

# Intercontinental Press

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## **1980: THE YEAR IN REVIEW**

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- **Workers in Imperialist Countries Resist Militarization**
- **Polish Workers Threaten to Overturn Stalinist Regime**
- **Iranian Masses Organize, Mobilize, Deepen Revolution**



## Ireland: Hunger Strikers Win a Resounding Victory

By Gerry Foley

The fifty-three-day hunger strike by political prisoners in Northern Ireland has scored the biggest political victory won by the anti-imperialist movement in Ireland since the Northern Ireland civil rights movement of 1968-72.

By the time it ended December 18, the hunger strike had focused worldwide attention on the struggle of the Irish people for independence and national unification, and on the violations of human rights carried out by the British government in attempting to suppress that struggle.

Furthermore, it sparked a massive upsurge by the anti-imperialist population throughout Ireland, with mounting demonstrations and mobilizations in every part of the country.

Finally, it succeeded in forcing the British government to back down and grant the demands of the prisoners.

The statement given to the hunger strikers December 18 by the British secretary for Northern Ireland, Humphrey Atkins, in essence opens the way for granting all five of the H-Block prisoners' demands.

### Demands of Prisoners

The prisoners' demands were:

1. The right to wear their own clothes.
2. The right to refrain from prison work.
3. The right to free association among political prisoners.
4. The right to organize their own educational and recreational facilities and to receive one visit, one letter, and one parcel a week.
5. The right to full remission of sentences (that is, the usual time off for good behavior).

Atkins' statement to the prisoners says:

"I want to spell out for you and your families what will happen when the protests end.

"First of all, any such prisoner will be

put into a clean cell. . . .

"Within a few days clothing provided by their families will be given to any prisoners giving up their protest so that they can wear it during recreation, association and visits. As soon as possible, all prisoners will be issued with civilian-type clothing for wear during the working day. From then on, as I said in October, denim prison uniform becomes a thing of the past for all prisoners.

"They will also immediately become entitled every month to eight letters, four parcels and four visits.

"Prisoners who end their protest will be able to associate within each wing of the prison blocks in the evening and at weekends. . . .

"We want to work out for every prisoner the kinds of available activity which we think suit him best—work (including of course the work of servicing the prison itself), vocational training and educational training. Again, if groups of prisoners come off the protest together, getting this program organized will take time.

"On the question of remission—and this will be of special importance to the prisoners' families—provision already exists for lost remission to be restored after subsequent good behavior. We shall immediately start reviewing each case individually."

### Relatives Bring Clothes to Prisoners

It was on the basis of these promises that the seven hunger strikers who began their action on October 27 and were near death agreed to end their fast.

Following this, spokesmen of the Sinn Féin (Provisional Republicans) prisoners office in Belfast, which represents most of the hunger strikers, announced that the other hunger strikes, involving twenty-nine men and three women, were expected to end as soon as the news of the settlement could be communicated to them.

The Belfast Sinn Féin also announced that other forms of protest in the prison would be phased out as soon as possible, depending on the British government's fulfillment of its promises.

The day after the settlement was announced, Atkins went on TV to declare that the British government had made no new concessions. Then, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, public relations officer of the National H-Block Committee, announced on television that the prisoners' relatives were taking their clothes into prison. That

was the concrete, undeniable sign of victory.

The fundamental issue in the prison protest was the attempt of the British government to force the prisoners to wear convict uniforms. Because of their refusal to do this, the prisoners were forced to live naked in their cells. They were put in punishment wings, the H-Blocks, where they were subjected to special harassment that ultimately made it impossible for them to use washing and toilet facilities.

What McAliskey's statement meant was that men who have worn nothing but a blanket for years and not been able to wash themselves for many months are now preparing to live like human beings again, to wash and wear their own clothes. They had won.

### British Leave Room for Maneuver

The way in which the British government has presented its concessions politically was well illustrated by a statement Atkins made over TV. He said that if the prisoners did not give up their protest, they would not be allowed to wear their own clothes. That sounds tough unless you know that the right of the prisoners to wear their own clothes was the main thing the protest was about.

The British government's concessions were all made in equivocal terms and formulated as simply humane prison reforms that were being implemented due to the Conservative government's zeal for social improvement.

If the British government is prepared to grant all those confined in its prison system the right to wear their own clothes; the right to associate freely; and the opportunity to educate themselves rather than be forced to do meaningless, degrading labor, the Irish political prisoners can hardly object. After all, their goal is the liberation of all society from oppression and inhumanity, and that is why the British government railroaded them to prison.

The British concessions are formulated in ways that leave the prison officials a lot of room for maneuver. It is obviously going to take a struggle of some kind to assure that the provisions of the Atkins statement are implemented to an extent that will meet the letter and spirit of the Irish political prisoners' demands.

However, the massive mobilization of the Irish people and supporters of human rights and national liberation around the world on behalf of the hunger strikers has created excellent conditions for assuring that the prisoners' demands are fully met.

### Hunger Strikers Slandered

The fact is that the extent of support that was building up for the H-Block prisoners terrified the ruling classes of Britain and the United States as well as the bourgeois forces in Ireland.

### Coming in our Next Issue . . .

The next issue of *Intercontinental Press*, after our winter break, will be dated January 19. It will feature an interview on British politics and the Labour Party today with Steve Potter, national secretary of the International Marxist Group, the British section of the Fourth International.

This is shown by the heavily biased reporting in the media during the hunger strike. Great pains were taken to maintain a solid front against the prisoners in the capitalist media.

For example, both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, two of the most influential U.S. dailies, warned in the strongest way against any sympathy for the hunger strikers, subjecting them to heavy-handed slander and completely distorting the issues.

After the conclusion of the hunger strike, the *New York Times* wrote in an editorial December 20: "The strike was apparently ended without any significant concession by Prime Minister Thatcher. The protesters wanted a special status as political prisoners. 'Murder is murder is murder,' was Mrs. Thatcher's blunt rejoinder, and on this she was supported by the European Commission of Human Rights and by key voices in all Ireland, in the Republican South, as well as the British-ruled North."

The fact is that the prisoners did not demand "political status" as such. They did not ask people to mobilize on their behalf for a vague abstraction but for the concrete rights which those Irish political prisoners tried before 1976 enjoy and which the British government deprived them of in an attempt to break them morally.

Nonetheless, the *New York Times's* sigh of relief was audible. While the prisoners could not arouse any sense of honor in the capitalist rulers the growing mass movement that supported them did arouse real fear.

#### 'Reprieve' for Thatcher

"The British Government has won not a victory but a reprieve," the editors of the *Times* noted. They went on to say:

"Despite their crimes, the strikers are seen as symbolic victims of a system of justice that is increasingly an embarrassment to the British. Criticism extends well beyond the petty prison rules concerning prison clothing. More fundamentally, Northern Ireland is the only place in Britain where offenders can be convicted without a jury trial by a single judge in what are known as Diplock courts. Interrogation can be prolonged well beyond the time allowed elsewhere—and offenders can be convicted solely on the basis of confessions thus obtained. . . .

"Surely this is the time to address the legitimate grievances that made the possible death of even a single striker so hazardous to civil order in a sad part of a nominally united kingdom."

What frightened the U.S. rulers, as well as the British and their neocolonialist stooges in Dublin, was the burgeoning of one of the most powerful mass movements in Irish history.

#### Retreat of Mid-1970s Reversed

The campaign that developed in support

of the H-Block prisoners represented a resumption of the mass movement that began with the civil rights marches of 1968-69.

The retreat of the Irish people that began in the mid-1970s has been reversed. The national liberation movement is entering a higher stage. A new generation of Irish fighters are coming to their political maturity.

These processes had been under way for some time. The H-Block campaign focused them and impelled them forward. The victory will give a further impetus.

The leaders of the Irish struggle proved able to build an effective united front that brought tens of thousands of people into action. They were able to wield these

masses into a conscious and disciplined force capable of drawing in larger and larger sections of the Irish people and, finally, beginning to mobilize the decisive contingents of the Irish nation, the industrial workers organized in the country's powerful trade unions.

This mass campaign, like the civil rights movement before it, had an international impact. It began to win vital allies for the Irish struggle.

This campaign has prepared the way for the resurgence of the Irish revolution that was interrupted sixty years ago. It was the beginnings of this movement that frightened the British and forced them to give in. But it will not end with that victory. The decisive battles lie ahead. □

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# Central America: Focus of Class Struggle Shifts to El Salvador

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—As 1980 drew to a close, the working-class and popular upsurge that opened with the victorious 1979 insurrection here in Nicaragua showed no sign of abating.

While the revolutionary government in Nicaragua has been consolidating its power and strengthening its ties with the masses, El Salvador has become the focal point of the class struggle in the region.

Over the past year the revolutionary organizations there have succeeded in welding together a united mass movement that is continuing to gain in strength. At the same time, the Salvadoran junta is isolated internationally, has lost the support of one sector of the population after another within El Salvador, and is being torn by internal divisions. Its defeat by the revolutionary forces would endanger the military dictatorships in Guatemala and Honduras, and threaten the imperialist hold on all of Central America.

Having failed to stem the revolutionary tide through phony reforms, diplomatic pressure, economic blackmail, repression, and terror, the U.S. imperialists are readying plans for direct military intervention in El Salvador.

After "losing" Nicaragua, the Carter administration decided to draw the line in El Salvador. On October 15, 1979, a group of young officers acting with Washington's blessing ousted Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero, whose brutal dictatorship had outlived its usefulness. The leaders of the coup set up a new ruling junta that included two colonels, a Social Democrat, a Catholic university professor, and a business executive. The junta denounced the Romero regime's violations of human rights. It pledged to "halt violence and corruption" and bring about "an equitable distribution of the national wealth."

But the October 15 junta was rapidly discredited. Far from being halted, repression against the workers and peasants was stepped up. The reform-minded civilians who joined the junta and the cabinet in good faith found that power remained firmly in the hands of the right-wing military officers. The progressive promises remained on paper.

Nineteen eighty had no sooner begun than the new government collapsed. Two junta members, the entire cabinet except for the defense minister, thirteen vice-ministers, and twenty-five other top officials all resigned on January 3. They declared that the "political-military oligarchy" was blocking the promised reforms, while "the armed forces continue to

stain their hands with the blood of the people."

Preserving the repressive power of the armed forces was the uppermost consideration for Washington, however. So a new façade for the military dictatorship was arranged. The bourgeois Christian Democratic Party (PDC) offered its support and two of its leaders joined a new junta.

### United Action Against Junta

The working-class and popular forces drew the correct lessons from the experience of the reformist junta. Greater unity against the regime was achieved with the formation of the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses (CRM) on January 11.

The CRM represented a united front among the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR), the United People's Action Front (FAPU), the February 28 People's Leagues (LP-28), and the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN). The four groups represented the vast bulk of Salvadoran trade unions, peasants and student organizations, teachers unions, and slum-dwellers and market vendors groups.

The BPR, FAPU, and LP-28 had opposed the October 15 junta from the outset, while the UDN—the legal expression of the Communist Party—had participated in the cabinet. The new front now took a clear stand against the military/Christian Democratic junta and set about mobilizing the masses in action against it.

On January 22 one of the largest demonstrations in El Salvador's history took place. Some 300,000 persons marched through the streets of the capital at the CRM's call to protest repression and support the demands of the workers and peasants.

The junta's answer to this mobilization was the same one it would give to further popular mobilizations throughout the year—a massacre. Two hundred demonstrators were killed and 300 wounded when police and paramilitary sharpshooters opened fire on the huge crowd outside the Metropolitan Cathedral.

There was no let-up in the repression, but strikes, factory occupations, and other protests continued throughout February. In early March the junta declared a state of siege and announced its long-heralded program of "reforms." Banks were nationalized and troops were sent into the countryside to occupy 376 of the biggest farms.

### Junta's Phony Land Reform

This "agrarian reform" was not aimed

at achieving a just division of the land to meet the needs of the peasantry. Rather, its purpose was to destroy the social base of the revolutionary forces in the countryside. The farms were turned over to members of the fascist Democratic Nationalist Organization (ORDEN), while peasant families were driven out of their homes, tortured, or killed.

The land reform, moreover, did not touch the main source of the Salvadoran oligarchy's power—the great number of coffee plantations of 500 or fewer hectares.

Before the "reform" was a month old, the vice-minister of agriculture in charge of implementing it had resigned and fled the country. His letter of resignation declared: "... it was useless to continue in a government that is not only incapable of putting an end to violence but which itself generates political violence through repression."

Only one peasant organization offered the "reform" its support—the Salvadoran Communal Union (UCS), which was founded with the aid of the CIA-backed American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD). But on June 5 the UCS had to issue a statement denouncing repression against its own organization: "Given all this [repression], we feel we cannot continue supporting this agrarian reform. . . . If such acts of repression do not cease, we will be obliged to take other steps in defense of our organization."

### Massacre at Archbishop's Funeral

Shortly before his assassination on March 24, Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero termed the land expropriations "capitalist" reforms that "are taking place through a military occupation of the countryside that at a given moment can generate the return of the wealthy to power."

Romero was an outspoken critic of the oligarchy's brutal rule in El Salvador. He withheld his support from the October 15 junta and called on the Christian Democrats to resign as well when the junta collapsed in January. In February he called on President Carter to halt military aid to El Salvador. And on March 23, the day before he was killed, Archbishop Romero called directly on the ranks of the armed forces and police to heed "the law of God that says, do not kill. No soldier is obliged to obey an order that goes against the law of God."

No one has yet been arrested for the archbishop's murder, nor does there even seem to be an investigation under way. An



article published December 12 in the Madrid daily *Diario 16* charged that Salvadoran Maj. Roberto D'Aubuisson paid terrorists from the counterrevolutionary Cuban exile group Omega 7 to commit the crime. The gunmen reportedly had received training as sharpshooters from the CIA. D'Aubuisson is reputedly the chief of El Salvador's paramilitary death squads.

Archbishop Romero's funeral was the occasion for another massive mobilization by the popular organizations. More than 400,000 persons turned out. Again the military launched a massacre. Fifty were killed and more than 650 wounded or injured in the March 30 attack.

But the mounting repression did not daunt the organized opposition to the regime. Instead, it was driving more and more Salvadorans into action against the junta.

#### CRM Program

The CRM made public in late February its "Programmatic Platform of the Revolutionary Democratic Government." It called for dissolving all the repressive bodies and paramilitary bands, building a new "People's Army," and "putting an end to the overall political, economic, and social power of the great lords of land and capital."

In early April two important political currents announced their support for the CRM's program—the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), which maintains ties with the Socialist International; and the People's Social Christian Movement (MPSC), which arose out of a series of splits and expulsions from the Christian Democratic Party. In fact, the MPSC claimed a large majority of the Christian Democrats' ranks, leaving the *pro*junta faction with very little in the way of a social base.

The support offered to the revolutionary forces by the MNR and the MPSC paved the way for the formation of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) on April 16. The FDR took shape as a broad coalition among the popular organizations grouped in the CRM, the MNR and MPSC, several important trade-union federations, the General Association of Salvadoran University Students (AGEUS), and the National Federation of Small Businessmen.

In effect, the FDR became the representative of the vast majority of Salvadoran society.

#### Massive Support for FDR

The massive support enjoyed by the FDR was demonstrated convincingly on June 24 and 25, when El Salvador was paralyzed by a general strike involving 100,000 industrial workers, 25,000 government employees, 30,000 teachers, and more than 100,000 agricultural workers. Between 80 and 90 percent of all economic, commercial, and government activity was



Salvadoran liberation fighter. El Salvador

brought to a halt.

The general strike succeeded in face of the military occupation of San Salvador and televised appeals by junta members against participation.

As the mass mobilizations continued, so did the repressive response of the junta. The regime's intransigence brought to the fore the need to step up preparations for armed self-defense and insurrection. This required above all the unification of the political-military groups that had been waging armed struggle against the dictatorship since the early 1970s and that were closely tied to the mass popular organizations.

The initial step toward such unity was taken in January with the establishment of coordination among the Farabundo Martí People's Liberation Forces (FPL), the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN), and the Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS). The latter had decided to join the armed struggle after the collapse of the October 15 reformist government.

On May 22 the FPL, FARN, and PCS were joined by the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU) was thus created.

The DRU became the unified command for all the political-military organizations in the struggle against the dictatorship.

The unity process was slowed by the FARN's withdrawal from the DRU over tactical differences in August, but that difficulty was overcome in November with the formation of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The FMLN represented the effective fusion of the four groups. In early December the total unity of El Salvador's political-military organization was consolidated with the entry of the Central American Revolutionary Workers Party (PRTC) into the FMLN.

#### 'Preinsurrectionary Rehearsal'

While peasants displaced by the junta's "land reform" and the heavy repression in the countryside have provided an important source of recruitment for the popular armed forces of the FMLN, increasing attention has also been paid to military preparations in the urban working-class and poor neighborhoods. This was the central purpose of the general strike the FDR called for August 13, 14 and 15.

Termed a "preinsurrectionary rehearsal" by the FDR, the August strike enabled regular units of the Unified Revolutionary Directorate to take control of working-class neighborhoods and conduct armed exercises with the participation of the population. In this way the popular militias and workers self-defense squads were greatly strengthened.

The revolutionary forces also engaged the junta's troops in hundreds of military actions in the course of the August strike.

The junta tried to take the offensive against the guerrillas in October and November. Sweeps involving heavy artillery, helicopters and jets, and thousands of troops were launched against FMLN strongholds, first in the eastern department of Morazán and then in San Vicente and Chalatenango. The army's scorched-earth tactics left hundreds of peasants dead and thousands homeless, but failed to cripple the FMLN. "We can say that our guerrilla forces have retaken their positions in Morazán and San Vicente," FMLN leader Schafik Handal told a clandestine news conference in San Salvador December 13.

The main result of the junta's offensives, Handal added, was that they "allowed us to steel our fighters in battle."

#### Crisis Within Junta

The growing strength of the revolutionary armed forces and the failure of the military drives against them sharpened the longstanding dispute in the Salvadoran officer corps and brought the military/Christian Democratic junta to a crisis in December.

The Christian Democrats and junta member Col. Adolfo Majano had been calling since October for a "dialogue" with

the opposition, with the aim of splitting the FDR. But the extreme right-wing officers tied to the landholding oligarchy opposed this tactic. They pressed instead for reversing the land reform and imposing a "military solution," which would mean unleashing massive terror in the style of Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, whose dictatorship slaughtered tens of thousands of Indian peasants in 1932.

The rightist officers and their civilian supporters grew bolder after the election of Ronald Reagan in the United States. On November 26 they called for ousting Majano and the Christian Democrats from the junta. The next day, uniformed troops and paramilitary forces kidnapped and murdered five members of the FDR's executive committee and a leader of the BPR. Credit for the slaughter was claimed by the "Maximiliano Hernández Anticommunist Brigade"; the junta disavowed any responsibility.

Colonel Majano, anxious to preserve what remained of his moderate image, left the country upon learning of the FDR murders. Christian Democratic leader Napoleón Duarte sped to Washington to seek a resolution of the junta's crisis. While the diplomatic maneuvering was going on, four Catholic missionary women from the United States were murdered, with strong evidence pointing to National Guard involvement.

The Carter administration announced the suspension of economic and military aid (\$25 million in all) and dispatched two top diplomats to El Salvador.

#### Duarte Named President

If Carter's commission failed to solve the crime committed against the American nuns, it did manage to achieve its main task—patching together a new governmental arrangement to replace the junta.

On December 13 Duarte and Col. Jaime Abdúl Gutiérrez proclaimed themselves president and vice-president respectively, with Gutiérrez being named in addition commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Washington quickly announced the resumption of U.S. aid.

The exclusion of Majano from power was completed. Ousted from the junta, he turned down exile to an embassy post in Spain and declared himself the victim of a "coup."

Majano also did further damage to the notion propagated by Washington that the Duarte-Gutiérrez regime was still trying to implement the reforms promised in October 1979. He called on Salvadorans to struggle against "a government of impostors that is maneuvering disloyally behind the backs of the people in order to betray and frustrate them once again." Majano dropped out of sight immediately after making that statement at a news conference. The military high command ordered his arrest and expulsion from the country.

On December 17, Majano's supporters

among the lower ranking officers issued a declaration in the name of the "Democratic Military Youth." They refused to recognize the legitimacy of Col. Gutiérrez's promotion and declared that Majano remained their commander-in-chief. The young officers called on fellow members of the military "to stop staining their uniforms with the blood of the people and serving as instruments of the rightist chiefs and the false Christian Democratic leaders."

#### Disarray in Washington

The ongoing dispute among the military and civilian rulers of El Salvador found its reflection in an acrimonious clash between Carter's State Department and the "transition team" of President-elect Reagan. While Reagan aide Jeane Kirkpatrick declared that by suspending aid Carter was gravely weakening the junta and paving the way for its fall to a leftist victory, Carter's "human-rights" specialist Patricia Derian accused the Reaganites of putting the lives of U.S. ambassador to El Salvador Robert White and other American personnel in danger by encouraging the extreme-rightist death squads.

In its final days the Carter administration was trying to wash its hands of the bloody deeds being carried out with its support in El Salvador, while the Reagan camp was already trying to pin the blame on Carter for "losing" El Salvador.

Such disarray in the imperialist camp will fuel anti-interventionist sentiment among the American people and further demoralize the regime's forces in El Salvador. But unfortunately the country has not yet been lost to the imperialists, and they have been pouring in economic and military aid for months to insure that they keep it.

#### Pentagon Moves To Intervene

The publicly acknowledged military aid of \$5.7 million in fiscal year 1980—not affected by the temporary suspension in December—included huge quantities of tear-gas grenades, field combat radios, and special night-vision devices described by a U.S. Army aide as "perfect for use against guerrillas and insurgents." Washington's Zionist allies in Israel have supplied fighter-bombers, transport planes, and large quantities of Uzi submachine guns and Galil assault rifles.

Advisers to President-elect Reagan have already pledged to step up direct U.S. military aid, including combat supplies, to El Salvador and to continue bolstering the regime economically.

Plans for even deeper involvement have been under way for some time. "Our actions and our words have narrowed down our policy options to a single path of gradual escalation of direct military involvement" in El Salvador, a group of dissident U.S. government analysts wrote in a November 6 document. The Pentagon, they

said, was readying "operational plans for multilateral and unilateral deployment of military forces in El Salvador and Guatemala" and assessing "the need and preparation of contingency plans for actions intended to disrupt support and supply lines of Salvadorean guerrilla forces in Cuba and Nicaragua." (For full text of document, see *Intercontinental Press*, December 15, p. 1308.)

According to Salvadoran FDR leaders abroad, a naval task force from the U.S. Pacific Fleet has been stationed 300 miles off the Salvadoran coast for some time.

A key part of the imperialists' preparations for a final showdown with the workers and peasants of El Salvador is the role to be played by the right-wing military regimes in Guatemala and Honduras. A special force of mercenaries and Somozaist guardsmen who fled Nicaragua has been built up in Guatemala for use against an insurrection in El Salvador.

#### 'Operation Sandwich'

The Honduran regime of Gen. Policarpo Paz García received \$3.9 million in U.S. military equipment and weapons this year after Paz visited Washington and met with Carter. The dictator was hailed by Washington for holding "free elections" on April 20. The docile opposition Liberal Party was allowed to win a majority of seats in a constitutional assembly, but real power remained firmly in the hands of Paz and the military.

In November the Mexico City daily *Excelsior* reported that the Salvadoran, Honduran, and Guatemalan armies had laid plans for "Operation Sandwich"—a joint military operation aimed at quelling an insurrection in El Salvador.

"Our army is totally committed to supporting the Salvadoran military," a top Honduran officer told *Excelsior*. (The officer also issued an invasion threat against Nicaragua, warning the Sandinistas to halt their "leftist Communist policies.")

One important prerequisite for closer collaboration between the Salvadoran and Honduran regimes was the termination of the formal state of war that had existed between the two countries since July 1969, when the Salvadoran army invaded Honduras in response to severe protectionist moves by the Honduran bourgeoisie.

Under U.S. pressure the two regimes hurriedly negotiated a peace treaty. It was signed in Tegucigalpa on December 10, while several thousand Hondurans rallied outside in solidarity with the Salvadoran struggle.

Three days later the three main organizations of the Honduran left—the Communist and Socialist parties and the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)—issued a joint statement. "It is not a peace that has been signed," they said, "but a genocide pact against the peoples of Central America. . . ." They declared their "militant



unity" in opposition to the Salvadoran and Honduran regimes and U.S. intervention.

The December 10 demonstration, other similar solidarity actions in recent months, and the steps toward unity on the left show that opposition is rising among Hondurans to their government's counter-revolutionary plans toward El Salvador.

During the past year the Paz Garcia regime has faced mounting unrest among agricultural workers, public employees, and peasants. Cane cutters and banana plantation laborers carried out militant strikes in February and the banana workers struck again in late November. Peasants carried out large-scale land occupations on several occasions during the year.

#### Radicalization in Guatemala

In Guatemala, Gen. Romeo Lucas Garcia's government will face still greater obstacles if it tries to intervene in El Salvador. Radicalization among Guatemalan workers and peasants is far more advanced than in Honduras. Despite the continual assassinations of union leaders and political activists by the Lucas regime's death squads, the workers and popular movement has been able to forge strong organizations at several levels.

In 1976, virtually all of Guatemala's trade unions came together to form the National Committee of Trade-Union Unity (CNUS). The CNUS in turn was the basis for the formation in February 1979 of the Democratic Front Against Repression (FDCR), which now includes some 170 labor, peasant, student, shantytown dwellers, journalists, professional, religious, and cultural organizations.

The FDCR also includes two bourgeois political groupings that have been special targets of the paramilitary death squads, the Revolutionary United Front (FUR) and the Social Democratic Party (PSD). The top leaders of both these parties—Manuel Colom Argueta and Alberto Fuentes Mohr—were both gunned down in 1979.

But as one Social Democrat pointed out last March, the FDCR's "leaders are no longer university students and intellectuals; they're now workers and peasants. That's why the Government is making a mistake in killing the politicians. We don't control the mass movement" (*New York Times*, March 23, 1980).

A leader of Guatemala's most important armed revolutionary group, the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), described the FDCR's role this way:

The FDCR is a very important factor in the process. . . . It is a factor that makes it possible to bring together all the popular and democratic forces that are struggling in the country. Note that what is involved is an organization of struggle—the very name says so. . . . And of course the Front has no legal status nor headquarters, but the Front mobilizes, the Front exists, the Front fights the repression—the Front is revolutionary. [Interview in the Cuban magazine *Bohemia*, March 21, 1980, pp. 67-68.]

Parallel to the strengthening of the FDCR, the armed revolutionary groups in Guatemala have made important gains in the past year.

In May the EGP, the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), and the Leadership Nucleus of the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT, the Communist Party) announced that they had begun a process of unification and joint activity. The combination, they said, of "guerrilla warfare; worker, peasant, popular, and democratic struggles; and international solidarity has backed the genocidal Lucas government into a dead end."

An especially important breakthrough made by the revolutionary groups in Guatemala in the past two years has been their ability to involve growing numbers of peasants and youth from the country's Indian majority. In the predominantly Indian province of El Quiché, the EGP has repeatedly occupied towns and conducted mass political meetings in the Indians' native languages. The ORPA carries out similar activity in other provinces.

In response the Guatemalan army has tried to impose a reign of terror in El Quiché. Hundreds of Indians have been killed, tortured, or "disappeared."

In January a group of El Quiché peasants occupied the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City to protest the repression and disappearances. The police set the embassy on fire, killing more than thirty peasants, students, Spanish diplomats, and Guatemalan officials. The lone peasant survivor was later kidnapped from his hospital bed and murdered by a death squad.

The Catholic Church became a special target of the regime in El Quiché after priests began speaking out against the army's role there. Three priests were murdered in May, June, and July of this year, and the bishop of El Quiché narrowly escaped two attempts on his life. On July 19 the church decided to close its doors throughout the province—"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." (See interview with exiled Guatemalan priest, *Intercontinental Press*, December 15, 1980, p. 1320.)

The growing involvement of Indians in the armed struggle in Guatemala is especially worrisome to the regime, since two-thirds of the army's 11,000 troops are Indians, usually recruited by force.

"The Army now demands that the Indian troops carry the brunt of the guerrilla hunts . . . raiding the Indian villages," the *Washington Post* reported last March 28. But "former Indian soldiers have recently begun to join the leftist guerrillas. . . ."

The revolutionary groups direct special propaganda at Indians who have served in

the army, urging them to "return to your village—help your people fight, organize. . . ."

#### Washington Sticks With Lucas

Growing numbers of Indians are also becoming involved in the struggle through the Committee for Campesino Unity (CUC), an organization that belongs to the CNUS and the FDCR and has been organizing the rural poor.

In February the CUC led a militant and victorious strike by 50,000 laborers in the cane and cotton plantations along the Pacific Coast of southern Guatemala. The laborers—many of whom are Indian migrants from El Quiché and other northern provinces—occupied sugar mills and plantations and won a 186 percent wage hike, despite the military occupation of the area and a fierce anticommunist propaganda campaign by the government and the employers.

The deteriorating relationship of forces between the Lucas Garcia government and the Guatemalan workers and peasants has Washington worried. But the imperialists have few options, since the most prominent "moderate" bourgeois politicians have all been killed off by right-wing death squads and there is no evidence that any Majano-style faction exists within the military.

The State Department tried to maneuver for a liberalization through Lucas's Christian Democratic Vice-President Francisco Villagrán Kramer. But Villagrán became totally isolated within the regime, left the country, and resigned in September.

Rich deposits of petroleum and nickel and other minerals, a geographic position adjacent to Mexico's oil fields, and status as the most populous Central American country give Guatemala high strategic value for the imperialists, and they will fight to keep it.

Despite the Carter administration's public stance of opposition to Lucas on human-rights grounds, the Pentagon has set up a computerized communications center in Guatemala City and helped Lucas obtain arms, training, and technical aid from Israel, Chile, and Argentina.

Reagan adviser Roger Fontaine pledged in July to give the Guatemalan military "what aid they need in order to defend themselves against an armed minority which is aided and abetted by the Cubans."

#### Solidarity Worries Washington

The authors of the State Department "dissent paper" cited earlier were especially worried about Nicaraguan solidarity with the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador.

Washington's analysts, they warned, "underestimate the implications of the Nicaraguan and Cuban commitment to provide military support to Salvadorean guerrilla forces in the event of continued



escalation of U.S. involvement."

Such concern is well founded. The leaders of the Nicaraguan revolution have repeatedly declared that an invasion of El Salvador would be seen as a direct threat to their own country.

If the imperialists "commit the error, the stupidity of intervening," Commander Daniel Ortega said December 17, "we will have to think seriously about a deepgoing defense of the revolution, because we have to see an aggression in El Salvador as an aggression against Nicaragua as well."

Defending the revolution was one of the overriding tasks in Nicaragua throughout 1980. This meant above all deepening and consolidating the social transformation that began with the victory over the Somoza dictatorship on July 19, 1979.

The workers and the peasants, led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) beat back repeated attempts by bourgeois forces to put political pressure on the revolutionary government, sabotage the economy, or even mount counterrevolutionary military attacks.

#### **FSLN Answers Capitalist Attacks**

To each bourgeois attempt to roll back the revolution, the FSLN responded by organizing and mobilizing the workers and peasants and their allies in defense of their class interests.

- No sooner had the 1980 Plan for Economic Reactivation gone into effect than it became evident that not a few private enterprises were being decapitalized, instead of reactivated.

The workers were quick to respond, taking over production in a series of plants and demanding government action against employers who were trying to sabotage the economy.

A tough law against decapitalization was adopted March 2, several workplaces were intervened by the government, and the FSLN called for the implementation of "workers control . . . so as to prevent a halt in production or the destruction of enterprises by their owners or other reactionary forces. . . ."

- In face of complaints by bourgeois parties that it was being "manipulated to domesticate the minds" of the illiterate, the historic National Literacy Crusade was launched March 23. More than 50,000 high school and university youth spent five months living among the peasants in the Nicaraguan countryside, sharing their labors and teaching them to read and write.

By mid-August, more than 400,000 Nicaraguans had ceased to be illiterate, while a substantial majority of the country's urban young people had experienced firsthand the hardships and poverty that still confront the rural population.

Not only did the campaign produce a reduction in illiteracy from 52 percent to 13 percent, but it also qualitatively strengthened the revolution's support in the coun-

tryside and produced hundreds of experienced new cadres for the July 19 Sandinista Youth.

- On April 21, a decisive worker-peasant majority in the Council of State was decreed by the Junta of National Reconstruction. Majority representation in the legislative body was provided to the FSLN-led mass organizations that arose in the course of the insurrection—the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), Rural Workers Association (ATC), Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), and so on. Other trade unions and prerevolution political groups were also granted delegates. Nine of the forty-seven seats were allocated to the parties and economic organs of the capitalists.

Charging "totalitarianism" in the Council of State's composition, the bourgeois politician Alfonso Robelo resigned his position on the government junta and tried to launch anti-FSLN mobilizations behind his Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN).

But Robelo and his capitalist supporters were answered by a May Day demonstration in Managua of 200,000 workers. That was followed by two months of neighborhood rallies, "economic reactivation assemblies" in the workplaces, and other mobilizations that culminated in the massive gathering of 500,000 Nicaraguans on the first anniversary of the revolution.

#### **The Issue of Democracy**

- Having failed in its efforts to convert the Council of State into a brake on the revolution, the bourgeoisie launched a campaign after July 19 to demand "free elections." On August 23, at a rally in Managua of 350,000 to celebrate the end of the literacy campaign, the FSLN settled this question.

Democracy "is not reducible only to the participation of the people in elections," a National Directorate statement read by Commander Humberto Ortega declared. Rather "democracy begins in the economic order, when social inequalities begin to diminish," extends to "workers participation in the management of the factories," and finally encompasses "the participation of the masses in all aspects of social life."

Therefore, when elections are held in 1985, Ortega said, they will be for "improving the revolutionary power and not for raffling off who holds it. . . ."

- During September and October, there was an increase in armed attacks by gangs of the Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen operating from Honduran territory.

The reactionary bourgeois daily *La Prensa* cast honest journalism aside and bent all efforts to discredit the FSLN and foment anticommunist hysteria among its readers.

The Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) began blaming the Sandi-

nistas for all of Nicaragua's economic difficulties.

The bourgeois youth of Robelo's MDN launched a series of provocations in the high schools.

The capitalist forces began to believe their own propaganda that the masses of working people were turning against the FSLN and the revolution. The MDN, supported by the other bourgeois parties and *La Prensa* planned to hold a big rally on November 9. This was to be followed by a walkout from the Council of State's November 12 session.

Once the proper atmosphere of "crisis" had been created, military attacks arranged by COSEP Vice-president Jorge Salazar and top Somozaists abroad were to bring down the FSLN-led junta and install a counterrevolutionary government headed by COSEP members and ex-National Guard officers.

But the FSLN acted decisively to head off this wild scheme. The MDN's rally was banned and the central figures in the military plot were rounded up and jailed. COSEP leader Salazar was killed while resisting arrest by security forces. The bourgeois walkout from the Council of State was repudiated in dozens of demonstrations and meetings led by the mass organizations throughout Nicaragua.

On November 19, more than 100,000 persons gathered in the Plaza of the Revolution in Managua to hear Commander Jaime Wheelock declare:

Unless this country is drowned in blood, there will be no return of the exploiting classes to power in Nicaragua. Just as the men of independence times did not allow the Spanish colonialists to be candidates in elections after 1821, we are not going to allow what was overthrown in the past to appear with new life in the future. The future belongs to the people.

#### **Formation of CSN**

- While the bourgeoisie's campaign against the FSLN was in full swing, the Sandinista Workers Federation took an important initiative to strengthen the unity of the workers movement behind the revolution. At the CST's call, a national assembly of trade unions was held November 16. With the participation of all but one of Nicaragua's labor federations, the meeting launched the Nicaraguan Trade Union Coordinating Committee (CSN).

The CSN adopted a platform that called for "uniting and mobilizing the workers and toilers in general . . . to defeat and isolate from the masses the forces of imperialism, the local oligarchy, and the parties of the bourgeoisie."

The CSN, the platform declared, would "act so that the working class might consolidate and develop its hegemonic role in the . . . Sandinista People's Revolution."

The CSN further affirmed the independence of the trade unions from the

state apparatus, mutual respect among its member organizations without regard to political affiliation, and "the right of the workers to freely choose and remove their own leaders."

The formation of the CSN marked a big step toward overcoming the sectarianism that had plagued the workers movement in Nicaragua in the past. It put the unions in a better position to defend the revolution from the mounting attacks by the bourgeoisie.

• Fully aware of the dangers to the revolution presented by the gangs of ex-National Guardsmen operating from across the Honduran border, and by the threats of massive U.S. intervention in El Salvador, the FSLN placed great stress in 1980 on strengthening the Sandinista armed forces.

Starting in February, the Sandinista People's Militia (MPS) began to be organized in workplaces and neighborhoods. In

plazas, fields, and vacant lots across the country, tens of thousands of militia volunteers were trained and armed.

When Somozist attacks in the north increased in September and October, militia units were mobilized for fulltime training and combat experience. By the end of the year, MPS brigades from all areas of the country were being rotated into active duty in the north every forty days.

#### Capitalists Renew Threats

In the final weeks of 1980, the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie gave no sign of backing down from its belligerent stance against the Sandinista revolution. On December 18, the Superior Council of Private Enterprise held a national assembly. Five hundred big cotton and coffee growers, cattle ranchers, industrialists, merchants, and professionals gathered beneath a portrait of their "martyr," Jorge Salazar, and reaffirmed their earlier threats of "political

and economic chaos" if the revolutionary government's "deviations" were not rectified.

The capitalists of Nicaragua know that their only hope now lies in a defeat of the Salvadoran revolution and the demoralizing impact this could have in Nicaragua. They understand that the future of their exploitative system in all Central America depends on the outcome of the mounting civil war in El Salvador.

This is well understood by the workers and peasants of Nicaragua as well. In all their mobilizations in 1980, one cry rang out continually, with special urgency: "If Nicaragua won, El Salvador will win!"

In this way, the Nicaraguan people expressed not only confidence in the approaching victory of their Salvadoran brothers and sisters, but also their readiness to do whatever might become necessary to assure and defend that victory, which will also be their own. □

## Despite Imperialist Attacks and Iraqi Invasion

# Iranian Workers and Peasants Deepen Revolution

By Janice Lynn

In February 1979, the masses in Iran rose up in their millions and toppled one of the most hated dictators in the world. In so doing, they struck a giant blow for freedom.

Since then, the revolution in Iran has continued to deepen.

As in any revolution, the key to the advance of the Iranian revolution lies with the working people in the cities and countryside mobilizing and organizing to advance their own class interests.

In 1980 the Iranian masses took some important steps in this direction, strengthening their independent organizations to fight for their needs and defending and extending the gains already won.

The year-long mobilizations of the workers and peasants were sparked by the dramatic confrontation with U.S. imperialism—so deeply hated in Iran for its long history of dominating and exploiting the country.

The rulers in Washington were intent on reimposing a regime in Iran like that of the shah's. But the Iranian masses were not about to let this happen.

President Carter admitted the shah to the United States in October 1979, thus provoking the occupation of the U.S. embassy and the taking of hostages. The U.S. rulers then stepped up their attacks on the Iranian revolution—sending warships to the Arabian Sea and even attempting a military raid against Iran.

The mobilizations in Iran have been among the deepest and most sustained in history.

During 1980 they led to a sharpening confrontation between the toiling masses and the Iranian capitalist class—the landlords, factory owners, and bourgeois government figures.

As the workers and farmers came up against the Iranian government's attempts to thwart their advances, they began to raise more anticapitalist demands. The Iraqi invasion spurred working people in Iran to assert their views on the kind of massive arming and popular mobilization needed to defend the gains of the revolution.

The Iranian capitalists became more and more isolated. The question of what class should rule was posed more clearly.

The mobilizations in Iran also led to confrontations with the Persian Gulf monarchs and other capitalist regimes in the region. The Iraqi regime's invasion was a response to the increasing anticapitalist and anti-imperialist dynamic inside Iran. Iraqi president Saddam Hussein feared the example the Iranian revolution provided for the workers and farmers in Iraq and throughout the Middle East.

#### February 1979 Insurrection

It was the relatively small but powerful industrial working class that was the

driving force behind the February 1979 insurrection.

Strikes took place among bank and telegraph workers, government and insurance workers, copper miners, dockers, textile workers, railroad workers, and so on. It was the strike wave by the oil workers that precipitated a general strike, bringing the economy to a total halt.

Demonstrations spread to every corner of the country. They drew in the peasants in the countryside who traveled to join demonstrations in the nearest town or city.

The urban poor were mobilized; the bazaar merchants; students and children; women—in historically unprecedented numbers; and the oppressed nationalities.

But while it was the workers and their allies who made the revolution, the working class did not take political power.

The new government was made up of bourgeois political figures and members of the Islamic hierarchy. Despite many differences among themselves, all those in the new government pledged their allegiance to the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who had won wide popular support for his uncompromising opposition to the shah and by his call for an Islamic revolution that he said would be in the interests of the poor.

Because the mosques were the only centers of social life not totally controlled by the shah's regime and secret police, the mass demonstrations against the shah



tended to be organized out of them.

The mosques were one of the few places where oppositional views could be heard, expressed, or discussed. This brought to the fore the role of the Shi'ite hierarchy, which had a long history of conflict with the shah.

As a result of the shah's brutal oppression, Islam and Islamic organizations became for many a means of expressing hatred of imperialist domination, of rejecting the culture of the oppressors, and of defending the value of their own culture and history.

Under the banner of "Islamic revolution," the working masses began to fight for their own interests against the exploiters at home and abroad.

#### Gains of Iran's Workers

In the less than two years of the revolution, the Iranian people have made a number of important gains.

- The monarchy was abolished and a republic was established;

- The people won the right to vote, to speak out, to demonstrate, and to organize political parties—rights that were completely suppressed under the shah;

- Throughout the country, factory workers began to organize their own committees (*shoras*) to fight for their interests on issues of wages, health, safety, housing, and production priorities. They exercised the right to strike and the right to engage in political activities—all of which had been forbidden under the shah. The atmosphere of fear and repression that had existed in every factory and workplace during the shah's regime disappeared. The SAVAK (secret police) agents and some of the most hated managers were driven out of the plants;

- Wages for most industrial workers were doubled and the workweek was reduced from forty-eight to forty hours per week;

- Committees and shoras began to be organized among the peasants in the countryside, in the army, and in the neighborhoods;

- The peasants began dividing up the land of the big landowners and foreign corporations. Schools and other public services were established for the first time in many rural areas;

- Thousands of anti-shah political prisoners were released from jail. SAVAK, which had been trained and organized by the CIA, was abolished;

- The shah's torturers and hangmen began to be tried and punished for their crimes. Elements associated with the shah's regime were purged from the armed forces and state apparatus. The 40,000 U.S. advisers who had dominated the shah's army and regime were expelled from the country;

- Forty percent of Iran's oil had been controlled by U.S. corporations and another forty percent by British Petro-



Political prisoners released after overthrow of the shah.

leum. Following the revolution, imperialism's control over Iranian oil was eliminated. All oil was cut off to the racist apartheid regime in South Africa (which under the shah had depended on Iran for 90 percent of its oil);

- Ties were broken with the Zionist state of Israel. The Palestine Liberation Organization was given the former Israeli embassy in Tehran;

- The Kurdish, Azerbaijani, and Arab nationalities—brutally repressed under decades of monarchy—made gains in the struggle to run their own affairs, use their own languages, practice their own cultures, etc. The revolution opened the possibility for the oppressed nationalities to organize and to launch massive struggles to win their national rights;

- Large corporations were nationalized, including all banks and insurance companies. The U.S. capitalists had some \$700 million invested in Iran during the shah's regime. These investments brought in giant profits for the corporations, but next to nothing in improvements for the masses of Iranians. Some seventy to eighty percent of the industrialized sector was nationalized—an important step in freeing the country from foreign domination;

- For the first time, working-class and peasant women came out of the political isolation of the home to fight for the kinds of economic improvements that hold the key for ending women's oppression.

#### Iranian Government

One of the most powerful achievements of the Iranian revolution was the rise in the level of political consciousness and revolutionary activity on the part of the

Iranian working class. Their determination to be free of foreign domination, and the increasing awareness of the need for working people to run the country, was repeatedly expressed by workers in many of the massive demonstrations that took place during the revolution's first two years.

"Cut off the hands of the capitalists who are sabotaging production! Abolish capitalism and plunder," was one of the slogans raised by more than 100 factory committees in Tehran. They called for the government, in collaboration with the factory shoras to take over all industry in the country.

Steelworkers in Isfahan called for "breaking the hold of foreign and dependent native capitalists," for "nationalizing their capital," and for "dividing land among the peasants." And they called for the right of the shoras to exercise executive powers and to make decisions in all areas.

The gains won by the Iranian masses were all achieved and maintained by the constant mobilizations of millions of Iranians—and despite efforts by the Iranian government to slow down, contain, or even reverse this mass upsurge.

Iranian workers and peasants, as well as Iran's oppressed nationalities, ran up against the Iranian government in many of the struggles they waged.

This is because the Khomeini government did not decisively break with capitalist property relations, including landlordism, nor with the old bourgeois state apparatus left from the days of the shah.

Capitalist governments are not set up to meet the needs of the working masses, and they cannot do so even in the richest



countries. In underdeveloped countries, the capitalists cannot solve basic problems like land reform and industrialization. Nor can they adequately meet social needs such as health care, housing, or education, or provide self-determination for oppressed nationalities, or equality for women.

Nonetheless, the bourgeois government in Iran has not been able to successfully hold back the revolutionary process—the massive mobilizations, the independent initiatives, the growth of workers committees.

It is precisely because the government has not been able to prevent the deepening of the revolution that Washington has been so intent on overturning the present leadership in Iran.

The U.S. rulers would like to see a government that would not give as many concessions to the masses, or reflect their anti-imperialist sentiments, as Khomeini has done.

They would like to see a regime that would be better able to stem the advances of the Iranian workers and farmers.

The Iranian capitalist class is in a weak position. It complains about “multiple power centers”—that is, the factory shoras, the Revolutionary Guards, the Islamic student associations, the peasant shoras, and so on.

It has been these mass formations that have often taken initiatives and moved forward. And the fighting among the governmental factions is basically over what to do about these initiatives and mobilizations.

It is only the Iranian working class with the support of the peasantry that can carry the Iranian revolution forward.

But although the Khomeini regime cannot carry out this historic task, it has taken a number of important and progressive measures that must be staunchly defended against imperialism in league with pro-shah reactionaries.

It is an advance that Iran now has a government that takes a fiercely anti-imperialist stance, instead of a government that fawns on Washington.

It is an advance that the Iranian government calls on the Iranian people to mobilize for an irreconcilable struggle to defend their gains, rather than gunning them down by the thousands in the interests of imperialism, as the shah did.

And it is an advance that the mass mobilizations of the Iranian people have continued. The Iranian workers and peasants have continued to organize themselves and push forward with their demands—forward toward socialism—even though they may not yet call it that. But that is the direction in which they are moving—towards working people running society in their own interests.

#### **Response of U.S. Rulers**

From the very beginning of the Iranian revolution, the U.S. government viewed

this revolution as a deadly threat to its interests in the Middle East.

The overthrow of the U.S.-imposed dictatorship in Iran was a powerful step towards breaking out of imperialist bondage. It served as an inspiration to the oppressed and exploited throughout the world.

But Washington had counted on the shah's regime, not only as a protector of its oil interests, but also as a bulwark against the Arab revolution and as a bastion of capitalist stability throughout the region.

Because of the deep opposition among American working people to using U.S. military force to back unpopular dictators, the U.S. ruling class could not intervene directly to crush the popular rebellion of the Iranian masses.

But they never gave up their aim of regaining full, firm control of Iran.

The U.S. rulers went on an intense propaganda campaign aimed at totally discrediting the Iranian revolution in the eyes of the American working people.

The U.S. rulers wanted to convince American workers that the Iranian revolution was neither in their interests nor in the interests of the Iranian people. And that it would be progressive if Washington intervened to install a regime in Iran like that of the “great modernizer”—the shah.

So, in October 1979, the deposed monarch was admitted to the United States.

#### **Occupation of the 'Spy Nest'**

The November 4, 1979, occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran came as tens of thousands of Iranians were angrily protesting this provocative act. Bringing the shah into the United States was widely seen as part of a conspiracy to engineer another CIA coup, like the one in 1953 that put the shah back on the throne.

Moreover, the U.S. embassy was the hated symbol of American imperialism's domination of Iran.

The occupation immediately won the support of the Iranian masses, as hundreds of thousands—and at times millions—assembled outside the embassy to show their solidarity with the students inside.

The Iranian masses had one simple demand—Return the shah and his stolen billions to the Iranian people so he could stand trial for his crimes.

To the Iranians, allowing the shah to remain in the United States was like offering asylum to a Hitler.

But the U.S. rulers were not concerned about the hostages. This provided the rulers with an opportunity to step up their propaganda, to try to cut through the deep antiwar sentiment of the working class.

Rejecting all requests for the legal extradition of the shah, Carter seized billions in Iranian assets; sent U.S. warships into the Arabian Sea; ordered a halt to all oil imports from Iran; and threatened Iranian students in the United States with deportation.

Carter refused to negotiate with any Iranian officials. He rejected proposals for an international inquiry into the crimes of the shah.

The U.S. rulers tried to whip up an anti-Iranian frenzy, encouraging racist, right-wing attacks on Iranian citizens in the U.S. These were used to create the impression that American workers wanted to go to war against Iran.

But as the truth about the shah's crimes began to come out, it became clear that most workers were not in favor of fighting a war over a tyrant, hated throughout the world, and against a people mobilized in their millions to defend their revolution.

#### **Mobilizations in Iran**

In Iran, a new wave of revolutionary struggle swept the country. At the center of this upsurge was the struggle against Washington's sabotage of the revolution, symbolized by the admission of the shah into the United States and the consequent embassy occupation.

This upsurge was marked by a qualitatively higher level of anticapitalist consciousness. The connections between the U.S. imperialists and the native capitalists and landlords became clearer and the confrontations sharper.

The mobilized readiness of the Iranian masses to defend their revolution dealt a powerful blow to Washington's attempts to go to war in the Middle East and helped to politically isolate the proimperialist and pro-shah forces within Iran.

The Iranian workers began to demand bolder and bolder measures to free their country from foreign exploitation and to end capitalist profiteering.

More shoras began to be organized in the factories and began waging struggles to take over greater management functions and to institute workers control. Many of the shoras began publishing their own workers' newspapers.

More steps were taken, especially by the youth, to reconstruct the country on the basis of working people's needs.

Among the peasantry, land occupations and demands for land distribution became more common.

And one of the most popular demands of the masses was for the formation of an “army of 20 million”—that is, a people's militia and army—to defend the revolution.

For the first time, workers participated as workers on the many mass mobilizations, raising demands of their own.

The Iranian people repeatedly stressed that their enemy was only the U.S. government and *not* the American people. They expressed their solidarity with the struggle of Black Americans.

The workers and farmers began to assert their right to a voice on how to overcome the economic and social legacy of the shah's tyranny—unemployment, lack of

industry, inequitable land distribution, inflation.

The students in the embassy discovered top secret documents. These documents showed how the U.S. government had long planned to bring the shah to the United States for reasons that had nothing to do with health. And they proved that the real function of this embassy—in a country in the middle of a revolution against U.S. domination and repression—was not simply to process visas. In fact, the U.S. embassy had been used as a center for spying and plotting against the revolution.

The Iranian people renamed the U.S. embassy the "spy nest."

#### U.S. Escalates Attacks

Through the first part of 1980 the U.S. government continued its attacks and propaganda against Iran.

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

All attempts by Iranian officials to end the crisis were rebuffed by Carter, who declared that Washington would never apologize for imposing and supporting the shah's regime.

U.S. officials declared that the country's national honor was at stake. The honor they were talking about was not the honor of American working people, but the honor of the Rockefellers' billions.

Real honor—the honor of humanity—was violated when the U.S. government put into power and backed to the hilt the butcher shah.

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

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

Then, on April 24, Carter launched the abortive commando raid on Iran—which if it had not been aborted, would have led to the deaths of some or all of the hostages.

It was clear that the real aim of this raid had nothing to do with saving American lives. It was part of Washington's attempt to provoke a war to roll back the revolution and install a regime in Iran that would again rule in the interests of U.S. corporate profits.

The U.S. military raid was roundly condemned by the oppressed and exploited throughout the world.

Although the hostage issue was used to try to whip up support for the U.S. military buildup, the draft, higher energy prices, and other economic sacrifices, it did not succeed in reversing the American working people's opposition to new Vietnams. This was indicated by the massive opposi-

tion by young Americans to Carter's draft registration.

Following the April raid, Washington's propaganda and attacks against the Iranian revolution continued.

In June it was disclosed that the CIA had provided transmitters for nightly broadcasts into Iran from Egypt by Iranian counterrevolutionaries.

On July 10, Iran crushed a plot by former officers of the shah to carry out a military coup aimed at reinstalling the shah's last premier, Shahpur Bakhtiar. The coup was said to have had the backing of the CIA and the Iraqi regime.

On July 27, the shah died in exile in Egypt. On this same day the U.S. government stepped up its campaign against Iranian students, beating and arresting 192 at a Washington, D.C. demonstration. The British government carried out a similar campaign.

Accompanying these moves was the continual campaign in the U.S. media to portray the Iranian masses as "Islamic fanatics" and Khomeini as a "religious madman."

While it is true that religion and religious ideology have been used time and again for reactionary ends, what born-again Jimmy Carter and the ultraconservative "Moral Majority" are concerned about is certainly not religion. What they are concerned about is the deepening revolution taking place in Iran.

In the case of Iran, the religious ideology of the Iranian workers and peasants is merely the current form that their progressive social aspirations take.

When Khomeini or any other religious leader took stands that ran counter to the interests of Iranian working people—such as propping up the unpopular Bazargan government at the beginning of the revolution, launching attacks on the Kurdish and Arab peoples, or restricting democratic rights—they ran into growing resistance.

The clerical figures in Iran were unable to halt the progressive anti-imperialist mobilizations of the masses. And in many cases they were even forced to adapt to the demands of the mass movement, articulating and giving voice to them.

Efforts to stifle debate and roll back the gains won by Iran's workers and farmers have not succeeded. Efforts to disband the workers shoras, roll back land reforms, or eliminate political parties have failed.

Many of the reactionary campaigns by rightist clerical figures have been denounced by the masses, and subsequently by Khomeini (although this is rarely reported in the U.S. and other imperialist press).

The key thing is that throughout 1980 the Iranian masses continued to push forward with their demands. The revolution in Iran was by no means pushed back. It continued to move forward.

It was in this context that the Iraqi

Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein launched its September 22 invasion of Iran.

The U.S. government and its imperialist allies used this invasion to massively expand their military presence in the Middle East.

Some sixty-one warships gathered ominously in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

The head of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force announced his troops were ready to fight in the Middle East.

Four U.S. radar intelligence planes were dispatched to Iraq's ally, Saudi Arabia.

Washington began using military facilities in Oman to resupply its naval taskforce.

And the U.S. rulers stepped up their propaganda campaign, blaming "fanatical" Arabs and Iranians for threatening the "civilized world's" oil supplies.

The Iraqi regime's goal in invading Iran was to try to stabilize the region in order to protect it from the effects of the Iranian revolution. It wanted to contain and weaken the Iranian revolution and overthrow the Iranian government.

These goals coincided with Washington's. And in the first days of the invasion, the U.S. rulers cheered on the Iraqi forces.

The Iraqi regime had also been tied in with some of the shah's former generals and with the shah's former prime minister, Bakhtiar. These forces were working to organize a counterrevolution in Iran. The Iraqi regime was providing them with bases, radio stations, money, arms, and other aid.

Despite Hussein's anti-imperialist declarations, the professed socialist goals of the ruling Baath party, its progressive stand in support of the Palestinian struggle, and the aid it has provided to revolutionary governments in such countries as Grenada, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Vietnam, it launched a counterrevolutionary attack that only served the interests of imperialism.

Far from being a blow against Zionism or imperialism, the Iraqi regime turned against the only real revolution to challenge imperialism in the Middle East in recent years.

The Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein is an example of the kind of radical nationalist regime in underdeveloped countries that comes to power, plays an anti-imperialist role for a number of years, carries out radical reforms, but in the end is unable to lift its country out of the imperialist trap. It ends up succumbing to the pressures of the world capitalist market and its fears of its own workers and peasants. As this process developed in Iraq, the regime reached a growing convergence of interests with Washington.

A similar political evolution could happen in Iran—but *only* if the mass upsurge of the workers and farmers there is rolled back.



Fearing the same kind of massive mobilizations that led to the toppling of the shah, the Iraqi regime moved to crush the workers and peasants movement in Iran.

But far from the quick victory that Washington and Hussein expected, this war has dragged on for several months, with the Iraqi regime being unable to take control of Iran's oil fields or any major Iranian city, except for sections of Khorramshahr. The destruction on both sides has been devastating, but it is already clear that the result has been a political fiasco for Hussein, whose regime may not survive the war.

What Hussein and Washington had not expected was the fierce determination by the Iranian masses to defend their revolution. The U.S. rulers had totally misjudged the depth of the revolution in Iran and the power of its support in the rest of the region.

Fearing the repercussions of the Iraqi regime's gamble—inside Iran, in Iraq, and in the Persian Gulf monarchies—Washington began to shift its public stance away from support for the invasion.

#### New Upsurge in Iran

In Iran, neighborhood committees began to spring up or become revitalized in cities throughout the country, to carry out tasks of defending the revolution.

The workers shoras began taking initiatives—beginning to organize arms training and discuss ways of reorganizing the economy to meet the demands of war. There was a greater sentiment for keeping a close watch over management, for examining the financial books, and for preventing sabotage of production or the hoarding of goods by the capitalists.

Massive demonstrations—many with armed contingents of men, women, and children—took place in cities throughout the country to affirm the Iranian people's readiness to defend their revolution.

The masses increasingly began to demand that a new military command structure and a new armed forces be created. The obstructionism of the army high command—including many holdovers from the shah's regime—and the lack of a unified command significantly slowed down the defense of Khuzestan Province where the fighting was concentrated, and spurred demands for a new military force that would rely on the toiling masses.

The predominantly Arab population of Khuzestan also participated in the fighting to repel the Iraqi invaders, despite the Tehran government's often brutal attacks on the oppressed nationalities' struggles for their national rights.

Defense of the revolution would have been much stronger if the Tehran government had met the demands of the oppressed Arab and Kurdish nationalities.

Instead, the government launched a military offensive against Kurdistan that began in April and continued until shortly



Auto workers demonstrate outside U.S. embassy in Tehran.

Cindy Jaquith/Militant

before the Iraqi invasion. But this fighting became very unpopular among the Iranian working people, who recognized that fighting their brothers and sisters in Kurdistan was an obstacle to a united mobilization against imperialist attacks. Within the army and sections of the Revolutionary Guards, protests against the government offensive in Kurdistan took place.

After the Iraqi regime's invasion, the need for a united defense of the revolution became even clearer. The government's refusal to recognize the national rights of the Kurdish people weakened the defense against the Iraqi regime's attacks.

During the last months of 1980 disputes over how to respond to the Iraqi invasion and the mobilizations it sparked among the Iranian masses led to deepening factionalism within the government. The government responded to these new mobilizations with new attempts at repression—shutting down offices and banning newspapers of various left formations, and jailing some of those who expressed criticism of the government.

But these attempts at curtailing democratic rights were protested by the masses. The Iranian working people wanted to know why they had still not been able to drive the Iraqi invaders out of their country. They wanted to know why arms had not been distributed in more massive numbers.

The masses showed they were becoming more and more dissatisfied with both the

clerical and "liberal" factions of the government, neither of which had been able to take the steps necessary to begin solving the country's problems.

#### A Workers and Peasants Government

The maintenance of the capitalist system in Iran leaves the country vulnerable to new imperialist inroads in the future, both economically and politically. The only thing preventing the reassertion of imperialist domination in Iran is the continued mobilization of the masses of Iranian workers and peasants.

And only a workers and peasants government can definitively free Iran from the imperialist yoke and meet the needs of the masses.

However, as long as the workers and peasants of Iran are not able to replace the present capitalist government with one of their own, it is necessary to defend the existing regime against all attacks from imperialism, pro-shah forces, or bourgeois regimes in the area. Any overthrow of the Khomeini government by rightist forces would signal the reversal of the gains of the Iranian revolution and a bloody crushing of the workers and peasants.

It is precisely through their mobilizations in defense of their revolution that the masses in Iran will strengthen their self-confidence and organization, and lay the basis for establishing a government of their own. □



## Polish Workers Threaten to Bring Down Stalinist Regime

By Gerry Foley

Along with the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle in the colonial and semicolonial countries, and the class struggle in the imperialist centers, there is a third fundamental arena in the world struggle for socialism—the political revolution against the counterrevolutionary Stalinist bureaucracies.

In 1980, there was a dramatic acceleration in the struggle of the workers under Stalinist rule.

With the development of an independent mass workers movement in Poland and the organization of one-fourth of the entire population of the country in unions independent of the bureaucracy, a force has emerged in the Stalinized workers states that has the potential of standing up to all the power that the Kremlin can bring to bear and dealing it a decisive defeat.

### Fragility of Bureaucratic Rule

The breakdown of the totalitarian system has reached an advanced stage in Poland. It is now unlikely that the Polish bureaucracy can contain it. However, if the Kremlin sent in its own and satellite armies, it would risk a costly war that could open up cracks in its control of the USSR itself.

In comparison with U.S. imperialism and other advanced capitalist countries, the political hold of the Stalinist bureaucracies is extremely fragile. These regimes have no deep historical or social roots. They stand in acute contradiction to the aspirations of the workers in whose name they rule and to the needs of the planned economy itself.

The repressive crust imposed on the Stalinized workers states by the ruling bureaucracies is very hard and covers everything. But it is also brittle and thin. Once it begins to crack, it can break up in a very short time. That has been shown in a number of crises of bureaucratic rule in East Europe since Stalin's death, most dramatically in Hungary in 1956.

The Kremlin is well aware of this danger and therefore is willing to pay any political price to stop such processes once they begin. For example it paid, and is still paying, a very high price for its intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

### Bureaucrats Believed in Capitalism

There is another aspect of the crisis in Poland that is different from earlier instances in which bureaucratic rule was challenged in Eastern Europe. That is the extent to which the crisis of Stalinism and the radicalization of the workers in Poland

is linked to and intertwined with the crisis of the world capitalist economy.

The Polish bureaucracy's economic planning was based on the assumption of a continually expanding market in the capitalist world for the country's products. But this class-collaborationist perspective began to founder after the international capitalist economy went into decline in the mid-1970s. Trade possibilities started to contract. As a result, the Polish authorities were forced to borrow more and more heavily from imperialist-dominated financial institutions to be able to satisfy the minimum expectations of the population.

Irresistibly, the pressure of debt forced the Polish bureaucracy to try to remove the food subsidies. The first time they tried that it produced a mass explosion, a spontaneous general strike in June 1976. The second time they tried this, in June 1980, it spurred the current upsurge.

The Polish bureaucracy's confidence in the future of capitalism was rudely deceived. But while it was the most discomfited, it was not the only ruling bureaucracy left in the lurch by the capitalist crisis.

Because of their nationalized and planned economies, the Stalinized workers states are buffered from the biggest shocks of the business cycle—from mass unemployment and spiralling prices. But the productive potential of their progressive social system is stunted by the privileged castes that monopolize political power.

Bureaucratic mismanagement and the waste of resources tied up in income and privileges for the bureaucracy are an enormous drain on the Polish economy. The way forward is contained in part in the demands by the independent union, Solidarity, for democratic workers' involvement in planning, access to all financial records, workers control, and an end to special privileges.

Most importantly, reliance on trade with capitalist countries reflects the bureaucracy's rejection of proletarian internationalism. Only the expansion of the world socialist revolution, above all to the advanced capitalist countries, can lay the basis for lasting solutions to the economic and social problems facing the Polish workers and the rest of humanity. Only this can end the arms race and the threat of war, and lay the basis for a worldwide socialist economy. In this framework, expanded trade can play a subordinate role.

Such a perspective is anathema to the bureaucracy, however, which strives for long-term cooperation with world capital-

ism to preserve the status quo. This class-collaborationist perspective is increasingly undermined by the decay of the capitalist system itself, and by the revolutionary struggles of the world's toilers against hunger, tyranny, and insecurity.

### No Possibility of Self-Reform

In large part because of the failure of the bureaucracy's perspectives, the Polish crisis of 1980 also dealt another blow to illusions in the possibilities for reform of the Stalinist system.

Two generations of reformers, represented by Gomulka who was put in power by the 1956 upsurge, and Gierek, who gained power as a result of the 1970 insurrectionary strikes of Baltic port workers, have been driven from office in disgrace by renewed, more powerful, and more determined workers struggles.

The Polish masses have given their verdict on this experience. For the first time, the masses of Polish workers, farmers, and intellectuals in revolt against Stalinism are not placing their confidence in any wing of the Communist Party.

The principled fighters for workers democracy and the masses of workers have built an independent organization, Solidarity, which now numbers more than 10 million members. The statutes of the union stipulate that no Communist Party official can hold a leadership position in Solidarity, thereby recognizing that the interests of the party of the bureaucracy are antagonistic to those of the workers.

### Twenty-Five Years of Struggle

The emergence of an independent mass workers organization with a conscious leadership represents the culmination of twenty-five years of experience in the struggle against bureaucratic privilege, inequality, and totalitarian political methods.

Through Jacek Kuron, who has emerged as a central political leader, the new workers movement is linked to the left wing of the 1956 Polish October. Kuron was a leader in the early 1960s of the rearguard fight against the liquidation of the gains of the 1956 upsurge.

In a 1965 document entitled "An Open Letter to the Communist Party," Kuron and his associate Karol Modzelewski, both students at Warsaw University, presented the first rounded revolutionary program for ousting the bureaucracy from power and establishing workers democracy since the time of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union.

The Kuron group also was inspired by the Vietnamese Revolution and the international youth radicalization. The first demonstration they organized after being released from their first prison term was one in support of the Vietnamese people. The Polish bureaucracy did not bother to call one, although demonstrations took place in cities throughout the world during the 1967 International Days of Protest.

#### Formation of KOR

Following the 1976 strikes, Kuron organized the Committee to Defend the Workers (KOR) in order to mobilize support for those workers who were being persecuted for their role in the protests against the price rises.

The KOR was able to rally Polish intellectuals to the side of the workers, as well as to gain support from West European CPs that felt the need to clear their skirts of responsibility for Stalinist repression.

Current leaders of Solidarity such as Lech Walesa and Anna Walentynowicz gained their first political experience in the 1970 and 1976 strikes in the Baltic shipyards.

The KOR was subjected to heavy harassment, including cat-and-mouse jailings. But by the fall of 1977, the government relaxed its repressive campaign. The KOR then transformed itself into the Movement for Social Self-Defense (KSS—although it is still most often referred to by the more familiar “KOR”) and took up a broader program of trying to promote independent organization in all areas of the society.

For example, the KOR gave impetus to a whole series of independent publications that were not legal but appeared with the addresses of staff members and that the government did not systematically suppress. By the time of the 1980 upsurge, this independent press had a circulation of tens of thousands.

One of the independent publications promoted by the KOR was a workers' paper *Robotnik*, with which some of the key leaders of the independent unions worked. An initial version of the demands raised by the workers in the August-September strikes was published in *Robotnik* several months before the upsurge, signed by figures such as Kuron, Walesa, and others.

#### Leadership of Solidarity

The leadership of Solidarity is thus the outcome of a process of militant workers struggles, political discussion, and selection, that goes back some years. It has shown its ability to carry out tactical and strategic discussions and resolve them democratically.

Such a leadership has never existed before in the antibureaucratic upsurges in Eastern Europe. They were all too brief to permit the development of an independent workers movement and leadership.

The existence of an organization such as

Solidarity provides a living model of workers democracy within a society where the government is still trying to rule in a totalitarian way and cannot, by its nature, do otherwise.

This situation is highly unstable, since the bureaucracy cannot long tolerate a mass workers movement beyond its control. Nonetheless, the leadership of the independent unions has not retreated in the face of threats from the regime or from the Kremlin itself. It has continued to press forward, although always from a defensive stance.

For example, in November the government arrested two members of Solidarity for helping to publicize a government document that laid out procedures for attacking the opposition. The union responded by threatening a regional general strike in the Warsaw area. It then raised demands for an investigation of the illegal actions of the repressive forces.

#### Crisis of Communist Party

As a mass organization and a political force, the Communist Party is clearly outdistanced by Solidarity. The political authority of Solidarity leaders is incomparably greater than that of a former political policeman like the CP's new first secretary, Stanislaw Kania.

Already more than 60 percent of the working-class members of the CP belong to Solidarity. The way in which Kania addressed these CP workers in his report to the December party plenum suggests that they follow the leadership of Solidarity more than that of the CP.

As a result, the Communist Party has been going into deeper and deeper crisis. Local meetings were called across the country in early November to mobilize the activists for the expected confrontation with Solidarity over the question of legal recognition of the union.

But the result was a flood of resolutions from factory cells condemning the lack of democracy in the party and past corruption. Calls were raised for a massive purge of corrupt and careerist elements.

In fact, since the August-September strikes, tens of thousands of members have left the Communist Party.

Already a discussion article has been published in the country's main daily, *Zycie Warszawy*, calling for a fundamental reorganization of the party along democratic lines.

#### Kremlin Terrified

Facing this situation, the Kremlin and the other East European bureaucracies are terrified. They have seen the sort of breakdown of totalitarianism now occurring in Poland before—in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

In Hungary, for example, the whole apparatus of Stalinist rule broke down in a couple of weeks. It took a full-scale Soviet invasion and a bloody, if short, war to

reestablish it.

Poland has well over three times the population of Hungary, and the entire international context is more favorable for Polish resistance to Soviet attack.

The Kremlin stepped up its implicit threats of intervention coincident with the Polish CP Central Committee plenum at the beginning of December. These threats were intended to intimidate the workers movement in Poland and to encourage stiffer resistance by elements in the party to the pressures brought to bear by this movement.

Kuron explained his response to the Soviet threats in an interview in the December 15 *Der Spiegel*. He was asked if he saw the communiqué issued by a Moscow summit meeting of East European Stalinist leaders in December as a final warning preparatory to an invasion. He replied:

“By no means. The communiqué was a further attempt to bring pressure to bear on the people of Poland. This threat is supposed to get them to hold back and not continue their advance toward democracy.”

#### No Halfway Process Possible

The process that has been unleashed in Poland cannot be stopped halfway. The escalation of Soviet pressure was followed by the threat of new strikes from the farmers demanding that the government recognize their independent union, as well as that of the workers.

What is more, the farmers mobilization came on the heels of a statement by the Polish Council of Bishops calling for “social peace.” And it is precisely among the farming population that the church wields the strongest influence.

The Catholic hierarchy sees its interests in an accommodation with the bureaucratic rulers. For that reason, it tried to use its influence during the strikes to get the workers to go back to work. And it has tried to use its influence again in December to hold the movement back.

In both cases the warnings of the church leaders were not heeded, even though they based them on a more material threat than hellfire—the possibility of a Soviet invasion.

These instances show clearly what the adherence of the Polish masses to Catholicism amounts to—when it represents Polish national rights and freedom of conscience in opposition to totalitarianism, they are fervent Catholics; when Catholicism represents conservatism and submission to authority, it rolls off them like water off a duck's back.

When threats of Soviet intervention were at their height, Walesa made strong appeals for an end to strikes and the avoidance of confrontations. This deprived Moscow of pretexts for threatening Poland and further isolated the party bureaucrats who were sabotaging implementation of the August agreement. It helped convince





Strike at Warsaw steel factory.

Der Spiegel

new layers of the population—especially those influenced by the church—that Solidarity is a responsible representative of Polish working people.

Far from retreating before the Soviet threats, the workers made one of their most impressive shows of strength December 16 when more than 500,000 people gathered in Gdansk for a solemn ceremony at the new monument commemorating the workers gunned down during the 1970 upsurge.

Before the August strikes, the government had condemned attempts to honor the martyrs of 1970 as subversive and antisocialist. But this time, top party leaders and church dignitaries were compelled to endorse the meeting. The president of Poland joined Walesa on the platform.

The gathering thus legitimized the gains the workers have won since the August strikes, as well as their previous struggles. The fact that the government felt obliged to offer its support to the meeting is an indication of the relationship of forces inside Poland, and adds to the difficulties that the Kremlin rulers will confront in any invasion.

#### International Influence of Struggle

The international impact of the Polish upsurge of 1980 seems destined to be far deeper and more widespread than that of any of the previous antibureaucratic struggles and that is also a factor that strengthens the Polish workers and farmers against the Kremlin's threats.

The current Polish workers movement is striking more deeply than prior upsurges at the pretense of the privileged bureaucratic castes to represent the workers.

Thus, the Kremlin and the Stalinist bureaucracies and CPs in the other East European countries have been put politically more on the defensive by the Polish upsurge than by previous antibureaucratic explosions, even the Hungarian revolution.

At a time when the antibureaucratic opposition in the USSR and other East European countries has found itself in a

blind alley of individual moral and intellectual protest, with some dissidents even lending support to U.S. foreign policy, the Polish upsurge offers the example of a mass movement led by the industrial working class that is capable of defeating the Polish bureaucracy in a head-on fight and facing up even to a Soviet invasion.

Poland stands in close contact with those areas of the Soviet Union where the opposition to the ruling bureaucracy is most massive, the Baltic republics and the Ukraine.

Moreover, Poland's neighbor to the west, the German Democratic Republic, is the Stalinized workers state most open to international news, where the bureaucracy is least able to shut out the truth about the Polish process.

In the case of Czechoslovakia, where the bureaucracy has been the most rabid in its denunciations of the workers movement in Poland, there is virtually no language barrier. Polish is very close to both Czech and Slovak.

In the past, the various antibureaucratic movements have tended, out of bitter experience with Stalinism, to have illusions about the Western capitalist countries. Such illusions are not entirely absent in Poland. But there is already a widespread distrust of the motives of the imperialist powers.

For example, in his interview in the December 15 *Der Spiegel*, Kuron had this to say about the alarms raised by NATO and the Pentagon about the possibility of a Soviet invasion of Poland and their "warnings" to Moscow:

"Poles have been shocked by the hysterical tone of the Western mass media, above all the Polish language broadcasts, when they talk about the danger of Soviet intervention. Many Western statements create the impression that it is the Poles' own fault that they face the threat of a Soviet invasion."

#### Imperialists Also Worried

The imperialists, of course, have adopted

a posture of sympathy for the Polish workers. They have seized on the threat of a Soviet invasion to intensify their anti-communist propaganda campaign and to justify further escalation of the arms race. In December, the NATO governments announced plans to impose sanctions on Moscow should it send troops into Poland.

And there are more than a few U.S. officials who entertain the hope that a military move by the Kremlin against the Polish workers will provide cover for Washington to step up its military intervention on the side of the Salvadoran junta.

But as Kuron noted, the real sentiments of the imperialists toward the Polish workers struggle increasingly break through. In fact, the December 8 issue of *Time* magazine, in the past an advocate of the "liberation" of Eastern Europe, carried a headline on the Poland situation saying "Strike-happy unions continue their risky game with Moscow."

Ruling circles in the West have made it plain in a number of ways that they are frightened by the developments in Poland. They are disturbed by the threat the struggle there represents to the status quo, and they are worried about repayment of the loans they granted at extortionate interest rates. But there are deeper political fears.

The Polish upsurge of 1980 has begun to make it clear that the collective ownership of the means of production is not inseparably bound up with totalitarian dictatorship. It has begun to show what workers democracy would look like in action.

The Polish workers have given an example of the ability of the working class to assume the active leadership of a whole society and move it toward socialism. □

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# Statement of the Fourth International

## Solidarity With the Fighting Salvadoran People!

[The following declaration was issued December 5 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

The military junta and its counterrevolutionary gangs, with the support of American imperialism, are committing more and more crimes against the Salvadoran people. The repression has claimed 10,000 victims since the beginning of the year. Juan Chacón, Enrique Álvarez, Enrique Barrera Escobar, Humberto Mendoza, Doroteo Hernández and other leaders of political currents and of the mass organizations were recently assassinated. There has been savage reprisals against the peasants with the destruction of villages and harvested produce. The most elementary democratic rights have been suppressed totally and brutal intimidation is carried out against all those who do not line up on the side of the assassins. That has been the balance sheet of the regime set up in October 1979 and given political, economic, and military aid by U.S. imperialism, the "national" bourgeoisies in Latin America, and, particularly in Europe, by the Christian Democratic parties and their parliamentary group at the European assembly in Strasbourg.

The arrival of Reagan as president of the United States, who scarcely bothers even with the demagoguery of his predecessor on human rights, is encouraging the unleashing of reactionary violence rarely equalled by the worst dictatorships.

However, the very painful losses suffered by the Salvadoran people and the increasingly open threat of intervention from imperialism and its lackeys, have not obtained the hoped-for results. On the contrary, the struggle of the worker and peasant masses, of the students and other oppressed layers, has continued to grow. Today the revolutionary organizations have more support than ever and, despite repeated difficulties, have succeeded in unifying at a much higher level against a junta which is increasingly discredited—even in the eyes of sectors that had previously supported it. The number of liberation fighters now reaches into the dozens of thousands and whole areas, such as Morazán, are under their control. New offensives against the regime are now being planned. The revolutionary forces are striking harder and harder blows against the junta and its imperialist masters. The setting up of a revolutionary government in the liberated zones is already on the agenda.

The leaders of American imperialism

and their allies in Europe and Latin America are perfectly conscious of the gravity of the situation from their point of view. They know that the Salvadoran masses could win a historic victory in the relatively near future. They also know that Guatemala is a real powder keg and the relationship of forces in that country is also evolving in favor of the masses and their organizations. They realize that the Nicaraguan revolution is deepening and that the Sandinista National Liberation Front leadership, far from being intimidated by the bourgeoisie's maneuvers and the criminal operations mounted by the imperialists, has decided to go forward and that no force can seriously resist it within the country. They know that the Cuban workers state ensures active solidarity with the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean who are struggling today.

The stakes are high for imperialism. If the Salvadoran revolutionary organizations are victorious, there is a risk that its strategic positions in a crucial region, already seriously weakened by the Nicaraguan insurrection of July 19, 1979, will crumble. It is precisely because they have estimated the importance of the present events and their possible dynamic that Washington and its allies have clearly increased their financial and military aid to the junta. They are going to do everything they can to avoid a defeat which would be even more catastrophic than the one they suffered with the Cuban revolution.

They still dispose of very considerable resources and it would be an error to underestimate them. If all the measures taken so far have proved insufficient, they could launch a military intervention,

through an intermediary or even directly. The ensuing conflict could lead to a major international confrontation.

The international workers movement must become conscious of all the implications of the crisis in Central America. It must fulfill its internationalist duty by mobilizing to aid the Salvadoran people and their revolutionary organizations. An international campaign must be put at the top of the agenda. Trade union organizations, particularly in Latin America, in Western Europe, and the United States must commit themselves in the front ranks. The systematic massacre of a whole people must not be accepted without reaction.

Actions should be organized calling for: repression to be stopped immediately, democratic rights to be respected, the freeing of political prisoners, the punishment of those guilty of crimes, and the breaking by all countries of diplomatic relations with the assassins' junta. Solidarity can be expressed at the same time by concrete financial and medical aid to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and its organizations. World opinion must be alerted to the real danger of an imperialist intervention. The strongest possible opposition to such an intervention needs to be expressed.

Down with the junta! International solidarity with the Salvadoran people and their fighting organizations!

Support the FMLN!

Against any imperialist intervention in Central America!

Solidarity with the struggle of the Guatemalan masses!

Hands off the Nicaraguan revolution and the Cuban workers state!

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## Imperialist Militarization Drive Meets Wide Resistance

By Will Reissner

A relentless propaganda campaign to convince working people in the advanced capitalist countries that they should support huge increases in arms spending and the further militarization of society was carried out during 1980.

Faced with a rising tide of revolutionary struggles, especially in Central America and the Middle East, Washington has been pressing its imperialist allies in Western Europe and Asia to shoulder more of the cost of defending imperialist interests around the world.

But the capitalist world is in the throes of an international recession. It is especially difficult to convince working people to support large increases in war spending at a time when expenditures for social welfare are being sharply cut.

### 'Scare the Hell Out of Them'

Faced with this situation, the imperialist rulers have revived many of the propaganda themes used by them during the Cold War. As Senator Arthur Vandenberg put it early in the Cold War, if the White House hoped to expand military "preparedness," it would have to "scare the hell out of the country."

Washington and its allies have sought to conjure up the image of the Russian bear poised to gobble up the world in order to blunt working-class opposition to an arms buildup, increased military intervention, and to the new counterrevolutionary wars that such intervention will inevitably lead to.

It is not that the imperialists have scrapped détente with Moscow and are returning to the policies of the 1950s. The relationship of class forces precludes that and the rise in the international class struggle actually makes Moscow's aid in containing revolutionary outbreaks more important to the imperialists than ever.

However, the same revolutionary upheavals also require the capitalist rulers to step up their militarization drive, and they cannot do that effectively without playing up the supposed Soviet threat.

A favorite scare tactic is to portray the Soviets as having been engaged in a decade-long surge in war spending that left the United States and its allies in a vulnerable position.

Another theme of the propaganda campaign warns that the survival of the U.S. and its allies is dependent on "a thin line of tankers" from the Persian Gulf, which is menaced by turmoil in the Middle East and by Soviet "expansionism" in the region.

Reports of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan played up the Soviet "threat" to Persian Gulf oil fields. Some news reports went so far as to state that the Soviets were now sitting astride the "traditional invasion routes" to Iran, although no one could point to a single invasion of Iran that had ever taken place along those "traditional" routes.

Most recently the specter of a potential Soviet military intervention in Poland has been used to urge higher spending by the

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

### Imperialist Arms Buildup

The decision by the imperialists to sharply increase military spending, however, came long before the specific "dangers" they now point to as justification for these moves.

Between 1969 and the 1981 projections, for example, war spending by the United States has grown by an average of 14

### Who Spends More on Arms?

A major propaganda campaign has been waged around the theme that the USSR vastly outspends Washington on arms. The purpose of the campaign is to convince working people in the imperialist countries to support sharp increases in military spending.

The claim first emerged in 1974, when the Pentagon was launching a post-Vietnam military buildup. By 1976, the Pentagon was claiming that the USSR was spending a full 44 percent more than Washington on weapons.

All these claims are based on calculations made by the CIA. A detailed analysis of the CIA studies was done by Franklyn D. Holzman of Tufts University and appeared in the June 1980 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

The CIA, for example, uses different methods for calculating the cost of improving Soviet weapons systems and U.S. weaponry.

A concrete example: the U.S. replaced its Maverick missiles, costing \$65,000 each, with the *more effective* Wasp missile, which costs only \$5,000 due to technological progress. The CIA calculates that U.S. spending has dropped by \$60,000 per missile. But if the Soviets made the very same substitution, the CIA would say Soviet spending had risen because the new missile is more effective than the old one.

The CIA study, if you read the fine print, never claims to actually measure what Moscow spends on defense. Instead it determines what the Soviets would spend if they purchased everything in the United States, in dollars. The CIA uses this method precisely because it overstates the cost of the greater

Soviet use of manpower and understates the cost of the greater American use of technology

Using its method, the CIA calculates each Soviet soldier at the \$10,000 per year U.S. cost, and each piece of U.S. high technology at the much cheaper U.S. prices. To further skew the balance, the CIA includes all the Soviet border guard detachments in its total figures on the size of the Soviet military.

The CIA cost estimates also ignore the fact that there are whole layers of U.S. weapons that the Soviet Union cannot presently reproduce at any cost. In 1977 the CIA acknowledged that "while virtually all of the Soviet inventory of weapons falls within U.S. production technology, the Soviets simply do not have the technology required to produce many of the U.S. weapons. . . ."

Taking all the factors into account, Holzman estimates that the Soviets actually spend, in rubles, 60 to 70 percent of what the U.S. spends on the military.

CIA figures also do not reflect the fact that the U.S. is a member of the NATO alliance, and the Soviet Union is part of the Warsaw Pact. But this has a vital bearing on arms spending levels. In 1978 the United States' NATO allies spent some \$75 billion on defense, while the Soviet allies in the Warsaw Pact spent only \$12 billion.

Even accepting at face value the inflated CIA figures on Soviet spending, NATO as a whole spent \$180 billion in 1978, compared to \$160 billion for the Warsaw Pact.

—Will Reissner



percent per year, nearly twice the inflation rate for the period.

NATO members had agreed in 1977 to boost real arms spending at least 3 percent per year in real terms for the next five years.

In the United States itself, the Carter administration proposed a five year Pentagon budget that would increase spending in *current dollars* from \$158.7 billion in 1981 to \$248.9 billion in 1985. President-elect Reagan has called for boosting spending even further, by 6 percent after inflation annually.

The Pentagon has been striving for a decade to get its European allies to shoulder more of the financial and political burdens of defending imperialist interests.

In September 1979, former NATO military commander Gen. Alexander Haig, President-elect Reagan's nominee for Secretary of State, told a conference on NATO's future that the alliance's planning should be extended to cover operations in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and other areas. This point was repeated at the conference by NATO Secretary-General Joseph Luns, and by Henry Kissinger.

The campaign to strengthen NATO's military capabilities scored two initial gains. One was the December 12, 1979 decision by NATO members to deploy on West European bases 572 medium-range, nuclear-armed missiles capable of reaching targets in the Soviet Union. The other was the decision that most NATO members would increase their real arms spending by 3 percent, after inflation, each year for five years beginning in 1978.

Both of these decisions, however, have run into problems. There is growing opposition in the West European workers movement to an escalation of the nuclear arms race. There is also deep resistance to sharp rises in war spending at a time when social welfare spending is being slashed throughout the continent.

The plan to deploy 464 ground-launched cruise missiles at U.S. bases in West Germany, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Italy, and 108 Pershing II missiles in West Germany, was first proposed by President Carter in 1977.

#### Massive Opposition in Britain

Recently, the movement against cruise missiles has grown by leaps in Britain. The British Labour Party convention in early October voted overwhelmingly for a call to ban all nuclear weapons from British soil and to oppose any participation in military arrangements involving nuclear weapons, which would include NATO.

On October 26, some 80,000 people marched in London to protest nuclear armaments, the largest antinuclear demonstration in Britain in two decades.

Michael Foot, who as head of the Labour

Party's parliamentary group would be prime minister if Labour won the next general elections, declared that he would send all Cruise and Pershing missiles back to the United States if he takes office.

There is massive opposition to the ruling Conservative Party's entire program of increasing British arms spending while slashing other government programs. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, an early and enthusiastic supporter of the NATO decision to boost real defense spending by 3 percent a year, has tried to maintain that pace despite Britain's deep economic crisis.

Last July the Thatcher government decided to spend \$14.5 billion to build four or five new nuclear submarines armed with Trident missiles, and to reequip its army with new tanks and armored personnel carriers.

But as the British economic crisis deepened, with more than two million workers unemployed and their numbers growing daily, Thatcher has had to retreat somewhat from the commitment to 3 percent real growth in war spending.

Other NATO members such as Canada, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, and West Germany are also having trouble meeting the 3 percent goal. In addition, Portugal and Turkey are in such deep economic trouble that they were exempted from the provision from the beginning.

#### Bonn Fails to Meet Arms Goal

Bonn's vacillation has been particularly troubling to Washington since West Germany is NATO's strongest Western European member, with the largest economy and the most powerful conventional forces. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was a supporter of the deployment of neutron bombs in Europe as well as the Cruise and Pershing missiles, and was an advocate of the 3 percent spending hike.

In late October, however, representatives of the ruling Social Democratic-Free Democrat coalition government revealed that the 1981 budget would not meet the 3 percent goal. They cited the expected zero growth of the West German economy in 1981 as grounds for scaling down arms spending plans. (The actual budget increase, unveiled December 17, was less than 1 percent in real terms.)

Washington has been relying on the West German military to take over some tasks of the U.S. forces in Europe, freeing Washington's troops to be ready to intervene in the Middle East and other areas of the world.

Bonn has already made some moves in this direction. One was to expand the West German navy's area of operations in the North Atlantic to free U.S. vessels for transfer to the Middle East.

Pentagon planners have also suggested that Bonn establish more reserve brigades, which would, in the words of John Vinocur in the November 27 *New York Times*,

"allow American forces stationed in West Germany to be ready for intervention in the Middle East through the presence of a West German back-up."

But in addition to West Germany's economic problems, the expansion of the military faces rising opposition among West German youth. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of West German rearmament, some 50,000 people demonstrated against growing militarism and the draft. The largest demonstration took place on November 21 in Stuttgart, where some 21,000 people gathered.

The U.S. government applied heavy pressure on Bonn to meet the 3 percent commitment, fearing that West German slippage would make it harder for other NATO governments to push through the spending increases.

Schmidt, however, countered by suggesting that Washington emulate the West German regime and institute a draft.

#### Opposition Rises in Low Countries

The Dutch government has also been forced to renege on its 3 percent commitment by a combination of huge opposition to the escalating arms race and the slowdown in its economy.

Two years ago, when Washington was trying to get agreement for the deployment of the neutron bomb in Europe, more than one million people in Holland signed petitions opposing it. The largest party in the country, the opposition Labor Party (PvdA), has come close to demanding the removal of all nuclear weapons from Dutch soil, and mass demonstrations and other opposition forced the Dutch government to suspend its decision on whether to accept Cruise missiles until December 1981.

This year the Dutch economy is expected to show no growth over 1979, and forecasts for 1981 predict similar performance. Unemployment is expected to rise to 300,000 by year end, sharply higher than previous projections. That would total 7 percent of the workforce.

In Belgium too, the combination of opposition to the arms race and deep economic troubles are forcing the government to slow arms spending. The Pentagon estimates that Belgian arms spending in 1980 will decline slightly in real terms, with 1981's level uncertain.

The same pattern can be seen in Denmark. The Social Democratic government of Anker Jorgensen has hacked away at spending for pensions, education, and other social benefits, while advocating that Denmark's military spending be frozen at present levels, with adjustments for inflation.

But Jorgensen is having a hard time selling that to the Danish workers. Some opinion polls have shown that only 17 percent of the Danish population supports increases in military spending.

In an effort to stiffen the NATO govern-

ments against their internal opposition, U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown released the texts of sharply worded letters he had sent to the Dutch and Danish defense ministers, demanding that they spend more on arms.

"When called on to explain to our Congress the costs of our defense efforts in Europe," Brown wrote to his Dutch counterpart, "I am going to be hard pressed to demonstrate that our NATO allies are all making similar sacrifices for the common defense."

Brown warned the Danish defense minister, "I will find it extremely difficult to justify to Congress and the American public commitments to reinforce Denmark and preposition equipment there."

Norway is one of the few NATO members that is expected to reach the 3 percent target this year. But a major debate is brewing there over a NATO plan to stockpile American weapons and equipment in the country for use by U.S. Marines.

The plan for "pre-positioning" the supplies was to have been finalized in early 1980. But it ran up against major opposition in the ruling Labor Party (DNA) and among the population as a whole.

The final decision, therefore, has been postponed at least until January 1981.

Earlier, the Norwegian government's vote to support the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe caused an uproar in the left wing of the Labor Party and among Norwegian working people, although none of the missiles are supposed to be placed in Norway itself.

#### A Neutron Bomb for Giscard

Unlike virtually every other government in Europe, the regime of French President Giscard d'Estaing has been able to sharply boost its arms spending and step up its military role outside of Europe without having to face massive protests.

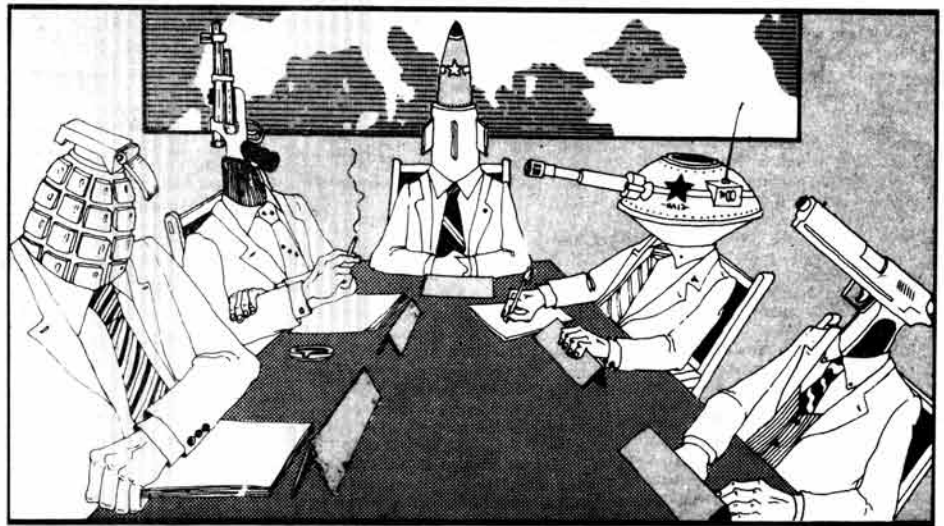
Giscard owes his success in this mainly to the treachery of the French Communist Party and the French Social Democracy.

The 1981 budget, presented in September, includes sharp cuts in public spending in all areas except for the military and the police. In fact, the military budget is slated to rise more than 3 percent after inflation, even though economic growth will fall sharply, with unemployment rising.

Giscard has strengthened the military potential of the imperialist alliance in other ways as well.

On June 26, the French president announced that his regime had successfully tested a neutron bomb. German Chancellor Schmidt, who had been a leading advocate of the cancelled U.S. plan to deploy neutron bombs in Western Europe, hailed the French move, as did officials of the Pentagon.

Giscard is also planning a new missile for use with the neutron bomb. Paris



already has its own regular nuclear forces with missiles targeted on Soviet cities and industrial centers, a nuclear submarine force that is scheduled to grow from its present five submarines to a total of ten, and an airborne nuclear force that is undergoing modernization.

The French government has also played a big part in military defense of imperialist interests outside of Europe. The French navy is cooperating with the U.S. Navy off Iran, and in the past two years French troops have intervened in Chad, the Central African Republic, and Zaïre.

#### 'Out of NATO Forever'

Greece and Turkey remain a major weak spot in the imperialist alliance.

In October, Washington succeeded in settling Greece's six-year walkout from NATO's military wing. But Greece's reintegration into the military command was met with giant daily protests outside of parliament. On October 22 as many as 500,000 demonstrators brought downtown Athens to a standstill.

On November 16, the anniversary of the 1973 uprising that led to the overthrow of the Greek military dictatorship, which had seized power along the lines of a NATO contingency plan, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators marched on parliament chanting "Out of NATO forever," "Down with Americans, murderers of the peoples," and "Unity and struggle to get rid of the rightist government."

Along with the recent mobilizations against NATO, there has been an ongoing struggle against the ruling class austerity drive. Nearly 1.5 million workers participated in a twenty-four hour general strike on November 10.

Greece had pulled out of NATO's military command to protest the invasion of Cyprus by fellow NATO-member Turkey. Under heavy U.S. pressure, and following the September 12 military coup in Turkey, the Greek and Turkish regimes resolved some of their outstanding differences.

U.S. bases in Greece are a key component in operations in the Mediterranean and Middle East. The Greek and American governments were anxious to resolve the issue in hopes of keeping the question of NATO and U.S. bases out of the 1981 election.

U.S. strategists also feared that unrest in Turkey, in the words of one U.S. Air Force officer, "may soon force us to consider moving bases from there to Greece, not the other way around."

The U.S. State Department has already admitted that it had advance notice of the September 12 coup in Turkey. Washington and the other NATO governments did not conceal their pleasure at its success.

According to John M. Goshko of the *Washington Post*, "the coup leaders are well-known in NATO circles and are highly respected for their pro-western attitudes."

The coup in Turkey, the settlement of some of the Turkish-Greek differences, and Greece's reintegration into NATO are of prime importance to the U.S. in consolidating its bases in the eastern Mediterranean. This is part of its attempt to strengthen its military striking power in the Middle East, a move aimed first of all against the Iranian revolution.

Other aspects of this thrust include the recent practice deployment of U.S. troops to Egypt, agreements concluded with Oman, Somalia, and Kenya for use of facilities by the U.S. Navy in the Indian Ocean, and development of a base on the British-held island of Diego Garcia.

#### Carter Pushes Japanese Rearmament

Washington's drive to get its allies to shoulder more of the cost of defending imperialist interests around the world has not been restricted to NATO members.

Another target of the campaign has been Japan. In July the Carter administration began to publicly express its hope that the Japanese government would sharply boost its arms spending. The 1981 Japa-



nese budget includes a 2 percent real increase in military spending, which is up more than any other category in the budget.

In a September 22 meeting with Japanese Foreign Ministry officials, U.S. Undersecretary of Defense Robert W. Komer called on Japan to increase its naval forces in order to replace the ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet that were shifted from the Pacific to duty off Iran.

The Pentagon is particularly worried about maintaining imperialist strength in the Pacific in light of the tremendous opposition to the military regime in South Korea, the rising opposition to the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines, and the advance of the revolutions in Indochina.

The central obstacle to the drive to increase Japanese militarization is the profound antiwar sentiment of Japanese working people.

The present Japanese government has sent up a series of trial balloons about revising the 1947 constitution to eliminate clauses restricting Japanese military strength, but these have been met with furious protest, forcing the government to back down.

Tokyo did, however, take a big step toward an increased regional military role in February when it sent two destroyers and eight aircraft to participate in joint Pacific maneuvers with forces from the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

#### B-52s in Australia?

The right-wing government in Australia has pledged to boost its arms spending by 3 percent in real terms in 1981, despite the severe economic difficulties afflicting that country as part of the worldwide economic recession.

Through the U.S. naval communications base at North-West Cape, Australia is already a vital link in Washington's worldwide military network. There has also been recent upgrading of U.S. bases in Australia, and proposals have been made to station U.S. nuclear-armed B-52s in the country, improve communication facilities, and set up a nuclear submarine base.

However, the proposal to base B-52s in Australia became a major issue in the October election, with the opposition Australian Labor Party opposing the plan. Prime Minister Douglas Fraser was returned to office in that election, but with a sharply reduced majority.

Fraser ran into more trouble in November, when his government tried to suppress information about its ties to the Pentagon by banning an article in a major Sydney newspaper, and by banning the sale of a book on the topic.

The attempt at censorship caused an uproar, and Fraser not only failed to halt the spread of the information, but he also provoked a widespread debate on precisely

the issues he had hoped to keep under wraps.

There is no doubt that the imperialist rulers have been successful in raising military expenditures sharply, although not to the point that they would like. Just as important as the increase in arms spending, however, is the tenacious resistance that has been called forth from the working masses, and the growing anti-NATO movements in countries such as Britain and Greece.

Social tensions are also rising within the United States itself, as the U.S. ruling class drives forward with its militarization plans while slashing other government programs.

The imperialist militarization drive was forced into high gear in 1980 by the continuing revolutionary upsurge in the semicolonial countries. But it is laying the basis for big class confrontations within the imperialist centers themselves. □

## Anti-Soviet Sanctions Fell Flat

The Carter administration hoped to use the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan to firm up the NATO alliance. But efforts to get Washington's allies to join together in an Olympic boycott and an economic freeze against the Soviet Union met with little real cooperation. What was intended as a show of imperialist unity turned into its opposite.

When the Moscow Olympics opened in July, only five of the fifteen members of NATO were missing (Canada, Norway, Turkey, the U.S., and West Germany). Twice as many NATO members—Belgium, Denmark, France, Britain, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Portugal—were represented.

Australia and New Zealand—Washington's partners in the ANZUS alliance—both attended the Moscow games, while Japan boycotted.

The attempt to apply economic sanctions against the Soviet Union was no more successful.

The severe depression in the steel and capital goods industries in the advanced capitalist countries has intensified competition for markets and undercut any willingness by their imperialist allies to apply sanctions that result in a loss of sales.

A *Wall Street Journal* article on November 14 noted, "Japanese industrialists are growing increasingly restive with the sanctions. They complain that the measures have cost Japan at least \$500 million in lost sales this year and are frustrating new export opportunities. Executives and government officials alike grumble that Japan is losing these contracts to West European rivals whom they accuse of following the sanctions less scrupulously."

U.S. sales to the Soviet Union fell by almost 50 percent since the sanctions were applied—dropping from \$1.7 billion in the first half of 1979 to \$857 million in the comparable period in 1980.

France, on the other hand, expects its sales to the USSR to jump by almost a billion dollars this year, to a total of \$4.7 billion.

West German sales to the USSR have also grown substantially. West German exports to Eastern Europe amounted to \$8.7 billion last year, which is nearly three-quarters of the value of its trade with the United States, its largest trading partner.

Two contracts signed by the Soviet Union last September show the current state of the economic sanctions campaign. One involved the Soviet purchase of an aluminum mill to be built by a West German company, and the other involved the building of a steel mill by a French company. In each case the factories were originally to have been purchased from U.S. companies, in one case with Japanese participation. But those companies withdrew as part of the economic sanctions.

The embargo on grain sales to the Soviet Union has virtually fallen apart. The Carter administration got assurances from most of its allies that they would not increase their grain exports to the USSR to make up for the drop in U.S. sales. But those assurances meant very little in real life.

Canadian grain sales to the Soviet Union climbed from 2.1 million tons in 1979 to 3.9 million in 1980. Australian exports rose from 0.1 million tons to 3.9 million, and Argentine sales went from 1.4 million tons to 5.5 million.

In October, the European Common Market countries announced that they were ending their embargo on barley sales to the USSR, after a nine-month suspension. A month later Canada officially dropped its grain embargo, announcing it would sell 5.9 million tons of its 1979-80 crop to the USSR, making Canada the Soviet Union's largest grain supplier.

—Will Reissner

## Growing Resistance to Tory Attacks Among British Workers

By Pat Kane

LONDON—150,000 people demonstrated November 29 against the policies of Britain's Tory government, in particular the massive rise in unemployment. They gathered in one of the areas of the country worst hit by the present economic recession.

The massive demonstration follows hard on the heels of the recent fight for the leadership of the Labour Party; the Tory government's viciously anti-working-class "mini-budget"; and the victory of the Gardners engineering workers in Manchester who occupied their plant against redundancies [lay-offs]. Two days later, the Fire Brigades Union smashed through the government's two-week-old 6 percent pay limit for public sector employees.

This was one of the biggest labor demonstrations since the early seventies. It was called jointly by the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress (TUC), and working people travelled from all over Britain to attend.

Although the demonstration had the support of the trade unions, it was the Labour Party that played the main part in organizing the event. This was the reason for the massive turnout from the traditional Labour strongholds in Scotland and the north of the country.

### Liverpool Workers Show Their Militancy

For years Liverpool has suffered from mass unemployment. Factory after factory has closed, and whole areas have been turned into industrial deserts. But mass unemployment has not erased the militancy of the workers. It was the ordinary people of Liverpool, turning out in their thousands, who made the march such a huge success.

They came from everywhere. From the shops and bars they spotted the nearest Liverpool banner and joined the march. The Liverpool dockers and the Ford Halewood auto plant had thousands behind their banners, as did all the local Labour Party branches.

### Rally Reflects Fight in Labour Party

The main speaker was Michael Foot, recently elected leader of the Labour Party in Parliament. Foot is looked on as a "left" leader, and when he appeared on the platform he was cheered by the crowd.

The recent fight inside the Labour Party over the reform of the party's constitution has boosted the confidence of the rank-

and-file activists. For years they have struggled to elect Labour governments, only to see the right-wing parliamentary delegation ignore the policies of the party conference and implement their own version of Toryism.

Now they see the chance to change this through the election of the parliamentary leader by the rank and file, through selecting parliamentary candidates before each election and ensuring that they are accountable to their local party, and by ensuring that Labour Party conference decisions are carried out by future Labour governments.

Foot, who had supported the demonstration, was elected to the post of parliamentary leader on November 10. He was seen by the trade union leaders as the best figure in the leadership to maintain the unity of the party and to prevent any further drift to the left among the rank and file.

Foot is considered left wing for his outspoken views against the further proliferation of nuclear missiles, and the trade union leaders know that he is the only possible leader who can maintain the party's status quo. He is a compromise between Tony Benn, the candidate of the party's left wing, and Denis Healey, the leader of the party's right-wing members of parliament (MPs).

Irrespective of Foot's bad record on fighting for reforms within the party, or his particular role in the center of the party's hierarchy, his left-wing origins have meant that he is now seen by the mass of the Labour voters as being to the left of the traditional leaders of the parliamentary party.

### Boos for Healey, Cheers for Benn

The response of the rally to Healey was totally different. He was widely booed as he made his speech. Some people still remember the failure of the last Labour government to save jobs. Healey, along with the other right-wing leaders, is closely identified in the eyes of the rank and file with these failures.

Tony Benn was given a massive cheer as he called on the next Labour government to carry out socialist policies. Benn did not stand in the election of the parliamentary leader, and has now adopted the role of Foot's main supporter.

All sides in both the trade union and

party leaderships now want to call a truce before the rank and file can consolidate their new confidence and force lasting changes in the inner life of the party.

Several trade-union leaders also addressed the rally. When Alan Fisher, leader of the militant National Union of Public Employees, which organizes manual workers in local government and welfare services, called for a general election, the crowd called for a general strike.

The demonstration was the clearest indication yet of the growing anti-Tory movement that is developing under the impact of the economic crisis.

### Tories Panic as Recession Continues

The massive attack on working-class living standards contained in the emergency "mini-budget" introduced by Tory Chancellor Geoffrey Howe on November 24 added to the anger of the demonstrators.

In his speech to Parliament, Howe announced that "the recession is far greater than we thought." He then outlined measures centered on further cuts in welfare services, increased taxation for the majority of workers, and a 6 percent wage limit for public sector workers. Almost everyone suffered from the budget measures, but cuts in old people's pensions and state unemployment payments were especially sharp.

The pressure for these emergency measures has come from the immediate effects of the economic crisis. Unemployment now stands at 2.16 million according to official government figures. But opposition to government policies from the working class has increased the tensions on the bosses. In addition, sections of manufacturing industry are suffering under the crude monetarism of the Tories. The cutback of state aid to private industry, declining exports due to the high value of the pound, and high interest rates have cut into the profits of core industries.

At the recent conference of the bosses' organization, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), Chairperson Sir Terence Beckett called for a "bare-knuckle" fight with the government to "save industry." This caused some pro-Thatcher employers to walk out of the CBI.

Beckett is an important figure in British industry, and he was previously chairperson of Ford before taking over at the CBI last year. He has continued his criticisms



of the government, and on December 3 he announced at a meeting in the industrial West Midlands that industry was carrying too much of the recession burden and that he was disappointed at the low level of Howe's spending cuts.

In an aggressive speech he said that large parts of the industrial base were "disappearing down the plughole faster than we can stop them."

Manufacturing industry output, CBI says, will fall by a total of 14 percent this year and next, compared to an 11 percent reduction during the height of the 1929-31 depression.

#### **Ruling Class Dissatisfied**

Increasingly, sections of the ruling class are questioning the policies of the Tories. They are wondering if the Tories will be able to carry out their pledge to break the power of the unions and control the working class. They see the public sector unions remain strong, and while spending on services has fallen for the last six years, they demand further spending cuts to bring the public sector into line with the private sector wage and unemployment levels.

The profits of the capitalists are being eroded through high interest rates and a strong currency. While this continues they refuse to invest, which further fuels the recession. They are disappointed by the paralysis of the cabinet in the crisis, and by the crude monetarist policies of the government.

They are worried that the effects of the recession will seriously hamper the ability of British capital to compete in any future trade upsurge, no matter how limited.

These growing divisions within the traditional base of the Tories are also reflected within the cabinet itself. James Prior, the employment secretary, has been roundly criticized by Thatcher as well as by more right-wing Tory MP's for his soft approach to the trade unions.

Thatcher has demanded tougher laws to curb the power of the unions, while Prior has learned from the failures of past antiunion laws and wants to attack the unions at a much slower pace. This conflict has, up until now, been confined within the overall framework of the government's economic policies.

The obvious failures of Thatcher's brand of "monetarism" has brought the debate out into the open, and Prior, along with deposed Tory leader Edward Heath, have started to openly criticize the government's present course.

This open conflict within the ruling class circles has increased the basic mistrust among the working class for the Tories. It is obvious that the government cannot solve the problems of rising unemployment and inflation, and the workers are now looking more and more to their traditional party, the Labour Party, to get them out of the present crisis.

This has reached a new level after the success of the November 29 demonstration and the victory of Foot in the election for leader of the parliamentary Labour Party.

#### **Fightback Registers Setbacks and Victories**

The response of the workers to the latest Tory attacks has been uneven across the various sectors of the economy. Workers at the engineering factory of Gardners in Manchester occupied the factory and were successful in defending jobs, but unemployment continues to rise across industry.

The Liverpool demonstration was called to protest against unemployment, and it showed that slowly, but surely, there is the beginning of a movement among industrial workers against job loss.

The Fire Brigades Union has smashed through the new 6 percent pay policy, and there is now an organized rank-and-file opposition to government cuts in the public sector. Over 700 delegates attended a conference sponsored by labor organizations in the London Borough of Lambeth and decided to campaign and organize for militant action against cuts.

But it is the issue of wages that dominates the workplace at this time of the year. All the major unions have submitted wage claims, and are presently awaiting the response of the employers and the government.

Thatcher is pleased with her progress so far in the present round of wage negotiations, and ministers are announcing that it will be "all quiet on the wages front this winter." But the dynamics of the class struggle can spoil the best laid plans of government officials.

In British Leyland, the nationalized car company, the managers have been able to enforce a 6.8 percent pay settlement. This was done with the active assistance of Terry Duffy, the president of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. He has enforced a similar low settlement on other engineering workers, but the average rise in the industry due to local payments won through the strength of the shop stewards organizations is over 21 percent.

The Leyland settlement comes after years of massive attacks on shop-floor rights, including victimization and sacking of leading militants, speed-ups and changes in work practices, and the demoralizing effects of plant closures. Despite this, British Leyland workers voted by a massive 2 to 1 majority for strike action against the nationalized company, and by implication the government, which had set the limit for wages.

It took the open refusal by the union leaders to act on this vote, both at a plant and national level, for the company to be able to push through the pay settlement.

Two other particularly important incidents were the decision by Ford workers to reject a 9.5 percent offer and the decision

of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) to accept 13.8 percent in the current wages round. Both show the uneven and contradictory effect of the recession on the working class.

#### **Militancy at Ford**

Ford was one of the first to settle in the current wages round, and it quickly became the pace setter for other private sector firms. Mass meetings around the country rejected the offer, but the union leaders did not recommend any strike action.

Ford workers are in a militant mood. They have seen the company increase its British profits and invest £207 million in its local plants over the last year. Following the example of Fiat in Italy, Ford has introduced robots and other new technology.

Ford workers see the company making profits, and irrespective of threats of plant closures are demanding their share. When the company tried to introduce a new work code, there was immediate strike action at the Halewood plant in Liverpool.

The resistance of the Ford workers rests on the continued strength of the shop stewards system. Terry Duffy, the same leader who acted at British Leyland, has been forced to call for strike action if the company does not agree to implement a thirty-five-hour week by 1984.

Given the uncertainty at Ford, and its impact on other sectors, the government has been highlighting the announcement on December 1 that the national Union of Mineworkers had voted to accept a 13.8 percent pay deal. The NUM has always been a militant union, and the Tories portray its decision as a "vote for moderation."

At first reading, it would appear that the Tories are right. But this is far from the whole truth. What the result showed was that the division between right and left Social Democrats that exists in the labor leadership has a practical effect on the militancy of the workers.

In all the traditionally militant areas, such as Scotland, South Wales, and Yorkshire, the percentage of miners who rejected the deal has increased on successive ballots. The leaders of these areas, notably Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire miners president and a leading supporter of the Labour Party's left wing, have campaigned against the deal and against Tory propaganda that high wage rises cause unemployment and pit closures.

In the more moderate areas, the right wing used the argument that rejection and possible strike action would result in pit closures. The different political views of these latter leaders—they support the right in the Labour Party—was the determining factor, not the lack of any will for a fightback among miners in these areas.

Left-wing leaders of the miners had campaigned for massive pay rises, but the

specter of pit closures is dominating the coalfields. The Tories have presented the miners' vote as a huge victory, but the voting is a lot closer when colliery officials and staff, other management grades, and those not directly involved in coal production are removed from the voting totals.

#### Call for 'Triple Alliance'

In South Wales there is a call for a new "Triple Alliance" of miners, steelworkers, and rail workers to fight the Tory plans for enforced redundancies and contraction of the nationalized industries.

The pay settlement has not stopped this move. Thousands of miners were on the November 29 demonstration, and their militant traditions will ensure that they play a part in the struggles against the Tories.

Finally, two outstanding victories have again shown that working-class action can defend jobs and living standards. The militant factory occupation of the Gardners engineering factory was a clear victory against the multinational Hawker

Sidley company, which owns Gardners. And the Fire Brigades Union secured their demands through threatening strike action and by mobilizing public support.

All these struggles show the unevenness of the present working-class response to the recession. As the recession deepens, militant workers will look for solutions from their own mass party.

What is new in the situation is the energetic role of the Labour Party left. The Liverpool demonstration is only the latest in a series of initiatives it has called over the last eighteen months.

On November 7, 1979, Labour called a demonstration against public sector cuts that attracted 30,000 people. On June 22, it mobilized over 20,000 in a demonstration against nuclear power that greatly accelerated the growing movement for nuclear disarmament. Now it has organized the biggest working-class demonstration for a decade. All this was done through the party's National Executive Committee.

On January 24, 1981, there will be a special Labour Party conference, the third

in eighteen months, to decide the method for electing the leader of the party. Foot is expected to retain the leadership, and this will boost the mass movement, which views Foot as a left candidate.

Meanwhile, the Tories will have to force through pay settlements on other workers who only have to look to the firefighters to know that they can break Thatcher's 6 percent ceiling. The TUC/Labour Party liaison committee has called for a week of action against the Tories for February, and the government will be trying to attack the public services at the same time as these protests take place.

The November 29 demonstration showed that the labor movement is on the march, despite its confusion and contradictions, and despite the fact that it is hampered by its reformist misleaders.

As Labour National Executive member Jo Richardson told the giant rally, "the only person that I want to see unemployed is Thatcher." That adequately sums up the growing anger of Britain's working people against the Tories. □

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