cell and then locked up for twenty-four hours.

"We were also isolated. There was a rule that remand prisoners could not speak to sentenced prisoners. So, even though we could all sit together and watch television from 6:00 to 8:00 at night, we could not

speak.

"When we went into the exercise yard, we had to walk in a continual circle, but in the middle, away from the sentenced prisoners.

"Finally, we were sentenced to six months, and forced to do prison work. We were allowed no parcels. There wasn't even a real library in Armagh at the time. Just a collection of romantic novels. There was nothing educational in it. You had a half hour visit once a month, and there was a notice in the visitor's box that no physical contact was allowed between the prisoners and any visitor. I had two small children at the time.

"You had to ask the screws for permission to go to the toilet. They took you to the toilet and then stood there while you went. It was the same thing if you wanted a shower.

"That was what conditions were like then. We were not recognized as political prisoners, even though we had been arrested on a political demonstration."

### Conditions Under Political Status

During 1971, the British army launched a massive campaign of repression in Northern Ireland. Rose recalled:

"I was released from prison in July 1971. In August, when internment was reintro-



H-Block protest in Dublin November 22.

Republican News



duced, my husband, who was a staff captain in the Irish Republican Army, was shot dead."

On August 9, 1971, the British army and proimperialist Protestant police raided the nationalist Catholic ghettos and dragged off about 400 men to be detained without charge or trial. There were massive outbursts of rage in the nationalist areas. The British army responded with a war against the entire population of the Catholic neighborhoods, in Belfast in particular.

In the fall of 1971 any male on the streets of the Catholic neighborhoods after midnight was shot on sight by the British army. Later they began shooting down women too.

In January 1972, thirteen civil rights demonstrators in Derry were shot dead by British paratroopers.

Under the pressure of a growing international outcry, the British government was forced to end internment in the fall of 1972. But the number of political prisoners actually continued to grow. And the British military intimidation of the Catholic neighborhoods increased.

Rose was arrested again in 1974.

"I was taken for interrogation and charged with possession of arms. My son was arrested out of the house with me. He was fourteen at the time."

But after 1972, the British had been forced to grant political status to the nationalist prisoners. Rose recalled:

"It's never easy being in jail. But this time the conditions were entirely different. There was freedom of association among the political prisoners. The women had organized education. Tutors were brought in. The women were taking A level and O level examinations [required for high-school graduation].

"The prisoners were allowed one parcel a week and as many letters as they liked.

"I could see the difference right away in the attitude of the screws to the prisoners. It seemed very strange to me. The women were treated as if they had some rights and human dignity.

"When I was in in 1971 you were totally dominated by the screws. You had to adhere to the prison rules 100 percent. You couldn't deviate in any way. Being put on report to the governor [warden] was very serious."

Rose and her son were acquitted and released. In 1977, she was arrested again on the same charge as in 1974. This time, however, the attention of international public opinion was no longer on Ireland.

#### Prisoners Tortured

With the weakening of the political pressure on them, the British authorities set in motion a system designed to break the resistance by morally and physically destroying the most courageous resisters. Rose described her experience:

"In 1977, they took me out of my house

## Save the Lives of the Irish Prisoners!

The hunger strike of seven Irish political prisoners in Long Kesh concentration camp is entering its seventh week.

For over a month and a half, the hunger strikers have been taking nothing but water and salt. At this point, even if they survive, they are beginning to suffer irreparable damage to vital organs.

The hunger strikers are representatives of an entire oppressed people. For example, one of the men now on the verge of death, Ray McCartney, became involved in the resistance to British military occupation as a boy of fourteen in 1972, when a relative was shot down by paratroopers. They were ordered to open fire on a peaceful demonstration for civil rights.

The facts about the treatment of the prisoners have become generally known in Ireland. They have made it clear to the Irish people that the British government is still determined to break them as a people. That explains the swelling upsurge of support for the prisoners in Ireland—tens of thousands of people on the streets, even in small towns like Coalisland; resolutions by almost every important trade-union body.

Despite a biased campaign that stands out even in the capitalist press and media, the weight of international public opinion

is shifting toward the Irish prisoners.

Support has come from major trade union federations in France, Australia, New Zealand, and even the Fiji Islands. It has spanned the spectrum from anti-bureaucratic fighters in East Europe to the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Spanish and French Communist parties.

In the face of this support, even the flagship of the U.S. imperialist press, the *New York Times*, felt obliged to call on the British in a November 27 editorial to meet the prisoners' main demand—to be allowed to wear their own clothes.

On the basis of the support that has already been demonstrated it is possible now to mount an emergency campaign that can save the lives of the hunger strikers.

Emergency demonstrations and protest meetings should be mounted.

Every prominent individual, every trade union, politician, government body, and political group must be urged to send telegrams to the British government calling on it to meet the prisoners' demands. Telegrams should be sent to Prime Minister Thatcher, 10 Downing Street, London, and copies should be sent to the National H-Block Committee, 30 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1, Ireland.

to Castlereagh interrogation center. I was tortured physically and mentally for three days. They had written out a statement for me saying that I had possession of arms. I refused to sign it.

"But when they saw that beatings were not going to get me to sign it, they threatened my son, who by that time was nineteen. They said that they were going to take him in and torture him in front of me, and then take him out and throw him in a Loyalist area, where he'd be taken by the Loyalists, be tortured again, and then eventually his head would be battered in. So, I signed the statement."

This time, going into Armagh was like going into a medieval dungeon. "The week before, the screws had been giving the prisoners a hard time. They had been interfering with their parcels, and harassing them, and they had even beat up on some of them.

"So, the republican women got fed up and retaliated. There was a riot in B-wing. After that the women were locked up twenty-four hours a day, their parcels were stopped, their visits were stopped.

"I was remanded in custody a week after

the riot. Even though I hadn't been there at the time, just because I was a republican remand prisoner, I was locked up twenty-four hours a day. I hadn't been there at the time of the trouble. It was just because I was a republican.

"The sentenced republican women were on protest. They were refusing to work. For that, they were locked up nineteen and a half hours a day. It was exactly like 1971. You had no parcels. You had only a half hour visit once a month, no recreation, and no educational facilities.

"I was given bail. When I got out I found out that I was pregnant. My husband was arrested in September 1977, but he didn't get bail. The baby was born in January 1978. In May of that year, I was sentenced."

#### Three-Minute Trial

Rose explained:

"I wasn't tried in a normal court, as happens, say, when you've robbed a bank. You're taken to the police station, held in a cell, you're up in court the next day, and charged, and probably given bail.

"But I was taken to a special interroga-

tion center. I was put in a special wing for political remand prisoners. Then I was tried in a special Diplock court, where there was no jury. My trial took about three minutes.

"They claimed that I was a criminal and should be treated like a criminal. But I was only humiliated like a criminal. I didn't get the rights and protection that any ordinary criminal would get."

I asked Rose if all the women in Armagh, were republicans. She said that many of them were just ordinary nonpolitical women picked up in British sweeps of the Catholic neighborhoods.

"Take Pauline McLaughlin. Pauline is twenty-three. She has five years served of a sixteen year sentence. She was held for seven days in the interrogation center in Derry. She was sentenced on the basis of statements she allegedly made and signed.

"Pauline is illiterate. She can only sign her name. She can't read, and she can't write. She was illiterate then, and she's still illiterate. How could she even know what she was signing?"

"Because Pauline was tortured and forced to sign a statement, because she knew that she was going to have to spend most of her life in jail for something she didn't do, she developed a nervous complaint of the stomach. Everything she eats, she vomits up. Even if she takes a drink of water she vomits it up.

"Pauline was a normal healthy woman when she was arrested. Now she's under seventy pounds. Her bones are brittle; her teeth are falling out. The woman is dying. And they won't transfer her to a hospital.

"They take her out for hospitalization every once and a while, and pump her full of vitamins and minerals. Then they bring her back. But it doesn't solve anything; it just prolongs the agony."

Rose told me that she knew that she had to go on protest as soon as she was sentenced because she could not endure the conditions the way they are now. The women on protest, unlike the men in Long Kesh, are allowed to wear their own clothes. But they are harassed in other ways.

"You're also oppressed as a woman. The prison system is totally male dominated.

"The governor of Armagh jail is a very strange man. He's a 'saved Christian.' He thinks that all women are 'unclean' and should be saved from themselves. As he expressed it to me, in 'saving' our 'womanhood,' he was 'cleansing' us. As women we should be rearing a family, taking care of a man, keeping a home, where we should spend all our time. He tries to inculcate in the woman that women should never take part in either a military or a political struggle, women just do not do things like that."

But the warden's concern for "womanhood" did not induce him to have any consideration for the prisoners as women and mothers. In fact, he and the other prison officials only used that as one more way to try to break them.

"It's hard when you have young children and you only get a half hour visit once a month. I had to try to divide up my time between three young children, who were all trying to tell me things, about their schoolwork and so on, and my nineteen-year-old son who had left school to take care of the family. He wanted to talk to me about the problems he was having with the children.

"One of the women had two infants. She'd had one in prison. They took it away from her at sixteen months. The children were coming and calling her by her first name, as if she were a stranger. They were

calling the granny 'mommy.' It hurt the woman an awful lot, and forced her to come off the protest so that she could see her children as often as the common prisoners, once a week."

In the case of babies as well, the political prisoners were treated worse than the common prisoners.

"It was the political women who had their babies taken away. There was a woman who was up on a burglary charge. She kept her baby the whole time. It was released with her."

#### Beatings and Locked Toilets

Then, when the warden failed to break the women by such methods, he resorted to manhandling:

"On February 7, the governor sent thirty-seven male screws in to beat up the women, along with thirty-seven female screws.

"After that we were locked up. We tried to get medical care for three of the women who had been hurt. But they were left lying in their cells.

"We were frightened. Some of the women took their period. I asked the nurse for sanitary napkins. She told me that the governor had ordered her not to give any out.

"The toilets were locked; the washrooms were locked. We were locked up twenty-three and a half hours a day. There was only one chamber pot in a cell for two women.

"We asked the governor what we were supposed to do with our waste. He said: 'Put it on the walls the way the men in Long Kesh do.' That's what we had to do.

"Then after four weeks, he had the windows boarded up. We were moved to a smaller wing. There were more beatings. The food got worse; they started putting



Dublin protest backs hunger strikers.

An Phoblacht/Republican News



dirt in it. The harassment of our visitors increased. Every time we went out for exercise we were beaten and verbally abused.

"We think the governor lost his head. As I said, he is a strange person. Sending male screws in to beat women, putting a women's wing under the complete control of men, who had keys to the cells twenty-four hours a day—all these things were creating an outcry.

"So, the governor offered to negotiate

with us about restoring 'privileges,' that is the right to use the toilets. But we think that this is a right, not a privilege.

"We decided not to negotiate unless he agreed to recognize our human rights, to grant our five demands—free association; the right to education; one letter and one parcel per week, one visit per week; the right not to do prison work; and no additional time on sentences because of the protest.

"So, the women are still sitting in these

filthy cells. They have not had a change of clothes since February. But they will not let themselves be broken.

"We know that the governor thinks that he can break us because we are 'weak women.' But that just makes us fight harder. These women will give up their lives rather than let this warden and his like take their human dignity away from them, their dignity as women and as fighters for their people." □

# Statement of the Fourth International

## Meet Demands of the Irish Hunger Strikers!

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International reaffirms its solidarity with the Irish political prisoners presently held in H-Block of Long Kesh prison (the Maze) and the Armagh Women's prison.

In particular we declare our complete solidarity with those prisoners who have now undertaken a hunger fast "to death," in pursuit of their demands to be treated as political prisoners.

These demands involve: the right of prisoners to wear their own clothes; the right to refrain from prison work; the right to freely associate with each other and to organize their own recreation and education; the right to have full remission of sentence (parole rights); the right to have visitors and receive mail.

The Tory government of Margaret Thatcher has declared that no concessions will be made to the prisoners.

These rights were previously granted to Irish political prisoners in 1972. They were arbitrarily abolished by the British government four years later. The claim of the British that the prisoners concerned are "ordinary criminals" is totally false. The fact that the prisoners are tried before juryless courts is one indication of their exceptional nature.

Furthermore, respected international bodies such as Amnesty International have reported that many of these prisoners were tortured in order to force them to sign "confessions." In 90 percent of cases such "confessions" have been the sole basis on which the prisoners were convicted.

The Irish Republican prisoners are incarcerated for one reason only—the continuing occupation by Britain of the northeast of Ireland. The prison camps erected in Ireland by Britain are a consequence of the resistance to that occupation.

It is now sixty years since British imperialism enforced the partition of Ireland against the wishes of the majority of the Irish people. The creation of the artificial, British-occupied statelet in the six north-

eastern counties of Ireland was an affront to democracy and to the principle of self-determination. In that respect those who continue to resist the partition of Ireland do so in the name of democracy.

The harsh treatment handed out to the Irish republican prisoners has done nothing to curtail that resistance. On the contrary, the hunger strike has already mobilized more people on the streets of Ireland than at any time in the past eight years. As many as 25,000 demonstrated in Belfast on the eve of the Hunger strike and four weeks later, on November 22, a similar number took part in a protest in Dublin.

Against this resistance British imperialism in the North of Ireland now has

"security forces" under its control numbering over 30,000 soldiers and police—to control a population of less than 1.5 million. The British ruling class also has on its side the right-wing, pro-British "Loyalist" gangs who are now threatening to launch a civil war against the republican-minded population of the North of Ireland. In this context an international campaign of solidarity with the anti-imperialist resistance in Ireland is all the more vital. The Fourth International pledges its support for such a solidarity campaign and, in saluting the heroism of the hunger strikers, recognizes that the only lasting solution to the Irish conflict lies in the complete and immediate withdrawal of Britain from Ireland. □

## Left Makes Big Gains in Peru Municipal Elections

Candidates of working-class parties substantially increased their showing in Peru's November 23 municipal elections over left-wing vote totals in the national elections last May. Running in an electoral front called the United Left (IU), they won control of eight departmental capitals, including Arequipa, the country's second largest city.

In Lima, the capital, the candidate of the ruling People's Action (AP) party received the highest vote, with 35 percent of the total. But this was a sharp drop from AP's 45 percent in Lima in the national elections. The IU candidate for mayor of Lima, labor lawyer Alfonso Barrantes, received 27 percent of the vote, up from the 21 percent that left parties had won in May.

In some working-class suburbs and shantytowns around the capital, Barrantes won an absolute majority of the votes cast.

The left's vote totals would have been even higher had it not been for widespread apathy, reflected in an abstention rate of

nearly 50 percent in many areas. As the London-based *Latin American Weekly Report* noted in its November 28 issue, "if the voters' disillusionment had not been exceeded by their apathy, IU would have done even better. The left's tactic of holding mass meetings throughout the country proved highly successful in areas particularly badly hit by unemployment, inflation and public spending cuts. It will continue to pick up support as the government's deflationary policies bite ever deeper."

Perhaps the biggest loser in the elections was the American People's Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), Peru's oldest bourgeois party and the one that had long had the largest mass base. The municipal elections marked a continued decline in APRA's support. The party's mayoral candidate in Lima won only 16 percent of the vote, compared to APRA's 27 percent showing in May.

Throughout the country, in the words of the *Latin American Weekly Report*, APRA's results were "an almost unmitigated disaster." □

# Washington Forced to Suspend Aid to Salvadoran Junta

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Intoxicated by the election of Ronald Reagan to the U.S. presidency, and completely misreading the real mood of the American working class, right-wing terrorists in El Salvador have put the U.S. government on the spot.

Less than a week after assassinating six top leaders of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), the ultraright gorillas, who are closely linked to the official military apparatus, murdered four American women. The victims—three Catholic nuns and a missionary—were on their way to attend the funeral of the slain FDR leaders.

The bodies of Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan were found buried in a common grave near the village of San Juan Nonualco, twenty-five miles east of San Salvador. All had been tortured and shot in the neck.

Ford and Clarke, nuns of the Maryknoll order who had been working for several months with refugees of the Salvadoran province of Chalatenango, were returning from a conference in Nicaragua. They were met at Ilopango International Airport by Kazel and Donovan on the evening of December 2.

That night, the main highway from the airport to the capital was being heavily patrolled by National Guard units. Members of the Canadian delegation to the FDR funeral reported that they last saw the American women when the latter's car has halted at a National Guard roadblock. The roadblock site was not far from the area where the bodies and the burned-out remains of the vehicle were later discovered.

### Buried as 'Unknown Persons'

When the nuns' disappearance became known early on December 3, the U.S. embassy made inquiries to various branches of the Salvadoran military. All denied having any information as to the women's whereabouts.

It soon became known, however, that peasants had discovered the women's bodies along a roadside the night of December 2 and informed the National Guard. With certification from a local official, the women were buried as "unknown persons." This is a common practice when the victims of right-wing death squads are discovered in the Salvadoran countryside.

In an official statement the Maryknoll order declared that the Salvadoran military "was instrumental in the disappearance and deaths of these four women."



Maura Clarke, one of the murdered nuns, had worked for many years in Nicaragua, first in the countryside, and then in a poor Managua suburb known as Open 3 (now Ciudad Sandino). In Open 3 she had led community struggles for electric and water service. After returning to the United States in 1976, Clarke was active in building solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution. Three thousand persons attended a mass in Ciudad Sandino on December 6 to honor Maura Clarke's memory and protest the murder of her and her associates.

In the face of mounting evidence of military complicity in the women's deaths, the U.S. State Department announced December 5 that all military and economic aid to the Salvadoran junta was being suspended, "pending clarification of the circumstances of the killing."

Along with suspension of aid to the junta, the State Department also announced that a special investigative commission would be sent to El Salvador. This was to be headed by Under Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs William Bowdler, and William D. Rogers, who served as assistant secretary for Inter-American Affairs in the Ford administration.

The bipartisan makeup of the diplomatic mission and the involvement of Bowdler, the Carter administration's top troubleshooter for Central America, indicated that considerably more might be involved than just establishing responsibility for

the murder of four American women. Washington is deeply concerned about the stability of the Salvadoran junta itself.

### Junta Disintegrating?

The junta's situation has become increasingly precarious in recent weeks. Military offensives in the countryside against the armed revolutionary forces—now united in the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN)—have failed to achieve their objectives. Demoralization and desertions from the army have mounted.

The Christian Democratic members of the junta began calling for a "dialogue" with the Revolutionary Democratic Front in mid-November. Meanwhile, extreme right-wing sectors of the officer corps—buoyed by Reagan's election—began pressing for the ouster of the Christian Democrats.

With the November 27 murders of the FDR leaders, the situation grew worse. Junta member Col. Adolfo Majano, a "liberal" officer who had been the special target of the extreme right-wing, abruptly left the country.

Soon thereafter, the Christian Democratic leader José Napoleón Duarte turned up in Washington for meetings with Carter and with aides of President-elect Reagan. According to U.S. government sources quoted in wire service dispatches here, Duarte's aim was to "warn at the highest level of the danger presented by the rapid deterioration of the Salvadoran situation." (*Barricada*, December 3)

Meanwhile, Salvadoran Foreign Minister Fidel Chavez Mena, also a Christian Democrat, traveled to Panama. Majano was already there as a guest of General Omar Torrijos. According to Panamanian government sources, Chavez Mena said the Christian Democrats had given the Salvadoran military forty-eight hours to decide whether they wanted a "political" or a "military" solution to the country's crisis.

Before returning to El Salvador December 6, Col. Majano acknowledged to newsmen that "the violence has placed the junta of government at its lowest level of credibility both domestically and internationally."

Majano called on the Salvadoran officer corps to "insist on a political outcome with the participation of *all* the living and democratic forces of the country."

Majano and the two Christian Democratic representatives Duarte and Morales Ehrlich make up a majority of the govern-



ment junta. The fact that they had to run to Washington and Panama to seek support for their "political solution" rather than simply implement it shows once and for all that it is not the junta that rules El Salvador, but the military high command.

[After this article was written, it was reported that Majano was ousted from the Salvadoran government by a vote of the army commanders. According to a dispatch in the December 8 *New York Times*, the vote against Majano was 300 to 4. Duarte predicted: "There will be many changes in the Government within the next few days."—IP]

And it is also the military officers who control the death squads and paramilitary gangs that murdered the leaders of the FDR and the four American women. Washington could condone—and they even have ordered—the FDR murders, but the political uproar in the United States and abroad would be far too damaging if it failed to at least appear to be taking some vigorous action against the killers of three U.S. nuns and a missionary.

#### Policy Dispute in Washington

Even before the murder of the four American women, there was great pressure on Washington to make at least some cosmetic changes in its approach to El Salvador. The Christian Democrats' call for a "dialogue" may have been worked out with U.S. officials with these pressures in mind.

On December 3 the Mexico City daily *Excelsior* published excerpts from a confidential document drawn up by dissident analysts from the State Department, the CIA, and other U.S. agencies. The document, dated November 6, warned of the Carter administration's inclination to "intervene militarily in El Salvador to prevent the collapse of the current regime." (See the following articles.)

"Current policy," the analysts said, "underestimates the domestic legitimacy and international support enjoyed by the opposition FDR/DRU coalition. Furthermore, policy makers fail to recognize the scope of military capabilities of opposition guerrilla forces and ignore the logistical value and potential impact of their support in neighboring countries."

The analysts called for opening direct talks with the FDR and the guerrillas in hopes of receiving what they termed "a Zimbabwe-style solution." Even before the murders of most members of the executive committee, the FDR had flatly rejected the call for "dialogue" by junta members.

In their November 27 statement on the FDR murders, the FMLN Directorate said that while "the armed forces and their paramilitary groups have stepped up their massacres," the junta was "trying to cover up these fascist outrages . . . by insistently proclaiming its support for 'peace' and 'dialogue'."

"Peace can only be achieved by over-

throwing this genocidal regime," the FMLN declared.

"The only alternative for solving the national crisis is the installation of the revolutionary democratic government made up of and supported by the working class of the city and countryside, the middle layers, patriotic elements and groupings in the army, Catholic and Protestant religious figures committed to the people, and sectors of private enterprise that are willing to contribute to the reconstruction of the country and the reorganization of the society to make it justly and durably peaceful. . . ."

The FMLN indicated what kind of dialogue it was interested in: "we are open and fully prepared to hear the opinions of all persons, organizations, or institutions that seek to achieve this goal of freedom, peace, independence, and social justice, even if they are not affiliated to the FMLN

or the FDR. We respect their ideas and opinions. The political conduct of the revolutionary democratic government will seek to represent the synthesis of the various to represent the synthesis of the various ideas, opinions, and interests of the progressive forces and will respect them all."

The FMLN statement closed by issuing "our general order for the revolutionary militants and our call to the Salvadoran people: everyone prepare for the decisive battle."

On December 4 the FMLN announced the imminence of "large-scale blows that will show the genocidal military Christian Democratic junta the people's determination to overthrow it in a very short period of time." The FMLN said that these actions would "place the revolutionary movement in a state of high combativity that will indicate clearly which way the balance of forces leans in our country." □

### 'The People Will Avenge Their Martyrs!'

MANAGUA—Juan Chacón, Enrique Álvarez Córdova, Manuel Franco, Enrique Barrera Escobar, Humberto Mendoza, and Doroteo Hernández were buried in the crypt of the San Salvador cathedral on December 3.

The six leaders of the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador slain by a paramilitary death squad on November 27, were laid to rest alongside the grave of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. Romero was the victim of a right-wing assassin last March.

In the days preceding the funeral, more than 100,000 persons had filed past the caskets of the FDR leaders inside the cathedral. Some 7,000 persons attended the funeral itself—the FDR had decided not to encourage a massive gathering because they feared a provocation by the military.

On the day of the funeral, the cathedral was surrounded by troops and armored vehicles. The Israeli-made jets of the Salvadoran airforce buzzed the crowd of mourners during the service.

The funeral mass was conducted on the steps of the cathedral by Catholic priests who are leaders of the Coordinating Committee of the People's Church in El Salvador. (Acting-Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas refused to attend the funeral, complaining that the cathedral had been "occupied" by political activists. However, in a December 7 statement on the murder of three nuns and a Catholic missionary, Rivera y Damas declared: "We blame the persecution of the church and specifically the assassinations of priests as well as of church agents on the security forces and

ultrarightist gangs, and consequently we blame the governing junta.")

Father David Garate pronounced the funeral sermon. He called for "destroying this rotten system to the roots" and building "a new society."

Speaking for all the international delegations at the funeral a U.S. priest named Father Hilborne denounced "the U.S. military and economic intervention which backs up the genocidal junta and the oligarchy."

Rev. Greg Chisholm, representing the Canadian Interchurch Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, said he was there "to express our solidarity because of the genocide by this Government against its own people." Chants continuously rang out, condemning the junta and the armed forces.

Most of the people gathered in the Cathedral were from the poor neighborhoods of San Salvador, wearing worn clothes and many of them bare-foot. Their spirits were high, however, as they shouted, "The people will avenge their martyrs!"

The funeral coincided with a widespread strike by industrial workers in San Salvador on December 3 and 4. Some 30,000 workers in 160 enterprises struck to protest government complicity in the murders of the FDR leaders.

Strikes were called by the newly formed Trade Union Unity Committee (CUS). The CUS represents an important step toward uniting the main union federations of El Salvador. It includes the FSR, FENAS-TRAS, and FUS, as well as six smaller union organizations. —Fred Murphy

## El Salvador 'Dissent Paper' Reveals U.S. War Plans

By David Frankel

Secret moves by the U.S. government, carried out behind the backs of the American people and without the slightest public debate, have brought the United States to the brink of a new Vietnam.

No other conclusion is possible after reading the "Dissent Paper on El Salvador and Central America" that we are reprinting in this issue of *Intercontinental Press*.

Dated November 6, this document presents the views of a minority on the U.S. government's El Salvador/Central American Task Force. It was written in consultation with unnamed "current and former analysts and officials" at the National Security Council, State Department, Pentagon, and CIA.

"Members of Congress and their staffs . . . also participated in this effort," the document reports.

### Intervention Plans in Motion

Washington has already laid the groundwork for massive U.S. military intervention in El Salvador. The Carter administration has already decided that if it cannot stabilize the Salvadoran dictatorship by other means, "it is prepared to and will use military force in conjunction with others, or, if necessary, unilaterally."

While noting the "deeply disturbing statements" of Ronald Reagan's advisers in regard to El Salvador, the authors of the document point out that "should President Reagan choose to use military force in El Salvador, historians will be able to show that the setting for such actions had been prepared in the last year of the Carter Administration."

Detailed contingency plans have been drawn up, supplies are being stockpiled at U.S. military bases in Panama, advance teams of military advisers are already operating in El Salvador down to the tactical level, and secret agreements have been negotiated with the military regimes in Guatemala and Honduras.

According to the "Dissent Paper," the "expanded training program for Salvadoran personnel" undertaken at U.S. bases in Panama "is the largest ever sponsored by the US for any Latin American country in a single year."

The resources invested in the U.S. political, diplomatic, economic, and military effort to shore up the Salvadoran dictatorship already "exceed those allocated to any other hemispheric crisis since 1965"—that is, since Lyndon Johnson ordered the U.S. Marines to invade the Dominican Republic.

American working people are being dragged toward a war in Central America—a war in defense of a blood-soaked dictatorship.

Just this year, 9,300 Salvadorans have been assassinated by rightist murder squads which include uniformed and non-uniformed police and military personnel, and which are commanded by top military officers. Among the most recent victims were three American nuns and a Catholic lay-worker who were executed because of their work with peasant refugees. Human rights activists, educators, lawyers, priests, trade unionists—anybody willing to raise their voice against injustice and repression faces the threat of torture and death.

As the report puts it, "Neither the government nor the armed forces have been able to demonstrate their will or ability to avoid indiscriminate repression of civilian personnel thus contributing to the rapid deterioration of their image among the population and internationally."

While U.S. Ambassador Robert White issues official statements deploring the crimes of the ultraright death squads, other U.S. officials, the "Dissent Paper" explains, are "Seeking to bring under unified command the paramilitary units operating in the country," and are working at "Establishing and/or improving communications and cooperation among armed forces and paramilitary organizations in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras."

When peasant families are burned alive in their homes, or when worker activists are found dead, with their hands tied behind their backs and their eyes gouged out, it is all part of the plan for "Strengthening counter-insurgency capabilities of armed forces" outlined in section A. 3 of the "Dissent Paper."

### 'A Weak, Unpopular, Isolated Regime'

What bothers the authors of the "Dissent Paper" is that they do not believe Washington can successfully crush the opposition to the Salvadoran dictatorship without paying too high a price.

The junta, they complain, is "a relatively weak, unpopular and internationally isolated regime." They note that "the current government . . . is not stable and the security forces are unable to win a military confrontation on their own."

Taking up the relationship of forces within El Salvador in greater detail, the report stresses that the regime "has failed to neutralize the peasant population and

has not succeeded in isolating the guerrilla forces."

It adds: "The urban middle class is divided among those who have already chosen to side with the FDR opposition, those seeking to leave the country and those remaining neutral for the time being. Only a small fraction of this sector can be said to be committed to the survival of the current regime."

Both domestic and foreign capitalists have cast their vote of no-confidence in the future of the junta by liquidating their assets and withdrawing their capital from the country. "Infusion of foreign assistance and loans is not having any significant impact on economic recovery," the report says.

While the ruling junta continues to fragment, "The documented expansion of military capabilities of the opposition forces, including their ability to recruit and organize large contingents of displaced peasants, and to cause heavy casualties among government forces, makes it highly unlikely that a short term military defeat of the guerrilla forces might be achieved."

Although they urge Washington to pursue a negotiated settlement in El Salvador that would avoid "the radicalizing effect of prolonged 'liberation wars' on the insurgent leadership and on the masses," the authors of the "Dissent Paper" are forced to concede that "even the strongest supporters of this option admit that the sector of the armed forces now in control of the political process—who know the extent of mass support enjoyed by the opposition—have no intentions to allow a truly participatory electoral dynamic to develop."

In other words, the Salvadoran junta and its backers in Washington know that they cannot allow elections because they would lose.

### 'Careful Monitoring of U.S. Press'

An essential aspect of Washington's criminal policy toward El Salvador has been a concerted attempt to prevent the truth about the situation there from getting out to the working class, both within the United States and internationally.

To achieve this aim, the U.S. rulers have manipulated the mass media and carried out an international disruption campaign against supporters of the Salvadoran struggle.

Within the United States, the document notes, "Informal signals to foreign desk editors during the electoral campaign discouraged their interest in the region."



The junta did its bit, placing "restrictions on visiting reporters [that] have kept a tight lid on many critical events in the past six months." And some too-inquisitive reporters "have been banned from the country by threats on their lives."

Carter's El Salvador Task Force has been carrying out "Careful monitoring of US press coverage of developments in El Salvador to avoid Nicaraguan style publicity for opposition insurgents."

According to the document, "Media coverage of El Salvador has been responsive to official government policies: greater emphasis on US interests in the region, continuous reference to Cuban involvement, understatement of the 'human rights' dimension, effective use of the 'extremists of the right and left' formula."

Under the heading of "improving and protecting the international legitimacy and prestige" of the Salvadoran dictatorship is the information that the Carter administration has been "Activating mechanisms to disrupt opposition efforts to obtain international support and legitimacy and to limit the impact of such efforts."

Exactly what these "mechanisms" are is never specified, but any report on the criminal activities of the FBI and CIA in the days of the movement against the war in Vietnam will suffice to fill in the blanks. Illegal surveillance, the use of agents-provocateurs, encouragement of ultrarightist terrorism—all these methods and more have been used against opponents of Washington's war plans.

#### International Terrorist Network

What is involved in Washington's policy of attempting to crush the popular revolution in El Salvador is not merely one small country. The counterrevolutionary network has already spread throughout Central America and beyond.

"US intelligence," the report notes, "has been in contact with Nicaraguan exile groups in Guatemala and in Miami and it is aware of their relationship with Cuban exile terrorist groups operating in the US."

In regard to these terrorist groups, the report points out that "no attempt has been made to restrict their mobility in and out of the US or to interfere with their activities. Their mobility and their links with the US—it seems reasonable to assume—could not be maintained without the tacit consent (or practical incompetence) of at least four agencies: INS, CIA, FBI and U.S. Customs."

Washington has also made secret arrangements with the dictatorships in Honduras and Guatemala, including an indication of "US willingness to assist Honduras in case of outbreak of open hostilities with Nicaragua," the report says.

However, the "Dissent Paper" warns, such undertakings may backfire. A section of the military in Honduras "considers that open conflict with Nicaragua could

prove dangerously destabilizing for Honduras and is not convinced of the possibility of defeating the new Sandinista army and militias."

Within Guatemala, "Opposition forces have unified in a broad coalition that includes moderate reformers, parts of the church, and the marxist and populist guerrilla groups. . . ."

"There has been a significant improvement of the military capabilities of the guerrilla forces in Guatemala. Their prestige and following among Indian peasants as well as among the urban middle classes has been well documented."

And the report warns that even Venezuela, where President Herrera Campins' Social Christian regime "has become an indispensable ally in our current policy in Central America," may not be able to bear the social pressures generated by a counterrevolutionary war in Central America.

"Venezuela's domestic situation has continued to deteriorate during 1980. . . . Trade, fiscal and inflationary problems have led to increased unemployment, lower wages and a restless social environment.

"Social Democratic and left wing opposition to the government's economic and social policies has been growing. The opposition's control over the trade union movement gives their tactical coordination significant disruptive power.

"Herrera Campins' foreign policy does not have broad popular support in Venezuela and does not attract international sympathy."

#### Fear of American Workers

But it is not just the workers and peasants of Latin America that worry the authors of the "Dissent Paper." They are afraid of how the U.S. working class would respond to a military adventure in Central America.

The White House is also acutely aware of this factor, as is shown by the lengths it has gone to prevent "Nicaraguan style

publicity for opposition insurgents" in El Salvador.

"A poll conducted in June 1979," the dissenting report said, "found that 2 of every 3 Americans opposed the Somoza regime and about half of these were sympathetic to the Sandinista insurgents. More pertinent however, is a poll conducted in August 1980 which found that the public attitudes of June 1979 had not changed significantly despite critical media coverage of the first anniversary of the Sandinista government."

In other words, there is a vast reservoir of good will and support for the struggle in Central America among the American working class. Washington's policy depends on keeping the American people ignorant about the real situation in El Salvador, on preventing any public discussion of what is going on there.

However, as the murder of four American women December 2 indicated, that is something easier said than done. As a result of outrage inside the United States, Carter was forced to announce the suspension of aid to the junta December 5.

Tolerance for the government's policy in El Salvador, the "Dissent Paper" warns, "would not survive the introduction of US troops in the region. For example, an October 1980 poll found that 60% of all males and 68% of females interviewed opposed the use of US military forces in trouble spots in developing countries. The still to be analysed reaction to the draft registration drive and the drop in support for intervention in Iran after the rescue attempt, suggest that assertions to the effect that we have overcome the 'Vietnam Syndrome' may be premature."

Yet it is clear from the dissenting report that U.S. policymakers have charted a collision course with the workers and peasants of El Salvador, a course that threatens to drench all of Central America in blood.

These are the stakes that are involved in the struggle against U.S. intervention in El Salvador. □

### Don't miss a single issue of Intercontinental Press/Inprecor! Send for your subscription now!

- Enclosed is \$35 for a one-year subscription.
- Enclosed is \$17.50 for a six-month subscription.
- Enclosed is \$8.75 for a three-month subscription.
- Please send information about first-class and airmail rates.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

#### Make checks payable to

Intercontinental Press  
410 West Street  
New York, N.Y. 10014 U.S.A.

# DOCUMENTS

## Government 'Dissent Paper' Reveals U.S. Moves in El Salvador

### Washington's Secret War in Central America

#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. CURRENT US ROLE IN EL SALVADOR

1. Improving political and economic conditions
2. Protecting international legitimacy
3. Counter-insurgency capabilities
4. Contingency plans
5. Congressional and public opinion support

##### B. ALTERNATE VIEW OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FACTORS

1. El Salvador's domestic situation
2. Regional factors: Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador.
3. International context
4. US public opinion

##### C. IN SEARCH OF A NON-MILITARY OPTION

1. US objectives
2. The context for dialogue
3. The Zimbabwe option
4. Attitudes of regional actors: Mexico, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, others.

##### D. OPENING MOVES OF AN ALTERNATE POLICY

1. Recognition of the FDR
2. Signal willingness to abandon confrontational track
3. Maintaining a low profile
4. Encouraging pluralistic media coverage

#### Statement of Purpose

The Reagan Administration's first international crisis may well be in El Salvador. Candidate Reagan's foreign policy advisors have made deeply disturbing statements about their plans for Central America and the Caribbean basin.

However, should President Reagan choose to use military force in El Salvador, historians will be able to show that the setting for such actions had been prepared in the last year of the Carter Administration. There may still be time to change course during the transition period. If the effort fails we will continue to argue for a negotiated resolution of the conflict. We recall, perhaps with unwarranted optimism, that it was Mrs. Thatcher—and not her Labor predecessors—who brought the Rhodesian crisis to a peaceful end. We hope that moderation and reason will prevail among President Reagan's appointees.

We see current US activities in El Salvador as leading to increased military engagement with far reaching implications for our strategic interests in the Caribbean basin. Support for our policies is limited and unreliable. Our identification with the governing Junta in that country has placed us in a collision course with key regional actors with whom we need to maintain friendly and cooperative diplomatic and economic relations.

By contrast, the non-military, negotiated solution proposed in this paper may well enjoy broad international support and acceptance. This option is seen as most effective in achieving the two key objectives of US policy in this region: limiting Cuban and

Soviet expansion and promoting the emergence of stable and pluralistic governments.

The views articulated in this paper are shared in private by current and former analysts and officials at NSC, DOS, DOD and CIA. Employees from other agencies active in El Salvador and Central America—but normally excluded from policy debates—also contributed to these notes. In this case, their close contact with the situation in the field provided us with valuable insights and uncommon objectivity.

Members of Congress and their staffs, concerned by developments in the region and disturbed by the implications of some aspects of current policy, also participated in this effort.

It is our intention that this dissenting paper circulate widely among makers and executors of policy, in the Carter and Reagan administrations. We trust it will promote open discussion of realistic alternatives to our potential escalated military involvement in Central America and the Caribbean.

Washington D.C., November 6, 1980

#### Summary and recommendations

The Carter administration has gradually increased US political, diplomatic, economic and military involvement in support of the civilian-military coalition government in El Salvador. This involvement is extensive and growing. The resources invested in this effort exceed those allocated to any other hemispheric crisis since 1965.

Resource allocation and official public statements have identified our strategic interests in Central America and the Caribbean with the fate of a relatively weak, unpopular and internationally isolated regime.

#### Guide to Abbreviations Used in Memo

- ARA—American Republics Area, a bureau of the U.S. State Department.  
CIA—Central Intelligence Agency.  
COPEI—the ruling Christian Democratic Party in Venezuela.  
DOD—Department of Defense.  
DOS—Department of State.  
FBI—Federal Bureau of Investigation.  
FDR/DRU—Revolutionary Democratic Front/Unified Revolutionary Directorate of El Salvador.  
FSLN—Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua.  
IBRD—International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.  
IDB—Inter-American Development Bank.  
IMF—International Monetary Fund.  
INS—U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.  
NGO—non-governmental organization.  
NSC—National Security Council.  
PRI—Institutional Revolutionary Party, the longtime ruling party in Mexico.



Various government agencies have taken preparatory steps to intervene militarily in El Salvador. Policy makers appear to have concluded that such a move could succeed in preventing the collapse of the current regime.

Current policy consistently underestimates the domestic legitimacy and international support enjoyed by the opposition FDR/DRU coalition. Furthermore, policy makers fail to recognize the scope of military capabilities of opposition guerrilla forces and ignore the logistical value and potential impact of their support in neighboring countries.

Contingency scenarios for US military deployment tend to underestimate troop requirements, estimates of casualty rates, and the time and geographic scope of required engagement. Politico-military analysts downplay the potential for regionalization of armed conflict in the isthmus. In particular they underestimate the implications of the Nicaraguan and Cuban commitment to provide military support to Salvadorean guerrilla forces in the event of continued escalation of US involvement. No serious consideration appears to have been given to global security implications of an escalated regional conflict involving US, Cuban, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan and other participants.

Diplomatic analysts overestimate the extent of current Venezuelan and Costa Rican commitment to continue to support our current policy in El Salvador. They also tend to minimize the political costs of world reaction to follow any increased deployment of US military personnel or equipment in the area.

The articulation of US policy for public and congressional audiences has misrepresented the situation in El Salvador emphasizing the viability of the current regime, downplaying its responsibility for the excesses being committed by security and paramilitary forces, exaggerating the positive impact of current reforms and portraying opposition forces as terrorists unsuitable for and unwilling to engage in constructive dialogue. These misleading rationalizations of our policies have played upon domestic frustrations resulting from perceived setbacks in other theaters, and have legitimized grossly inadequate arguments in favor of military intervention.

Our actions and our words have narrowed down our policy options to a single path of gradual escalation of direct military involvement in a region vital to our national interests and within a political context that gives the use of force few chances to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

The search for a non-military option in El Salvador must be urgently reopened. The process must begin with a realistic redefinition of our objectives, it must be based on unbiased intelligence analysed within a framework that reflects the new power distribution in the Caribbean basin.

A key objective of US policy in Central America is to limit Cuban and Soviet bloc influence throughout the region. Communist potential for projecting their influence relies principally on the opportunistic willingness to provide military equipment and training to subversive groups. Their obvious weakness under conditions of political stability and relative peace gives way to ominous strength when armed conflict spreads.

To limit opportunities for Soviet-Cuban expansion, the US must avoid the regionalization of armed conflict in Central America by reversing the current trend towards escalation of our own military involvement.

A second strategic objective of US policy should be to promote the emergence of stable governments capable of effective management of sorely needed reform programs while encouraging responsible private sector activity and normal economic relations with foreign business communities.

Clearly the current government of El Salvador is not stable and the security forces are unable to win a military confrontation on their own. Local and foreign businesses have already been severely weakened. Continued warfare will further erode their influence and limit their role in the post war period. Polarization and the hatred built up through years of violence will continue to reduce tolerance and eliminate respect for individual rights.

The sooner the conflict is brought to a negotiated end, the easier it will be to moderate the policies of the new status quo.

The two principal objectives and arguments presented apply with equal weight to the Guatemalan situation. Our support for a negotiated solution in El Salvador will serve notice to the Guatemalan hardliners that their time has run out. The chances for a less radical and less traumatic transition in Guatemala will be greatly improved.

## **Recommendations**

A new policy towards El Salvador will have to address the following issues:

### **1. Recognition of the FDR/DRU**

There can be no improvement of our negotiating position and no resolution to the current conflict without the US officially signaling the world community that it acknowledges that the FDR/DRU coalition is a legitimate and representative political force in El Salvador.

This recognition will be a key indicator to intransigent sectors on the left and the right that a real change of attitude has taken place in Washington.

### **2. Signal our willingness to abandon the confrontational track**

Salvadorean and international public opinion perceive the US as being committed to a military solution in Central America. We must signal our willingness to abandon this course of action under certain conditions if an appropriate environment for negotiations is to emerge. To do so we must consider:

- 1) Taking actions which will clearly separate us from those sectors inside and outside the armed forces responsible for gross excesses against the population. The individuals involved have been identified by the FDR/DRU and by our own intelligence services.
- 2) Taking actions to reduce the level of military support we are currently providing to the armed forces, for example, by reducing or interrupting our training program and military supply flows.
- 3) Condemning the intervention plans of Guatemalan military and paramilitary forces and indicating our opposition to Honduran encouragement of hostile actions against Nicaragua.
- 4) Expressing privately and publicly our concern regarding continued involvement of Southern Cone countries in El Salvador and urging all our allies, including Israel, to act with caution in the region.

### **3. Maintain a low profile throughout the process of disengagement**

The US does not have at this time the political credibility to spearhead a mediation effort. We should encourage and support initiatives taken by other regional actors avoiding direct participation. Our direct involvement may limit our ability to influence the process and may become an obstacle to mutual concessions.

### **4. Encourage pluralistic media coverage**

Conditions in El Salvador and our official posture have not encouraged adequate media coverage. Influential US journalists have been banned from the country by threats on their lives. Salvadorean government restrictions on visiting reporters have kept a tight lid on many critical events in the past six months. Informal signals to foreign desk editors during the electoral campaign discouraged their interest in the region.

Appropriate, objective and pluralistic media coverage will make a positive contribution to the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict in El Salvador and, indeed, throughout Central America.

## **A. CURRENT US ROLE IN EL SALVADOR**

Policy statements on Central America, whether for internal use or for congressional or public consumption are inadequate starting points for discussion of our current role in the region. Rather

than focusing on the articulation of policy objectives and their rationale, we prefer to outline the actions of our government agencies which affect developments in El Salvador.

We have ascertained that the activities grouped and listed below are being implemented by no less than twelve agencies of the government and supported by numerous NGO's.

The following is a partial list of these activities:

**1. Improving political and economic conditions to increase viability of current governing coalition through:**

- Accelerating disbursement of bilateral economic aid and providing administrative and technical assistance.
- Supporting approval and expediting disbursements of IBRD, IDB and IMF new and pipeline programs and projects under consideration.
- Setting up of US/Salvadorean technical and managerial team to assist in government planning and administration to prevent economic collapse.
- Expanding resource flow and tightening administration of agrarian reform program to reduce its impact on traditional elite and to increase short term benefits to target population.
- Expanding short-term resource flow to private sector to discourage current capital exodus and strengthen sectoral confidence.
- Monitoring closely and moderating latent and open differences among members of governing Junta and the officers corps.

**2. Improving and protecting the international legitimacy and prestige of the regime through:**

- Encouraging Salvadorean recruitment of moderate, reformist personnel for diplomatic representation.
- Providing logistical support and orientation through US embassies and missions.
- Actively encouraging increased diplomatic support from sympathetic Latin American and other allied governments.
- Discouraging resolutions and other diplomatic initiatives critical of current government or possibly contributing to the legitimization of opposition forces.
- Activating mechanisms to disrupt opposition efforts to obtain international support and legitimacy and to limit the impact of such efforts.
- Creating favorable conditions for other countries' involvement in support for US initiatives in the OAS and the UN in relation to the situation in Central America.
- Closely monitoring and feeding US and world media coverage of the region and publicizing widely US confidence in and support for current process in El Salvador.

**3. Strengthening counter-insurgency capabilities of armed forces through:**

- Increased training for middle and low ranking officers.
- Improving military infrastructures for more effective urban and rural combat communications and for rapid troop deployment.
- Setting up adequate supply lines and stockpiling materiel in cooperation with regional and extra-hemispheric allies.
- Providing strategic and tactical command advisory assistance.
- Increasing cohesion and coordination among various command structures within Salvadorean armed forces.
- Seeking to bring under unified command the paramilitary units operating in the country.
- Establishing and/or improving communications and cooperation among armed forces and paramilitary organizations in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.
- Making available US surveillance data pertinent to military developments in El Salvador to the armed forces.

**4. Updating detailed contingency plans for US alternative responses to deterioration of conditions in the region to include:**

- Political and diplomatic initiatives to be taken in the event that military engagement of US forces is required to preserve the current regime.
- Operational plans for multilateral and unilateral deployment of military forces in El Salvador and Guatemala.
- Cost, casualty and time estimates under favorable and unfavorable conflict scenarios.
- Evaluation of readiness status and recommendations on preparatory exercises to be undertaken.
- Assessment of the need and preparation of contingency plans for actions intended to disrupt support and supply lines of Salvadorean guerrilla forces in Cuba and Nicaragua.

**5. Assuring continued congressional and public opinion support for current policies through liaison and press relations efforts that emphasize:**

- A moderate and reformist image of the current government.
- US support for extensive but moderate reforms in the region as a means to contain extremist and communist expansion.
- Linkages between opposition guerrilla groups in El Salvador and Guatemala with Cuba.
- Discrediting centrist spokesmen of opposition as puppets of hardline guerrilla leaders.
- Careful monitoring of US press coverage of developments in El Salvador to avoid Nicaraguan style publicity for opposition insurgents.
- Arranging regular closed session briefings for congressional committees, sub-committees and key MC's concerned with the issue.

This partial list of activities implies an allocation of bureaucratic and financial resources exceeding those made to any other hemispheric crisis since 1965. No such allocation could have taken place without a major high level decision in the administration. This decision was made in part to prevent the crisis in El Salvador from climaxing prior to the elections. However, the choices made have strategic implications reaching beyond domestic political considerations.

The Carter administration came to the conclusion that the collapse of the current civilian-military coalition government in El Salvador and its replacement by a left wing regime would constitute a threat to our strategic interests in the Caribbean basin.

Policy makers also agreed that the US still has a chance of preventing such developments through the provision of overt and covert political, military, economic, technical, diplomatic and public relations assistance to the current regime. However, if this effort failed to stabilize the local situation, the US would let it be known that it is prepared to and will use military force in conjunction with others, or, if necessary, unilaterally.

We consider these activities and the policies they imply to be dangerously misguided. Current policy, as we interpret it, is based on inaccurate intelligence, and on the suppression within various bureaucracies of verified contradicting information.

The options and recommendations on which policy decisions were made have been based on irresponsibly self-serving evaluations and analyses of intelligence reports available within the agencies. Critiques and dissenting views were systematically ignored.

Underlying these apparent bureaucratic maladjustments one finds a fundamental lack of understanding of general conditions and trends in Central America and the Caribbean.

**B. AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING EL SALVADOR**

In this section we outline a characterization of the situation in





U.S. troops in Santo Domingo in 1965. Washington has allocated more resources to El Salvador than 'to any other hemispheric crisis since 1965.'

El Salvador and its international context which is drastically different from the one commonly accepted within the Department.

The outline is based on a condensation of statements, commentaries, reports and memoranda available throughout various agencies of the government. We are not aware of any request for this information to be assembled for evaluation or for discussion.

#### 1. El Salvador's domestic situation

- The governing Junta and the armed forces have failed to rally significant support for their reform and counter-insurgency programs.
- The land redistribution effort has failed to neutralize the peasant population and has not succeeded in isolating the guerrilla forces.
- The urban middle class is divided among those who have already chosen to side with the FDR opposition, those seeking to leave the country and those remaining neutral for the time being. Only a small fraction of this sector can be said to be committed to the survival of the current regime.
- Domestic and foreign businesses have nearly completed liquidating their assets and withdrawing their capital from the country. No significant private investment is taking place. Infusion of foreign assistance and loans is not having any significant impact on economic recovery.
- Conflict among members of the ruling coalition continues to spread. New defections from the Christian Democratic party and factional fighting among and within branches of the armed forces impede regime consolidation.
- The documented expansion of military capabilities of the opposition forces, including their ability to recruit and organize large contingents of displaced peasants, and to cause heavy casualties among government forces, makes it highly unlikely that a short term military defeat of the guerrilla forces might be achieved.
- Neither the government nor the armed forces have been able to demonstrate their will or ability to avoid indiscriminate repression of civilian personnel thus contributing to

the rapid deterioration of their image among the population and internationally.

#### 2. Regional factors

It is misleading to examine developments in El Salvador outside the Central American and Caribbean context. Although policy statements and analyses routinely include references to regional concerns, seldom is an attempt made at relating domestic developments in one country with those within its neighbors'.

#### GUATEMALA

The trends below are pertinent to short term developments in El Salvador:

- Political power in the country is firmly in the hands of the hardline faction of the military, paramilitary and civilian elites. Among them there is near unanimous rejection of any reformist or moderating changes in regime composition or program.
- In recent years, the Guatemalan military have been referring to an expanded definition of their country's national and territorial interests that contemplates the possibility of intervention in neighboring Belize and El Salvador.
- Opposition forces have unified in a broad coalition which includes moderate reformers, parts of the church, and the marxist and populist guerrilla groups.
- A paramilitary strike force made up of former members of the Nicaraguan National Guard, anti-Castro Cubans, Guatemalan military personnel and mercenaries has been formed in the past year. Spokesmen for this contingent have expressed their intention to intervene in El Salvador "when the situation requires it."
- There has been a significant improvement of the military capabilities of the guerrilla forces in Guatemala. Their prestige and following among Indian peasants as well as among the urban middle classes has been well documented.
- Repression of moderate political and trade union leaders continues to accentuate political polarization and has led to

the practical liquidation of the political center. Reflecting this internal situation, the international image of the regime continues to deteriorate.

- In the past year Salvadorean and Guatemalan opposition forces have increased contacts, communication and cooperation on political and military matters.

It should be noted that US intelligence has kept informed of the plans and capabilities of the paramilitary strike force in Guatemala. US intelligence has been in contact with Nicaraguan exile groups in Guatemala and in Miami and it is aware of their relationship with Cuban exile terrorist groups operating in the US. Charges that CIA has been promoting and encouraging these organizations have not been substantiated. However no attempt has been made to restrict their mobility in and out of the US or to interfere with their activities. Their mobility and their links with the US—it seems reasonable to assume—could not be maintained without the tacit consent (or practical incompetence) of at least four agencies: INS, CIA, FBI and US Customs.

#### HONDURAS

During 1980 DOD has devoted considerable resources to expanding communications and improving relations with the Honduran armed forces. DOD's stated objective has been "to create a new balance in the region" after the fall of Somoza's National Guard. The discussions with Honduran officers have been characterized as "encouraging", "fruitful", and "successful" at different stages of the process. These discussions included the following topics:

- Agreement on role of the US as mediator in seeking a settlement of disputes between El Salvador and Honduras.
- The need for increased cooperation between Honduras and El Salvador armed forces to reassert government control over disputed border areas currently held by Salvadorean guerrillas.
- US and Honduran cooperation in resupply efforts to El Salvador's armed forces in the event of a large scale insurrectional offensive.
- US willingness to assist Honduras in case of outbreak of open hostilities with Nicaragua.

Although our efforts in Honduras have already proven very useful, their impact has been exaggerated by a failure to take account of domestic developments in that country:

- A hard line majority within the military establishment has been pressuring to contain and even reverse the democratization process. It is with representatives of this faction that the agreements above were discussed.
- This hardline faction favors counter-insurgency cooperation with El Salvador, tolerates and encourages National Guard exile groups hostile to Nicaragua to operate from Honduras, and believes it could win a military confrontation with Nicaragua.
- A minority moderate faction within the armed forces is seeking closer relations with the civilian democratic opposition. It favors friendly relations with the Nicaraguan government and with the FSLN. It wants no Honduran involvement in El Salvador. It considers that open conflict with Nicaragua could prove dangerously destabilizing for Honduras and is not convinced of the possibility of defeating the new Sandinista army and militias.
- There has been a notable increase in trade union, religious, professional and political activity in Honduras. The organizations involved share a sympathetic view of the Nicaraguan process and oppose Honduras support for El Salvador's armed forces.
- Rural and urban guerrilla groups have begun to operate in Honduras in the past year. Although their capabilities pose no threat to internal stability, their disruptive potential in the event of gradual regionalization of conflict should not be underestimated.

#### NICARAGUA

The following background items should be kept in mind in attempting to predict Nicaraguan behavior in the event of escalated US involvement in El Salvador:

- Cooperation between the FSLN and various branches of the Salvadorean guerrilla groups can be traced back to the mid 1970's. Salvadorean contingents participated and provided logistical support during the war in Nicaragua. Historically, cooperation between the two countries against US interventions is documented in the 1920's and during the 19th century.
- Prior to July 1979, the FSLN maintained support networks in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. FSLN commanders and troops are familiar with the terrain and the population. Nicaraguans have extensive family ties in these countries.
- Widespread popular support for the opposition forces in El Salvador and Guatemala, the high level of military preparedness of the population, the recent combat and insurrectional experience, and the high levels of unemployment would make recruitment and training a relatively simple and rapid operation.
- Despite economic recovery and surprisingly effective planning, administration and management, the Nicaraguan economy remains weak and vulnerable to a war effort. An outbreak of hostilities would force the Nicaraguan authorities to adopt "war communism" methods. This would imply labor conscription, extending government control over private sector activities, and generally would radicalize the Nicaraguan political process.
- Nicaraguan military supplies are sufficient to cope with internal disorders and limited border skirmishes. Nicaraguan involvement in regional hostilities would require expanded supplies and would provide ample opportunities for increased Cuban and Soviet bloc leverage in that country.
- The FSLN has consolidated firm control over government, armed forces, and mass organizations. The size, discipline and morale of regular army and militia units are impressive. Their newly acquired transport and communications equipment would make them serious contenders in any regional conflict.

Other political and diplomatic factors also deserve our attention. The FSLN and, in general, the Nicaraguan process continue to enjoy broad international support. During their first year in government the Sandinista government has gained influence and legitimacy in international forums notably in the OAS, the UN and the non-aligned movement. The Nicaraguan government and the FSLN have opened diplomatic and party relations in most Soviet bloc countries.

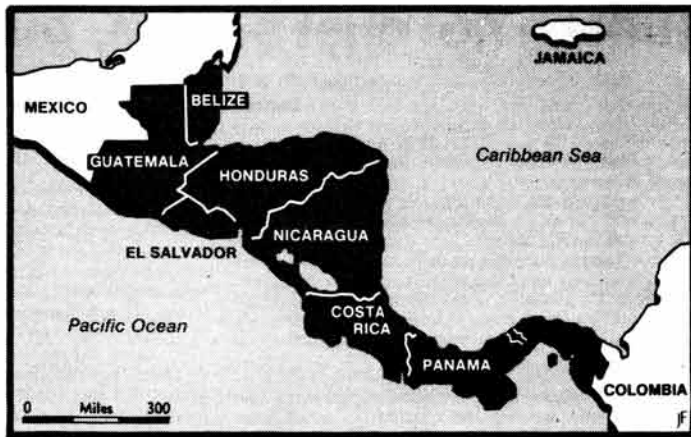
The Nicaraguan leadership remains divided on how to respond in the event of a direct US military intervention in El Salvador or in Guatemala. A moderate wing favors emphasis on diplomatic actions, extending humanitarian support for refugees and opposition forces but avoiding a military engagement that would severely hurt the prospects for economic recovery. The hard liners on the other hand favor full support for the guerrilla forces and, if needed, direct participation of Nicaraguan forces in regional operations.

#### MEXICO

US policy makers have failed to give adequate consideration to the potential impact of Mexico's policy towards the conflict in El Salvador. Yet Mexico's continuing economic growth, its oil wealth and its internal political stability have sharply increased its prestige, capabilities and willingness to influence developments in the Caribbean basin and Central America.

Analysts in Washington project a continuation of Mexico's rhetorical posturing and downplay recent changes. But current intelligence suggests that Mexico is unusually determined to





promote the emergence of stable, progressive and representative governments in Central America capable of asserting their independence from the US and willing to develop friendly and cooperative relations with their powerful northern neighbor. There are two principal reasons for this affirmative policy:

- 1) Mexico sees with growing concern and displeasure Venezuelan and US involvement in security matters close to its own oil fields.
- 2) PRI analysts have concluded that the process in El Salvador is irreversible. In their view the best way to influence developments there is to establish early friendly relations with opposition forces and provide political and economic support for the new regime.

The PRI would like to limit the domestic impact of the Central American process and capitalize for itself Mexican sympathies for opposition forces in El Salvador and Guatemala. The PRI feels that the best way to insure non-interference in Mexico's internal politics by the new government is to recognize and to support them.

This policy does not depart significantly from Mexico's diplomatic tradition. Their current position towards Central America can be seen as an updated version of the successful and mutually convenient arrangement maintained between Mexico and Cuba for the past two decades.

The following factors link Mexico with the current situation in El Salvador:

- The PRI maintains cordial relations with and recognizes the legitimacy of the FDR/DRU coalition.
- Relations between the Mexican Government and the Salvadorean Junta have deteriorated steadily in the past six months.
- A significant percentage of the arms flowing into Guatemala and El Salvador originate in Mexico. This flow could not take place without the tacit consent of the Presidency.
- Mexico has already indicated to the US that it opposes current and escalated US and Venezuelan involvement in El Salvador. It has shown its willingness to lead a diplomatic counteroffensive and may link withdrawal to other bilateral issues of concern to the US.
- Public opinion in Mexico enthusiastically supports the Guatemalan and Salvadorean opposition forces. Government and private print and electronic media give clearly biased and distorted coverage of Central American events reflecting almost exclusively the views of the opposition in the two countries.
- Mexico has recently signed a series of accords with Cuba. Some of these include clauses that pertain to the two countries' common security concerns in the Caribbean and in Central America.
- Mexico is providing generous economic and technical assistance to Nicaragua. The PRI maintains fraternal relations with the FSLN. Some reports indicate that Mexico

may have agreed to increase its economic support to Nicaragua in case of regionalized conflict.

#### VENEZUELA

The government of President Herrera Campins has become an indispensable ally in our current policy in Central America. Venezuelan policy towards El Salvador—and indeed on most regional and global issues—largely coincides with our own.

COPEI's Social Christians identify with and support in many valuable ways their Christian Democratic colleagues in the Salvadorean Junta. Venezuela's official economic and security assistance to El Salvador complements and provides needed legitimation to our own efforts.

It is especially pertinent to examine some factors that might alter their current position:

- Venezuela's domestic situation has continued to deteriorate during 1980. The economic picture is not encouraging. Trade, fiscal and inflationary problems have led to increased unemployment, lower wages and a restless social environment.
- Social Democratic and left wing opposition to the government's economic and social policies has been growing. The opposition's control over the trade union movement gives their tactical coordination significant disruptive power.
- Herrera Campins' foreign policy does not have broad popular support in Venezuela and does not attract international sympathy. In many circles the release of Cuban terrorists is seen as damaging the country's democratic international image and prestige.
- Accion Democratica recognizes and supports the FDR/DRU coalition. AD has shown its determination to use this issue to build up their pressure on Herrera Campins. Some COPEI congressmen do not share their party's position on El Salvador. There are indications that a single issue coalition could be formed in the Congress that could impose a policy change on the executive.
- Officials in Herrera Campins' entourage are increasingly concerned about the implications of developing tensions with Mexico as Venezuelan involvement in El Salvador escalates.

These factors will become more critical in the event of a joint US/Venezuelan military deployment. The possibility of destabilizing developments in Venezuela should not be ignored. As pressures on the COPEI administration mount, the US should expect policy differences between the two countries to emerge.

#### COSTA RICA

The domestic political and economic situation in Costa Rica in many ways parallels that prevailing in Venezuela. President Rodrigo Carazo supports Venezuelan and US policies in El Salvador and his party maintains cordial relations with the Duarte/Ehrlich wing of the Salvadorean Christian Democratic Party.

But Costa Rican support is largely symbolic as the country lacks the economic, security and political resources to make a significant contribution to the joint effort. Furthermore, President Carazo and his party have become sensitive to domestic pressures seeking a change in Costa Rica's position toward El Salvador. Finally, Costa Rica's energy-short and trade-dependent economy makes the government sensitive and vulnerable to Mexican and Nicaraguan pressures.

#### PANAMA

The US is making extensive use of its remaining military facilities in Panama in the expanded training program for Salvadorean personnel. This training program is the largest ever sponsored by the US for any Latin American country in a single year.

The Latin American press has carried accusations suggesting that DOD may be using our facilities in Panama for stockpiling

military supplies intended to play a key role in an eventual logistical supply air-lift to Salvadorean armed forces. We have obtained some evidence supporting these allegations.

The critical importance of Panama for the US in the current scenario would be sharply increased should we become more heavily involved in the escalating conflict in El Salvador. Yet General Torrijos—who continues to exercise control over the armed forces and veto power over government policies—is described in our character profiles as “volatile, unpredictable (. . .) a populist demagogue (with) a visceral anti-American bias (. . .) and a penchant for the bottle”, hardly the description of a reliable ally. Our precarious situation in Panama was recently evidenced by President Royo’s public condemnation of our training program for the Salvadoreans.

Consider the following additional links between Panama and El Salvador:

- Although initially supportive of the 10/15/79 coup, General Torrijos—and the Panamanian government—have improved ties with the FDR/DRU coalition moderates.
- Panama’s economic difficulties and its dependence on the US banking community make it potentially responsive to our pressures. However the same factors combined with our tendency to act heavy-handedly may encourage a resurgence of “anti-imperialist” sentiment.
- In the past six months Panama has been expressing its displeasure on a number of issues related to perceived grievances linked to the implementation of the treaties.
- General Torrijos is in a position to assert control over two key tactical resources in any direct US military operations in the region: the canal and the bases.

#### ECUADOR

Earlier this year there was widely circulated allegations in Ecuador to the effect that DOD and ARA envoys had visited the country seeking to enlist government and armed forces support for the set up of an Andean Pact “peace keeping force” that could move into El Salvador in coordination with Venezuelan, US and Costa Rican contingents. Subsequent official denials did not change the perception that domestic and international counter pressures had succeeded in blocking the US initiative.

Despite its limited military capabilities, Ecuador’s democratic government and relatively healthy economy wield disproportionate political and diplomatic influence on its Andean Pact partners and on other Latin American countries.

Since May, President Roldo’s position on El Salvador has shifted further in favor of recognition of the FDR. European Social Democratic sources believe that Roldos may support diplomatic initiatives in favor of a new government which would include their participation.

#### 3. International context

In the aftermath of the 10/15/79 military coup, international public opinion was unanimous in its support for the new government and its proposed reform program.

That first coalition Junta had the participation and support of Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Communists and even some sympathy from the “popular organizations”. A fact seldom referred to by official spokesmen of our government is that the first, broadly representative coalition government collapsed in early January 1980. Junta members and their organizations felt the government was powerless to implement the reforms and control repression. From that moment on, international support for the successor coalitions dwindled rapidly. A year after the October coup the international context has changed drastically.

A brief review is pertinent to assess the support to be found for current US policies:

- The Christian Democratic movement and its member parties are divided. Its conservative wing favors continued support for the current government and for US policy. The youth sector of the movement—considered by many observers to represent majority factions in most parties—

identifies with the FDR opposition.

- The Social Democrats have unanimously moved to provide active political and humanitarian support for and through the FDR leadership. SD commitment to the Salvadorean opposition is seen consolidating along the same lines it did with respect to the FSLN in late 1978. The German Social Democratic Party, a key actor in the movement, appears determined to continue its support for the FDR. This has already been a source of some tension between us and the German government.
- Communist parties around the world also abandoned their “wait and see” attitude when the CPES resigned from its positions in government ministries in January 1980. Not surprisingly, the Cuban CP is advising their Salvadorean counterparts to moderate their program, to broaden their alliances and to continue to seek compromises with the “progressive sectors in the military”. Above all, the Cubans (and the Soviets) are urging utmost caution to avoid a direct confrontation with us.
- The most solid bloc of support for the current government and its counter-insurgency efforts comes from the southern cone military regimes. Among these, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay provide training and advisors on intelligence, urban and rural counter-insurgency, and logistics. Argentina has become the second largest trainer of Salvadorean officers after the US.
- Protestant and Catholic religious hierarchies in the hemisphere had been divided along the same lines as the Christian Democratic parties. The assassination of Archbishop Romero had a profound effect both on the hierarchies and on the village level priests and pastors who held the armed forces and the government ultimately responsible for the killing. Since then, a consensus in favor of the FDR has emerged.

The above changes in organized public opinion have had an impact on the expected behavior of governments in the international organizations. UN voting patterns on resolutions on El Salvador would show, at this time, a two thirds majority against the government and opposing US involvement. High ranking UN diplomats familiar with the Central American situation affirm that reaction to US military engagement would be equivalent to that which confronted the Soviets after their invasion of Afghanistan. The important diplomatic gains we made since would be lost overnight.

At the OAS the situation is not more encouraging. An unpublished study among representatives to the OAS found that about half of the members would oppose any form of military intervention in Central America regardless of the circumstances, about one in five would support it and the rest would abstain, support or oppose “depending on the circumstances”.

#### 4. US public opinion

Public awareness of the situation in Central America was increased through mass media coverage of the Canal treaty negotiation process and the war in Nicaragua.

A poll conducted in June 1979 found that 2 of every 3 Americans opposed the Somoza regime and about half of these were sympathetic to the Sandinista insurgents. More pertinent however, is a poll conducted in August 1980 which found that the public attitudes of June 1979 had not changed significantly despite critical media coverage of the first anniversary of the Sandinista government.

However, our efforts to emphasize the differences between the situation in El Salvador today and the one prevailing in Nicaragua before July 1979 have had an impact on public perceptions. Media coverage of El Salvador has been responsive to official government policies: greater emphasis on US interests in the region, continuous reference to Cuban involvement, understatement of the “human rights” dimension, effective use of the “extremists of the right and left” formula. Therefore, the current





Tom Kilpatrick/Militant

'Assertions that we have overcome the "Vietnam Syndrome" may be premature.'

domestic environment is generally supportive of current policy as articulated for public consumption.

We believe that this support would not survive the introduction of US troops in the region. For example, an October 1980 poll found that 60% of all males and 68% of females interviewed opposed the use of US military force in trouble spots in developing countries. The still to be analysed reaction to the draft registration drive and the drop in support for intervention in Iran after the rescue attempt, suggest that assertions to the effect that we have overcome the "Vietnam Syndrome" may be premature.

There are also some indications that church involvement in the current drive to attract attention to the situation in El Salvador in support for opposition forces and against US intervention may begin to influence public perceptions of our role in that country. Congressional staff familiar with the lobbying potential of this network foresee some changes in current attitudes and voting patterns in the event of escalated US involvement in Central America.

### C. IN SEARCH OF A NON-MILITARY OPTION

In this section we propose a redefinition of US objectives in Central America and argue that conditions exist for achieving them through a negotiated solution to the conflict in El Salvador.

#### 1. US objectives

A key objective of US policy in Central America is to limit Cuban and Soviet bloc influence in the region. We do not agree with those who belittle the threat of Cuban expansionism. But we try to distinguish between Cuban desires and intentions and their actual capacity to expand.

Cuban and Soviet bloc domestic political and economic difficulties and their overextension in Africa and Asia severely limit their ability and willingness to make new and potentially costly economic and political commitments. Neither Cuba nor its Soviet bloc backers are capable or interested in assuming the costs of displacing the US as the region's major aid donor and trade partner. We should be reminded that in Nicaragua—outside the highly publicized volunteer teachers and doctors from Cuba—Soviet bloc assistance has been minimal, a fact which has been a source of sobering frustration to the Sandinista leaders' expectations of a year ago.

But Cuban and Soviet bloc limitations in the economic field should not be mistaken with powerlessness. Their potential for projecting and expanding their influence relies fundamentally on their opportunistic willingness to provide military equipment and training. Their obvious weakness under conditions of political stability and relative peace gives way to ominous strength when armed conflict pervades.

Few developments would open more opportunities for Cuba in Central America and the Caribbean than the regionalization of armed conflict that would follow the escalation of US military involvement in El Salvador.

The Sandinistas, threatened by what they will perceive as the beginning of an offensive against them, would be under strong pressure to make a strategic alignment with the Soviet bloc through response mechanisms similar to those that pushed Cuba into their orbit in the 1960's.

Regionalization would justify the emergence of "internationalist brigades" that could roam the isthmus from Colombia to the Mexican border. And any government that might emerge during or after a military confrontation with the US in El Salvador would be forced to seek the protective umbrella of other regional powers. A likely candidate is, obviously, Cuba.

Therefore, to limit opportunities for Soviet-Cuban expansionism, the US should avoid regionalization of armed conflict by reversing the current trend towards escalating its own military involvement.

A second strategic objective of US policy should be to promote the emergence of stable governments capable of effective management of sorely needed reform programs while encouraging responsible private sector activity and normal economic relations with the foreign business communities.

Clearly the current government of El Salvador is not stable. It can not carry out the reforms it decreed and it can not provide a social and political environment conducive to economic normalization. Growing casualty rates and continued destruction of property make it apparent that the Salvadorean security forces can not gain a military victory on their own. The private business sector and foreign investors have already been severely weakened. Continued warfare will further erode their influence and limit their role in the reconstruction period.

Political analysts tend to overlook the radicalizing effect of prolonged "liberation wars" on the insurgent leadership and on the masses. Polarization, widespread destruction, and the hatred accumulated through years of bloodshed reduce tolerance and eliminate respect for individual rights. The longer the process, the more evident this trend will become. The sooner the conflict is brought to a negotiated end, the easier it will be to moderate the policies of the new status quo.

The two principal objectives and arguments made apply with equal weight to the Guatemalan situation. We have tried unsuccessfully for nearly four years to strengthen centrist moderate forces in the country and to press the government to limit repression and allow for political relaxation. Our support for a negotiated solution in El Salvador will serve notice to the Guatemalan hardliners that their time has run out. The chances for a less radical and less traumatic transition in Guatemala would be greatly improved.

#### 2. The context for dialogue

Conditions for a negotiated resolution of the conflict in El Salvador will be present when the principal domestic contenders and their respective international allies conclude that complete military victory is no longer possible, or that the costs of achieving such victory are no longer justifiable.

In this section we argue that the most key actors are now prepared to consider supporting and/or participating in a negotiated disengagement.

We have been saying privately and publicly that the Salvadorean opposition is unwilling to dialogue with the armed forces or with the Junta. We have been promoting the view that the

guerrilla leadership is seeking a full fledged military confrontation to liquidate or dismantle all existing political and military institutions. These are gross misrepresentations that, through mere repetition, have acquired an aura of veracity that does not correspond to reality.

The FDR/DRU leadership feels confident about their continuing growth in and out of El Salvador but two major tactical currents remain clearly identifiable:

- One argues that they have sufficient power to impose their own terms on the armed forces and the Junta. In their view mediated negotiations are identified with the 78/79 US promoted, tripartite effort in Nicaragua. This form of dialogue they reject.
- The other tendency, reportedly gaining influence within the coalition, favors opening discussions along the lines of a Zimbabwe type transitional arrangement.

Both tendencies are aware of the following factors:

- An insurrectional offensive may not be completely successful or sufficiently swift to avoid a stalemate in the internal war and a dual government situation that may sharply increase the social costs of their insurrection as well as the chance of US intervention.
- Even a successful insurrection might entail such high human and material costs that a military resolution might make reconstruction and regime consolidation dangerously difficult.
- Direct US intervention would impose a change of tactics away from localized insurrections to "prolonged people's war" on a regional dimension. This would postpone indefinitely the emergence of a representative popular government and would raise the social costs of the war effort beyond all previous projections.

Both tendencies reject any dialogue with representatives of groups or sectors identified with or directly responsible for "acts of indiscriminate repression and genocide". But they also agree on the need to reopen conversations with representative spokesmen for the private and foreign business sectors currently identified with the Junta. Close international allies of the FDR/DRU feel that a more conciliatory attitude is a necessary prerequisite for resolving the present stalemate. They also feel that such an attitude is steadily gaining ascendancy within the coalition.

A similar trend is also discernible on the government's side away from continued confrontation tactics towards a recognition that negotiations with the insurgent opposition might be unavoidable. There is a growing realization that a total military victory is no longer a realistic objective for the government and for the armed forces. Thus, the options facing the more lucid sectors identified with the governing coalition are:

- Defeat following insurrectional offensive
- Complete identification with and reliance on a US rescue operation
- Starting a mediated negotiation process towards a new coalition government

Clearly the situation in El Salvador is highly complex. Its complexity contrasts with the simplistic generalizations being made by senior US officials to the effect that the opposition is only interested in a military resolution of the current stalemate.

### 3. The Zimbabwe option

The Junta's proposal to hold elections in two years was officially predicted and denounced by the FDR as a political maneuver. Internally however the electoral offer is being discussed as one component of the "Zimbabwe option". The argument being made is based on the conviction that they would win those elections if they had the freedom to mobilize their supporters and access to mass media. However, even the strongest supporters of this option admit that the sector of the armed forces now in control of the political process—who know the extent of mass support enjoyed by the opposition—have no intentions to allow a truly participatory electoral dynamic to develop.

There are obvious differences between the situation in Zim-

babwe in 1978 and 1979 and the current situation in El Salvador. But there are also numerous structural parallels worth the attention of policy makers:

- The Patriotic Front was a coalition of centrist and marxist forces each with its own strong guerrilla army.
- Outside support from Cuba, the PRC and the Soviet Union, and a long and bitter guerrilla war had strengthened the liberation armies and weakened the Rhodesian forces. Terrorism on both sides became common in the last year of the war and brutal acts continued even as the Westminster talks proceeded.
- The threat of South African involvement, the Cuban commitment to intervene with troops and the implications of a regional war were important factors in favor of reaching a negotiated solution.
- The Muzorewa regime lost prestige and credibility through its identification with traditional white interests, its participation in the counter-insurgency efforts and its inability to implement structural reforms.
- The international climate around El Salvador is beginning to approximate the one prevailing in the last six months of the Muzorewa regime.

What is most clearly missing in the Salvadorean case is the will of the regional dominant power—the British in Rhodesia, the US in El Salvador—to concede that the time has come to grant its recognition to the new emerging status quo. It is interesting to recall in this context that a majority of US congressional and executive branch policy makers maintained the view that Mr. Mugabe was a marxist extremist and limited representation until his landslide electoral victory made him a prestigious and influential head of state.

### 4. Attitudes of regional actors

In our review of regional trends running counter to current US policy we made reference to factors favoring a negotiated solution, these were:

#### MEXICO

Washington policy makers do not wish to recognize the extent and significance of the changing power relations between the US and Mexico. Yet this change must be reflected in the two countries' attitudes and actions in Central America and the Caribbean.

Mexico has already indicated that it will support any initiative directed at containing the conflict in El Salvador as long as such an initiative enhances the chances of a truly representative popular government with FDR/DRU participation coming to be in that country.

#### NICARAGUA

Nicaragua's commitment to the FDR/DRU has been noted. The Nicaraguan Junta and the FSLN are keenly aware of the social costs of a prolonged war in El Salvador with regional repercussions.

There are clear signals coming from Managua that they would support a solution that would lead to a transitional government with FDR/DRU participation.

#### VENEZUELA

We already noted President Herrera Campins concerns relating to the rising domestic and international political costs of his policy in El Salvador.

But COPEI has invested its reputation within the Christian Democratic movement on continued support for their Salvadorean colleagues. COPEI wants to avoid the appearance of betraying its friends, and abandoning Venezuela's senior partner. A bipartisan consensus wants to ease the growing tensions with Mexico. President Herrera Campins would probably welcome a face-saving formula that would allow for a needed policy adjustment without domestic or international humiliation.

#### PANAMA

Negotiations in El Salvador would serve conflicting currents in Panamanian domestic politics. General Torrijos' dual allegiance to the reformist wing of the armed forces and to the centrists in



the FDR/DRU would allow Panama to play a key role in the mediation effort.

The broad based anti-interventionist sentiment now focusing on the use of Panama's territory for support of counter-insurgency in El Salvador could be diffused through a negotiated disengagement.

The threat of disruptions to the peaceful implementation of the Canal treaties would be largely neutralized.

#### **CUBA**

Cuban attitudes towards a negotiated settlement in El Salvador would largely depend on the nature of the process itself, on the response of the FDR/DRU and on their perceptions of the chances for adequate representation in a coalition transitional government.

It is pertinent to examine briefly aspects of the Cuban government's attitudes vis-à-vis the Zimbabwe negotiations. We stress that Cuba was prepared to intervene militarily in support of the Patriotic Front under the following conditions:

- A formal request from the two factions of the Patriotic Front, a formal request from the front line states, acquiescence from the OAU.
- Escalated South African intervention in Zimbabwe initiating the internationalization of the conflict.
- Formation of a Provisional Revolutionary Government.

From the Cuban point of view, the costs of involvement in Zimbabwe were much lower than those associated with their intervention in El Salvador. Their actions in Zimbabwe were surprisingly cautious even under such favorable circumstances. Mr. Castro surprised international observers when he gave full support to the negotiations in Westminster. We will emphasize again the strategic importance of reaching a solution in El Salvador that proves that Cuban military assistance is a dispensable factor in the democratization of Central America.

#### **OTHER REGIONAL ACTORS**

The list of likely supporters of a negotiated settlement that would guarantee FDR/DRU participation in a new coalition government is extensive. The arguments in each case may become repetitive. Costa Rica would follow with relief Venezuela's lead. President Roldos of Ecuador would see the opportunity to cancel out competing pressures on his administration. Caribbean countries would perceive US support for such a process as a step away from gun boat diplomacy and in favor of political pluralism. Religious organizations would support the moderating potential of negotiations and as a way to heal internal differences.

#### **D. OPENING MOVES FOR AN ALTERNATIVE POLICY**

The results of the elections, new appointments in Washington, and, above all, events in El Salvador will confirm the need for a new US policy. There is a wide gap between the prevailing attitudes among policy makers in Washington in November 1980 and those that will be required for the US to be able to make a positive contribution to this process. When re-evaluation gets underway the following key issues will need to be addressed:

#### **RECOGNITION OF THE FDR/DRU**

There can be no improvement of our position and no resolution of the current conflict without the US officially signaling to the world community that it acknowledges that the FDR/DRU coalition is a legitimate and representative political force in Salvadorean politics.

This recognition will be a key indicator to intransigent sectors of the left and the right that a real change of attitude has taken place in Washington.

When and how this recognition is extended is a critical factor in the prospects for success, in discouraging or encouraging flexibility on the part of the contenders.

We must be willing to meet privately or publicly with a representative delegation of the opposition FDR/DRU coalition. We must avoid the temptation to try to choose or impose interlocu-

tors. The instinctive tendency on our part to speak only with accomodating moderates named by us beforehand will have the effect of limiting these individuals' chances of playing a constructive role within the coalition. If a preference needs to be stated, the US should choose to meet with representatives of the toughest and least likely to compromise factions of the coalition. We must seek to overcome the view that recognition and negotiations are only tactics to divide, or just another form of intervention.

#### **SIGNAL OUR WILLINGNESS TO ABANDON THE CONFRONTATIONAL TRACK**

Salvadorean and international public opinion perceive the US as being committed to a military solution in Central America. We must signal our willingness to abandon this course of action under certain conditions, without necessarily closing that option. To do so we must consider:

- 1) Taking actions which will clearly separate us from those sectors in and out of the armed forces responsible for gross excesses against the population. The individuals involved have been identified by the FDR/DRU and by our own intelligence services.
- 2) Taking actions that indicate our willingness to reduce the level of military support we are providing to the armed forces, for example by reducing or interrupting our training program and supply flows.
- 3) Condemning the intervention plans of Guatemalan military and paramilitary forces, indicating our opposition to Honduran support for hostile actions against Nicaragua.
- 4) Expressing privately and publicly our concern regarding Southern Cone countries' involvement in El Salvador, and urge all our allies, including Israel, to act with caution in the region.

#### **MAINTAIN A LOW PROFILE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS**

Political analysts reflecting on the US role during the mediation efforts in Nicaragua point as its main weakness to the insistence of the Carter administration and the Congress to spearhead the effort. We should not initiate any mediating efforts. Instead we should support such initiatives and encourage those with whom we maintain influence to join in. Our direct participation may actually limit our ability to influence the outcome and may become an obstacle to mutual concessions.

#### **ENCOURAGE PLURALISTIC MEDIA COVERAGE**

Conditions in El Salvador and our official posture have not encouraged adequate coverage. Influential US journalists have been banned from the country by threats on their lives. Salvadorean government restrictions on visiting reporters have kept a tight lid on many critical events in the past six months. Informal signals to foreign desk editors during the electoral campaign discouraged serious investigative journalism.

Appropriate, objective and pluralistic media coverage will make a positive contribution to the search for a peaceful solution to the Salvadorean, and indeed, the Central American conflict.



Lou Howort/Militant

## Reveal Ties Between Capitalists and Somozaist Gangs

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—The pretensions of top businessmen and bourgeois politicians here to be carrying on "a civic struggle" against the Sandinista National Liberation Front's alleged deviations from the Program of Government of National Reconstruction have been dealt a severe blow.

State Security investigations have revealed the existence of direct ties between top Nicaraguan capitalists and armed bands of Somozaist National Guardsmen operating in neighboring countries.

The counterrevolutionary plot was broken up November 17. Three leading figures in the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) were arrested—Leonardo Somarriba, vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce; Mario Hanón, president of the Ricegrowers Association; Alejandro Salazar, vice-president of the Union of Coffee Producers; and several other members of the bourgeoisie.

The leader of the plot was Jorge Salazar, acting president of the COSEP. He was killed in a gun battle when State Security agents tried to arrest him the same day.

The immediate reaction of COSEP, the bourgeois parties, and the capitalist daily *La Prensa* was to portray Salazar as a hero and martyr. COSEP termed his death "an act of barbarism" and a "political crime" and hailed Salazar's "struggle at the side of the people for the original goals of the Nicaraguan revolution. . . ."

The sterling image of Señor Salazar was soon tarnished by the confessions offered by some of his co-conspirators themselves. They told a November 22 news conference at the Interior Ministry here that Salazar had been in contact with top Somozaist officers in Honduras and Costa Rica and with members of the Salvadoran and Honduran governments. (See *Intercontinental Press*, December 1.)

But the crowning blow came November 28 when the Interior Ministry presented Brigade Commander Alvaro Baltodano of the Sandinista People's Army (EPS) to reporters. Baltodano explained how he had been approached in early August by Nestor Moncada Lau, an employee of the Interior Ministry's immigration department. Moncada was with Jorge Salazar on November 17. It was he who opened fire on security agents, thus precipitating Salazar's death.

Moncada had been on friendly terms with Commander Baltodano since 1977. In August he began expressing his discontent with the revolution. "I tried to clarify some

things for him," Baltodano said, "but his statements were getting more and more dangerous—until the moment came when he declared that there were some persons who thought as he did and that there was a possibility of forming a group to deal with the problems he was talking about."

Baltodano informed the security forces of his conversations with Moncada and was instructed to play along, gain Moncada's confidence, and see where things might lead.

Before long, Baltodano was being told by Moncada that plans were underway for the armed overthrow of the Junta of National Reconstruction and its replacement with a new junta composed of COSEP leaders and ex-National Guard officers, "who are not viewed unfavorably by the people."

Moncada said his associates were especially interested in establishing contact with discontented members of the Sandinista armed forces. So at the end of October Commander Baltodano himself was invited to a meeting at the home of Moncada's aunt, Dora María Lau de Lacayo. She and Chamber of Commerce Vice-president Somarriba began to "talk about the need to accelerate the coup," Baltodano related. "They said that the more time went by the more the Sandinista Front was consolidating itself in power and the more difficult it was becoming to mount a coup."

Baltodano learned at the second meeting that Somarriba, Jorge and Alejandro Salazar, and Mario Hanón had all been traveling extensively to Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Miami. They were obtaining funds and holding discussions with such top Somozaist officers as Lieut. Col. Guillermo Mendieta, Col. Enrique Bermúdez, and Col. Justiniano Pérez. Pérez was the second in command to the dictator's son, Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero, in the brutal National Guard unit known as the Infantry Basic Training School (EEBI).

Jorge Salazar told the conspirators that he was "impressed" with the Somozaist plan for military attacks on Nicaragua and their level of organization.

"What we could definitely see was a movement getting started to try to regroup all the counterrevolutionary forces that are attacking the Sandinista People's Revolution," Baltodano said. Up to now the Somozaists have been divided and "fighting among themselves over money," he added.

"In the same meeting Jorge Salazar said

that the next day the COSEP and all the parties that revolve around it were going to withdraw from the Council of State," Baltodano continued.

Salazar said he and the others "had taken advantage of their trips to distribute a document concerning the withdrawal from the Council of State and the economic situation of the country and that this was going to produce very strong propaganda against the FSLN internationally."

After the walkout from the Council of State another meeting was held. Jorge Salazar declared that this action by COSEP and the bourgeois parties "had created a completely favorable situation for the movement they were planning, that the international support had been total, and that here in Nicaragua *everyone* had supported the withdrawal by COSEP and that political conditions were ripe for the coup. . . ."

Within a week Salazar was dead. His fellow conspirators were in jail and tens of thousands of Nicaraguans were taking to the streets to reaffirm their support to the FSLN and to repudiate counterrevolutionary provocations by COSEP and the bourgeois parties.

For months the bourgeoisie had carried on a carefully orchestrated political offensive against the FSLN, using *La Prensa*, sections of the Catholic church hierarchy, and dire warnings of economic chaos by the COSEP.

The offensive collapsed because the bourgeois leaders came to believe their own propaganda. They believed *La Prensa's* claims that the Nicaraguan people were turning against the "communistic" and "atheistic" FSLN. They thought their walkout from the Council of State would provoke a crisis in the government, win them mass sympathy, and set the stage for military action against the revolution from abroad.

Instead they ran up against the iron determination of the Nicaraguan masses to defend the political and social gains they have made in the last sixteen months. And they also collided with the disciplined loyalty to the cause of the workers and peasants that holds sway throughout the Sandinista People's Army. "Those who are conspiring against the revolution committed their first and fundamental mistake when they tried to meddle with the armed forces," said Commander Juan José Ubeda of State Security at the November 28 news conference. "That could only lead them to failure."

December 3, 1980



### Turbay Extends Rural Terror to Urabá

By Socorro Ramírez

BOGOTÁ—The Colombian army has launched a major military operation against peasants in the Urabá region, on the Caribbean coast, according to October 20 reports in the Colombian press. This operation is added to the large-scale repressive campaign that was launched on August 19 against peasants in the El Pato region of Huila Province. [See *IP*, October 20, 1980, p. 1088.]

According to *El Espectador*, a Bogotá daily, Gen. Landazabal Reyes arrived in Urabá at the head of more than 10,000 soldiers drawn from the army, navy, air force, paratroops, and "Psychological Action Units" of the armed forces, in a display of manpower never before seen in operations of this type.

The operation began with a propaganda campaign aimed at the population. Posters were put up and helicopters dropped leaflets calling on the peasants to reveal the whereabouts of peasant-based guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

In justification of its repressive measures, the army claims it is trying to wipe out a FARC Fifth Front operating in the area. The propaganda was profusely disseminated in the areas where the operation was focused.

In addition, it was revealed in the Colombian Congress that two U.S. helicopters were seen landing eight armed and uniformed American soldiers in Bahía Solano, in the Pacific coast province of

Chocó. The government claims that these were technical advisers, although Congress never authorized such advisers.

The offensive in Urabá, like the other "counterinsurgency" operations being carried out, is aimed primarily against the peasants. In public human-rights forums the peasants have presented the facts about the repression and have exposed tortures, detentions, controls, and limitations on food sales to peasants (on the theory that they could be buying supplies for the guerrillas).

They have exposed murders, such as the killing of Antonio Jiménez, an Urabá Communist municipal council member, and Darío Arango, the chairman of the municipal council in Puerto Berrío.

The forums have also exposed instances of genocide, such as the assaults against the Emberá Indians of Alto Andágueda, which were ordered by local politicians and political bosses.

The new offensive against Urabá is how the government of President Julio César Turbay Ayala has responded to the demands of the Colombian people for a general amnesty, lifting of the State of Siege, and abolition of the security law.

The struggle to remove the military from the peasant areas and Indian reservations, and solidarity with the people of El Pato, the Urabá peasants, and the Emberá Indians requires united solidarity activities, within Colombia and abroad. □

### Demand Release of Colombian Socialists

Estela Paredes and Jaime Saavedra, members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR) of Colombia, were taken into custody by the Colombian army on November 6 in the city of Neiva, in the department of Huila, for organizing protests against the rise in prices for public services and against the army's persecution of the people of El Pato.

According to a communiqué from the Central Committee of the PSR, "there has been increased repression against the mass movement, which arose out of the population's opposition to the army bombardment of El Pato." As a result, "the government has jailed ten of the main leaders of this movement," including com-

rades Paredes and Saavedra of the PSR.

Estela Paredes was sentenced to six months in prison on November 14. The charges against her still have not been established since the sentence followed a drumhead military trial in which she did not have a lawyer. As of November 17, Saavedra still has not been sentenced.

International solidarity is of decisive importance in freeing these fighters. Messages demanding their release should be sent to President Julio César Turbay Ayala, Presidencia de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 #7-26, Bogotá, Colombia. A copy of messages should be sent to *Combate Socialista*, Apartado Aéreo 13750, Bogotá, Colombia.

## To keep up with a constantly changing world, you need... Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

The *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* staff follows periodicals from all over the world to keep you on top of key international developments. *IP/I* also publishes regular reports from international correspondents. Readers find *IP/I*'s incisive weekly socialist analysis of world events indispensable.



### Yes! Start my subscription now!

- INTRODUCTORY OFFER.** Send me three months of *IP/I* for \$8.75.  
 Send me six months of *IP/I* for \$17.50.  Send me one year of *IP/I* for \$35.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Canadian Rates:** \$41 for one year; \$21 for six months. Send for rates to other countries.

Make checks payable to:  
**Intercontinental Press**

Mail to:  
**Intercontinental Press/Inprecor**  
410 West Street  
New York, N.Y. 10014

## Guatemalan Indians Joining Guerrilla Struggle

By Aníbal Yáñez

[The following article appeared in the December 15 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a U.S. Spanish-language socialist fortnightly. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

"We have come mainly to give testimony about what we have lived through—the brutal repression and genocide that the government of General Romeo Lucas García is carrying out in Guatemala." These were the words of Father "Celso," who together with Father "José" is one of the Catholic priests who have been forced to leave Guatemala as a result of the kidnappings, torture, and massacres perpetrated by the army and the government in that country. *Perspectiva Mundial* spoke with them recently during a visit they made to the United States. (For obvious reasons we are keeping their real names secret.)

### The Panzós Massacre

On May 29, 1978, in the town of Panzós, in the department of Alta Verapaz about 125 miles northeast of Guatemala City, more than 100 peasants—men, women, and children, all Kekchi Indians—were machine-gunned in the main square simply for demanding their right to the land. They were killed by the regular troops and armed farm owners of the region. According to Father "Celso," more than 200 people actually died "because many frightened and terrified women tried to flee by jumping into the [Polochic] river, and drowned. Others went to their villages to die."

The Panzós massacre is capitalism's real face in Guatemala. Since the end of the 1960s, the big imperialist companies increasingly entered Guatemala in search of minerals and hydrocarbons (for example, the extraction of nickel by INCO, or oil by among others, Basic Resources). And Panzós, along with many other Indian communities, is right in the area where the foreign-owned mining and oil companies are operating—the so-called Northern Transverse Strip.

On June 5, 1978, the El Quiché diocese of the Guatemalan Catholic church issued a statement on the Panzós massacre. It stated that "the Panzós massacre is no isolated case. It is rather another step in the escalating violence which has been raging all over the country for years. Quiché Department has been and still is suffering from this situation of permanent violence, with killings, kidnappings, torture, housebreakings, intimidations, etc.,

in recent years."

The statement added that "We believe that the basic factors causing this situation are the following:

"a) The greed for land on the part of those who hold power in the social, economic, and political spheres, and who tend to amass more and more.



Father Walter Voordeckers, murdered May 12, 1980.

"b) The constant exploitation of the working people and peasants, who are mainly Indians, and who have no means of defence whatsoever at their disposal.

"c) The fear felt by those in power that the most humble and deprived part of the population should become aware of their rights as human beings and children of God."

After that, repression against the church intensified because of its identification with the peasants. One month after the Panzós massacre, on June 30, 1978, Father Hermógenes López, who had repeatedly exposed atrocities committed by the army, was assassinated in Guatemala City. Several priests were also expelled from the country.

### The Massacre at the Spanish Embassy

In January 1980 a group of peasants from el Quiché Province occupied the

Spanish embassy in Guatemala City to denounce repression in the village of Chajul and to demand that peasant leaders who had been "disappeared" be accounted for. On January 31 the police attacked the embassy with flame-throwers. More than thirty peasants, students, Spanish diplomats, and former officials of the Guatemalan government were burned alive.

Once again the diocese of El Quiché issued a statement denouncing the massacre. For the first time, Father "José" pointed out, the church in this statement "not only condemned the repression but made a move of positive solidarity with the people's struggle."

Since the massacre at the embassy, the repression has not stopped, but rather has grown enormously. Armed patrols around parish churches have increased, and priests are accused of being guerrillas and of encouraging subversion simply because they condemn the army's attacks on the population.

In February the army threw cluster bombs at the Uspantán convent in El Quiché. All the church personnel from Uspantán withdrew to the capital. There they began to receive letters containing death threats from the Secret Anticommunist Army (ESA). (The ESA is a secret repressive organization with direct links to the Guatemalan army. According to an exposé several months ago by the former head of information and press of Guatemala's Interior Ministry, most ESA members are Guatemalan army officers trained in the United States, Chile, Israel and Argentina.)

### The Nebaj Massacre

Sunday, March 2, 1980, was market day in the village of Nebaj, and three or four thousand peasants from the surrounding area were in town. The army encircled the town to force all citizens to get military identification cards to prove that they weren't guerrillas. Using bullhorns, the soldiers told the people that anyone without a card would automatically be considered a guerrilla and could be shot without a trial, without even being questioned.

The army assigned one soldier with an old typewriter to make up the cards and forced the people to get in line. The soldier barely knew how to type, and in the whole day he was only able to make up about thirty cards. More than 3,000 people had to spend the night in line in front of the barracks, hungry, shivering with cold.



And frightened, because many people who had gone into the barracks had never come out again. When the doors of the barracks were opened, those at the front of the line saw some of their people hanging by their arms from the rafters.

In the neighboring villages the women began to worry because the men had not returned home. Knowing of the frequent army slaughters, they began to fear that their husbands had been killed.

A group of about fifty women got together and went into town demanding to see their husbands. The soldiers checked their weapons and began to threaten the women, shouting at them and shoving them. The women resisted being pushed back. The soldiers responded by opening fire on the whole plaza. It is reported that the bodies of twelve women and children were left in front of the church.

Once again the diocese of El Quiché issued a statement, this one dated March 5, 1980. According to Father "José," "for the first time an official church statement explicitly said that the army murdered the civilian population.

"This fact is important," he emphasized, "because the document was read in all the churches and was never denied."

#### The Army Assassinates Priests

The response of the repressive forces did not take the form of verbal explanations or denials. Father "José" recalls:

"On March 28 and May 3, the Uspután parish houses were fired on. Father Conrado de la Cruz was kidnapped in the capital May 1 and, of course, has not been seen again. Father Walter Voordeckers was murdered in front of his parish church on May 12. And Father José María Gran was assassinated on June 4."

Father José María Gran had been a



Captured Indian guerrillas.

witness to the killing of Nebaj. When the diocese of El Quiché published its statement on this massacre, the captain of the Nebaj detachment asked Father Gran if he had supplied the facts. Father Gran replied that the statement had been written by the entire diocese, and the captain responded: "Yes, but the Bishop wasn't aware of what happened in Nebaj. You were the one who brought this news to Quiché."

Over and over, Fathers "Celso" and "José" specifically stressed that the Guatemalan army is "the guilty party, carries out and directs the massacres, the killing, the terror, the kidnapping, the torture."

This is absolutely clear in the case of the assassination of Father José María Gran. In its report to the municipality of Chajul, the army itself said: "We had an encounter with guerrillas. We have left two bodies there; go get them." They were the bodies of Father Gran and his church sacristan.

On July 10, 1980, Father Faustino Villanueva was murdered in his office in Joyabaj. During that same month there were two attempts to assassinate the bishop of the diocese of El Quiché, Monsignor Gerardi. Then on July 19, the bishop called a meeting of all the priests, all members of religious orders, and all church workers, and decided that they should temporarily leave the diocese and El Quiché.

"It was closed for two reasons," explained Father "José." "First, because it was clear that they were going to kill all of us. And also so that this act would alert the whole world, expose before the world what is going on in El Quiché."

A recent proclamation of the Guatemalan Church in Exile declared that "the kidnapping, tortures, and massacres carried out by the army and the government

of Guatemala," are "the only way to maintain a system of exploitation, injustice and institutionalized sin, which is clearly anti-Christian and criminal."

#### The People are Losing Their Fear

The Indian peoples, who make up 60 percent of the Guatemalan population, are engaged in a struggle for land and for life itself. They have suffered the most in massacre after massacre, at the hands of the genocidal government. And the church, by standing beside the poor in the Indian regions, is the target of persecution and assassinations.

But the people of Guatemala are beginning to resist the repression and to lose their fear of it. As Father "Celso" states, "the people have said, 'There is no longer any alternative, the only road left is to go into the mountains. All the other doors have been closed.' One peasant told me, 'I'm not going to wait with my arms folded for them to come and kill me. I'm going into the mountains because I have to defend my family.'" Everyone understands that "the mountains" is synonymous with "the guerrillas."

Father "José" added, "The people are saying that the blister is too swollen and that somehow it will have to burst."

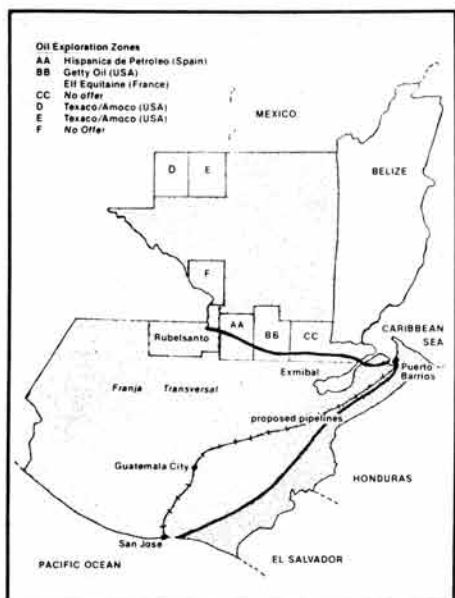
The Guatemalan Indian has been looked on as some kind of museum piece, existing only for tourists who want to take pictures.

But "the Indians are regaining their identity" in the struggle, Father "Celso" said. They are struggling for a revolution that will carry out a total and effective agrarian reform. They are saying, "So far we Indians may have been trampled underfoot, but no more."

Indians are being massively organized into unions, led by the Committee for Peasant Unity (CUC). And they are heading for the mountains, joining the guerrilla organizations in large numbers, not only in El Quiché but all over Guatemala.

The Indian, pushed to the sidelines for centuries, has said "enough!" They are convinced that a change is coming, that they will win their liberation.

Christians like Father "Celso" and Father "José," the committed sectors of the church in Guatemala, recognize that the only alternative left to the people is "the underground struggle and the people's struggle." □



Oil exploration zones in the Northern Transversé Strip.

#### European Subscribers

Subscriptions to Europe are now being processed through New York. Please address all correspondence to:

Intercontinental Press  
410 West Street  
New York, New York 10014

### Italian CP Takes Part in Trotsky Symposium

On Italy's Mediterranean Coast, about an hour south of Pisa by train, is the small resort town of Follonica, a city of about 10,000 people.

Follonica is in Italy's "Red Belt." Its city government is dominated by the Communist Party, as are the governments of its province (Grosseto) and region (Tuscany).

At a cost of tens of thousands of dollars these CP-led governmental bodies provided hotel accommodations and meals, and paid the airfare of most of those presenting papers at an October 7-11 "International Symposium on Leon Trotsky on the Fortieth Anniversary of His Death."

The Italian CP, the largest nongoverning Communist Party in the world, has long been trying to convince the Italian bourgeoisie of its reliability and its independence from the Soviet Union in order to be allowed into a coalition government on the national level.

What better way to do this than to organize scholarly symposia on historic figures who remain anathema in the Soviet Union? In June, for example, the Italian CP, in its own name, organized a symposium on Nikolai Bukharin, the leader of the Soviet Right Opposition who was executed in 1938 by Stalin after the Moscow Trials.

The October symposium on Trotsky was not officially sponsored by the Italian CP, although CP-led governments paid the expenses and CP members participated in it. Officially, it was organized under the auspices of the Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Foundation.

The participants, who came from the United States, Israel, Australia, France, Britain, West Germany, Spain, Italy, Austria, and elsewhere, were a varied lot. There were academic specialists, university researchers, political scientists, and even some political activists (as long as they had certain academic credentials).

Historians from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were invited to participate, but declined.

Conference participants fell into three general categories according to a report by Jean-François Godchau in the November 6-13 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*. The first group was made up of bourgeois specialists who study the Russian Revolution the way other scholars study astrophysics or insect morphology.

The second group was made up of Italian CP members and their "democratic" friends. The range of opinions presented by this tendency was surprisingly broad.

Godchau notes that these two groups, whatever their differences regarding Trotsky the person or Trotsky's ideas, were in

general agreement that Trotsky was not a defender of democratic rights. This they "proved" through references to the suppression of the Kronstadt uprising, to Trotsky's proposal to militarize the trade unions in 1921, and to his book *Terrorism and Communism*. Some went so far as to say that Trotsky, had he remained in power, would have followed similar policies to those implemented by Stalin.

The third tendency at the symposium was made up of those who, whether or not members of any organization, considered themselves part of the Trotskyist current. This included members of the Fourth International, the Internationalist Communist Organization (OCI) from France, the Institut Léon Trotsky, and the editorial board of the British magazine *Critique*.

One scholar from the Trotskyist tendency was conspicuous by his absence, a fact that was remarked upon by a number of participants. Ernest Mandel, the internationally known Belgian Marxist and a leader of the Fourth International, had not been invited to attend.

Each day, or half day, was devoted to a general theme, which was dealt with in a principal report and several briefer "co-reports," followed by limited discussion from the floor.

In all there were more than thirty contributions, which were extremely uneven in their importance and interest, according to Godchau. The reports were grouped under the general headings of Trotsky's Political and Cultural Training; Trotsky and Lenin; Trotsky and the October Revolution; Trotsky and the Soviet Economy; Socialism in One Country; and Trotsky and the Fourth International.

What did the symposium add to our understanding of Trotsky, his life, his fight, his thinking, his work? Actually, nothing. There was, in fact, nothing new in the reports, no facts that had not been widely known before the specialists began their laborious research.

Despite this, it would be a mistake to conclude that the symposium had no value. The importance of the gathering lay less in what was said than in the very fact that it took place with the explicit and active participation of members of the Communist Party.

As mentioned earlier, the Italian CP has its own reasons for its role in the conference.

But the CP's participation helps to break down the wall that the international Stalinist movement has tried to erect against Trotsky and his ideas. It helps to undercut the slanders that have been levelled against him and against the Trotskyist

movement, and the attempts to read Trotskyists out of the workers movement.

One interesting footnote on the CP's participation is the very name of the conference. By calling it a symposium on the fortieth anniversary of Trotsky's "death," the organizers hoped to gloss over the fact that Trotsky did not simply die, but was murdered in Mexico by an agent of the Soviet secret police, Ramón Mercader.

For decades the international Stalinist movement denied its responsibility for Trotsky's assassination. Despite all the evidence, it claimed that there had never been any proof that the murderer was a Stalinist agent and argued that the deed had been committed by one of Trotsky's disgruntled followers.

The first time any Stalinist source acknowledged that Trotsky had indeed been murdered by the GPU came in 1978, with the publication of the memoirs of Valentín Campa, who was at the time of the assassination a top leader of the Mexican CP, and who described the arrangements that were made to organize Trotsky's murder.<sup>1</sup>

But one person at the conference—a member of the ultrasectarian Workers Revolutionary Party of Britain—came all the way from London with the sole purpose of resurrecting the Stalinist version of Trotsky's assassination. The WRP, under the leadership of guru Gerry Healy, has spent the past five years waging a vicious slander campaign against longtime leaders of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (and of the international Trotskyist movement) George Novack and Joseph Hansen. Both of them, according to the Healyite cosmology, were simultaneously agents of the Soviet GPU and of the American FBI.

The only contribution of the lone Healyite at the conference was to level the charge that the late Joseph Hansen, Trotsky's trusted collaborator, was really complicit in Trotsky's murder.<sup>2</sup>

The Italian CP daily *l'Unità* was more than happy to report this slander under the headline "An Agitated Intervention in the Symposium on Trotsky." □

1. The chapter of Campa's *Mi Testimonio—Memorias de un comunista mexicano* in which he admits Stalin's guilt in the murder of Leon Trotsky was translated and printed in *Intercontinental Press*, December 18, 1978, pp. 1397-99. The same issue of *IP* also contains a review of Campa's book by Joseph Hansen.

2. In April 1975 the WRP launched its campaign of character assassination against Joseph Hansen, which has continued without interruption to the present. Hansen carefully answered these slanders in the November 24, 1975 and August 9, 1976 issues of *Intercontinental Press*. In addition the Socialist Workers Party published an "Education for Socialists" bulletin in December 1976 entitled *Healy's Big Lie: The Slander Campaign Against Joseph Hansen, George Novack, and the Fourth International*.



# DOCUMENTS

## Statement of the FSLN National Directorate

### The Role of Religion in the New Nicaragua

[The following statement by the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was published in the October 7 issue of the FSLN's official organ, the Managua daily *Barricada*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

For some time the enemies of our people—driven from power once and for all—have been carrying on an obstinate campaign of distortions and lies about various aspects of the revolution, with the aim of confusing the people. This campaign of ideological confusion seeks to promote anti-Sandinista fears and attitudes among the people, while at the same time politically wearing down the FSLN through interminable polemics that never seek honest conclusions, but in fact seek precisely the opposite.

The question of religion has a special place in these campaigns of confusion since a large percentage of the Nicaraguan people have very deep-rooted religious sentiments. In this regard, the reactionaries' efforts have been aimed at spreading the idea that the FSLN is using religion now in order to later suppress it. Clearly, the purpose of such propaganda is to manipulate our people's honest faith in order to provoke a *political* reaction against the FSLN and the revolution.

This campaign is particularly vicious because it takes up matters that touch very deep feelings of many Nicaraguans. Given the importance of the question, and in order to orient our membership, clarify things for our people, and prevent further manipulation of this subject, the National Directorate of the FSLN has decided to issue this document expressing its official position on religion.

\* \* \*

Christian patriots and revolutionaries are an integral part of the Sandinista People's Revolution, and they have been for many years. The participation of Christians—both lay people and clergy—in the FSLN and the Government of National Reconstruction is a logical outgrowth of their outstanding participation at the people's side throughout the struggle against the dictatorship.

Through their interpretation of their faith, many FSLN members and fighters were motivated to join the revolutionary

#### Nicaraguan Bishops Reply to FSLN

MANAGUA—The Conference of Bishops of Nicaragua issued a lengthy statement on October 17 in response to the FSLN's declaration on religion. While welcoming the latter as a "basis for dialogue with the Christian people" the bishops made a series of sharp criticisms of the FSLN's stance that generally echoed the line of the capitalist daily *La Prensa* and the bourgeois parties.

The bishops denounced "totalitarian systems" which they said "deny 'qualitative participation' to the Church in economic affairs" while accepting its role "strategically." The latter was a veiled condemnation of recent statements by Cuban leader Fidel Castro who after meeting with Nicaraguan priests last July called for a "strategic alliance" between revolutionary and progressive Christians in Latin America.

The main bone of contention between the church hierarchy and the FSLN is the participation of Catholic priests in leading posts in the revolutionary government. Three priests are cabinet ministers—Father Miguel D'Escoto (foreign affairs), Father Edgardo Parrales (social welfare), and Father Ernesto Cardenal (culture). D'Escoto and Cardenal are also members of the Sandinista Assembly, a body that

serves as the FSLN's central committee.

The bishops' October 17 statement complained of the "instrumentalization" and "manipulation" of priests. "To provoke divisions inside the Church," they said, "it is enough to introduce disorder and indiscipline among its ministers with brandishments and sinecures. . . ."

Priests serving in the revolutionary government have been told by Archbishop Obando y Bravo that they have until December 31 to gain permission from the pope for doing so. He has not specified what action the hierarchy might take if they fail to do so.

The FSLN has not responded directly to the statement by the bishops. However, the October 29 issue of *Barricada* did feature an "Open Letter to the Bishops of Nicaragua" written by Father Manuel Batalla. He termed the bishops' statement "truly a slap in the face of this revolution, one that could signal a dangerous threat against the aspirations of the poor."

"Why," Father Batalla asked the bishops, "do important sectors of the ecclesiastical hierarchy fall into the trap of faithfulness to a bourgeois ideology that safeguards the interests of a few against the rights of majority?"

The bishops have offered no answer.

struggle and therefore the FSLN. Many gave not only their valiant support to our cause, but were also examples of dedication, even to the point of shedding their blood to water the seed of liberation.

How could we forget our beloved martyrs Oscar Pérez Cassar, Oscar Robelo, Sergio Guerrero, Arlen Siu, Guadalupe Moreno, and Leonardo Matute, or the dozens of Messengers of the Word<sup>1</sup> murdered by the Somozaist National Guard in the mountains of our country, or so many other brothers and sisters.

1. Messengers of the Word was a Christian group which did peasant organizing in the early 1970s.—IP

We should give special mention to the revolutionary work and heroic sacrifice of Catholic priest and Sandinista member Gaspar García Laviana. He represented the highest synthesis of Christian vocation and revolutionary consciousness.

All these were humble men and women who knew how to fulfill their duty as patriots and revolutionaries without getting bogged down in long philosophical discussions. They now live eternally in the memory of the people, who will never forget their sacrifice.

But the participation of Christians was not limited to serving as fighters in the Sandinista Front. Many Christians, lay people and clergy, who never participated

in the ranks of the FSLN although some were linked to it, professed and practiced their faith in accord with our people's need for liberation. The Catholic church and some Evangelical churches even participated as institutions in the people's victory over the Somoza regime of terror.

On various occasions the Catholic Bishops bravely denounced the crimes and abuses of the dictatorship. Monsignor Obando y Bravo and Monsignor Salazar y Espinoza, among others, were abused by Somozaist gangs. It was a group of priests and monks that exposed to the world the disappearance of three thousand peasants in the mountains in the north of our country.

Many Christians of different denominations carried a liberating message to the people. Some even gave refuge and food to the Sandinistas who were mercilessly persecuted by Somozaism.

People gathered in the religious houses to hear underground news bulletins when the Somozaist repression prevented independent radio stations from broadcasting.

Because of their brave participation in the struggle, the Catholic Church and Christians in general suffered persecution and death. Many religious figures also were mistreated, were expelled from our country, faced a thousand obstacles to the exercise of their Christian faith. Many religious buildings were broken into, pillaged, bombed and assaulted in attempts to murder *compañeros* inside, as was the case with El Calvario Church in León and the chapels in the mountains.

To a degree unprecedented in any other revolutionary movement in Latin America and perhaps the world, Christians have been an integral part of our revolutionary history. This fact opens up new and interesting possibilities for the participation of Christians in revolutions in other places, not only during the struggle for power, but also later in the stage of building the new society.

In the new conditions that are posed by the revolutionary process, we Christian and non-Christian revolutionaries must come together around the task of providing continuity to this extremely valuable experience, extending it into the future. We must perfect the forms of conscious participation among all the revolutionaries in Nicaragua, whatever their philosophical positions and religious beliefs.

#### **FSLN's Positions on Religion**

1. The FSLN sees freedom to profess a religious faith as an inalienable right which is fully guaranteed by the revolutionary government. This principle was included in our Revolutionary Program long ago, and we will maintain it in practice in the future. Furthermore, in the new Nicaragua no one can be discriminated against for publicly professing or spreading their religious beliefs. Those who profess no religious faith have the

very same right.

2. Some authors have asserted that religion is a mechanism for spreading false consciousness among people, which serves to justify the exploitation of one class by another. This assertion undoubtedly has historic validity to the extent that in different historical epochs religion has served as a theoretical basis for political domination. Suffice it to recall the role that the missionaries played in the process of domination and colonization of the Indians of our country.

However, we Sandinistas state that our experience shows that when Christians, basing themselves on their faith, are capable of responding to the needs of the people and of history, those very beliefs lead them to revolutionary activism. Our experience shows us that one can be a believer and a consistent revolutionary at the same time, and that there is no insoluble contradiction between the two.

3. The FSLN is the organization of Nicaraguan revolutionaries, who have voluntarily come together to transform the social, economic, and political situation in our country in line with a known program and strategy.

All those who agree with our objectives and proposals, and have the personal qualities demanded by our organization, have every right to participate actively in our ranks, whatever their religious beliefs. Evidence of this is provided by the fact that there are three Catholic priests in the Sandinista Assembly.

Many Christians are members of the FSLN, and there will be Christians within the Sandinista Front as long as there are revolutionary Christians in Nicaragua.

4. As a vanguard that is conscious of the immense responsibilities that have fallen upon its shoulders, the FSLN zealously seeks to maintain the strength and unity of its organization around the explicit objectives for which it was formed. Within the framework of the FSLN, there is no place for religious proselytism. This would undermine the specific character of our vanguard and introduce factors of disunity, since the Sandinista Front includes *compañeros* of various religions and none.

Outside the framework of the FSLN, Christian activists—whether they be priests, pastors, members of religious orders, or lay people—all have the right to express their convictions publicly. This cannot be used to detract from their work in the FSLN or from the confidence that they have gained as a result of their revolutionary activity.

5. The FSLN has a profound respect for all the religious celebrations and traditions of our people. It is striving to restore the true meaning of these occasions by attacking various evils and forms of corruption that were introduced into them in the past.

We feel that this respect must be expressed not only by insuring conditions for the free expression of these traditions, but

also by seeing that they are not used for political or commercial ends. If in the future any Sandinista activist departs from this principle, we state now that this in no way represents the FSLN's position.

Of course, if other political parties or individuals try to turn the people's religious festivals or activities into political acts against the revolution (as has happened in some instances in the past), the FSLN declares it also has a right to defend the people and the revolution in these same conditions.

6. No Sandinista member should, in any official capacity, offer an opinion on the interpretation of religious questions that are solely the concern of the various Churches. These questions must be decided by the Christians among themselves. If a Sandinista who is also a Christian intervenes in the polemics of that kind, he does so in a personal capacity, in his capacity as a Christian.

7. Some reactionary ideologists have accused the FSLN of trying to divide the Church. Nothing could be further from the truth or more ill-intentioned than this accusation. If there are divisions within the religions, they exist completely independently of the will and activity of the FSLN.

A study of history shows that around big political events members of the Catholic Church have always taken different and even contradictory positions. Missionaries came with the Spanish colonizers, and they used the cross to consecrate the slave labor that had been initiated by the sword. But against them arose the firmness of Bartolomé de las Casas, the defender of the Indians.<sup>2</sup>

In the beginning of the last century many priests fought for the independence of Central America, some with weapons in hand. And on the other extreme there were priests who defended the privileges of the crown in Latin America with equal vehemence.

After liberation from the colonial yoke, we find the anti-interventionist positions of Monsignor Pereira y Castellón, who called for defense of the nation's interests against the North American invasion. During the Somoza epoch the figure of Monsignor Calderón y Padilla stands out, attacking the Somozas' vice, corruption and abuse of power against the poor.

And today there is the massive revolutionary commitment among revolutionary Christians.

Earlier we mentioned the participation of many Christians in the people's revolutionary struggle. But we must also point out that some, like León Pallais and others, remained at Somoza's side to the end.

We should not forget that in that period

2. Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566), a Spanish Dominican, was known as the "protector of the Indians" for his defense of the rights of the Indians against the Spanish settlers.—IP



there were priests who proudly paraded their military ranks and official positions—of course no one demanded that they give up their posts. But we should also not forget that in contrast to these sad examples we have the immense figure of Gaspar García L. and so many other Sandinista martyrs of Christian origin.

This situation continues in the present stage. An immense majority of the Christians actively support and participate in the revolution. But there is also a minority that maintain political positions opposed to the revolution.

Naturally we Sandinistas are good friends of the revolutionary Christians but not of the counterrevolutionaries, even though they call themselves Christians.

The FSLN, however, maintains communications on all levels with different Churches, with the ranks and the hierarchy, without regard to their political positions.

We do not foster or provoke activities to divide the Churches. That question is the exclusive concern of the Christians and does not involve political organizations. If divisions do exist, the Churches must look for the causes within themselves and not attribute them to supposed malicious outside influences. Speaking frankly, we would look kindly upon a Church that took part, in an unprejudiced, mature, and responsible manner, in the common effort to continually expand the dialogue and participation that our revolutionary process has opened.

8. Another matter that has recently been the subject of discussion is the participation of priests and members of religious orders in the Government of National Reconstruction. In regard to this, we declare that every Nicaraguan citizen has a right to participate in carrying out political affairs in our country, whatever their civil state, and the Government of National Reconstruction guarantees this right, which is backed up by the law.

The priest *compañeros* who have taken posts in the government, in response to the FSLN's call and their obligations as citizens, have thus far carried out extraordinary work. Facing great and difficult problems, our country needs the participation of all patriots to move forward. It especially needs those who had the chance to receive higher education, which was denied to the majority of our people.

Therefore, the FSLN will continue to ask all those lay and clerical citizens whose experience or qualifications might be needed for our process to participate.

If any of the religious *compañeros* decides to give up their governmental responsibilities for their own special reasons, that too is their right. Exercising the right to participate in and fulfill one's patriotic obligation is a matter of personal conscience.

9. The revolution and the state have origins, goals, and spheres of action that

are different than those of religion. For the revolutionary state, religion is a personal matter. It is the concern of individuals, churches, and special associations organized around religious aims.

Like every modern state, the revolutionary state is secular and cannot adopt any religion because it is the representative of all the people, believers as well as nonbelievers.

By issuing this official communiqué, the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front hopes not only to clarify the question under discussion, but also and especially to remind the

revolutionary militants of the FSLN and the Churches of their duties and responsibilities in the construction of our country, which has been held down by 159 years of pillage, repression, and dependence.

Building Nicaragua's future is a historic challenge that transcends our borders and inspires other peoples in their struggle for liberation and to create the new man, and it is a right and a duty of all Nicaraguans, regardless of their religious beliefs.

Sandinó Yesterday, Sandinó Today, Sandinó Always!

A Free Homeland or Death! □

## Uruguayans Reject Military Rule

Uruguay's military dictatorship was taken by surprise when voters in that country rejected continued military rule in a November 30 referendum.

A proposed constitution that would have given the military a permanent say in running the country was turned down by 58 percent of the voters. Only 42 percent voted for the constitution, which would have given the armed forces final authority over almost all governmental policies ranging from education to economics.

Military power in Uruguay resides in a council of twenty-eight generals and admirals who rule the country through a civilian figurehead, President Aparicio Méndez. The military took power in a 1973 coup following a vicious crackdown against the leftist Tupamaros guerrillas.

All left-wing political parties were banned and an estimated 5,000 of their members were arrested along with at least 700 trade unionists. There was widespread torture, and as many as 400,000 Uruguayans fled the country. Today there are still at least 1,400 political prisoners who remain in jail.

In the month before the plebiscite the

government announced it was lifting some of its strict censorship and allowing limited political activity for debate on the constitution. However, almost all of the country's former civilian political leaders were prohibited from engaging in political activity. Many were detained and questioned by the police. Campaigning in public places was prohibited and opposition meetings were broken up. Some 10,000 people, identified as leftists, were barred from voting in the referendum.

The government bombarded radio and television with proconstitution jingles every fifteen minutes. And newspapers were filled with advertisements recalling killings, kidnappings, bombings, and robberies from the early 1970s that were blamed on the Tupamaros, implying this would happen again if the constitution was not approved.

Despite this propaganda barrage and its repressive moves, the military suffered defeat.

The result has clearly placed the opponents of military rule in a stronger position to carry on the fight against the generals. □



Political prisoners in Montevideo during 1973 campaign against Tupamaros.

## 'There Can Be No Leadership If There Is No Open Debate'

[The following article by Wojciech Lamentowicz was published in the November 14 issue of *Zycie Warszawy*, the most important daily paper in Poland. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

The hopes of the entire population of Poland are bound up today with the prospects for political and economic reform. The general outline for such reform is included in the August agreements [the accord between the government and the independent unions that concluded the August-September strikes].

The most important of these provisions concerns the methods of administration to be employed by the government and a new style of party leadership.

The new element of democracy is primarily the independent trade unions, which are now authorized by law to express opinions about the division of the national income between consumption and accumulation, the bases for determining wages, price and wage policy, long-range economic planning, and the orientation of investment. That the independent unions will be able to have a say in these matters is guaranteed by their representativeness, their right to strike, limitation of censorship, and the compulsion placed on the state apparatus to function in a more open way.

We are all aware that maintaining these guarantees requires a new definition of the role of the workers party. This can and must be done by the party itself in its efforts to carry out the social agreements. It is rather generally agreed that the political crises from 1956 to 1980 were not caused by economic difficulties, bad harvests, or world-market recessions.

The crises of confidence in the government were provoked by a *crisis of internal democracy in the party*, which resulted from an arbitrary and conspiratorial style of leadership followed by the party apparatus and the top leadership circles.

The methods and the extent of the intervention of the party apparatus in economic, social, and cultural life began rightly to be questioned. So, up till now it has not been the party as a whole that has served as the political and ideological guide for the social activity of the industrial workers and other groups of working people.

Instead of the party as an organized whole, it has been the apparatus, the secretaries and executives at all levels, from the Political Bureau to the directors of the base organizations, that have exer-

cised this leading role. Moreover, instead of fulfilling the role of ideological and political leadership, the apparatus has run things administratively. In this, it has utilized elective positions and the civil service hierarchy but it has not respected the rules for elections set down in the statutes.

In fact, there is a distinction between the role of the top administrators and the role of political leadership. The party—and not the party apparatus—can and must be a political force and a center for developing ideas. It can and must, moreover, cease being the sole administrator of the Polish socialist state.

I think that we should move away from the formulation "the directing role of the party." A directing role has to do with direct administration and not with leadership.

Leadership is a two-sided political relationship between those who lead and those who follow. There can be no leadership if there is no open debate on objectives and means, if the citizens and party members are reduced to an anonymous mass, and if this so-called directing body depersonalizes "them."

The precondition for leadership is genuinely representing the interests of the citizens and party members without any false façades or pretences. In order to be a leader and not just a functionary or official you have to openly declare the views you have come to through your own experience. You have to actively uphold ideals and values, as well as be a representative of the interests of the workers and other layers. You cannot be a leader if you only issue directives and carry them out.

Leadership cannot be imposed (like a title put on a briefcase). If it is not earned, all this amounts to is the top government officials appointing agents. Leaders, either a party or individuals, can only be freely chosen as such. The ranks follow the leaders when they have confidence in them and when they know that because of their abilities and principles the leaders will not let them down.

And when do people place their confidence in others? When they are able to monitor what they do, because then they have the opportunity to find out the individual weaknesses and strengths of the various candidates for leadership, as well as their styles of leadership. In order to exercise a genuine leading role, the society has to know the party's candidates for leadership positions.

*The different views held in the various runs of the government and the records of*

*the politicians must be publicly known.* This is necessary so that those in positions of leadership will not only be respected but also loved.

People cannot identify with gray, faceless centers of absolute power, which continually proclaim their will to rule in vague, sloganizing language. People will only support and have regard for flesh-and-blood persons who are known for their principles and the boldness of their thinking.

We have to develop ways in which the citizens and the ranks of the party can express their will and eliminate bureaucratic domination and the use of propaganda to distort people's views.

It is necessary to impose less and propose more, propose new solutions and correct principles. We have to be less quick to make decisions and be ready to spend more time considering questions. We have to strive to win the support of society and not project a false front of unanimous decisions. We have to listen attentively to what people say and not prompt them to give "rounded" or "considered" answers.

What Stanislaw Kania calls humility, modesty, and sincerity is a concise description of a new style of political debate. Up until now what has been banned from political debate are new and bold ideas, controversy and living thought. What should be banned from political debate are historical myths, pompous phrases, and bureaucratic language.

The leading role of the party cannot be interpreted in a formalistic way. The political strength of the Polish United Workers Party was not increased because in 1976 it was written into the constitution of the Polish People's Republic that the party is "the leading force in society." The influence of the party will not automatically grow if the membership undergoes rapid expansion. Hypertrophy of the apparatus and a widening role of the official hierarchy in cadre policy are, in fact, manifestations of formalistic thinking.

A faith in the magic power of words and of numbers is a dangerous snare into which party leaders can also fall. Citizens who are guided by ordinary common sense do not let their heads be turned by incantations. Still less should party leaders and members let themselves be led into believing in magic.

It is believing in magic to think that words can create reality, that putting highfalutin names on commonplace things can elevate them. The other side of believing in magic is thinking that you can conjure away evils and mistakes by



not talking about them.

Today, we have to define the role of the party realistically and openly. It must be an organized association of cothinkers in which there is lively discussion and which is capable of spontaneous action in the interests of social progress. There is no longer any room in the Polish political system for a hierarchical apparatus administering the development of society.

The party has a chance to be a moral and political arbiter in situations where there is a conflict between the point of view of organizations representing social self-management and the point of view of economic administration. Social initiatives and strivings (such as those of the self-management bodies, unions, and social organizations) may increasingly conflict with the administrative point of view. The party leaders and the leading party bodies must avoid the sort of situation that existed in the crisis years, when *the party was a protagonist in the conflict* with the protesting workers.

The party cannot be neutral but neither can it accept a situation in which the party apparatus becomes identified with the state apparatus. If it takes sides, the party should stand with the workers rather than set itself against their expectations and demands.

In the discussion of program, there should not be any imposition of concepts worked out in the confines of a few offices. The party can play a leading role in discussion, not by arbitrarily distributing ideological praise and blame. *Opinions are more divided today than yesterday* and tomorrow they may be even more so. Ideas important for Poland may develop outside of the party or in local party centers.

Therefore, the programmatic conclusions of the primary party organizations and the letters to party meetings should be published and made known not just to certain circles in the apparatus and the party Central Committee.

The party as a whole must work out programs and strategies and pay attention to circles outside the party. Promoting discussion means actively promoting the development of new solutions, listening to the opinions of various sections of the society, and then synthesizing them in a creative way.

The party, and particularly its central apparatus, cannot have any *monopoly on finding the only correct roads for the development of Poland*. Rather, the party can become a generally respected synthesizer of public discussion and advocate of those opinions that concretely express the general interests of the workers.

A ruling workers party cannot be merely a combination of discussion clubs. It needs proper organization, honest elections, and principled monitoring. But what is needed today is not only an ascending scale of responsibilities (that is links between the various party bodies through the appara-

tus). Direct, horizontal ties (for example, between factories of various branches of industry or between the workers and the party intelligentsia) are very much needed.

So, it is worthwhile *forming discussion clubs that can bring together various sections of the party*. In this way, it will be possible to develop more ideas, more solidarity, and more genuine debate on programmatic goals. This is one way to involve broader layers of the society in developing political programs.

Finally, the party can become a guarantor of the democratization of organizational forms. To this end, it must learn how to

*take the lead* in expressing the just discontent of society. Furthermore, on the basis of the changes in the statutes and personnel that will be made by the Ninth Congress, the party must *become a positive example of democratic norms* for everyone, a genuine and generally recognized model.

Then, what I call the political leadership of the Polish United Workers Party would serve an essential role in building socialism. Then democracy in the state would not be threatened by a bureaucracy at the top paralyzing the activity of the party members. □

## North Carolina Official: 'It Is the Final Verdict'

# Charges Against Klan Killers Dropped

By Steve Craine and Greg McCartan

[The following article appeared in the December 12 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

GREENSBORO, N.C.—Giving a final blessing to the murder of anti-Klan demonstrators here a year ago, North Carolina authorities announced November 26 that they were dropping all remaining charges against the Klan and Nazi death squad.

Ten of the avowed racists still faced felony charges in the slaying of five Communist Workers Party members on November 3, 1979.

District Attorney Michael Schlosser justified this action by pointing to the November 17 acquittal of six Klan and Nazi gunmen by an all-white jury. "All the powers on this earth cannot change this verdict," Schlosser declared. "It is the final verdict. We must live with it."

Some thirty-five Klansmen and Nazis participated in the murderous assault. Less than half were ever indicted. Prosecutors made a special point of steering clear of the role of two police informers involved in planning and carrying out the attack.

In an attempt to portray the latest travesty of justice as "evenhanded," Schlosser also announced he would not pursue prosecution of six anti-Klan demonstrators. These victims of the attack had also faced felony charges. Ending the frame-up against them has been a demand of civil rights forces around the country.

Schlosser may consider the acquittal final, but many Greensboro residents disagree. A public hearing sponsored by the Human Relations Commission here November 21 heard repeated condemnations

of the state's handling of the case.

"It was a lie, an L-I-E lie," one older Black man said, his voice choked with outrage. "I can't understand how people in Greensboro can even sleep with that kind of verdict. They should come in and investigate. I think they should investigate the district attorney."

A minister from the United Light Church of Christ spoke representing several Black churches: "We have been trying to keep some things under the rug. The time to act is now. It is time for us to stop dragging our feet."

Anne Welsh of the American Friends Service Committee called on "city, state, and federal officials and agencies to take steps . . . to explain to Greensboro and the wider national and international community the roles of the informers and agents in the tragic events that have occurred."

Bobby Hopkins, a student from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (A&T), demanded to know "how can you get an all-white jury where you have a population that is 20 percent Black?"

Signe Waller, whose husband Jim Waller was one of those killed, said the verdict gave "a green light to increased attacks and specifically legalizes killing communists, but also Blacks, Latinos, and Chicanos."

Kate Daher, representing the Socialist Workers Party, demanded federal prosecution of all those involved in the attack. She also called for opening the government files on the cop agents in the Klan and Nazi organizations so the public could learn the truth about police complicity in racist violence. □

## Duvalier Arrests Hundreds in Haiti

By Ernest Harsch

Facing the most vocal opposition to the Haitian dictatorship in a decade, President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier launched a major crackdown against the independent press and dissident political activists on November 28.

Police and members of Duvalier's paramilitary goon squad, the dreaded Tontons Macoutes, swooped down on homes, offices, and press rooms throughout the weekend, seizing hundreds of persons. They included journalists, political and human-rights activists, doctors, teachers, medical students, and writers. Other critics of the government have been forced to go into hiding.

When police raided the newsroom of Radio Haiti-Inter, an independent station, they hauled off everyone inside. A recording played over and over for thirty minutes before the station fell silent.

Three other radio stations, including Radio Cacique, were also forced off the air. Yvens Paul, a popular commentator for Radio Cacique who had been arrested and severely tortured several weeks earlier, was picked up again, and Tontons Macoutes smashed the station's equipment.

The entire staff of the newspaper *Inter-Jeune* is believed to have been detained.

Among the prominent figures known to have been arrested were Grégoire Eugène, the head of the Social Christian Party; Marc Garcia, editor in chief of Radio Métropole; Lafontant Joseph, the secretary-general of the Haitian League of Human Rights; and Pierre Clitandre and John-Robert Hérard of the journal *Le Petit Samedi Soir*.

On December 3, the Duvalier dictatorship expelled Eugène, Garcia, and two others from the country, putting them on a plane to the United States even before they had been granted visas from the American



embassy.

In an effort to justify the repression, Col. Jean Valmé, chief of police in Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital, claimed that "all those arrested are communists." Government officials were privately claiming that those arrested had been implicated in a plot to kidnap three ambassadors. No evidence was given.

Duvalier's massive crackdown shows the real face of his phony liberalization policy announced two years ago. Under it, Haitian journalists and politicians were allowed to voice some mild criticisms of the regime, but within carefully circumscribed limits.

Just three days before the wave of arrests began, Foreign Minister Georges Saloman claimed, "Freedom of speech is greater now than ever before in our past history, and we intend to consolidate that progress."

Over the past few months, however, the opposition to the regime had become too vocal for Duvalier's liking.

In September, the town of Gonaïves erupted in three days of protests against the brutality of the Tontons Macoutes. A week later, hundreds demonstrated in the streets of Les Cayes, in the south, in reaction to a government decision to withdraw support from the local vetiver oil industry. Soon afterwards, 300 school children demonstrated in Port-au-Prince against arbitrarily imposed educational reforms.

The independent and opposition press reported such incidents in greater detail than before, and attacked the dictatorship. Grégoire Eugène's weekly *Fraternité* published an article in September attacking the failure of the Duvalier dynasty over the past twenty-three years. *La Conviction*, the newspaper of Sylvio Claude's Christian Democratic Party of Haiti, re-

printed a poster showing a dozen recently-fallen dictators, each of them crossed out, with an untouched Duvalier in their midst; the caption read, "No more room for dictators."

Sylvio Claude and forty of his supporters were arrested on October 13. The party promptly announced a demonstration projected to involve 10,000 participants, but government threats forced the party to retract its demonstration call.

A report in the October 31 issue of *Haiti-Observateur*, published in New York, described the atmosphere in the Haitian capital: "The tension is rising in Port-au-Prince where the streets are deserted by 9 p.m. Army soldiers and militiamen (Tontons-Macoutes), in battle gear—including steel helmets—are everywhere. Troops have occupied the headquarters of Sylvio Claude's party and surrounded the Fontamara section of the capital where Sylvio Claude and Grégoire Eugène have their homes."

Two weeks after Sylvio Claude's arrest, the Haitian army opened fire on a boat filled with refugees in Cap-Haitien, killing nineteen. "The city is in an angry mood," an underground reporter told *Haiti-Observateur*.

Despite the atmosphere of intimidation, opposition to the regime's moves continued. On October 24, a petition signed by hundreds of persons was read over the independent radio stations demanding the release of Yvens Paul.

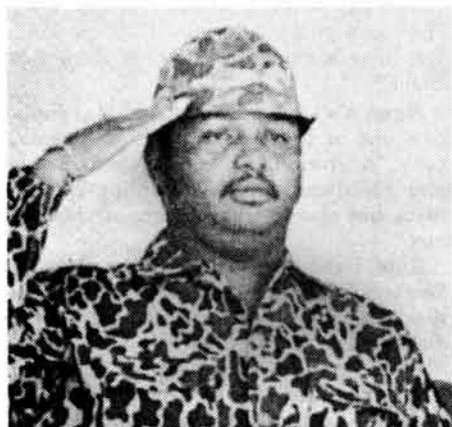
According to Rev. Gerard Jean-Juste of the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami, a petition campaign was also underway in Haiti demanding Duvalier's resignation. Hundreds of persons, he said, were lining up in the streets to sign it.

Worried about a possible outbreak of labor action by factory workers, Labor Minister Ulysse Pierre-Louis publicly warned two new trade unions in Port-au-Prince that any strikes would be considered "acts of destabilization against the established order."

The incident that appears to have led directly to the massive crackdown of November 28 was the widespread publicity given to the expulsion of more than 200 Haitian "boat people" from the Bahamian island of Cayo Lobos. They were put on boats and returned to Haiti.

The incident, which many Haitians considered a national disgrace, set off a commentary in the Haitian press about the extreme inequalities of wealth in the country. Foreign Minister Saloman admitted that this was a factor in the crackdown, charging that journalists had gone too far in criticizing Haiti's economic crisis and in blaming the government for it.

The wave of arrests and expulsions in Haiti immediately drew protests from Haitian exile organizations in the United States. At a news conference in Miami, Jean-Juste called for an international campaign to demand the release of all political prisoners in Haiti. □



President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier.