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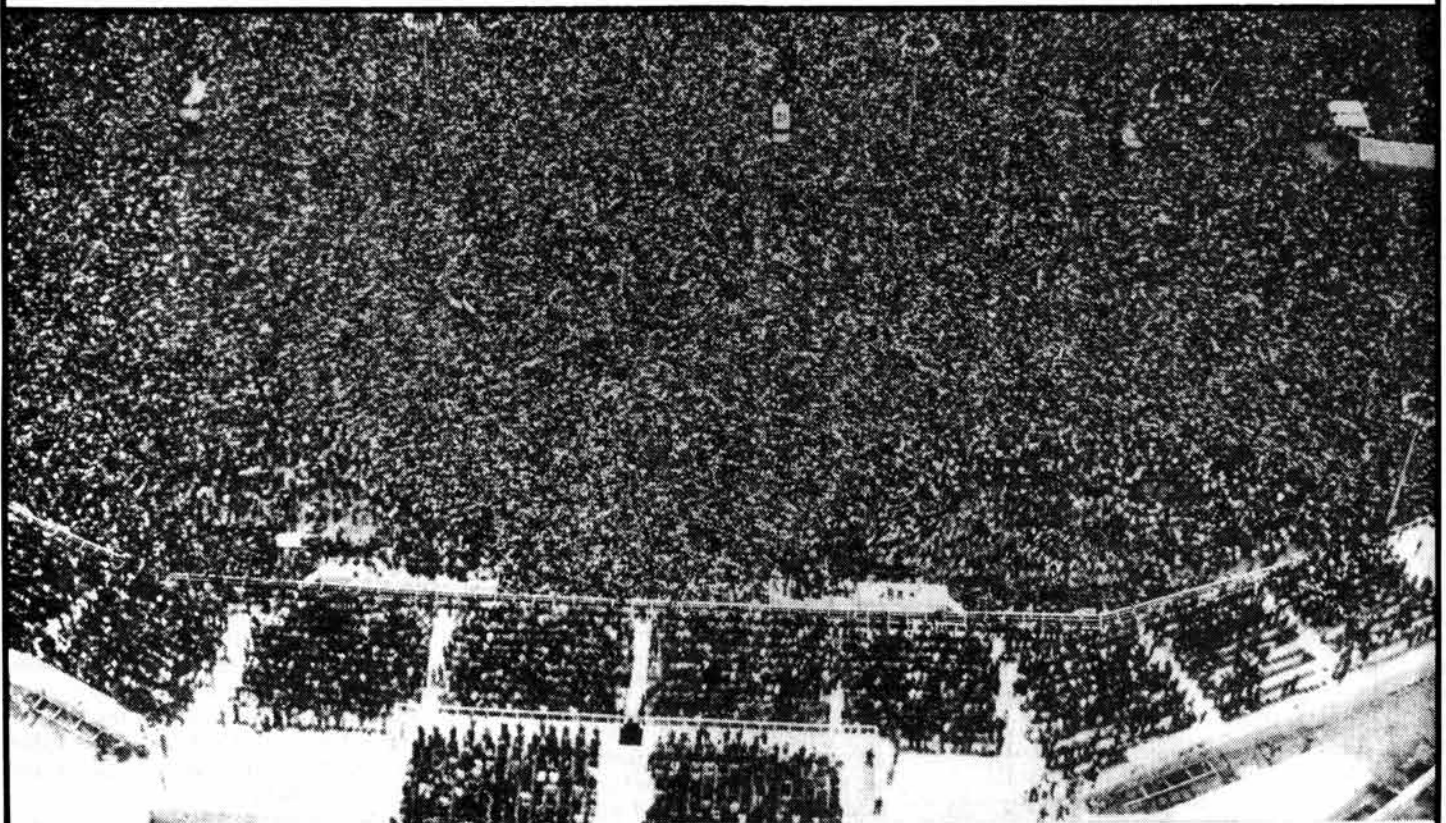
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Second Congress of Cuban Communist Party

'We Will Not Make a Single Concession to Imperialism'



Mass rally in Havana's Plaza de la Revolución on December 20 marked close of party congress.

Polish Workers Win
Five-Day Workweek

The General Offensive
in El Salvador

The General Offensive in El Salvador

By David Frankel

On January 10 the revolutionary fighters in the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) issued a call for a general offensive against the U.S.-backed junta in El Salvador.

"The hour has arrived to begin the decisive military and insurrectional battles for the taking of power by the people and for the formation of a revolutionary democratic government," the FMLN declared.

What has been the result of the general offensive launched by the liberation fighters so far?

According to the capitalist press, the FMLN offensive has been a failure.

"Two weeks after launching their long-awaited 'final offensive,' El Salvador's leftist guerrillas have so far posed no serious threat to the country's civilian-military junta, although the Government is not yet claiming that the rebels have been defeated," the *New York Times* reported January 26.

The *Economist* was even more categorical in its January 24 issue. "The much-heralded 'final offensive' of El Salvador's Marxist-led guerrillas appears to have fizzled out swiftly," the British financial weekly declared.

U.S. Sends Aid

The propaganda in the imperialist press coincided with the resumption of U.S. military aid to the junta on January 14, and with then-President Carter's approval of an additional \$5 million in arms for the junta on January 16.

Six UH1H ("Huey") helicopters, the type used by the Pentagon in Vietnam, were rushed to San Salvador along with U.S. advisers. With Ronald Reagan's assumption of office, the junta is doubtless counting on additional help from Washington. It has already begun to use incendiary bombs, similar in effect to the napalm used in Vietnam.

Also reminiscent of Vietnam-style body counts was the junta's claim that nearly 1,000 guerrilla fighters had been killed in the first stage of the FMLN's offensive. U.S. intelligence agencies say the FMLN has some 5,000-6,000 full-time fighters. Apparently the junta's troops, who are in the habit of assuming that any peasant or worker they meet is liable to be a guerrilla, counted the bodies of all their innocent victims as FMLN casualties.

It is true, of course, that the FMLN has not yet succeeded in overthrowing the junta and installing a new revolutionary

regime in San Salvador. However, the revolutionary forces have recorded significant successes in the first stage of their offensive.

To begin with, the FMLN forces proved their ability to mount a coordinated, nationwide offensive, to act as an army. As *Washington Post* correspondent Christopher Dickey pointed out in a January 17 dispatch:

"With the war erupting in city slums and villages, around military garrisons and in the sugar cane fields, the guerrillas have proven they can mount coordinated actions virtually anywhere in this overcrowded Central American country and operate almost freely in the rural areas."

Furthermore, the FMLN did not have to confine itself to hit-and-run raids. It took control of numerous towns and villages, and it mounted sustained actions in major cities throughout the country.

Commenting on the significance of the first stage of the offensive, Ana Guadalupe Martínez, a leader of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) on a diplomatic mission in Canada, remarked:

"It has been a concrete demonstration of the ability, discipline, and level of combativity of the revolutionary forces. It placed the enemy army in serious straits, and even immobilized it for two or three days."

Another aspect of the offensive has been the continuing process of defections from the junta. On January 11 Lt. Col. Bruno Navarrete of the National Guard announced his defection to the FMLN. On the same day, an entire unit of the National Guard in Santa Ana went over to the FMLN. And on January 29 two top economic officials—Nelson Romero, the general manager of the National Coffee Institute, and Carlos Federico Paredes, the government's vice-minister of planning—declared their support for the revolutionary forces.

The junta's increasing isolation is a one-way street. There are no reports of opposition figures, FDR leaders, or FMLN soldiers going over to the side of the junta.

Evaluation of General Strike

Since the imperialist media cannot credibly claim that the junta is gaining substantial popular support, it has insisted that the masses are largely indifferent to both sides in the civil war and that the FDR and FMLN have little backing. A similar device of portraying the workers and peasants as unwilling spectators

caught in the middle of the fight was used in the early days of the insurrection against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

In keeping with this line, the *Economist* declared, "A nationwide strike called by the left never caught on." The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that the strike "fizzled." And according to *Time* magazine, the figurehead civilian president in the hated junta, José Napoleón Duarte, had the gall to claim that the FMLN's supposed "setback" was due "to its failure to win popular support."

During the international El Salvador solidarity conference held in Managua at the end of January, one of the FDR representatives on a panel that discussed the current situation in El Salvador took up this question. He said that the general strike had been partial and uneven, but that the FDR did not consider it a failure in view of the intensity of the repression. In fact, workers could be—and were—killed for participating in the strike.

What the Struggle Is About

The lies and distortions in the capitalist media are so pervasive that it is useful to once again recall the fundamental facts about the struggle now unfolding in El Salvador.

Most of the people in El Salvador—60 percent—live in the countryside and are dependent on agriculture. But 2 percent of the Salvadoran population owns 60 percent of the land, while two-thirds of the peasantry owns no land at all.

Health care, running water, and electricity are unknown in the peasant villages and in many working-class neighborhoods of the big cities. In 1973 the average wage in the manufacturing and service sectors in El Salvador was \$1.64 per day.

Faced with rising mass struggles against these conditions, the military dictatorship of Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero instituted ferocious repression. But Romero's attacks on the mass movement only succeeded in provoking greater opposition to his regime. The victory of the Nicaraguan revolution in July 1979 was a further inspiration to the Salvadoran masses and a big blow to Romero.

Hoping to head off the gathering revolution, Washington sponsored a coup in October 1979. The new junta promised an end to repression and extensive social reforms. But when mass demonstrations broke out demanding an accounting of those who had disappeared into Romero's prisons and the punishment of Romero's torturers, the junta showed its true colors. The death toll in the first two weeks of the junta's rule exceeded the slaughter during

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Romero's last nine-and-a-half months in power.

The junta's much-heralded land reform, planned by the CIA's American Institute for Free Labor Development, has done nothing for the masses of poor peasants, while leaving the coffee holdings which account for 44 percent of Salvadoran exports completely untouched.

Death Squads

Every honest and decent person who attempts to speak out and tell the truth about what is happening in El Salvador—priests and nuns, journalists, political leaders, and human rights activists—becomes a target of the government's death squads. The junta's method of rule is symbolized by the dozens of maimed and tortured bodies found every morning in El Salvador.

The Salvadoran people know that there is no way out of this nightmare except through the overthrow of the junta. They also are well aware that this will not be an easy or simple task.

Unlike the situation in Nicaragua before the overthrow of Somoza, there is no split within the Salvadoran ruling class. Furthermore, the Salvadoran capitalists represent a stronger class with deeper social roots than was the case in Nicaragua. This is reflected in the size of ultrarightist organizations such as ORDEN, which claims to have some 100,000 members.

Although Washington is not in a position to intervene in El Salvador with massive numbers of U.S. troops right now because of the antiwar sentiment within the U.S. working class, it has begun stepping up its aid to the junta and is sending more U.S. military personnel.

International Solidarity

In this situation, international solidarity with the Salvadoran people is more important than ever. As was the case in Vietnam, such solidarity can play a big role in helping to win the battle.

Not only do the Salvadoran liberation fighters have staunch allies in the revolutionary governments of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada, they also have support in the Socialist International, which is on record in opposition to aid to the junta, as is the UN General Assembly. The Mexican government has repeatedly warned against any U.S. intervention, and there is deep sympathy for the Salvadoran struggle within the Catholic Church.

The potential exists for building a massive international solidarity movement, and that is the task of the day. The general offensive launched by the FMLN on January 10 signalled the opening of an all-out civil war in El Salvador. As one of the FDR representatives at the solidarity conference in Managua explained:

"You must understand that this is not some little army that the Salvadoran people are up against. It is an army backed by

the mightiest imperialist force on earth. It is not surprising that this army has been able to deal us some blows."

"The Salvadoran people have been fighting for fifty years," he continued, "and we

understand very well that the final phase of the revolution can last a few days, or a few weeks, or even a few years. But we also know that in the end the Salvadoran people will win." □

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Washington Failed to Push Back Revolution in Iran

Hostage Episode: A Big Blow to Imperialism

By Janice Lynn

The occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran sparked a fourteen-month-long confrontation between the Iranian people and U.S. imperialism.

What is the balance sheet of this dramatic conflict?

On the face of it, this was an unprecedented blow to imperialist arrogance. The youth of a semi-colonial country, one that was previously ruled all but in name from the U.S. embassy, occupied that embassy and held its personnel hostage for fourteen months.

Washington tried to drive back the Iranian people, who had dared to stand up to the mightiest imperialist power in history. Iranian assets were seized, U.S. warships were sent into the Arabian Sea, economic sanctions were imposed, and a military raid was attempted.

But in the end, Washington was forced to hand back some \$3 billion it had stolen from Iran.

More was involved, however, than the Iranians dealing another blow to the myth of imperialist invincibility and providing an inspiring example to the other peoples of the world that are oppressed by Washington.

Like a Declaration of War

From the beginning of the February 1979 revolution that overthrew the shah, the U.S. rulers were intent on restoring the Iranian monarch to his throne. The shah had been one of Washington's most valuable allies, protecting imperialist oil profits and serving as a bulwark against popular revolutions in the region.

The admission of the shah to the United States in October 1979 was like a declaration of war against the Iranian revolution. Washington hoped to use the U.S. embassy as a center for a Chile-style destabilization operation that would pave the way for restoring the monarchy.

The Iranians responded by occupying the embassy.

To Washington's dismay, Iranian workers and peasants began taking independent initiatives and mobilized by the millions in defense of their revolution. These were the first actions in which the masses of Iranian workers mobilized through their own organizations and independently of any government-called action.

The government of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, seen by the masses as too willing to compromise with imperialism, was forced to resign.

There were sharpened confrontations between the Iranian masses and the Iran-

ian capitalist class—the landlords, factory owners, and bourgeois government figures, who tried to hold back the masses.

Although most Iranian workers and peasants still have illusions in one or another of the various wings of the present bourgeois government's ability to solve the country's problems, the pro-shah and proimperialist forces within Iran have become completely isolated.

The massive mobilizations against U.S. domination closed off all prospects of the United States government returning a monarchy to Iran.

Instead of a trump card, the shah became a liability for the U.S. rulers. They shuttled him around from country to country, until he finally died in exile in Egypt.

The mobilization by Iran's workers and peasants—sparked by this confrontation with imperialism—opened a new political stage in Iran. The masses are now in a better position than ever to move forward in the fight for their interests.

Washington completely failed in its objectives. Not only was it unable to restore a proimperialist regime to power in Iran, but it now faces an even deeper revolutionary process.

Assessment of U.S. Rulers

Within the United States, the hostage issue was Washington's main pretext for trying to justify the use of military force in countries around the world. It was a test of the U.S. rulers' drive towards war and militarization.

But the sustained propaganda campaign during this whole period, which continued even after the hostages' release, was not successful in reversing American working people's deep opposition to any new Vietnams.

One of the most convincing proofs of how the imperialist rulers themselves view this question is the fact that they chose to settle the hostage issue at all.

The capitalist media has tried to turn what happened on its head by claiming that Reagan's tough talk was responsible for a deal being reached.

What actually happened, however, is that the U.S. banks tried at the last minute to change the wording of the agreement in a way that would have resulted in Iran getting \$900 million less than had been previously agreed. The Iranians made it clear that they would refuse to go through with the agreement under those circumstances, and the imperialists backed down.

If the U.S. ruling class really thought that they could use the occasion of Rea-

gan's taking office to launch a military attack on the Iranian revolution—something they have wanted to do since the revolution's inception—why didn't they stall the agreement a little longer?

The U.S. rulers try to portray the resolution of the hostage problem as a big victory for Washington. But the reality is just the opposite.

An indication of the real assessment of the capitalists is that on the day the hostages were released (the same day as Reagan's inauguration), the stock market plunged by more than twenty points. It was the first time in decades that the stock market fell so sharply on the day a new president was inaugurated.

"Now that the hostages are out, and inauguration is over, there's not much the market can hang its hat on," one securities analyst commented.

There was an initial flurry of speculation that Reagan might repudiate the agreement with Iran. But the speed with which the new administration backed off from any such idea is further confirmation that Washington is in a weakened position to attack the Iranian revolution.

Discussion Among U.S. Workers

The whole hostage episode opened a big debate and discussion among American workers about U.S. foreign policy. As more and more people learned about the crimes of the shah and the U.S. government's role in backing him to the end, questions arose about Carter's motives for bringing the despot into the U.S.

This discussion continues.

On January 29, former hostage Barry Rosen expressed what he said was the general anger among the hostages at the shah's admission to the U.S. He confirmed that ample warning had been sent by the embassy in Tehran about the consequences of such an act, and urged an investigation of the whole affair. "If anybody says they weren't warned, they're lying through their teeth," Rosen said.

But President Reagan is now trying to prevent further details from coming to light. ". . . we are not enamored with the idea of Congressional hearings or a commission to study the overall hostage situation," one of Reagan's key advisers commented January 30.

Upon the hostages' return, there was an outpouring of genuine sentiment that they were finally home. People expressed their relief that the fifty-two Americans had all come back—alive and in good health—and that the U.S. rulers had not been able to drag the country into a war.

A January 27 *New York Times* editorial entitled, "What the Cheers Are For" expressed some of this. Explaining how "Different people are obviously cheering different things," the *Times* editors commented, "some are relieved that the hostages returned without more bloodshed."

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, head of the

civil-rights group Operation PUSH, noted that among Blacks, "There's great concern about the hostages coming home. But there's also great concern over the hostages at home."

Jackson suggested that the news media give as much coverage as it is giving to the hostages to the thousands of U.S. prisoners who are Black.

Another PUSH spokesperson pointed out how many Blacks feel they have been held hostage for the last 300 years.

Writing in the January 26 New York Daily News, Black columnist Earl Cald-

well said of Washington's use of the hostage issue:

"It takes attention away from how bad the unemployment situation is, from the fact that . . . there is no sign that there is any relief from this relentless recession." He also noted that attention was being diverted from the growing number of unsolved racist killings.

The government-organized orgy of flag-waving will not divert attention from the country's problems for long. The reality of inflation, unemployment, racist oppression, and government attacks on wages will quickly intrude. □

Another reporter asked Charles Jones, the only Black hostage, about a statement that quoted him as saying he was treated "like an animal in the zoo."

What he meant, Jones explained, was that "We were fed like at certain times. [We] were being watched all the time. In other words, that's what I was talking about. I wasn't talking about being mistreated as an animal in a zoo."

Kathryn Koob, a highly religious person, told reporters that she never encountered any religious prejudice from the Iranian students. "As a matter of fact, there were questions, and an opportunity to talk about that."

Two of the hostages said they had passed the fourteen months doing extensive reading and a lot of reflecting.

Air Force Col. Thomas Schaefer said his biggest problem in captivity was "trying to determine what I was going to eat with my rice."

John Graves, public affairs officer at the embassy, stated: "I am uncomfortable with the fact that much of what I see in the press seems to be a kind of almost willful distortion. . . ."

For example, he said, "there's enormous evidence, completely cogent evidence for the proposition that the people who took us, that captured us, were students. Legitimate students."

The media, of course, have tried for fourteen months to convey the opposite idea.

The government and media claims of Iranian brutality unravelled some more that night when Richard Morefield, former U.S. consul general in Tehran, was interviewed by Ted Koppel on ABC-TV.

"I was never, ever formally interrogated," Morefield said. "I was always treated with respect. . . . It wasn't torture, in no way. I was never touched physically."

Morefield also said he received 90 to 95 percent of the letters his wife sent him.

Unable to make stick any specific charges of physical torture, the White House announced the day before the hostages' news conference that about a dozen of them were now suffering "severe" mental problems.

Asked about this, Marine Sgt. John McKeel declared: "I don't know how the rumor got out about some of us hostages supposed to be suffering from some mental condition. But I feel from the people I've talked to since my stay here at West Point that we're all all right."

"And as soon as they let us get home so—especially the Marines—we can get back to chasing women, it's going to be perfect."

Then he repeated emphatically, "We are all all right, physically and mentally!"

The hostages may be all right, but Washington's latest batch of lies about Iran is in bad shape. □

'Were We Subject to Torture? No sir'

U.S. Lies About Hostage Torture Unravel

By Janice Lynn

The hostage "torture" story is blowing up in Washington's face.

Finally able to speak for themselves at a January 27 news conference at the U.S. Military Academy, former hostages, one after another, emphatically denied claims that they had been brutalized or mistreated.

Elizabeth Ann Swift, who had been a ranking political officer at the former U.S. embassy in Tehran, made a vehement appeal for the media to stop lying.

"I, at the moment, have a case in point which I am very concerned over," she said, "which is *Newsweek* magazine, which has a statement by me, a quote by me in here on torture."

The *Newsweek* article had said: "At one point, a guard put the cold muzzle of his pistol to the head of Elizabeth Ann Swift. 'I heard the trigger click, but nothing happened,' she said after her release last week. 'They only wanted to torture us.'"

But the whole story, cold muzzle and all, came from somebody's hot imagination.

"I never talked to anybody from *Newsweek*," Swift told the news conference. "I never said this to anybody, any other correspondent. And it's not true."

Swift's comments came after one reporter tried to ask for the facts about so-called torture of the hostages in light of the shah's brutal record.

L. Bruce Laingen, former chargé d'affaires at the embassy, acted as though he hadn't heard the question, and State Department official John Cannon declared it out of order.

But Swift insisted on getting out the truth. And she explained why:

"The Iranian students . . . were constantly saying that the U.S. press was misreporting it, and we were constantly telling them that the U.S. had a free and a



ELIZABETH ANN SWIFT: *Newsweek* tale 'is not true.'

good, responsible press. And I'd like for the U.S. press to prove that now."

Judging from how the media have ignored the comments by Swift and other former hostages at the news conference, it will be a long time before the Iranian students are disproved.

Marine Sgt. James Lopez was asked about reports that hostages were tortured in the desert after the failure of Carter's "rescue" raid.

"Were we subject to torture? No sir," Lopez said.

"I think what you're referring to is that fact that we were dispersed around the country and that it was done in such a helter-skelter style that many of us were crammed into small cars, and the lodgings were last-minute affairs. . . ."

Marine Sgt. Kevin Hermening, whose mother—Barbara Timm—had visited him in Tehran in defiance of Carter's travel ban, confirmed that the decent treatment he described to his mother had not changed following her visit. □

Washington Increases Pressure on Nicaragua

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—Aiming to blunt Nicaraguan solidarity with the popular forces fighting in El Salvador and to force political concessions to procapitalist elements here, Washington has stepped up its threats and economic pressures against the Nicaraguan revolution.

U.S. officials have repeatedly charged that the Nicaraguan government is aiding Salvadoran liberation forces by sending them arms, providing training facilities, and even sending troops into El Salvador.

Voicing a particularly ominous threat, former Secretary of State Edmund Muskie told *Washington Post* reporter John M. Goshko January 29, "There is no question that if this flow [of arms] continues with the knowledge of the Nicaraguan government . . . this administration [Reagan's] may be forced to cut off aid to Nicaragua, which could well precipitate a bloodbath in Nicaragua."

Muskie's point, apparently, was to threaten not only economic strangulation of Nicaragua, but direct U.S. aid to Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries as well.

Muskie's "bloodbath" threat was only the latest and most graphic of the statements by U.S. officials. Quoting "an official source," the *New York Times* reported January 23 that the U.S. government had "suspended payments to Nicaragua from a \$75 million economic support fund last week because of evidence that left-wing guerrillas in El Salvador have been supplied with arms from Nicaragua. . . ."

Washington 'Evaluating' Evidence

Since the January 23 *Times* article appeared, the State Department has attempted to "clarify" the status of loans to Nicaragua. According to a January 23 announcement by William Dyess, State Department spokesperson, the remaining \$15 million in U.S. loans have been held up pending evaluation of the use of \$60 million already disbursed. (The overall aid package of \$70 million in grants was finally approved last September after months of stalling by Congress and the Carter administration.)

But Dyess did indicate that the allegations concerning El Salvador would figure into Washington's "evaluation." He added that Washington was aware of reports of weapons shipments to El Salvador, but stated that the U.S. government had "reached no conclusions" yet about the evidence.

Among the tales intended to back up the claims of Nicaraguan aid to the Salvadoran fighters was a supposed seaborne

"invasion" of El Salvador from Nicaragua on January 14. But the January 23 *Managua* daily *Barricada*, the official organ of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), lampooned the reports of an "episode cooked up in the feverish brains of the Christian Democratic junta and its functionaries."

Barricada noted that no evidence had ever been presented that any invasion ever even took place:

No one saw the fifty-two dead. Not a single photo was taken of them. Fortunately for the Salvadoran army the other forty-eight fled. And best of all for [Salvadoran President José Napoleón] Duarte, upon the failure of the supposed invasion the United States not only announced the renewal of military aid totalling \$10 million, but also gave the Christian Democratic junta \$89 million more, distributed as follows: \$20 million for private enterprise; \$20 million for agrarian reform (for the landlords that is); and \$49 million from the Inter-American Development Bank for who-knows-what purpose. All in the spirit of democracy. And the people? Dying in the streets with the blessing of the Salvadoran army.

Somozaist Gang Kills Seven Sandinista Soldiers

MANAGUA—Seven Sandinista soldiers were killed January 27 when Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen operating from camps in southern Honduras ambushed a border patrol near the town of Santa María in northern Nueva Segovia province.

Among the dead were four members of the Sandinista People's Militias (MPS) from the city of León who were recently mobilized for active duty in the north.

Six of the Nicaraguan troops died while defending themselves from the assault, which occurred in broad daylight just half a mile from the Honduran border. Four of the counterrevolutionary gang were also killed in the fight. Two MPS members were captured by the Somozaists and carried to a camp in Honduras where they were brutally tortured. One died as a result, but the other managed to escape and return to Nicaragua.

When the bodies of the four militia members were brought to León the day after the attack, thousands of persons gathered in the city's main plaza to honor the dead and to protest the impunity with which the counterrevolu-

The Congressional act authorizing the \$75 million in loans and aid to Nicaragua included a clause requiring presidential certification that the Managua government was not "aiding, abetting, or supporting acts of violence or terrorism in other countries." President Reagan will have to renew this certification before the remaining \$15 million can be disbursed.

As *Barricada* noted, the allegations of Nicaraguan intervention in El Salvador's civil war are being aired in order to justify Washington's own escalating military role in Central America. While suspending aid already pledged to Nicaragua, the U.S. imperialists are pouring weapons, aircraft, and hardware into El Salvador.

Prospect of Cut-off Excites Capitalists

The holdup in economic aid is also aimed at pressuring the FSLN into making political concessions to Nicaraguan capitalists. When news of the U.S. aid suspension reached the Chamber of Commerce assembly here January 23, those in attendance could scarcely conceal their glee.

Ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce Gustavo Somarrriba even expressed hope that with a worsening economic situation "the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Industries, and the COSEP [Superior Council of Private Enterprise] can gain the positions we ought to have."

tionary bands operate from Honduras.

MPS commander Edén Pastora addressed the crowd in León, saying: "It comes powerfully to our minds that tens and hundreds of Salvadoran refugees—old people, women, and children—who were fleeing repression in El Salvador were murdered by Honduran troops. The Hondurans control their borders with El Salvador quite well, and murder people who flee the repression of an army like the Honduran one. But they do not control their borders with us, where the genocidal guards go on killing. . . ."

"Let us hope the people of Honduras can hear us and that the people of Honduras do something so that the Honduran authorities stop tolerating these genocidal and criminal guardsmen."

Further mobilizations to protest the Honduran government's complicity with Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries and to redouble support to the Sandinista People's Militias took place throughout Nicaragua in the days following the January 27 attack. A massive rally was being planned for Managua on January 31.

—Fred Murphy

The reactionary bourgeois daily *La Prensa* carried several articles alleging that the revolutionary government had failed to comply with a U.S. stipulation that 60 percent of the \$75 million in aid and loans be allocated to the "private sector." The articles cited figures from the Nicaraguan Development Institute (INDE), a member organization of COSEP, purporting to show that private businesses had received only 16 percent of the aid already disbursed, and they quoted Chamber of Commerce head Reynaldo Hernández as saying "we have not received anything."

In fact, the Nicaraguan government has put high priority on financial aid to small private farmers and merchants and has even provided substantial loans to big industrialists and cotton growers to assure

rapid reactivation of the economy. The capitalists' real complaint is that they had no control over the credit policies of the government and nationalized banks. Those policies are aimed at meeting the needs of the Nicaraguan people and improving the lot of the poorest layers of small farmers and merchants.

Planning Minister Henry Ruiz said January 24 that a report was in preparation that would show how "the Central Bank has been making resources available in such a way as to fulfill the 60 percent quota."

In a speech to automobile workers the next day, however, Ruiz warned: "We will not allow anyone to come investigate us in our own house. We are the masters of our own destiny and of our own house." □

territorial integrity, and revolutionary power is not a task of the armed forces alone. It is a task that can only be taken up successfully if it is assumed by our entire people. In face of such powerful enemies, a successful defense must be organized in advance. That is the precondition for victory. Given the present circumstances, the integration of all the people into the Sandinista People's Militias is a task to be carried out immediately.

"All the people into the militias!" must be the order of the day.

While thousands of workers and students are responding to the FSLN's call and joining the expanded militia units, the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie is launching complaints against "militarism" and seeking to downplay the threats against the revolution from abroad.

In a statement published in the January 26 *La Prensa*, the Social Christian Party (PSC) blamed Nicaragua's economic problems on "exaggerated emphasis on the military," which it said "has led the country to finance unproductive expenditures with taxes on the workers and growing foreign indebtedness."

The PSC supports the ruling military/Christian Democratic junta in El Salvador and has close ties to the ruling party in Venezuela.

The bourgeoisie's disinformation campaign inside Nicaragua goes hand in hand with the mounting Somozaist attacks from Honduran territory (see box), and with the activities of counterrevolutionary Nicaraguans within the United States.

The January 17 *Miami Herald* carried an interview with José Francisco Cardenal, a Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) leader who left Nicaragua last May. Cardenal said that he and other exiles had formed the "Nicaraguan Democratic Union" and were organizing support abroad for an "uprising" in Nicaragua. "We are also accepting people who used to support Somoza," Cardenal said. He claimed his group already had 600 armed men operating in Jinotega province—"not only ex-Somozaist guardsmen, but also former Sandinistas and others who have become disillusioned with the process."

Fernando Agüero, long-time leader of Nicaragua's Conservative Party, appeared on Miami television recently along with several top Somozaists and announced plans for an invasion of Nicaragua "to liberate it from Communism."

In its January 22 article reporting José Francisco Cardenal's statements, the FSLN daily *Barricada* warned: "It is the responsibility of the U.S. government to prevent its territory from being used as a base of operations against Nicaragua by the counterrevolutionary groups, which apparently feel so encouraged that they even give statements to newspapers announcing their dangerous adventures."

In recent days the Sandinistas have also issued a series of stern warnings to domestic allies of the counterrevolutionaries

'All the People Into the Militias!'

FSLN Replies to Counterrevolutionary Threats

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—The Sandinista government has declared 1981 the "Year of Defense and Production" here in Nicaragua. An economic plan has been drawn up that calls for meeting the threat of imperialist economic boycott with tight supervision of government expenditures and a campaign to boost labor productivity. But in the first weeks of 1981 it is defense that has received the greatest emphasis.

On January 22 Brigade Commander Edén Pastora of the Sandinista People's Militias (MPS) announced the establishment of six new training centers in Managua for militia volunteers. In 1980, Pastora explained, MPS training had mostly involved only physical exercises and marching drills. "Now we are going to provide adequate training for defense—firing practice and courses in military tactics."

Greater responsibility for organizing the

militia units will now fall to the mass organizations, Pastora said, while the role of the regular army will be limited to providing instructors.

In February, the July 19 Sandinista Youth (JS-19) will begin signing up high school students as militia volunteers, JS-19 leader Fanor Herrera said January 23.

In a January 27 statement, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) National Directorate called special attention to the current campaign to build the militias and linked this task to the new threats emanating from Washington:

Our people must be prepared to confront aggressions that are already beginning to be carried out in the economic field, such as the pause in turning over the rest of the \$75 million loan. . . .

But we must also be prepared to face armed attacks. The defense of national sovereignty,



Sandinista government has announced expansion of militia.

Fred Halstead/IP

abroad.

"Every day some businessman goes to Miami," Commander Henry Ruiz said January 25. "Every day there is counter-revolutionary activity. Economic sabotage has begun. There are encampments on the northern and southern borders that enjoy the support of the most reactionary and traitorous local sectors and the encouragement of the reactionary Nicaraguan community in the United States where there are counterrevolutionary 'solidarity'

groups."

The counterrevolutionaries forget, Ruiz went on, that "the toilers are becoming more and more conscious. The working class is more closely united and our political commitment grows stronger every day. . . .

"If there is intervention, if there is serious counterrevolution, the rules of the game can be changed, leaving the destiny of this country in the hands of the workers alone." □

'Eskimo' Employees Ice Out the Bosses

An Example of Workers Control in Nicaragua

By Matilde Zimmermann

MANAGUA—Tensions between workers at the "El Eskimo" ice cream factory here and the company's owners came to a head in mid-January, when the trade union publicly charged the owners with "decapitalizing" the business, and the owners retaliated by firing the general manager for siding with the workers.

Eskimo is owned by the Salvo family, all the members of which, except for one sister, have moved to Miami. The factory and two restaurants employ 350 workers organized into a trade union affiliated with the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), as well as about a dozen who are members of the pro-capitalist Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers (CTN).

The general secretary of the CST union has charged publicly that the Salvo family "has not invested one single centavo, while it has withdrawn some 600,000 córdobas [10 córdobas=\$1] from the Eskimo account in the last fourteen months."

Interviews with Eskimo employees in the January 18 and 19 issues of the Managua dailies *Barricada* and *El Nuevo Diario* describe how the workers themselves organized to maintain production in the face of the Salvos' attempts to run the business into the ground.

'We Can Administer the Factory'

"When the Salvos left the country, they thought this company wouldn't last more than three months because we were incapable of managing it," union General-Secretary Isidro Orozco Arbizú explained. He continued:

"The facts show that we can administer the factory and more. We have also managed to pay all the workers the wages they missed during the June and July insurrection. We have renegotiated the 4.5 million córdoba debt the Salvos had to Nicaraguan banks, and we've been able to arrange for our suppliers to extend us the necessary credit for us to go on producing. We have also taken certain steps to im-

prove the conditions of work. Besides all this, we have been commended by the Ministry of Health for the standards of cleanliness maintained in production. . . .

"As soon as the Salvos saw that the workers had actually increased production and sales were up, they rushed to claim the profits as their own."

The workers have given up days off for "red and black Sundays" of voluntary labor to keep up production. (Red and black are the Sandinista colors.) Meanwhile, "the Salvos do everything they can to make the business and the union operate less efficiently," Orozco charged. "They tell workers at their restaurants to close early or not to work on weekends so that business will suffer."

'Charge It to the Eskimo Account'

Besides the 600,000 córdobas taken away by the Salvos, one unionist explained, "we have also kept up their 'consultant fees'—even though they haven't provided a single piece of advice since July 19, 1979. Paying them all this money for doing nothing just takes funds away from production."

In addition, 45,000 córdobas have gone to pay for members of the family to fly back and forth to Miami. Union treasurer Manuel Duarte Jirón explained that "The Salvos just say 'charge it to the Eskimo account.' That's all. And that's how they pay for their trips and satisfy their extravagant tastes." At a certain point the union just refused to allow company funds to be used for any more airplane tickets.

The workers described how a reporter from the reactionary daily *La Prensa* came to Eskimo and told them: "The Salvos can do whatever they want with their money since it is their money after all and they're the ones who made it."

"We have worked for this company all our lives," he was told, "and we've never even been to Costa Rica, whereas the Salvos go back and forth from there as if it

were Chinandega [a town in Nicaragua]."

General Manager Fired

Guillermo Collando Flores, whom the Salvos appointed general manager of El Eskimo in October 1979, has publicly supported the union charges of "decapitalization." The owners have accused him of betraying their interests by identifying with the workers, and on January 17 they presented him with a dismissal notice. Both Collando Flores and the union have announced that they do not accept the firing.

The Salvos have tried to use the small minority of restaurant workers who belong to the CTN to divide the workforce. The CTN members, explained restaurant worker and CST member Maira Rizo Torres, want the Salvos back in the saddle, with all the old relationships of exploitation and humiliation. "But we are not going to allow a return to the old ways. And even if Lucia Salvo tries to divide us she won't be able to."

Up to this point all the responsibility for coping with the economic sabotage of the Eskimo company has rested with the workers themselves and their union. But the conflict came out into the open when the Salvos tried to fire the general manager. The union has now requested a formal Labor Ministry audit of Eskimo's books and asked the government to intervene "in this conflict which involves the principles of our revolution that gave power to the workers and peasants."

"We are united, and we are counting on the Government's support," said one worker. "We are not alone, and we expect the Government will pay attention to our charges."

Some people don't seem to realize that times have changed in Nicaragua, concluded another worker. "These Salvos seem to think they are still living in the time of Somozaism, when their buddy Anastasio Somoza, the godfather of Mario Salvo, could solve all their problems for them."

The Eskimo dairy and restaurant were placed under government intervention on January 21. Acting on information provided by the trade union there, the minister of justice ordered a thorough audit of the company's books and turned over administration of the enterprise to the Ministry of Industries. The latter's first action was to reinstate Eskimo manager Guillermo Flores. □

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Kim Dae Jung Wins Commutation of Death Sentence

By Janice Lynn

A victory has been won in the campaign to save the life of South Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung. On January 23 Chun Doo Hwan, the country's military dictator, announced that Kim's death sentence was being commuted to life imprisonment.

The following day Chun also announced that martial law would be ended. But as with a similar proclamation one week earlier by Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Chun made sure that real power would remain in his hands.

Kim Dae Jung had been sentenced to death by a military court September 17 on frame-up charges of sedition and attempting to overthrow the South Korean government.

He was accused of fomenting the student-led demonstrations against the dictatorship in Seoul last May, as well as the Kwangju insurrection later that month. In Kwangju, some 200,000 workers and students took control of the city for nearly a week. They demanded an end to martial law and the regime's bloody repression.

There was an international outcry over Kim's death sentence. Japan's biggest labor organization, the 4.6-million-strong General Council of Trade Unions, held protest rallies and collected tens of thousands of signatures on petitions to save Kim's life. The action of the Japanese workers forced Tokyo to put pressure on Chun, and played a big role in saving Kim's life.

Human rights organizations, like the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists, also protested the verdict.

There were continued protests inside South Korea itself. Student demonstrations were organized in cities throughout the country. Protest rallies took place outside army bases where secret trials were being held of persons accused of participating in the May demonstrations.

The widespread outcry compelled a number of capitalist governments—in Europe and the United States, as well as in Australia and Japan—to take their distance from this flagrant violation of human rights.

The South Korean Supreme Court, meeting January 23, had upheld the death penalty for Kim. But one hour later a military government spokesperson announced the death sentence had been commuted to life in prison.

At the same time, it was announced that the prison terms of eleven persons, convicted of sedition along with Kim, were being reduced. The sentences of from seven

to twenty years in jail were changed to five to fifteen years.

U.S. officials praised Chun's good heartedness. "We believe this action will contribute positively to the strengthening of relations between the United States and South Korea," said William Dyess, acting State Department spokesperson.

The South Korean dictatorship plays a key part in helping U.S. imperialism to maintain its domination of East Asia—what Washington terms the stability and security of the region. Some 40,000 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea to back the regime in the event of any challenge from South Korea's workers and students.

Chun has already been invited to the White House to meet with newly elected president Ronald Reagan. The South Korean military dictatorship will be one of the first heads of state to meet with Reagan, thus setting the tone and direction of U.S. foreign policy under the new administration. Reagan has argued that Carter's human rights rhetoric made trouble for proimperialist regimes in a number of countries.

From the standpoint of public relations, however, it is easier for Reagan to back dictators who are at least claiming to clean up their act. That is why Chun announced the commutation of Kim's death sentence

and the formal lifting of martial law.

But severe repression remains:

- Political activities, including rallies and other public gatherings, have been sharply curtailed.
- A midnight to 4 a.m. curfew remains in effect.
- The press has already been reorganized into a handful of publishing and broadcast companies under strict censorship. In August 1980, some 172 weekly and monthly publications had their registrations cancelled and more than 250 journalists were fired. A new "education" campaign for journalists was initiated.
- The military intelligence apparatus has been strengthened and a new national security agency charged with repressing opposition to the dictatorship remains intact.
- All repressive measures enacted in the last period of martial law remain in effect.

"After they strengthened all those laws," one South Korean told *New York Times* correspondent Mike Tharp, "it will be like living under martial law without martial law."

Chun also announced he would allow a presidential election to take place in February. But a president is not to be elected directly by the people, but rather by a 5,000-member electoral college. Chun and his military supporters are, of course, expected to remain in power.

The struggle for democratic rights in South Korea goes on. Kim Dae Jung still faces life imprisonment on trumped-up charges.

The international campaign for the immediate release of Kim, and all other political prisoners in South Korea, must continue. □



Kim Dae Jung, second from right, at his trial.

Polish Workers Score New Victory

By Ernest Harsch

By mobilizing in their millions, the Polish workers have won another major victory against the ruling bureaucracy.

On January 31, after thirteen hours of bargaining, a government delegation headed by Prime Minister Jozef Pinkowski agreed to meet two of the main demands raised by Solidarity, the independent trade union federation.

The first was the union's call for the institution of a five-day, forty-hour workweek. According to the agreement, Polish workers will have all Saturdays off beginning next year, and all but one Saturday a month this year.

The second was Solidarity's insistence on greater access to the media, so that it could publicly explain its views. The government agreed to give Solidarity weekly television and radio programs, cover its activities and proposals in its regular news broadcasts, grant it air time when labor issues are being discussed, and allow it to publish its own weekly newspaper.

The third issue that was discussed remained unresolved: recognition of the new independent farmers' union, Rural Solidarity. Although the government has so far held out against recognizing the farmers' union, it did agree for the first time to begin direct negotiations with its representatives. A special commission was sent to Rzeszow, a strong-hold of Rural Solidarity, for talks with the farmer activists.

Despite the failure to resolve the issue of the farmers' union, Lech Walesa, the most prominent leader of the ten-million-member Solidarity, termed the agreement "the greatest success we have yet achieved. We've never got so far. Almost everything was 80 percent settled."

The issues of the five-day workweek and Solidarity's access to the media were not new ones. Both had been part of the accords signed last year in Gdansk and other centers following the massive July-August strikes.

But the Polish bureaucracy had been stalling on implementation of the reforms. It hoped to undermine the gains of the workers and sow divisions within the ranks of Solidarity. And by refusing to recognize Rural Solidarity, it was also seeking to obstruct the emergence of a strong farmers' organization and the development of a close alliance between the farmers and the workers.

Workers Lose Patience

By January, the Polish workers had begun to lose patience with the bureaucracy's footdragging, leading to an even

larger and more widespread labor mobilization than the massive strikes of July-August 1980.

On January 10, several million workers took a "free Saturday" in support of Solidarity's demand for negotiations on the issue of the five-day workweek. When the government attempted to dock the wages of those who took part, a wave of protest strikes swept a number of cities.

When the government still refused to negotiate on this question, Solidarity called another Saturday action. "We will not go back one step," Walesa declared.

Despite a press blackout that prevented the union from widely publicizing its "free Saturday" action, the second one on January 24 was even more successful than the first.

According to the government radio, Gdansk, where many of last year's strikes were centered, was almost completely shut down. In many Warsaw factories, attendance was admitted to be less than 20 percent, and in Lublin most factories were closed. All over the country—in Elblag, Slupsk, Tarnow, Koszalin, Radom, Legnica, and dozens of other cities and towns—millions of workers stayed home.

Public solidarity with the workers was very visible. Streetcars carried posters and buildings were draped with banners bearing the name Solidarity.

At a radio factory in Warsaw, one huge banner read, "Solidarity Wants Justice and Democracy in Poland."

Following on the heels of the January 24 action, the country was swept by a new wave of wildcat strikes, some of them spontaneous and some called by local chapters of Solidarity.

In Bielsko-Biala, in southern Poland, workers launched an indefinite general strike on January 26 to back their demands for the dismissal of the local governor, his deputies, and the mayor. About 300 factories were affected.

The next day, six-hour strikes involving more than 100,000 workers took place in the Silesian capital of Katowice, shutting down a number of major industries, including a giant steelworks. Coal miners in Bytom and workers in Jastrzembe and Bialystok also struck. In Lodz, a major textile center, work came to a halt at more than 1,000 factories and other enterprises for three hours.

In subsequent days, other strikes erupted. Wroclaw was hit by a partial transport stoppage and newspapers stopped publishing in Poznan because of a printers' sit-in.

During the course of these strikes, closer ties were established between Solidarity and the newly formed farmers' union. Some union chapters called strikes in support of Rural Solidarity's demand for official recognition. Walesa traveled to Rzeszow and spent several days there for discussions with the Rural Solidarity activists and to help cement the alliance between the workers and farmers movements.

Students Protest

Following the example of the workers and farmers, opposition to the bureaucratic policies of the government and Communist Party leadership has been spreading to ever wider sections of the population.

At the University of Lodz, in central Poland, several thousand students have launched a sit-in to press their demands for the establishment of independent student organizations, access to printing facilities, the banning of police from the campus, and student participation in the running of the university, including a voice over the curriculum.

One student protester, who was quoted in the January 29 *New York Times*, described the students' objections to the courses they are forced to take, courses which justify the defense of bureaucratic privilege and the suppression of independent thought in the name of Marxism.

In the first year you get "Political Economy." It is a vulgar introduction to Leninism and, in fact, to Stalinism. In the second year, there is "Basic Principles of Marxist Philosophy," a slightly superior form of indoctrination.

In the third year, it is "Fundamentals of Political Science." The people who do the lecturing are no different from the operatives of the secret police. The fourth year, it's really the tops, "Philosophy and Sociology of Marxism." Any student who asks a provocative question there is tossed right out of the classroom.

The protesters at the university have been joined by students at the nearby Polytechnic and the Medical Academy. Student delegations from Warsaw, Gdansk, Wroclaw, and Lublin have traveled to Lodz to express their solidarity with those sitting in there.

Because of the growing movement on the campuses, the official Socialist Union of Polish Students is being pushed aside by various local student organizations.

At a December 28 conference of the Union of Polish Writers, Jan Jozef Szczepanski, a dissident intellectual, was elected the new chairman of the organization. New leaderships were also chosen by the journalists' union.

Rumblings in the CP Ranks

Since the massive strikes of 1980, it has become evident that much of the Communist Party membership sympathizes with the struggles and demands of the independent workers' movement.

Many CP members, in fact, have joined Solidarity. Out of a total party membership of 3 million, some 1.7 million are now members of Solidarity as well. Some of the strongest supporters of Solidarity are workers from the country's 162 largest factories, where the Communist Party was particularly well entrenched. In many of these factories, party cells have virtually ceased to function.

A report from Warsaw in the January 28 *Christian Science Monitor* noted a "new assertiveness, within the Communist Party itself, of rank and file members as against the 3 percent of professional party bureaucrats that constitute the 'apparat.'" Moreover, "numerous local party cells are now calling for free, secret elections of party secretaries at local, then regional, then national level."

One discussion document presented within the party cell at the Fonica radio assembly plant in Lodz, for instance, called for sweeping reforms in the party through the holding of an extraordinary congress and the democratic election of a new leadership that would include "men of the masses, those who represent the interests of the workers, and, in particular, representatives from the most disadvantaged social layers." It appealed for support to Solidarity and maintained that the events since mid-1980 had a "revolutionary character."

The bureaucratic methods of the party leadership have also come under public attack. An article in the November 14 *Zycie Warszawy*, the most important Polish daily, denounced the "arbitrary and conspiratorial style of leadership followed by the party apparatus and the top leadership circles."

On January 2, another article in the same paper called for "openness of political life" inside the party and the dismissal of incompetent officials. "The sores of our country have been linked to the sickness inside the Communist Party," one commentator wrote.

'10 Million People to Talk to'

From the very beginning of the labor upsurge last year, the Polish bureaucracy—and its allies in Moscow—have sought to misrepresent the aims of the workers movement and slander their struggle for socialist democracy. They have accused the leadership of Solidarity of being "provocative" and "extremist," of raising unreasonable demands that could only damage the Polish economy and society, and of resorting to strikes on the slightest pretext.

But throughout the conflict over the five-day workweek, Solidarity made it clear that it wanted to avoid a confrontation if possible. It continually pressed for negotiations.

Solidarity stressed that its goal was not an arbitrary cut in the workweek, regardless of the cost to the economy. Given the



STANISLAW KANIA

country's deep economic problems, it recognized that workers might have to go in on some Saturdays. But the union wanted a voice in making that decision. It wanted accurate information on the condition of the economy so as to be able to formulate possible alternatives.

What the workers objected to most of all was the government's unilateral announcement in early January that workers could take off only every other Saturday. This decision was made without consulting the workers and in violation of the 1980 accords.

"We appreciate the tough economic situation of the country, we know there are difficulties," Walesa said on January 23, "but we also know there are about 10 million of us—10 million people to talk to."

Closely linked to this demand by the workers for a say in the country's affairs was Solidarity's efforts to win greater access to the press and broadcast media, so as to be able to make its views known and to openly discuss solutions to Poland's economic, social, and political problems.

That, too, had been part of the original Gdansk accord. According to the agreement, "The new trade union should have a real opportunity to publicly express an opinion on key decisions that determine the living conditions of working people, . . . long-term economic plans, and investment policy and price changes."

But press censorship and restrictions on the dissemination of ideas remained an active part of the bureaucracy's arsenal of control. Although the newspapers at times reported on Solidarity's meetings and activities, they did not, since early December, allow the union's views to appear in print.

Moreover, there was an almost total press blackout on Rural Solidarity. The January 16 issue of the youth newspaper *Sztandar Mlodych* did not appear because the censors refused to allow interviews with members of Rural Solidarity to be published in it.

It was this provocative stance of the Polish government that finally prompted the workers to go out on strike once more.

Although the bureaucracy has been forced to concede considerable ground, its slanders against the workers movement have not subsided.

On January 29, for example, just two days before it reached the agreement with Solidarity, the Polish government issued a statement that declared: "Anarchy and chaos are creeping into the life of the country, endangering the fate of the motherland and its citizens. The forces hostile to socialism are being activated."

It warned that it was prepared to "take the necessary steps" for the "maintenance of law and order."

The same day, a Soviet Tass dispatch claimed that "oppositionist anti-socialist forces have become more active in Poland" and directly accused the Solidarity leadership, for the first time, of employing "blackmail, threats, provocations and now, quite often, physical violence."

A day earlier, an article in *Red Star*, the Soviet army newspaper, tried to link the Polish workers movement with the imperialist countries. "The crude interference of the West," it said, "above all of the NATO member countries, in Poland's home affairs is a carefully preplanned political campaign of political sabotage against the socialist community."

The imperialist powers have certainly tried to generate some propaganda advantage out of the Polish strikes, portraying the workers' struggle for socialist democracy as a fight against "communism." But the Polish workers are not rising up in their millions because of "political sabotage" by the imperialists. It is the crimes and abuses of the Stalinist bureaucracy that have driven the Polish workers and peasants to rebel.

By fighting for their democratic rights and to assert their control over the Polish economy, the workers and peasants of Poland have set an example for the toiling masses throughout the world. Their struggle is in the interests of socialism, not of imperialism.

What the bureaucrats—both in Warsaw and Moscow—are fighting to preserve is not socialism, but their own privileged status. Their slanderous charges are intended to prepare a crackdown on the Polish workers and peasants, including a possible Soviet military intervention.

But such threats have not been successful in cowering the workers or in stemming the growth of opposition to bureaucratic rule.

Speaking before a mass rally in Rzeszow January 28, Walesa declared, "We must be aware that it is the power of our movement that cannot be destroyed" by tanks or guns.

"Maybe there would be victims," he said. "If we have to pay a price we shall do so, but we shall win." □

Why Socialists Back Demands of Working Farmers in Poland

By Suzanne Haig

[The following article appeared in the February 6 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

Inspired by the upsurge of millions of Polish workers, working farmers have established their own organization, Rural Solidarity. Reported to have 600,000 members, it is receiving aid from the workers movement.

Communist Party chairman Stanislaw Kania has attacked Rural Solidarity, which has not yet been recognized by the government. In an effort to prove the union is led by counterrevolutionaries, Kania was reduced to charging that "in some of these biographies, we find an ancestry traceable to the landed gentry"—a class which has not existed in Poland since the end of World War II.

Such attempts to drive a wedge between the farmers and the working class are not surprising.

The overthrow of capitalism in Poland after World War II benefited most farmers. Landlordism, massive rural unemployment, and near starvation were eliminated. Electricity was brought to the countryside and major progress was made toward ending illiteracy. But the living standards of Polish farmers have not kept up with those of city workers.

The parasitic caste that rules the country has placed a low priority on producing consumer goods and agricultural equipment. Mismanagement, privileges for government and Communist Party officials, a staggering debt to the imperialist banks, and the absence of democratic involvement of working people in planning have led to serious economic difficulties. The workers and farmers are challenging the oppression they suffer under this misrule.

Workers and Farmers Alliance

The emerging alliance between the Polish workers and the working farmers is key to advancing the struggle for democratic rights and equality. Without such an alliance, no workers state can advance toward socialism.

But to the Workers World Party, an ultraleft sectarian organization in the United States, the struggle of the oppressed classes in Poland is anathema.

The right to form a union and the other gains won after the August strikes have "set back the clock of socialism," party leader Sam Marcy wrote in the September 12 *Workers World*.

"... what the workers have gained

economically and socially," he charged, "is at the cost of legitimizing a bourgeois opposition," in which he lumps together the reactionary Catholic Church hierarchy with union leaders, dissident intellectuals, and working farmers.

Without resolute government action against the workers and farmers, Marcy believes that this "bourgeois opposition" will "seize the political initiative and urge the workers to move in a bourgeois restorationist direction."

To the Workers World Party, the Polish workers are allying with their class enemy when they support the working farmers. The substance of Marcy's argument is that farmers have the Polish workers state by the throat and are choking it to death.

"Aside from the small state sector in agriculture," he wrote on September 12, "capitalist farming prevails throughout Poland. It has been getting steady, consistent, and ever-larger infusions of subsidies from the government, that is from the hides of the workers.

"This is true even though . . . small, private farming is inefficient and largely responsible for the poor state of food production in Poland."

Marcy never bothers to explain why Polish workers, who know a lot about the economy, don't join him in blaming the problems on the working farmers.

The solution, proposed in the November 14 *Workers World*, is for the Polish government to "launch a struggle to collectivize the countryside."

Capitalist Threat?

Do Poland's working farmers represent a threat of capitalist restoration? Are they the enemy of the workers?

There are today 3.5 million private farmers in Poland. Their farms are not capitalist enterprises with thousands of acres and dozens of workers. The average farm is 12.5 acres. Only one-sixth of all private farms are more than thirty acres, and most of these are cultivated by a single family.

Does the presence of so many small farms constitute an immediate threat to the workers state, as Marcy claims? Hardly.

Marcy makes the error of confusing the potentiality of small farmers to accumulate large tracts of land and hire wage workers—thus threatening the planned economy—with what is actually the situation in Poland today.

In the 1920s Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky warned that the mil-

lions of small farmers constituted the "fundamental source of the capitalist tendencies in Russia."

At the time, the Soviet Union was still overwhelmingly agricultural. The industrial sector was very weak, still suffering from the devastation of the civil war. And a class of rich farmers hiring wage labor appeared, which demanded an end to the monopoly of foreign trade and was hostile to the working class.

Forced Collectivization

Even under these circumstances, Trotsky opposed forced collectivization, as had Lenin from the beginning of the revolution. He believed the government should take measures that would win the poor farmers to support the workers state against the rich farmers. The Stalin leadership, however, went ahead with forced collectivization, which led to an economic and social catastrophe in the countryside.

Poland in 1981 bears little resemblance to Russia in the 1920s. Poland is now a major industrial country—among the top fifteen largest producers of industrial goods in the world. Its working class has grown steadily, gaining enormous social weight, while the percentage of the population employed in farming has declined steadily.

More than one-third of the farms are cultivated by farmers over sixty years old without heirs intending to farm. The young are leaving for the city to work in the factories.

Many of these farmers still use plow horses. Few have tractors.

The working farmers do not view themselves as capitalists or even consider it possible to accumulate much property. The demands of Rural Solidarity indicate this. A rich landowner, or an aspiring one, would not be demanding better medical and social benefits and a guaranteed income.

This is why they are fighting—not because they are producing large surpluses and want to be freed from the fetters of the planned economy in order to amass huge profits. They are demanding a share of the benefits of a planned economy. And the workers recognize the justice of this demand.

The farmers' main demands assume the existence of a nationalized, planned economy.

The farmers make about 75 percent of the average wage of nonagricultural workers. They are demanding higher prices for their produce from the government and

full compensation for crop failure so that their living income will be equal to the average worker.

The farmers are asking that the unused land belonging to the state farms be distributed to those farmers whose possessions are too small to provide them with a decent standard of living.

Workers World claims that since 1956 the farmers have been increasingly subsidized. Are they getting lavish handouts?

Bartering for Fertilizer

Three-fourths of the country's food is produced by the private farms. Yet the state farms—which make up 25 percent of the farmland—get 75 percent of the subsidies. Small farmers are forced to barter pigs and potatoes to get fertilizer or coal. They lack modern equipment.

They want a fairer distribution of subsidies, a fight they have been waging since the 1950s.

Nor are they demanding that this come "from the hides of the workers," but from the bureaucrats' hides. Among Rural Solidarity's demands is an end to corruption and the expropriation of the hunting lodges and villas owned by party officials. They are also demanding that wage workers on the state farms be allowed to join Rural Solidarity.

The attitude of the farmers toward the working class was summed up by Rural Solidarity organizer Jan Kulasz when asked by a *New York Times* reporter if the farmers would hold back produce to force recognition of their union.

Said Kulasz, "The workers' and peasants' alliance could not do this. We could not have the children in the cities without milk."

Marcy traces the source of the allegedly growing capitalist sector in the countryside to the "abandonment of collectivization as a result of the 1956 uprising." What actually happened?

From 1950 to 1954 the Polish Stalinist government implemented a series of ruthless collectivization drives, forcing the peasants to give up their land. Few consumer goods made their way to the countryside, and the standard of living did not rise.

The peasants engaged in slowdown strikes, consuming whatever they could produce themselves, and delivering little to the government. Food shortages became acute. Food for the urban population had to be imported. By 1954 six of the most important crops had lower yields than under capitalism in the 1930s.

Following the workers' uprising in 1956—a struggle for economic and democratic rights—the Gomulka regime was forced to drop the drive against the working farmers and decrease the gap in subsidies paid to private as opposed to state farms. Even with a slight decline in the amount of subsidies received, 80 percent of the collective farms collapsed.

Even prominent Polish government economists concede that the decline of agriculture can be attributed to the Stalinist policy of forced collectivization.

In the Soviet Union, the forcible expropriation of millions of Russian peasants in the late 1920s and early 1930s led to a disaster from which Soviet agriculture has still not recovered. Millions died of starvation after burning crops, eating their seed supplies, slaughtering millions of livestock, and destroying farm implements in a rebellion against this inhumane policy.

Workers World believes this policy could inspire workers and poor peasants today and end the food shortage. On the contrary, the bureaucracy would literally drive the farmers into the arms of reaction.

To win working farmers to support the workers state and to participate in more advanced forms of agriculture, they must be shown that state farms are more efficient and will benefit farmers. Equally important, working farmers must be able to make their decision without coercion and must see that the government is on their side.

Petty Fiefdoms

This is not the case in Poland. Small farmers face economic discrimination. Because the state farms are better subsidized, farmers resent them and view them as competitors. The state farms, moreover, are highly inefficient, needing two and one-half times more fertilizer to produce the same amount of food as the small farms.

The farmers hate the state farms because they see that these are not organized to benefit both the workers and the farmers. The bureaucratic farm managers operate them as petty fiefdoms, with lifestyles resembling the despised landlords of the past.

Cuba's policy toward small farmers sharply contrasts with that of Poland.

Even though Cuba has made significant progress in establishing state farms, the government defends the farmers' right to own their own land and sell their goods on the market for prices determined jointly by the government and farmers.

Nor has the government withheld social benefits from small farmers in order to force them to give up their land. Instead, better housing, social security, communications, and education have been brought to the countryside.

In a speech to the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in 1975, Fidel Castro summed this up, "The revolutionary policy of unfailing respect for the free will of the working peasant, of effectively assisting and supporting him, is the solid basis on which the peasant-worker alliance today develops, growing stronger and stronger."

Cuban Peasant Given Choice

"The peasantry," he stressed, "is the ally

of the working class. The latter will never use coercive methods against its brothers in the struggle or depart from the use of persuasion, whether this is successful or not."

Cuba has held this position for the past twenty-two years despite the U.S. blockade and serious economic problems.

No wonder Cuban peasants are totally committed to the revolution—ready to fight and die for it.

Workers World believes that the workers must look to the Stalinist rulers to end the crisis by crushing the working farmers. "It is, after all," Marcy says, "a socialist government." And he adds, "Aside from the Polish Communist Party and those sincere and devoted administrators, there is no organized political force of a progressive character capable of taking the initiative and redirecting Polish society in a genuinely socialist direction."

This arrogant and patronizing tone reveals an utter contempt for the working people of Poland.

The hatred of capitalism has been burned into the memory of the Polish workers and farmers, who suffered at least six million dead under Hitler's occupation.

They know the misery that capitalism brought them and would fight heroically to prevent its return.

Who Defends Socialism?

But to Marcy, it is not the workers who defend socialism, but the factory and farm managers, the generals, the cops, and the Communist Party bureaucrats—with their villas, swollen bank accounts, retinues of servants and prostitutes, fancy cars, and special stores.

But they are the most powerful reactionary forces within Poland today—the main obstacle to socialism.

Workers World's support for these privileged bureaucrats says a lot about the kind of "socialism" it stands for.

Revolutionary socialists, on the contrary, have full confidence in the ability of the workers and working farmers in Poland to take control of their own destiny. They are the key to the socialist future. □

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Polish Trade Unionists Discuss Issue of Workers Control

By Jacqueline Allio

[The following article appeared in the January 20 issue of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor* published in Paris. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

More than a half million people attended the ceremonies in Gdansk, Poland, in memory of the Baltic Coast workers who were shot down by the police ten years ago. A huge monument to those who fell in 1970 was unveiled on December 16.

Hundreds of buses covered with slogans of the Solidarity union movement, special trains organized by railroad workers in several cities, unending lines in front of the places selling commemorative buttons and posters, all testified to the fantastic mobilization of the workers of all of Poland on December 16 and 17.

The unanimous sentiment at these ceremonies was "never again will we let such a thing happen." Solidarity had decided to turn these events into a demonstration of its strength, and that is what in fact happened.

"This monument will be the symbol of unity. It will cement the unity of the workers of all of Poland" said one of the main leaders of the Warsaw MKZ two days after the ceremony. (The MKZs are regional union bodies.)

But he quickly added: "Thankfully I was not at Gdansk because hearing all those speeches would have made me sick. . . . Given the importance of this event, they should have limited themselves to having one minute of silence, instead of ending up with a super-traditional ceremony.

"Everything that was said simply obscured the meaning of that anniversary, of the fact that we had to wait ten years to pay tribute to our comrades. Some of the statements by the priests sounded bizarre, not to say dangerous for Solidarity. They prove that the bishopric is trying to manipulate the union, which the speech by Lech Walesa also shows. Walesa is too much the good believer and lets himself be too influenced by the Church."

These thoughts, in fact, express the reaction of many members and leaders of Solidarity, who were troubled and shocked that the speech Lech Walesa gave on that occasion had been written by a church official, with half the speech devoted to quotes from the bishopric.

"Peace, order, prudence, defense of the homeland. . . ." This theme dominated all the speeches. It was the theme of the

speeches by the church figures, by the leader of Solidarity, and by Tadeusz Fiszbach, first secretary of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP—the Communist Party) in Gdansk.

Fiszbach was hissed when he stated that "thanks to the Red Army, Poland was freed from its chains at the end of the Second World War." At the end of his speech there was only heavy silence, barely broken by the applause of the clergy at the bottom of the platform.

"If the government had even sent a representative to say 'I'm sorry for what happened . . .'" the Warsaw Solidarity leader continued. "But that's not what happened. Instead we saw a member of the party who, as a leader, bears his share of the responsibility for the massacre in 1970, speak nonsense about peace and everyone's responsibility!"

Although the establishment of this monument was one of the main demands of the workers in the shipyards last August, not a word was said at the ceremony about these twenty-one demands. Not even one word was said about perspectives for the movement. It was therefore easy for Polish television to present these ceremonies as sort of a national anthem, wiping away anything that dealt with the mobilization and demands of the working class.

But the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Gdansk massacre would have been an unparalleled opportunity for the leadership of Solidarity to address the massive number of members of the independent unions who were present and to indicate the road to follow in the coming period.

The justifiable desire to avoid any uncontrolled incidents does not in itself explain the more than moderate tone of Lech Walesa's speech. The church's pressure was all too obvious in his speech. Even though for many Solidarity members the words spoken at the ceremony seemed less important than the event itself, many union members reacted very sharply to what they felt was a kind of violation of the movement's independence.

This Christmas period there were worse food shortages throughout Poland than ever before. No butter was available, except in restaurants, no sugar, no meat, no fruit except apples. In some regions there began to be bread shortages.

Lines would form in a few seconds in front of a store because "someone" had heard them say that there was a shipment of mushrooms or tomatoes, or even "someone" thought they heard someone say . . .

In a country where family celebration of holidays is still sacred, everyone learned to make prodigious efforts to organize a decent meal. People knew that the 12,000 tons of carp—the traditional Christmas meal—was a thousand tons less than the year before, despite an increase in imports. And there was 30 percent less herring, another basic dish in Poland.

People also knew that hundreds of thousands of tons of spoiled fish had just been thrown out because of the carelessness of the manager of a cannery.

The authorities also claimed that some of the problem was the fault of people who were hoarding—which, of course, only aggravates shortages. The figures on hoarding were available and showed this to be true. They show the depth of the economic morass that the bureaucracy's policies have plunged Poland into.

Besides, who provoked the panic of the residents, so that in spite of their good sense they went out and hoarded? It was the regime itself, by blowing hot and cold and issuing extremely alarmist reports about the threat of famine this winter. Although the country is not yet in that state, there is the danger of want, especially in the most disadvantaged regions.

The fight that Solidarity waged in favor of equally sharing the available meat supplies—which have been rationed since December 18—was specifically aimed at ending inequality in supplies that prevail between regions and areas.

The leaders of the MKZ in Warsaw discovered, for example, that residents of towns around Warsaw were being discriminated against compared to those in the capital. In the outlying towns people were receiving only 500 or even 300 grams of sausage instead of 800 for the whole holiday period, and were getting less than half the pork that was available to Warsaw residents. "It has always been like that," they were told by the mayor of the town, who they went to for an explanation.

The Solidarity leaders ended up insisting that stores in the capital begin selling meat to residents of other cities in the province. Those residents had a different ration ticket, which did not give them the right to buy food in Warsaw. While the new measure benefitted those around Warsaw, it did not resolve the situation in other regions, where supplies of meat per resident were as much as three times lower than in the capital.

In some cities the independent unions did not hesitate to show their discontent.



Lech Walesa addressing striking workers in Gdansk last year.

In Piotrkow Trybunalski, in Chelm, and elsewhere, Solidarity members occupied the county seat to demand that negotiations begin. In general, agreements were reached in these cases. But the bureaucrats in Chelm initially had sent militia men armed with submachine guns to try to intimidate the Solidarity members. A one hour warning strike took place in Chelm on December 23 to protest this abuse of power.

The confrontation between Solidarity and the bureaucracy on this question seems all the more unavoidable when we realize that the militia's stores in a city like Radom received ten times as much meat as regular stores, although their clientele is much smaller.

The Radom MKZ issued a leaflet exposing the fact that—among other abuses—one hundred kilograms of pork had been given to the public prosecutor's office, which employs less than fifty people. The leaflet called on residents to inform the union of other abuses of this type and to exercise rigorous control over supplies.

This desire to exercise control over the distribution of food supplies is especially explosive because it would end up exposing the embezzlement by the bureaucrats. It would also show that those who limit supplies by hoarding had quite a small effect compared to the policy of leaders seeking to preserve their privileges.

At the Ursus tractor plant, we saw an example of the workers' determination not to be led around on a string by the bureaucrats. Management had refused to proceed with wage increases under the pretext that the money was not available and that the workers had already gotten a raise several months earlier. The workers responded by setting up a commission to find out how much money is wasted in the plant. They

carried out an inventory of all the unused stock, machines, and so forth that could be resold and used elsewhere, and they organized an exhibition of photos showing the results of their inquiry. They immediately won their demands!

Further evidence of their desire to control production was seen when the Ursus workers got in contact with Rural Solidarity to discuss problems regarding the manufacture of tractors. As a result of these talks they concluded that tractor production should be lowered by 10 percent in order to increase the production of spare parts that were in extremely short supply. This would make it possible to repair the thousands of broken down tractors that are now unusable. The measure will notably improve the available fleet of tractors.

Imposing Workers Control

Solidarity's determination to exercise some control over the entire economic and social situation in the country can be seen in its establishment of various commissions at the national as well as regional levels. Notable among these is a commission to control prices and wages, which will immediately intervene to demand wage increases if prices should increase, and which will enforce a social minimum wage of 2,400 zlotys per month.

At present the spread of wages runs from 2,000 to 100,000 zlotys per month, with the average being around 6,000 zlotys after the raises granted following the strikes last summer. About 30 percent of the population receives less than the minimum wage.

The union leaders are also demanding the establishment of a commission, under the control of parliament, which would make it possible to exercise control over working conditions. And if that structure proves unable to fight abuses, they will

take whatever measures are necessary to control the situation themselves.

In addition, they are involved in negotiations with the authorities to work out a plan to rationalize the supply of electricity to factories in order to end the present waste in this sphere. Blackouts that can take place at any time are one of the main factors responsible for the decline in production.

But this tendency toward asserting control is not limited to economic or social problems. Although most resist using the term, the working class's desire to exercise control is also expressed in regard to questions that are directly political. One clear example was the strike by Warsaw workers in November to win the freedom of Jan Narozniak—a Solidarity member jailed for possession of a "confidential" document on repression of oppositionists.

A poll of 1,000 Solidarity delegates in the region was taken after that strike. Asked if they approved of the decision to call the strike, 95 percent of them said yes without any hesitation. The percentage answering "yes" was higher among the delegates from the big factories than among the white collar workers and intellectuals.

When asked if it was within Solidarity's scope to intervene in cases of this type, nearly 50 percent responded that it was and that the defense of workers arrested for offenses involving their opinions relates to a basic point in the Gdansk agreements.

The other half thought that in general the union should restrict itself to intervening around trade-union type questions, but that it had been correct to intervene in that particular case. Only 0.5 percent of the workers polled thought that it was an error.

On each question, the proportion of workers adopting a radical position was higher than the proportion of other social layers.

Their viewpoint was simply "to defend the rights of man and the interests of the working class," as some workers told me in a discussion at the Huta Warszawa steel mill. But in fact they were putting forward the demand for control over the militia and police by forcing the authorities into negotiations on the activities of those forces.

"Through this strike," the Huta Warszawa workers added, "we wanted to make sure that such arrests would not be repeated. And the aim of discussions with the government was both to determine who was responsible for the repression and to show our strength to the authorities, who must understand that they cannot be allowed to repeat situations like in 1968, 1970, or 1976."

At year's end typesetters threatened to stop printing *Trybuna Ludu* through a rolling strike effecting one region after another if the bureaucracy did not back down on its decision to prohibit the showing of *Worker 80*, a film shot during last

summer's strikes. Here too, the political character of their action was obvious to everyone.

All these examples show that in the past two months the independent unions have made significant progress along the path toward workers control. Z. Bujak, the chairman of the Warsaw MKZ laughingly told me: "We are not yet strong enough to force the choice of leaders we want to head the factories everywhere, but we are already strong enough to kick out the directors we do not want."

The movement's strength flows not just from the mobilization of the mass of wage workers—about 80 percent of whom now belong to Solidarity—but also from the mobilizations of the small independent farmers organized in Rural Solidarity, which, although not yet legally recognized at the time of this writing, claims 600,000 members, and from the unity that exists between these two unions. This unity was clearly expressed during the national conference of Rural Solidarity.

Both groups are conscious of the importance of this unity. The workers have clearly stated that they are ready to go on strike to support the farmers if the government refuses to change its position on registering Rural Solidarity. And the farmers themselves plan to strike if their organization is not legalized, and will determine the date for their action in consultations with Solidarity's National Coordinating Commission.

Moreover, the farmers have just proposed organizing points of direct sales of meat in order to support Solidarity's struggle against the bureaucracy's manipulation of the distribution of supplies.

Who is Responsible for What?

The situation becomes especially explosive since no one is sure who they should deal with. "At least you in the West fight against the bosses and you know who your enemies are," a representative of Solidarity at the Ursus factory in Warsaw told us. "But at this point we do not know who we're supposed to deal with. For example, everyone is waiting for the authorities to present the plan that they are in the process of working up. But at present no one knows what the plan looks like or who will be in charge of it."

The internal crisis of the party has reached the point where no one knows any longer exactly which wing is dominant nor what will come out of the PUWP congress to be held in March.

The revolt against the local bureaucrats is not restricted to the population's accusations against county leaders and their expulsion, as happened in Czestochowa, Olsztyn, or Bielsko-Biala. It is also expressed by an open revolt of rank-and-file party members, as expressed in the document from the PUWP factory committee at the Fonica radio plant in Lodz.

In their document, which they symboli-

cally entitled *What is to Be Done?* after Lenin's famous article, the workers assert:

"It is impossible to continue to lead in such a way that the party's bureaucratic apparatus—which is also the state apparatus and the economic apparatus—forces the population to adopt its own arbitrary decisions. . . . Solidarity is the principal representative of all those who call themselves 'us,' against the party and state which they define as 'them'. . . . The party, with Solidarity and with other social organizations, must clearly place itself on the side of 'us.' "

Their document still expresses many illusions about how such a transformation could be accomplished, but it is very explicit on the need to sweep away all the bureaucratic structures that are the cause of the present situation. Although in Lodz there is no horizontal coordination between different cells of the party, as exists in some other cities, the above-mentioned document originated out of systematically organized meetings in most of the plants in the city, and it serves as a point of reference in the debates that party members have throughout the region.

Given the wave of questioning, the PUWP leadership usually cannot enforce repressive measures it decides upon. In Torun, the party's ranks simply decided to retain the PUWP first secretary at the city's most important factory, even though he was expelled from the PUWP by the central leadership. The charge against him was that he had organized direct meetings between different PUWP cells, a practice which is formally prohibited under the PUWP's normal functioning.

In Poznan the bureaucrats had to send in their big guns to impose a city secretary whom the local members did not want. In Plock, the meeting between PUWP first secretary Stanislaw Kania and local party officials in the city was so stormy that *Trybuna Ludu* had to report the rank-and-file discontent in its columns.

In discussions with party members almost everywhere, one more often hears them describe themselves as Solidarity members inside the PUWP, than as PUWP members in Solidarity.

Moreover, party members often are much more vigorous in their attacks on the bureaucracy than are leaders of Solidarity and Rural Solidarity who are not members of the PUWP and are careful to avoid confrontations that they are not sure they can control.

But, we should stress, the ranks of these organizations often go beyond these leaders. For example, an old peasant got long applause when he told the National Conference of Independent Producers: "We have to get rid of that entire bureaucracy and the organizations it controls, like the CZKR and the WZKR,¹ which are nothing

1. CZKR: Central Association of Agricultural Circles; WZKR: Provincial Association of Agri-

but bureaucratic apparatuses. We refuse to let anyone dictate forms of organization to us. What we need is a real union that allows us to carry out a united struggle with the working class. And that union is Rural Solidarity, whether the bureaucrats like it or not!"

How the Discussions Progress

The discussions concerning the elections of factory delegates, which are to be held in early January, have resulted in some progress on the question of democratically organizing the movement. This does not always develop smoothly. You hear a lot of sighs and comments about how hard it is to carry out debates within a democratic framework. This shows people are beginning to understand that there must be organizational means that enable each person to present their point of view, although the idea of the right to form tendencies has not yet appeared as such.

I was told on more than one occasion that "democracy is more difficult than we thought." One person explained that "you need time for each person to be able to express themselves and people have to learn *how* to debate our ideas and *how* to resolve our differences."

Sometimes the discussions take place on a very personal level, as we saw in a meeting of railroad worker delegates in the Warsaw region. But the idea is spreading that the elections should take place on the basis of program.

A leader of Solidarity in the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk stated that "in the ideal, I think that the criteria for the election of delegates should include the candidate's personal merit, his membership in political and social organizations, his position in the factory, and the program he defends." He noted, however, that "we are so far behind, we still have so much to do in building the union, that I doubt that at present anyone would even be able to defend a program, properly speaking."

But the desire to equip themselves to overcome this backwardness is shown in many ways. For example, in hopes of accelerating the training of real trade-union cadres, the local leaders in Katowice decided to use audiovisual media, setting up half-hour broadcasts on basic questions such as what is a union, what are the rights of union members, and so on. At Ursus, the factory's cultural commission has set up a "flying university" for the workers of the Warsaw region.

In recent weeks progress has also been made in defining the union's role as being that of a defender of the workers' interests. People are seeing that workers councils have to be established as quickly as possi-

cultural Circles. The agricultural circles are structures that had a cooperative origin. They have been bureaucratized and are supposed to rationalize the distribution of materials and fertilizer.

ble, and that these councils must be different from the union. Such councils would have responsibilities in managing the factory and would represent all the workers on a proportional basis.

"The factory directors would very much like Solidarity to take responsibility on the economic level and participate in management," a union leader told us. "But we are refusing because we know that it would be wrong, and that comanagement is impossible unless we can also make decisions. The objective is to set up workers councils with a director who would carry out the decisions made by the council. But we are not yet there."

Everyone does not yet have such a lucid understanding of the problem of comanagement and of the bureaucracy's maneuvers to try to integrate Solidarity representatives into the structure, the better to reduce them to silence. But it is said that in the course of discussions the ideas of Jacek Kuron on this question have gained ground among the leaders of the local MKZs.²

But the discussion gets more confused as one approaches the question of what solutions to put forward and what model of society to propose. Democracy, of course, but how?

What Solutions?

Given the present wastage, there is a natural tendency to blame the plan and propose total decentralization of the economy, to the point where people lose sight of the need for a central plan.

Many of those holding responsible positions in Solidarity will, without flinching, endorse the proposals of some union experts who call for the reintroduction of competition and market mechanisms in all spheres of the economy, and who favor requiring profitability of factories, especially through reducing the workforce.

When one pushes them a bit, most of these activists state they support collective ownership of the means of production and recognize the need to maintain the big steel plants, heavy industry, mines, the chemical industry, and so forth as state property.

But they obviously identify the idea of a "central plan" with the "bureaucratic management system."

Most of the time they do not distinguish between the need to make compromises and accept the reintroduction of market mechanisms in agriculture and in certain areas of consumption and distribution, and the consequences of such mechanisms if they were applied to the economy as a whole.

When the commercial director of the big Huta Warszawa foundry—employing 16,000 workers—stated his satisfaction that the projected decentralization mea-



Solidarity meeting in Krakow.

asures assure the independence of the factory for the coming year, and that the volume as well as the kind of production would now be decided by the foundry management itself, this provoked no reaction from the Solidarity representatives present.

Instead, several of the workers we talked to at a union general assembly in the plant expressed an identical opinion. The implications of the adoption of a "Yugoslav-type" or "Hungarian-type" system—which are often cited as references—and of the introduction of competition between factories are clearly not understood. Many times workers would tell us that it is preferable to have a certain number of unemployed workers, who get benefits, than to have people in guaranteed jobs who have nothing to do because there is no work and who earn a poverty wage.

During one visit, an employee of the public relations department of FSO-FIAT-Polski coldly told us: "The only way to be able to cure the situation is by reintroducing unemployment. If the workers know their job is not guaranteed, they will be a bit more careful in their work."

Although the Solidarity representative present, who was himself a technician, thought that this position was a bit extreme and appeared shocked by its anti-worker character, he nevertheless felt that "a little unemployment wouldn't be bad."

But when union officials from France, Sweden, Britain, and West Germany, who had come to make contact with Solidarity and to build solidarity activities in their respective countries, raised objections to this idea, independent union activists hesitated and appeared very open to discussion.

Everyone insisted that it was important that the plan be decided "from below." But there was little discussion of how to centralize the proposals coming from all the factories and what methods to use to take the needs of the population as a whole into account.

Because their view is clouded by the bureaucratic character of the economic

management that prevails today, most of them clearly underestimate the importance of a central plan that expresses the interests of the mass of workers. They do not see that the existence of such a plan is in fact the prerequisite for a maximum degree of decentralization of economic decisions and for the establishment of democratic relations on the factory level.

We should note, however, that some of these ideas were expressed in certain movement bulletins such as *NTO* (Bulletin of Scientific, Technical, and Cultural Workers of Warsaw) or in the contributions to *Forum-80* put out by Solidarity. These ideas have been spontaneously taken up by workers in other cities who have reprinted some of the articles in their regional bulletins.

What Perspectives for the Movement?

The tendency toward workers control seen in the various examples given earlier, as well as the evolution of the debates on the organization and role of the independent unions, shows that the bureaucracy's maneuvering room is very limited and that many of the religious hierarchy's pressures for the reestablishment of "order and social peace" have had only limited effect.

The previously quoted comments of the Solidarity leader regarding the attempts by priests to manipulate the situation were the most radical expression of the defiance toward the Church that we heard. Nonetheless, after Father Urszulik, a spokesman for the bishopric, attacked the KOR and Jacek Kuron in particular in a mid-December statement, the chairman of Solidarity in the Mazowsze region did not hesitate to meet with Cardinal Wyszynski, the primate of Poland, to call him to task. He ostentatiously paid a visit to Kuron immediately after his interview with the cardinal.

The cardinal felt obliged to minimize the thrust of his subordinate's comments, assuring Solidarity of his unreserved support.

It should be said that the Catholic hierarchy is far from being assured of the

2. See the document by Jacek Kuron in *Intercontinental Press*, November 17, 1980, p. 1203.

support of its own troops. In fact, some fifty priests from the diocese of Przemysl protested against opinions broadcast by Father Urszulik in the name of the Polish church and sharply demanded his resignation: "If he is afraid to say what the church really thinks, he does not have the right to represent the church in this position" their letter stated.

We should not underestimate the real influence of the church and the Catholic hierarchy. But we should also be careful to avoid overestimating the clergy's ability to bring Solidarity back into line and "salvage the movement," as numerous articles in the bourgeois press claimed when the church made its appearance in force at the December 16 ceremonies in Gdansk.

The whole series of obstacles Solidarity will have to confront in the period to come, the difficulties it will have in maintaining and widening the mobilization, will undoubtedly stem less from the church than the continued pressures exerted by the Soviet bureaucracy, which threatens to send in troops if the process goes too far, combined with the Polish bureaucrats' attempts to convince some sections of Solidarity that the only way to avoid a Soviet intervention is to participate in the "National United Front" under the wing of General Mieczyslaw Moczar.

But the obstacles Solidarity faces are also linked to the internal problems of building the movement. The installation of a democratically elected leadership—which really represents the forces in motion and the various existing points of view—remains crucial to strengthening Solidarity and developing the mass movement.

The regional structures of the independent unions have a positive character. Pre-dominant weight is given to the local and regional leaders and the regional bodies have the material bases to be able to exert "counterpower" to the power of the bureaucracy. But the strength of the regional structures is counterbalanced by the very great weakness in the national leadership.

At the time of this writing, the role of Solidarity's National Coordinating Commission is still very murky. Because there are no clear criteria defining the rights and prerogatives of the presiding committee—which serves as the commission's executive committee—the national leaders who are most in the public eye, and Walesa in particular, have total freedom to intervene as they see fit. This obviously causes tensions. There is a real danger that in the confusion, differences that might exist within Solidarity could be "resolved" by way of struggles for supremacy between one or another leader of the movement.

Given this situation, the elections now taking place to designate the union delegates at the factory level and the elections that must soon take place for regional (MKZ) and national leaderships have special importance because in the weeks to

come Solidarity will have to confront a series of decisive events.

The authorities have not been content to just refuse so far to register Rural Solidarity and the National Student Association. They are also trying to backtrack on the Gdansk agreements regarding the promise of free Saturdays after January 1, and they continue to obstruct Solidarity's access to television coverage, while the church now has two hours every Sunday to broadcast the mass.

The question of access to the media cannot help but focus more attention on the question of civil liberties, on the right to free expression and censorship. It indicates the directly political character of the confrontation between Solidarity and the bureaucracy.

This tendency toward taking on a political character can only increase with the resumption of negotiations on the extent of

police and militia powers, through the commission set up in December following the Narozniak incident.

These are some of the questions that will help to more clearly define the positions that now exist within Solidarity. These questions make it all the more important to adopt organizational measures that allow the workers to move forward along the path of workers control that they are presently taking.

All the above shows that it is more important than ever to carry out solidarity work within the Western working class, and to send trade-union delegations to Poland to assure the Polish proletariat of the unconditional support of the international workers movement for the struggle they are waging, and to smash any impulse toward intervention by the Soviet bureaucracy. □

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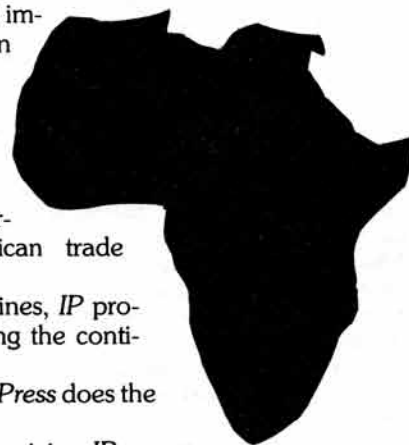
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Irish Political Prisoners Suffer Renewed Abuse

By Gerry Foley

BELFAST—The countdown has begun for the start of a new hunger strike by the Irish political prisoners confined in the infamous H-Blocks of Long Kesh concentration camp and in Armagh jail.

The mood in the H-Blocks and in Armagh and among those close to the prisoners is bitter. After all of the deprivation the prisoners have suffered in resisting the five-year-long British campaign to force them to accept criminal status, after seven prisoners chosen by their comrades starved themselves to the brink of death to protest this policy, the heroic fighters in the prison are now facing renewed harassment and abuse.

The statement that British Secretary for Northern Ireland Humphrey Atkins gave to the hunger strikers before they ended their fifty-three-day fast December 18 opened the way for meeting all of the prisoners' five demands. In fact the hunger strikers were told that it would be foolish to "starve yourselves to death for a quarter of a demand" and that given the promises laid out in the Atkins document it would be unconscionable for them to let their comrade Sean McKenna, who was on the brink of death, go on to lose his eyesight and his life.

The hunger strikers decided to test the intentions of the British authorities.

The British officials did make some concessions in practice. For example, the attempt to starve and demoralize the prisoners by giving them insufficient and revolting food was ended.

But the British authorities did not give up their attempts to force the prisoners to wear convict uniforms and to do prisoner work. They made this an absolute precondition for granting any of the other concessions promised in the Atkins statement.

Over the weekend of January 24-25, the families tried to bring in the prisoners' clothes. Since all the prison work stops on Friday afternoon, the prisoners were no longer formally in violation of the prison rules and therefore, according to the Atkins statement, had the right to wear their own clothes until Monday morning.

Petty Maneuver by Prison Officials

The prison officials resorted to a petty maneuver to maintain the principle of criminalization of the political prisoners. They let the outerwear in but kept out the prisoners' socks and underwear. This stratagem was in line with the tactics the British government used in getting an end to the hunger strike. "Are you going to starve yourselves to death over a quarter

of a demand?" became "are you going on protest for the sake of wearing your own underwear and socks?"

It was a way of making a mockery of the prisoners' protest and their human dignity, just as during the earlier H-Block protest the government and the capitalist press tried to use the fact that the prisoners were forced to live in filth to degrade their ideals and principles.

The prison officers were quick to resume the harassment of the prisoners in other ways too. On January 24, a warden threw urine over a clean sheet and pillow that had been given to a prisoner in H-Block No. 6, who had been moved into a clean cell as part of the government's concessions. A prisoner in H-Block No. 3 was refused permission to go to the toilet.

The public relations officer chosen by the prisoners sent out a statement saying "our food, which from Christmas we have had no reason to complain about, is once again being interfered with, being delayed until cold, and being [given] in reduced amounts."

The statement concluded: "No matter what the British administration is saying publicly, a major attempt to finally break us, to break our spirit and resolve is now being made. We have come this far and there is no going back."

The intentions of the British administration were shown further by the fact that on January 24 new rules were issued that forbade bringing books in the Irish language into the prison. Books in Irish have never been excluded from the prison before. The only purpose this display of chauvinism can serve is as a sort of ultimatum to the prisoners.

Prisoners Beaten

On Tuesday, January 27, the pressure had risen to the point that ninety-six prisoners who had been moved into ordinary cells were obliged to protest by breaking up the furniture.

In H-Block No. 5, forty-eight prisoners, almost all of those in the block, were beaten by the guards. Some prisoners suffered serious injuries. One, Eddie Brophy, apparently suffered a heart attack. Eamonn Bigney reportedly had a broken bone.

The injured men were left without medical treatment throughout the night.

The forty-seven prisoners in H-Block No. 3 were moved to a wing previously occupied by prisoners who were forced to use the cells as toilets and where the walls were covered with excrement.

A statement sent out by the prisoners said, "All forty-seven men were forced to remain in those cells throughout the night in complete darkness, naked, all but for a small hand-towel, and without blankets, mattresses, or any form of heating. All suffered from extreme cold."

Joe Austin of the Belfast Republican Press Center warned that after the beatings and ill-treatment that the prisoners suffered on January 27 a new hunger strike could begin immediately.

Interestingly, the *Belfast Telegraph*, a proimperialist daily, criticized the British government for its delay in implementing the changes promised in the Atkins statement.

A front page editorial on January 30, said: "If there are to be a renewed hunger strike and further street protests, let them be on unreasonable extra demands by the prisoners and not on any allegations of Governmental delay in implementing recent rule modifications."

During the culminating period of the hunger strike, National H-Block Committee leaders in Belfast learned that the British army and Protestant police officials differed on whether or not the mass protests in the event of the death of one or more of the hunger strikers could be controlled. The army officers thought they could, the police thought not. This points up another aspect of the contradictory relationship between the proimperialist Protestant population in Northern Ireland and the British. The Protestants are often more excitable because they are closer to the situation. They are, however, also less likely to delude themselves about the state of mind and capacities of the oppressed Catholic population.

H-Block Committee Conference

The activist core of the mass movement against the H-Blocks appears to have held up well, despite confusion about the way the hunger strike was ended and the British renegeing on their promises.

The organizers of the National H-Block Committee conference in Dublin on January 25 were surprised by the size of the turnout and the spirit of the gathering. The amphitheater in Liberty Hall was filled to overflowing by about 500 people who showed their determination to go on with the struggle no matter what. This is a movement that already has its martyrs. Five of its leaders have been brutally murdered, and one of the main national figures of the campaign, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey—along with her husband Mi-

chael—narrowly escaped death at the hands of assassins.

The conference heard a message from Bernadette expressing her determination to carry the struggle forward. There were moments of silence in memory of the murdered H-Block leaders.

The discussion at the conference was rather vague. Probably it will take the activists and their leaders some time to find their feet and adjust to the new phase of the struggle. Also Sinn Féin, the political wing of the Provisional republican movement and the strongest force in the campaign, seems to have underestimated the potential for the conference and therefore did not project a perspective for the new phase of the campaign in a clear and forceful way.

Nonetheless, Gerry Adams, the main Sinn Féin leader in the H-Block campaign, reaffirmed the mass action orientation of the campaign and opposed proposals that would narrow it. A detailed positive account of the conference was published in the issue of the republican weekly *An Phoblacht* that appeared in Belfast on January 29.

In some meetings, Sinn Féin representatives have proposed an "escalation of protests." This goes hand in hand with a

renewal of armed actions by the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The IRA claimed responsibility for the assassination of right-wing Protestant leader Norman Stronge on January 21. Apparently this tendency reflects frustration among rank-and-file activists that emerged following the end of the hunger strike and the disillusionment with its results.

During the hunger strike the republican leaders suspended armed actions. They recognized that in their existing form these operations by small IRA units interfered with the development of mass action.

The pressure of the mass protests imposed this discipline on the local units. With the lessening of this pressure there is apparently a tendency by local groups to return to their former activity.

However, the fact is that the mass campaign proved its power and the entire atmosphere in Ireland has changed as a result. The mood and attitude of anti-imperialist activists has changed so dramatically that it startled me when I arrived here. They are determined to renew the mass action campaign. As the H-Block prisoners said in their statement quoted above, "We have come this far and there is no going back." □

communist leadership that was ousted from its posts, there were the Bandera Blanca (White Flag) tendency, the "Leninists," and the "pro-Soviets."

The Bandera Blanca grouping takes its name from the fact that most of its members originally came from the Bandera Roja (Red Flag) organization.

The "Leninists," a current that originated at the previous PSUC congress, have the support of important sectors of the Workers Commissions in Catalonia. Francisco Frutos, the new general secretary of the PSUC, comes from the "Leninist" tendency.

The positions adopted by the congress mark an open break with many of the positions of the PCE. The congress noted that the results of Carrillo's collaboration with the government party have been "overestimated, and in any case benefitted the right."

The PSUC also criticized the repressive antiterrorist law, which PCE deputies in the parliament supported. The congress went on record in support of gay rights and in opposition to nuclear power.

The congress also challenged the PCE's support for the Spanish constitution, which is based on the monarchy and the unity of the Spanish state with its oppressed nationalities. Santiago Carrillo has frequently praised King Juan Carlos for his role in Spain's transition from Francoism and has stressed the need to maintain Spain's unity.

By contrast, the PSUC congress adopted a motion supporting "the right to self-determination of Catalonia within the perspective of a federal republic."

On international questions, the incoming PSUC leadership proposes a referendum on Spain's entry into the Common Market and opposes U.S. military bases in the country.

The pro-Soviet faction was able to exploit the rank-and-file discontent with Carrillo's policies to consolidate its strength and, in alliance with the "Leninists," regain leadership of the PSUC. But although all groups cooperated in routing the Eurocommunist wing, the new majority is not a homogeneous current.

Furthermore, many of the positions adopted at the congress are very abstract. For example, there was no concrete proposal on how to fight the government's austerity policies.

The open confrontation between the leaders of the PSUC and PCE may well deepen the internal crisis in the CP as a whole. The January 16-23 *Combate*, weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), points out that the questions raised by the PSUC "are undoubtedly of concern to many PCE members of other nationalities and other regions" in Spain. Those differences are likely to be reflected in the PCE's Tenth Congress, scheduled for July. □

As Catalonia Branch Breaks With 'Eurocommunism'

Spanish Communist Party in Deep Crisis

By Will Reissner

By a vote of 424 to 359, the Fifth Congress of the United Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC), a semi-autonomous branch of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE), removed its "Eurocommunist" leaders from their posts and took its distance from a number of the PCE positions. The congress took place January 2-6.

The PSUC has traditionally been the PCE's strongest branch, with nearly one-third of the total party membership. Based in the industrial belt around Barcelona, the PSUC has been getting about 19 percent of the vote in Catalonia, compared to 10 percent for the PCE in the rest of Spain. Eight of the twenty-three PCE members of parliament are from the PSUC.

Following the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975, and the subsequent legalization of the PCE, it experienced rapid growth for several years. Under the leadership of Santiago Carrillo, the PCE took its distance from the Soviet regime on a number of international questions. Inside Spain, the PCE dropped the term "Leninist" from the party statutes, made its support for parliamentary reformism more explicit, and supported the policy of wage restraints and cuts in social spend-

ing pushed by the capitalist government.

But in the context of the deep economic crisis and the ruling-class offensive against the labor movement, these policies have led the PCE into its deepest crisis in decades. Since 1977 the PCE has lost half its membership. Its present strength is probably down to 70,000 members. In Catalonia, the PSUC has dropped from 40,000 to about 20,000 in two years.

Last summer the PCE daily, *Mundo Obrero*, was forced to become a weekly.

Many members of the PCE recognize that the party's attempts to cooperate with the bourgeoisie in imposing a policy of austerity on the working class has only led to strengthening the bourgeoisie and the rightist forces it encourages, while weakening the workers movement as a whole, and the PCE in particular.

In the final analysis, the crisis in the PCE is a reflection of its inability to win any concessions through its perspective of cooperation with the bourgeoisie at a time of worsening economic crisis and increasing attacks on the standard of living of working people.

There were four major tendencies at the PSUC congress. In addition to the Euro-

'Party Is More Proletarian, Marxist-Leninist, and Revolutionary'

By Fred Feldman

"Our Revolution's prestige derives from our loyalty to principles! And more important than the prestige is the confidence that all the world's revolutionaries must have that Cuba can always be counted on. . . .

"Principles are not negotiable. There are people in the world who negotiate with principles, but Cuba will never negotiate with principles! And we're sure that neither this nor future generations will ever negotiate with their principles! . . .

"Without histrionics of any kind, we would prefer a thousand times over to die than to surrender! We will not make a single concession to imperialism! We will not renounce a single one of our principles!"

These words summed up the message of the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba. Fidel Castro spoke them to 1 million Cubans who gathered in Havana's Plaza de la Revolución December 20 to hail the successful completion of the congress and to learn of its main decisions.

The congress and the preparations for it were a center of discussion and attention in Cuba for months. 1980 was declared the "Year of the Second Congress." And it was a year of which Fidel Castro could say: "As far as mass mobilization in our capital is concerned, 1980 has been the most extraordinary year ever."

The congress was an international event. In addition to the 1,772 delegates, delegations from some 150 Communist parties, liberation movements, and other organizations from around the world were present.

There was good reason for all this attention. The congress sought to sum up the lessons of two of the most eventful years in the history of the Cuban revolution—years in which the Caribbean and Central America moved to the forefront of international politics—and to lay the groundwork for further steps forward for Cuba and the world revolution.

Responding to Changes

The congress showed how a revolutionary current, deeply rooted in the needs and experiences of the Cuban workers and peasants, is responding to big shifts in world and regional politics over the last half decade. It showed how this current has deepened its active internationalism in response to these events.

Above all, the congress was shaped by the extension of the socialist revolution to Nicaragua and Grenada, and the deepening of the liberation struggles in El Salvador and Guatemala—and of the Cuban revolution itself.

The congress evaluated the economic and political impact of the worldwide stagnation and inflation of the international capitalist system on the semicolonies, the imperialist powers, and the workers states.

It responded to the emergence of the working class as the decisive factor in anti-imperialist and anticapitalist struggles—not only in the imperialist countries, but in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This is a product of the growth of industry, urbanization, and the working class in these countries, as well as a consequence of economic crisis. This shift was most vividly demonstrated in the urban insurrections that brought down the shah of Iran and Somoza in Nicaragua.

The congress charted a course for Cuba based on a Marxist evaluation of the fundamental shift in the world relationship of class forces that was marked by the U.S. defeat in Vietnam and by the upsurge of struggles in the semicolonial world that this helped inspire.

Solidarity at Any Cost

The congress expressed the determination of Cuba's leaders to maintain their active solidarity with the struggles in Central America and the Caribbean whatever the cost. It showed their readiness to seize openings to extend the socialist revolution, and to learn lessons from the upheavals shaking the region.

The congress responded to threats and aggressive moves by Washington—moves begun by the Carter administration, which Reagan has pledged to continue and escalate—by proposing that the Cuban workers and farmers be organized and armed in territorial militias to defend the country. The congress warned that U.S. military intervention in El Salvador, Nicaragua, or Guatemala would lead to a new and more massive Vietnam.

The congress evaluated the deepening of the internationalism and class consciousness of the Cuban masses, as a result of the new upsurge and gains of the revolution in 1980.

It projected a course aimed at deepening this process, increasing workers control and workers democracy, and forging closer links to the masses. First and foremost, it concluded, this requires further proletarianization of the ranks and leadership of the party, and the strengthening of the mass organizations.

And it proposed to continue the campaign against the bureaucratic deformations and privileges that inevitably appear in an economically underdeveloped workers state at

the doorstep of the mightiest imperialist power on earth.

The party's evaluation of the political situation, as well as its tasks and perspectives, were laid out in the lengthy "Main Report," delivered at the opening session December 15 by Fidel Castro, in his capacity as first secretary of the Central Committee. The report was a collective product, reflecting discussions in the Political Bureau and Central Committee of the party. Its fundamental ideas had been discussed over the year in all the local units of the party.

The report won unanimous approval the following day from the delegates.

The report was divided into nine sections. The first was Cuba's socioeconomic development. Here, advances and problems in such varied fields as sugar production, light industry, public health, education, and economic planning were detailed.

The goals of the next five year plan—the product of an extensive discussion, including in the Assemblies of People's Power—were outlined.

For the years 1981-85, the report stated:

While setting modest goals, the plan provides for major improvements in the standard of living, and economic development as well. In view of the present world situation of economic crisis and the fact that ours is an underdeveloped country subjected to economic blockade and U.S. imperialist aggression, an average annual growth rate of 5 percent will undoubtedly constitute a great victory. [The Main Report and the December 20 rally speech appeared in the December 28, 1980, English-language weekly *Granma*.]

"The main goal of our country's socioeconomic development," Castro told the delegates, "is to finish creating the technical-material base for socialism. . . ."

Next the work of the armed forces and the Ministry of the Interior were taken up. And projections were made for the mass organizations—the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs), the unions, the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP), and others.

The development of the youth movement, the party, and the struggle to preserve and strengthen Marxist-Leninist ideology in Cuba were the subject of the next sections.

The report concluded with an estimate of the world economic situation, and a presentation of Cuba's foreign policy.

Revolutionary Victories

It is in Central America and the Caribbean that Cuba has focused its efforts to help extend the revolution. The opening of socialist revolutions in Nicaragua and

Grenada provided the Cuban working people and their leaders with inspiring confirmation of the correctness of their policies of internationalism and revolutionary solidarity.

In Nicaragua and Grenada insurrections based on the urban proletariat have brought workers and farmers governments to power which collaborate closely with the Cuban government. And in El Salvador and Guatemala, workers and farmers are fighting arms in hand to establish similar regimes.

In his December 20 speech in Havana, Castro pointed to the proletarian-led socialist revolutions in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada as the road to throw off imperialist domination—as examples for all Latin America.

"The peoples of the world are not so weak today," he declared, "and I believe that the day when all the peoples of Latin America are as willing to defend their country as Cuba is to defend itself, as willing as Nicaragua is, as willing as Grenada is, imperialist domination in this hemisphere will disappear."

The report took note of the rising combativity of the urban working class and its allies, linking this to a general crisis of imperialist domination:

The readiness of the masses to fight—which has reached unprecedented levels—should be especially underscored. The fact that revolutionary national liberation movements with a strong social content are on the rise and that mass movements in various countries reach new heights, indicates that the system of imperialist and oligarchic domination in this region is going through a more and more profound crisis; while at the same time revealing the maturity reached by the movement of the workers, peasants, youth, women and all other sections of the population, now led by experienced vanguards.

Special stress was placed on the growing role of unions.

During the period we are now analyzing, the Latin-American working class clearly showed that it was both mature and strong, and that its trade union movement is powerful. In Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, strikes of unprecedented magnitude took place; and the workers of Argentina have continued their struggle.

Washington Fights for Empire

Washington has not reacted passively to the challenge posed to its power to exploit and plunder by the revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua, the struggle in El Salvador and Guatemala, and Cuba's support for them. Castro told the delegates:

U.S. imperialism, which has not resigned itself to accepting the independent democratic social transformations that some Latin-American and Caribbean peoples are carrying out, has reacted to the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua and the revolutionary insurgency in El Salvador with an arrogant attempt to reaffirm its rule in Central America and the Caribbean, an area in which it brazenly declares it has a "special interest."

Aggressive moves and threats have multiplied. Under Carter, U.S. military "advis-

ers" were sent to help the murderous Salvadoran junta hang on to power, and, in his final days in the White House, Carter renewed major military assistance to the regime. Now Reagan is promising to further escalate U.S. military support, while suspending further disbursements of the meager loans promised Nicaragua as a warning to any government that backs the Salvadoran people. Preparations are being stepped up for large-scale, U.S.-backed military intervention by the Guatemalan and Honduran regimes.

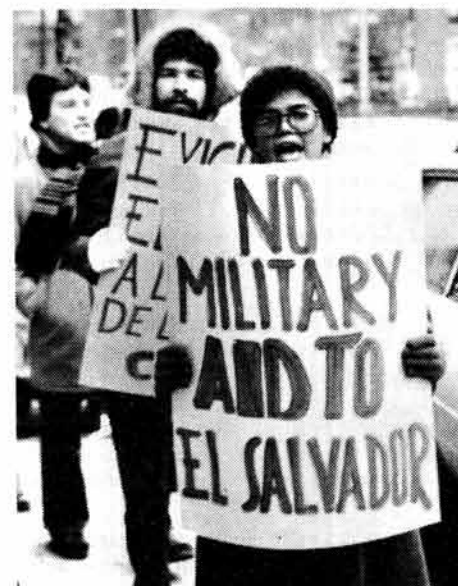
Beginning with Carter's scare campaign about the Soviet brigade in Cuba in mid-1979, anti-Cuba propaganda and actions rose steadily. The flap over the brigade was followed by: the establishment of a Caribbean military command in Florida; the holding of the Solid Shield '80 naval exercises; a growing permanent U.S. military presence in the Caribbean; and even the threat, which Washington was forced to back down from, of a mock invasion of Cuba at the U.S.-occupied Guantánamo naval base, on Cuban soil.

Washington has also covered up for the activities of anti-Cuban assassins. The assassination of a Cuban United Nations official last year—the first such assassination in the history of the United Nations—was a clear warning of more to come.

No Retreat by Cubans

In a speech to the National Assembly of People's Power December 27, Castro told the elected delegates and the Cuban people that they can expect this trend of increasing pressure from U.S. imperialism to continue under the Reagan administration:

... I do believe that the policy of that administration will be hard-line, very hard-line. In fact I think it will be openly interventionist regarding Latin America, and will also try to be the same regarding Cuba, since they consider this hemisphere their private property. [The December 28 speech



Alexis Irizarry/Militant

New York City picketline

appeared in the January 11, 1981, weekly *Granma*.]

The CP congress and subsequent speeches by Castro featured references to the "missile crisis" of 1962, when the Cuban people calmly mobilized to face a U.S. naval blockade and the possibility of nuclear annihilation rather than give up their revolutionary convictions.

One thing was made clear beyond any mistake. Cuba will not be intimidated by Washington's threats. Cuba will not give up its internationalist course in Central America, Africa, or anywhere else. As Castro told the December 20 rally, "Cuba can always be counted on."

Organizing Militias

The organization of Territorial Troop Militias—regional armed units made up of workers, farmers, and young people—was an important theme of the congress. Castro first called for their formation on May 1, 1980, in response to the Carter administration's anti-Cuba moves. In the report, Castro said:

We will not rest until every Cuban who wants to defend his neighborhood, his municipality, his work center and his country—block by block, inch by inch—has a rifle, a grenade or a mine and has been given the necessary training for carrying out his sacred duty of defending his homeland to the death.

"Our country must become a hard nut for the Yankee imperialists to crack and a deadly thorn in their side if they attempt an aggression," Castro declared.

In the same spirit, the National Assembly of People's Power declared 1981 to be the "Year of the 20th Anniversary of Playa Girón." This was the U.S.-organized Bay of Pigs invasion carried out in 1961 by the Kennedy administration. It was defeated by the mobilization of millions of Cubans through the militias and Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs).

'No Longer Alone'

Revolutionary advances in the Caribbean and Central America inevitably spurred a deepening upsurge of the Cuban masses as well. The Cuban people made the first socialist revolution in the Americas and have held out for more than two decades on the doorstep of the mightiest imperialist power.

It would be hard to overestimate the impact on millions of Cuban workers and farmers of the realization that "we are no longer alone"—as Castro put it following the Sandinista victory in July 1979.

The Main Report describes some of the consequences:

Our people's communist and internationalist consciousness has undoubtedly been increased in recent years. . . .

The People's Marches—an outpouring in response to the acts of provocation at the Peruvian and Venezuelan Embassies, to the Mariel flotilla

and to the Yankee military threats—will go down in history.

Never before have there been such huge mass mobilizations in our homeland.

This was a reference to the April 19, 1980, march of more than 1 million people past the Peruvian embassy, where thousands of would-be emigrants had gathered and which for a time was the center of an imperialist-inspired anti-Cuba propaganda campaign; the May Day rally in Havana, attended by 1.5 million people; and the May 17 "March of the Fighting People," held in cities across the country, in which more than 5 million of Cuba's 10 million people participated. All these in the space of one month.

Castro described how a new generation had "won their first revolutionary laurels in the vanguard of this great political and ideological battle. . . . The masses were tempered and tremendously strengthened in this struggle."

Meaning of the Emigration

While millions of Cubans were fired with enthusiasm by the extension of the socialist revolution, and defiant in face of imperialist threats, this was not true of everyone.

Economic difficulties and the relentless pressure of imperialism—including the attractive power of its vastly greater wealth and higher standard of living—produced polarization. This was a reflection in Cuba of the class polarization on a world scale between those attracted by the rise of working-class struggles, and others pulled by imperialism's drive to roll them back.

On one side in Cuba were marching millions who were preparing for the impending battles. On the other side were those who flinched before this prospect and sought an easy way out via the port of Mariel—petty criminals, black marketeers, a large number of nonrevolutionary Cubans with relatives in the United States, and a thin layer of conservative, privilege-hungry party and government officials.

The Main Report explained:

In spite of the tremendous efforts the Revolution has made to promote socioeconomic development—some social disgrace from the past still remains: a total lack of national feeling on the part of some, combined with the fact that the socioeconomic conditions in our developing country still produce some declassed, antisocial, lumpen elements that are receptive to imperialist enticements and ideas.

For these reasons, a bitter ideological battle has been waged by our imperialist enemy and the Cuban Revolution—a struggle that has been and will continue to be fought not only in the realm of revolutionary and political ideas but also in the sphere of our people's national feelings. Imperialism refuses to resign itself to a revolutionary, socialist Cuba. . . .

Castro told the delegates that the "clean sweep" of deserters was not yet over. The port at Mariel could be reopened, he warned, since Washington is continuing to block legal departures from Cuba.

"The construction of socialism as a completely free and voluntary task is still a



May 17 "March of the Fighting People" in Havana. "Never before have there been such huge mass mobilizations in our homeland."

principle of our revolutionary process," he declared. "It implies freedom of emigration."

Bureaucratic Dangers

The upsurge dealt a blow to bureaucratic tendencies that were beginning to take root in some parts of Cuba's administrative apparatus.

A degree of social differentiation and inequality is inevitable in an economically underdeveloped and relatively isolated workers state. For instance, some of the recent measures that have been necessary in Cuba to spur productivity and raise living standards—such as greater pay incentives—will tend to increase income differentials among workers and farmers.

The Cuban leaders, who frankly acknowledge the dangers involved, are seeking to limit this tendency by introducing pay increases for the lowest-paid workers and dropping high "historic wages" for some better-off workers.

These conditions make it possible for some individuals and groups in the state administration to seek privileges and nourish favoritism. Such parasitic layers unflinchingly try to suppress the initiative of the workers and farmers, which threatens their attempt to accumulate and maintain privileges. They are the least enthusiastic about using Cuban resources and personnel to aid other countries. Such bureaucrats inevitably come to yearn for an end to revolutionary upheaval and a live-and-let-live agreement with imperialism at the expense of the world revolution. They hope that such an agreement will help secure their privileged status.

According to the Main Report, signs of this development had appeared in Cuba:

There were increasing signs that the spirit of austerity was flagging, that a softening-up process was going on in which some people tended to let things slide, pursue privileges, make accommodations and take other attitudes, while work discipline dropped. Our worst enemies could not have done us more damage.

These dangers, Castro told the delegates, "even affected the Party to a certain extent. In some places, the general attitude was formal, conformist and basically petit bourgeois in the sense of avoiding problems with everybody—as if the Revolution itself were not always trying to straighten out problems involving injustice and poor work."

This posed a question for the leaders of the revolution: "Was our Revolution beginning to degenerate on our imperialist enemy's doorstep? Was that an inexorable law for any revolution in power? Under no circumstances could such a thing be permitted."

Most Powerful Weapon

From the beginning of the Cuban revolution, the Castro leadership has relied on the workers and small farmers to combat these tendencies. Unlike the Soviet Union—where the bureaucratic currents completely expropriated the workers from political power after Lenin's death in 1924 and established themselves as a counterrevolutionary governing caste—political power in Cuba has remained in the hands of the workers and farmers.

In the 1960s, the Castro leadership fought and defeated a Stalinist current led by Anibal Escalante, which sought to introduce bureaucratic methods and opposed an internationalist foreign policy.

After the failure of the campaign to harvest 10 million tons of sugar cane in 1970, the leadership drew the conclusion that the government's late recognition of the extent of the shortfall must result from a gap in its links with the Cuban masses, who were undoubtedly aware of big problems much earlier in the harvest. The Cuban leaders took steps to institutionalize the mass participation that has always been the foundation of the revolution, and to bring order into the economy.

Trade-union elections were held and regularized. The mass organizations were strengthened and their decision-making role was increased. And municipalities

elected Assemblies of People's Power, which in turn elected provincial and national assemblies. "The bodies of People's Power created the best possible conditions for the exercise of socialist democracy, the highest form of democracy, by institutionally facilitating the masses' participation in governing society, at both the local and national levels," Castro told the delegates.

In the last months of 1979, Raúl Castro made a series of speeches in which he cited lax and privilege-hungry administrators as a contributing factor in Cuba's economic difficulties. He took aim at the "fainthearted," who fear the consequences of internationalism and defiance of imperialist threats.

But the popular upsurge of 1980 provided the revolutionary leadership with the most powerful weapon, together with further extension of the socialist revolution, against bureaucratic tendencies: *the mobilization of a class-conscious and internationalist working class.*

This was explained in the report to the congress:

We consider the battle that the masses waged last April and May to be one of the most important political, ideological and moral victories the Revolution has won in its entire history. . . .

It is significant that this struggle had positive repercussions in the national effort to eradicate a series of ideological problems that had been gaining ground in this period.

The people's repudiation of the scum [the lumpen, bureaucrats, and others who joined the emigration—IP] also meant that they repudiated undisciplined behavior, sponging, accommodation, negligence, and other such negative attitudes. The position the people took, coupled with the political, legal, wage and administrative measures adopted during the past months, has led to a much greater demand for higher standards and more order in our society. Naturally, this campaign is not won in a day.

The mass actions of the Cuban proletariat in 1980 were a measure of its growing social power, class consciousness, and fighting spirit—a phenomenon increasingly noticeable throughout the world. It is this class which provides the most solid base of support for internationalist policies and the struggle against bureaucratic deformations, just as advances in the economy depend in the last analysis on their organization, consciousness, and initiative.

Proletarianization

The Castro leadership team has responded to the changes in the Cuban revolution—and to the growing political weight of the proletariat throughout Latin America—with an acceleration of its drive to proletarianize the party and its leadership.

"The most important, the most revolutionary thing about this Congress," Castro told a mass rally that followed it, "was the composition of our Central Committee. The leadership of our Party was given a strong dose of worker cadres, a strong dose of women, and a strong dose of internationalist fighters."

"We must take account," he said at the

December 20 rally, "that the number of workers in our Party has almost tripled, which means that our Party has become more proletarian and, therefore, more Marxist-Leninist and more revolutionary."

The Main Report explained that party members "who are directly linked to production and services now make up 47.3 percent of the total membership, compared to 36.3 percent of the total in December 1975." It also noted an increase in the percentage of women members from 14.1 percent in 1975 to 19.1 percent today.

In the Union of Young Communists (UJC), the percentage of women members rose from 30 percent in 1975 to 41.8 percent today, and the percentage of women among its full-time cadres rose from 5.3 percent to 14.3 percent. Fidel noted that these levels were still far from adequate.

Women leaders have been playing a stronger role in the mass organizations as well, the report continued. It reported that in trade-union elections, 42.7 percent of local leaders and 32.6 percent of executive committee members elected were women.

The composition of the Political Bureau, which leads the party between sessions of the Central Committee, was adjusted in the same direction by adding leaders of the mass organizations—the unions, the National Association of Small Farmers, the Federation of Cuban Women, and the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. Younger leaders, tested by the new struggles in Cuba, are being brought forward.

'Vanguard of a Vanguard People'

The report stressed that this shift in the party's composition, accompanied by doubling of its membership to 434,000 in five years, had been accomplished without lowering its political standards: "We have grown well. We have not sacrificed—nor will we ever sacrifice—quality for quantity."

The changes in the Communist Party of Cuba have tended to link it more closely to the revolutionary attitudes of its own mass base and its supporters among Cuba's proletarians and working peasants.

It enables the party to function more effectively in forging the revolutionary unity of the broad masses of workers around the practice of revolutionary internationalism and the ideas of Marxism. It has strengthened the hegemony of the revolutionary Marxist current not only inside the party, but among the working masses. The sentiments of militant internationalism and identification with Marxism among millions of Cubans, as well as the conviction of masses of workers and farmers that the Communist Party is *their* party, are historic conquests of the Cuban revolution.

In the Main Report, Castro expressed the confidence that this process is inspiring in the leadership. No party can appoint itself the vanguard, he said, repeating a theme he has explained many times.

We will be the vanguard not because of what we

think of ourselves but because of what the people think of us. It is a difficult but worthy and stimulating task to be the vanguard of a vanguard people, to be Communists in a country of Communists. The deepest, most permanent link with the masses has been, is and will always be the guiding force of our Party.

Principled Policy

Castro concluded the Main Report with an extensive discussion of Cuba's foreign policy. The fundamental principle of this policy was stated by Castro in his report to the first party congress in 1975:

"Cuba's foreign policy has, as its starting point, the subordination of Cuban positions to the international needs of the struggle for socialism and for the national liberation of the peoples."

The Cuban leaders recognized the victorious march of the Vietnamese liberation fighters into Saigon as marking an historic shift in the world relationship of class forces in favor of the workers and oppressed nations.

An important element in this victory, noted by Castro at the 1975 congress, were developments in the heartland of imperialism itself:

The war against the Vietnamese people, which began with massive support in the United States, soon generated an anti-imperialist and anti-war conscience at the US universities, among the country's most prominent circles, and even in ever-growing sections of a working class duped by the advantages of the ruthless exploitation of other countries. . . . [*First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), p. 234.]

The Cuban leaders seized the opening to foster anti-imperialist struggles, stymie imperialist attempts to regain the offensive, and to encourage the extension of the socialist revolution.

Africa

At the time of the First Congress, thousands of Cuban soldiers were already in Angola, helping the newly independent government beat back a U.S.-supported South African invasion.

Cuban troops remain in Angola to help train the country's defense forces, and to help fend off further South African intrusions. The presence of Cuban troops has inspired liberation fighters throughout southern Africa. It puts heavy pressure on Washington and the racist regime in South Africa to yield ground in Zimbabwe and Namibia. The victory of the Angolan people helped set off a new wave of mass antiracist struggles in South Africa itself, especially among urban youth and industrial workers.

At the end of 1977 Cuban troops went to Ethiopia, again at the invitation of the government, to help defend a deepgoing social revolution against an invasion by the Somali government of Siad Barre. This was a blow to Washington's efforts to destabilize the revolution.

More than 100,000 Cuban soldiers, all vol-

unteers, have now served in Africa, Castro told the Second Congress.

Maintaining Solidarity

Washington makes removal of Cuban troops from Africa a condition for diplomatic and economic relations. Castro responded at the December 20 rally:

On occasion, the imperialists speak condescendingly about their being willing to lift the blockade, willing to spare our lives, if we stopped being internationalists, if we withdrew our fighters from Angola and Ethiopia. (SHOUTS OF "NO!" AND "CUBA SI, YANKEES NO!" AND APPLAUSE) if we severed our close ties with the Soviet Union. (SHOUTS OF "NO!") Needless to say, for us it is neither a pleasure nor a whim to have thousands of our fighters in other lands. However, the day that we call back a single man—a single one—it will be because he's no longer needed or because of an agreement between the governments of those countries and us (APPLAUSE) but never as a concession to imperialism!

The Cubans' refusal to sacrifice internationalism has also led to tension with the French government, which is worried about the growing independence struggles in its Caribbean colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe. "There is high level communication with France, and significant economic exchanges have taken place," Castro reported. "The plenitude of those relations, however, has been hindered because the principled stands of the Cuban Revolution on colonial remnants in Latin America have not been understood by certain circles in France."

Cuban policy in Africa has sought to strengthen and advance anti-imperialist struggles and social transformations on the continent. From this standpoint, the Main Report devotes special attention to developments in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.

Internationalist Workers

Cuba's aid to oppressed nations has not been primarily military. The Main Report to the Second Congress stated that some 20,000 Cuban construction workers, 11,000 industrial and agricultural specialists, 2,500 health workers, and 3,500 teachers are helping the peoples of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The dedication of these volunteers, together with the example of a country that uses its resources to help others—with no strings attached—has inspired admiration for the Cuban revolution. The popularity of socialism has been reinforced as information spreads throughout the semicolonial world of the material and cultural gains scored by the Cuban revolution.

Cuba's actions have raised its prestige in the group called the Nonaligned movement. This record has helped lay the groundwork for the Cuban leaders to play a bigger role in this organization of governments from countries oppressed by imperialism. Today, Cuba is the chair of the Nonaligned movement.

Activity in this body is part of Cuba's policy, described in the report, of joining forces



Fred Murphy/IP

Rural Workers Association march in Managua. Cubans are determined to maintain solidarity with revolutionary struggles in Central America.

"with all those patriotic governments and anti-imperialist movements that in one way or another challenge Washington's domination."

Cuba's leaders place a high priority on combating the devastating effects of the world capitalist crisis on the semicolonial peoples, already plundered and superexploited by the imperialist metropolises.

Economic Catastrophe

The Main Report describes how stagflation and growing unemployment in the economies of North America, Western Europe, and Japan have meant ruin for the poor nations—ever-higher prices for imports as compared to exports, soaring unemployment, spreading hunger, and leapfrogging indebtedness at extortionate interest rates to imperialist bankers.

The imperialists use these massive debts, which have reached \$500 billion for all underdeveloped countries, to impose severe austerity programs that accelerate the decline in living standards, as in Zaire and Peru. Heads of state who resist such demands face destabilization programs, like the one that helped oust the Manley government in Jamaica late last year.

This crisis hits the workers states, too. Social ownership, the planned use of the means of production, and a state monopoly of foreign trade make it possible to prevent human catastrophes on the scale of those occurring today in Africa, for instance. But the workers states are compelled to import goods from imperialist countries at inflated prices, while exports lag and loans and other assistance become harder to obtain.

Castro told the party congress that Cuba's economic growth rate had fallen to an average of 4 percent annually since 1975, from the 10 percent level reached during the 1970-75 period. A drop had been foreseen by the

First Congress, which had set a goal of 6 percent annual growth.

Over this period, Cuba's buying power was reduced by the rising prices of commodities that it must import, and by the sagging world market price of its main export—sugar—during much of this time.

The crisis in the countries dominated by world imperialism is built into their social and economic structure, and these problems are horribly exacerbated by the current state of world capitalism. According to the Main Report, alleviating the results of this situation requires a massive shift of resources from the imperialist metropolises to the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. At the United Nations on October 12, 1979, he proposed providing \$300 billion in development aid over a ten-year period. Castro told the congress that this just demand has not attracted support in imperialist circles. But he explained that it had performed a progressive political role. Castro said:

The struggle for a new international economic order, however, has had the positive result of uniting the underdeveloped countries in a single front—a phenomenon that, in view of their tremendous economic, political and social heterogeneity can only be explained on the basis of generalized contradiction between them and imperialism, a contradiction that included the governments of countries that are allies of imperialism on the periphery of the underdeveloped, dependent world but are no longer ready to accept unchanged the system of inequality and exploitation to which the monopolies of the capitalist powers subject them.

The polarization set off by the economic crisis can be seen in the semicolonial world. At the congress, Castro selected the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) as an example of "a veritable crisis of neocolonialism" triggered by the economic crisis.

Castro pointed out that the resources gained by the OPEC countries through in-

creased oil prices, far from being primarily absorbed for development of the oil-producing countries themselves, had been "mainly sent to the developed capitalist countries." Imperialist banks made billions by lending this money at high interest to desperate semicolonial countries. As a result, the impact of oil price hikes on the imperialist rulers has been cushioned, while the non-oil-producing countries felt the full brunt of the price increase.

Castro has proposed that the oil-producing states charge a lower price to the poor nations, and provide them with substantial economic aid, instead of cycling their money through imperialist financial institutions.

At the same time he reaffirmed at the congress the progressive character of the OPEC governments' assertion of their right to control their oil, "defending the price of their basic export product and changing the rules of the imperialist game in a key sector."

Nonaligned Movement

Within the Nonaligned movement, the Cuban government has fought for firm anti-imperialist stands on key political questions, drawing a line of demarcation between those governments that will support these positions and those that most abjectly knuckle under to the policies of Washington and other capitalist powers.

At the 1979 Nonaligned conference in Havana, for example, the Cubans waged a struggle, against substantial organized opposition, to condemn the Camp David Middle East accords, withdraw recognition to the Pol Pot forces in Kampuchea, and support the struggle of freedom fighters in Western Sahara. The decisions that came out of the Havana conference were the most stinging rebuke to Washington ever to come out of a major conference of world governments, including previous conferences of the Nonaligned movement.

The Cuban leaders seek to collaborate most closely with several categories of governments among the Nonaligned (some of the categories overlap). The Cubans, for example, maintain good diplomatic relations with governments such as that in Mexico, which have shown their willingness to defy Washington's international campaign to quarantine the Cuban revolution.

Special attention is also paid to governments brought to power by deep revolutionary mass mobilizations, as in Ethiopia and Iran. In the Main Report, Castro hailed the "development of a clearly anti-imperialist people's process" in Iran.

Another category is those governments embroiled in sharp conflicts with imperialism such as Syria, Libya, and Angola.

And there are those nationalist governments in Africa and elsewhere that have carried out some progressive social measures and claim to be constructing socialism. The governments of Madagascar, Benin, and Congo (Brazzaville) are among these.

The Cubans clearly look at all these governments in a different light from revolu-

tionary Nicaragua and Grenada, however, where mass-based socialist revolutions are unfolding under Marxist leaderships. In the opening paragraphs of the Main Report to the congress, Castro pointed to the underlying class considerations that set apart revolutionary leaderships such as these:

We cannot deny that anyone who struggles to obtain his homeland's independence from a colonial or neocolonial power or for freedom from tyranny is a revolutionary, but there is only one higher way of being a revolutionary in today's world—that of being a Communist, because Communists embody the idea of independence, freedom, true justice, equality among men and, what is more, internationalism—that is, brotherhood, solidarity and cooperation among all the peoples and nations in the world

It is in this context that Castro examined the 1980 elections in the United States:

The November 4 election in the United States was especially significant, as it took place in the midst of the U.S. economic disaster . . . involving massive unemployment, especially among blacks and young people; a lower real income for all U.S. workers due to runaway inflation; and a desire for political change among many people, while others simply stayed away from the polls.

The international situation, in which the United States has continued to lose hegemony and prestige, cleverly exploited by the contending political parties; the people's frustration and skepticism about badly managed situations such as that of the hostages in Iran, who were not freed in the end, also helped defeat the Carter administration.

In a country that prides itself on its "representative democracy," 47.1 percent of the eligible voters stayed away from the polls. The Republican candidate was elected by 26.7 percent of the total number of eligible voters.

Thus, the report avoids the mistake of many radicals who view Reagan's election as proof of an overall shift to the right by the American people. In fact, Castro pointed to signs of discontent and polarization that could lead to sharper class struggles in the future.

In our opinion, Reagan will be unable to solve any of the main problems affecting the United

States: inflation, unemployment, energy crisis, economic recession, vice, drugs, violence, crimes, corruption, and his ideas on foreign policy endanger world peace.

The report clearly expressed concern, however, that the Reagan White House will push harder along a militaristic course than the Carter administration:

Reagan's electoral triumph is a right-wing victory that signifies a clear move in that direction by an important sector of U.S. public opinion. This is confirmed by the defeat of the most liberal senators, including some who were firm advocates of ratifying the SALT II Treaty. The apparent national backing that the election returns give Reagan opens up the possibility that he may throw caution to the winds and return to his earlier aggressiveness in supporting the most reactionary plans in the Republican Party platform.

Castro also suggested that such war moves in Central America or the Caribbean could again inspire mass antiwar sentiment and action in the United States, particularly given the fierce resistance any intervention would meet from the toilers of the region:

If Yankee marines or intervention forces land in Central America, the people of the United States will again witness the painful scene of their soldiers' coffins arriving home. . . . The blame will fall on those who refuse to acknowledge the lessons of history and the irreversible changes that have taken place in the world.

Class Tensions in Europe

In his report to the National Assembly of People's Power December 27, Castro also took note of prospects for deepening class conflicts in Europe, which could help stay the hand of the imperialist warmakers and create leeway for the further extension of the socialist revolution. He cited the following passages, among others, from an Agence France-Press dispatch about business conditions and political moods in Europe.

Most of the European countries will close the year's balance with frankly negative results in terms of inflation and with a balance of payments deficit that reached record levels.



U.S. troops in Panama. Castro warned against U.S. forces intervening in Central America.

The prospects for the reappearance of a legion of unemployed brought back memories of the specter of hunger and poverty that hovered over Europe in the years preceding the two world wars.

This situation, which is a source of foreseeable social tension that could spread like wildfire, may become aggravated if some experts' predictions of a new rise in oil prices are confirmed.

In the Main Report, Castro discussed the increased activity in Latin America of the social-democratic Socialist International (SI), mainly based in Western Europe.

Actions of Social Democrats

The Socialist International has taken a public stand of support to the Government of National Reconstruction in Nicaragua and to the FSLN, as well as to the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador. Grenada's New Jewel Movement was admitted to membership in the SI at the end of 1980.

Leaders of the SI, such as Willy Brandt of Germany and Joop den Uyl of the Netherlands, have been among the most prominent European figures claiming to favor a substantial shift of resources from the industrialized countries to the semicolonial world.

The Second Congress of the Cuban Communist Party was attended by official delegations from the social democratic parties of France, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, and the British Labour Party.

Castro noted that a number of "old bourgeois and oligarchic Latin-American parties" such as Democratic Action (AD) in Venezuela and the Peoples Revolutionary American Alliance (APRA) in Peru have joined the Socialist International.

While noting the irreconcilable differences that separate revolutionary socialists from social democracy, Castro held that the recent activity of social democracy in Latin America "shows a positive balance. They join forces and extend the battlefield against U.S. imperialist domination in Latin America."

Glaring Contrasts

Poland is explicitly mentioned in only a few paragraphs of the section on foreign policy in the Main Report.

Other parts of the report, however, indicate the impact that the massive uprising of the Polish workers has had on the Cuban leaders. They are evidently devoting considerable thought to this question.

While the Main Report makes the serious mistake of evaluating recent events in Poland as a success for reaction, the conclusions drawn by the Cuban leaders place them sharply at variance with the bureaucratic castes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Cubans, party members and nonmembers alike, cannot help but be struck by the differences between Poland and Cuba.

In Cuba, the congress of the Communist Party inspired a mobilization of 1 million people to hail it. In Poland, the working masses have nothing but scorn for the Com-

munist Party. They view it as the enemy.

In Cuba last year, millions took to the streets to defend their revolution and support the policies of the revolutionary government against the threats and slanders of imperialism.

In Poland, the government is on a collision course with millions of workers, while the imperialist media and politicians have a propaganda field day.

In the Main Report, Castro indicated why such events are impossible in a country such as Cuba where a revolutionary proletarian leadership is in power

"Is socialism in any given country irreversible or not?" he asked.

"It is utterly irreversible if principles are applied. We are at Yankee imperialism's doorstep, yet we do not fear its power, do not dream of its wealth, do not accept its ideology and are not destabilized by its actions."

He summarized some of those principles:

Ours is a state of workers who exercise revolutionary power. The Party and its members must always be solidly, closely and deeply linked to the masses. . . .

The party exists through and for the people. Bureaucratic and petit-bourgeois attitudes are completely alien to its principles. . . .

Castro continued:

Authoritarianism, demagoguery, a know-it-all attitude, vanity, and irresponsibility are inconceivable in Communists, for they should always have a fraternal and humane attitude toward others and—especially—an internationalist spirit that, while including deep-rooted patriotism is based on an understanding that their homeland is more important than any individual and that mankind is the most important of all.

If a Communist Party in power commits or tolerates serious errors of principle, those errors will prove very costly to the revolutionary process—as history has shown. Betrayals have done great damage to the world revolutionary movement.

Cuba As an Alternative

The target of these admonitions was certainly not only the cadres of the Cuban Communist Party, but the Soviet and East European regimes where, as Castro puts it, "circumstances have hardly been propitious for spreading socialist ideas."

Castro returned to this subject December 27:

When problems arise somewhere, it's not because Marxism-Leninism doesn't have invincible force, it's because the principles of Marxism-Leninism haven't been correctly applied. . . .

The fact that our country is located near the United States—a country which is so rich and powerful and which exerted such influence for such a long time on our country and our people—the fact that now they encounter a barrier like Cuba, a rock like Cuba, can only be understood in the light of the principles of Marxism-Leninism. The role of the Party, its links with the masses, the correct application of these principles, the absence of favoritism, acting fairly, giving priority to merit, collective leadership, democratic centralism, honesty, awareness, discipline, plus the extraordinary social and humane content of our work, the work of the Revolution: this is what has given our Revolu-

tion such a tremendous strength. There's no mystery about that.

"Although they didn't explicitly say so," Castro continued, "we know that the sister socialist countries, that are deeply concerned over events elsewhere, were very encouraged by what they saw in our country, here, 90 miles from the United States."

Wrong Political Stand

When it came to making a political assessment, however, the Main Report presented the events in Poland as a gain for imperialism, completely missing the gain for the world revolution represented by the mobilization of the Polish working class.

What happened there was partly a result of imperialism's subversive policy. . . .

The success that reaction has had there is eloquent testimony to the fact that a revolutionary Party in power cannot deviate from Marxist-Leninist principles, neglect ideological work and divorce itself from the masses.

Castro avoided direct attacks on the Polish unions and their leaders, expressing hope that the Polish United Workers Party would be able to resolve problems by "leaning on the healthy forces of the country and taking advantage of the enormous moral, patriotic, and revolutionary reserve of the working class."

But he warned: "There is not the slightest question about the socialist camp's right to save that country's integrity and ensure that it survives and resists at all costs imperialism's onslaught."

Castro's estimate that imperialism has been strengthened by the workers' upsurge in Poland is false. Imperialism is probing in Poland today, seeking openings to undermine the Polish workers state.

It is not the Polish workers who have been imperialism's objective ally in that process, however, but the Polish bureaucracy. By their corruption and mismanagement, they disorganized the economy. By seeking to suppress working-class organization, they prevent the workers from taking initiative to repair the damage.

The mobilization of the Polish workers to defend their class interests, and their moves to forge ties with farmers and other oppressed groups, strengthen the workers state. It strengthens the consciousness, organization, and fighting capacity of the class that forms the foundation of any workers state.

From this standpoint, a Soviet military intervention against the Polish workers movement would seriously weaken the Polish workers state, as well as deal a blow to the entire world revolution.

Castro's position assumes that the bureaucratic governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe can be reformed, and that the ruling parties can be won to a more revolutionary, proletarian course at home and abroad.

But the problem in Poland—as in the So-

viet Union—is not that individual officials or narrow layers of bureaucrats have become corrupt or highhanded. The problem that the Polish workers face is that the country is governed by a hardened bureaucratic caste, which requires the exclusion of the workers from political power in order to maintain its vast privileges.

The ruling parties represent these ruling castes, which oppress and plunder the workers using totalitarian political methods. That is why the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe inspire contempt and hatred in the working masses. That is why the Polish workers have taken the road of forging their own unions, independent of both the party and the government.

When the Polish workers demand rights such as the election of their own union officers, they are demanding something taken for granted in Cuban unions.

Castro's view of the Stalinist regimes and parties has been shaped by the experiences of the Cuban revolution, which has only been able to survive Washington's hostile actions through a close diplomatic, political, and military alliance with the Soviet Union and Eastern European workers states. This view, and the serious political errors that flow from it, are part of the political cost of this lifeline; the Cubans have not been able to recognize the antibureaucratic struggles by workers in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as an integral part of the world struggle for socialism.

This view has also been influenced by the Cuban revolutionists' own success in integrating most of the cadres of the Cuban Popular Socialist Party (PSP)—a Stalinist party with a record of betrayals that included support for Batista—into a new Marxist-Leninist party in the years following the revolutionary triumph.

Further consideration of this aspect of the world proletarian revolution, however, will be posed by every upsurge of workers in Poland and other Eastern European countries, as well as by the Cubans' own rich experience in countering bureaucracy, expanding workers democracy, and proletarianizing their party. The continuing rise of revolutionary struggles in Latin America and around the world will continue to change the international context in which the struggles in Eastern Europe develop and are viewed by revolutionists in other parts of the world.

Afghanistan

The Main Report at the congress hailed the 1978 overthrow of the Daud regime in Afghanistan and the revolutionary openings that developed for the masses there. It attacked the imperialist aid to counterrevolutionary guerrillas there and blasted Washington's drive to whip up an international campaign of anticommunism and militarism following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.



November 29, 1980 march of 150,000 workers in Liverpool, England, against unemployment. Castro's report discussed increasing social tension in Europe.

The report also defended Moscow's sending of troops to Afghanistan, seeing this as made necessary by the mistakes of the previous Afghan regimes and by the actions of imperialist-backed rightists.

But the Cuban leaders show no enthusiasm for the Soviet operation. The Kremlin's arrogant disregard for Afghan sentiments, removal and handpicking of governments, violations of human rights, and attempts to contain social change are completely counterposed to the methods the Cubans have utilized in aiding revolutions in Africa and Central America.

While blasting the imperialist propaganda campaign around Afghanistan, the Cuban leaders have noted the confusion and disorientation the intervention has caused even among the more radical governments and political currents in the semicolonial world.

The Cubans have sought to achieve a negotiated settlement that can lead to withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Thus, Cuba's alliance with the Kremlin does not prevent sharp disagreements, reflecting irreconcilable differences between the bureaucratic castes in the Soviet bloc and the revolutionary proletarian regime in Cuba.

These revolve primarily around the Cuban leaders' constant efforts to extend the socialist revolution and strike new blows against imperialism. This is anathema to the Soviet bureaucracy, which is dedicated to reaching an accord with the imperialists that can uphold the international status quo. Unlike the Cuban government, the Kremlin dispenses aid as a *tool* to pursue

this aim, giving or taking away according to its own diplomatic needs.

Learning From Cuba

The further struggles of the working class in Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, Poland, and around the world will continue to pose challenges for the Cuban leaders. They will deepen the content of the debates and discussions they are having, including their debates with the leaders of the Stalinist parties in Moscow, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere.

The Second Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba showed the advances these revolutions have made in adapting their thinking, organization, and action to big changes—above all, the shift of the urban proletariat to the center of world politics and the extension of the socialist revolution to Central America and the Caribbean.

Revolutionary Marxists around the world who recognize the political necessity of making a turn toward the proletariat in their countries can benefit from studying the experiences of the Cuban Communist Party which is deepening its own proletarianization.

The advances being scored by the Cubans in this process are intertwined with their determination to support the advances of the proletarian revolution in Central America and the Caribbean.

As the Cubans are courageously displaying solidarity with the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions, and with the freedom struggles in El Salvador and Guatemala, is today a vital part of linking up with the working class and its struggles around the world. □

Cuban CP Congress Takes Up the Challenge

By Livio Maitan

[The following article appeared in the January 20 issue of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor*, published in Paris. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The crucial problems posed by the present stage of the international situation were a central focus of the Second Congress of the Cuban Communist Party. Fidel Castro spent the entire last section of his very long report to the congress dealing with them, and in his speech to the immense mass demonstration that marked the end of the congress' work, he was even more explicit in laying out the policies that flow from these problems.

The congress very vigorously repeated what has been the basic theme of Cuban policy since the January 1959 victory of the revolution—tenacious and intransigent struggle against U.S. imperialism. The Cuban leaders have never minimized the price their country had to pay and still pays for maintaining that policy, particularly the blockade that for twenty years has been a very serious obstacle to balanced economic growth.

They have never rejected, out of hand, steps that could unblock the situation. At the Second Congress, Fidel Castro reaffirmed that Cuba is ready "to settle the historical differences created by the acts of aggression of the United States imperialist governments and, consequently [to discuss] the normalization of our relations with that country. . . ."

But at the same time, Castro noted that the precondition was that the United States must be "willing to lift the blockade, discuss the issue of [the U.S. military base at] Guantánamo and refrain from violating Cuba's sovereignty."

In his rally speech, moreover, Castro explained the price the imperialists were demanding: an agreement could be reached if Cuba renounces its internationalist policy and breaks its alliances. The Cuban response was as clear as could be. It was summarized by a statement that was received with an ovation from the mass of participants at the rally. "If we were to choose between treason and death we would prefer death a thousand times over."

Afghanistan and Poland

As expected, the congress confirmed the alignment of Cuban foreign policy along the central orientations of the USSR's policy. Once again, the leaders of the

Cuban party and state not only stressed the supreme importance that relations with the Soviet Union have had and still have for the country's economy, for its survival, but they also indicated unreserved agreement with the policy of the leaders of the USSR, which was presented as the bastion of socialism against all the imperialist and counterrevolutionary maneuvers and threats.



This was especially expressed in the attitude formulated toward the events in Afghanistan and Poland.

The Cuban leaders had certainly greeted the intervention by Soviet troops in Afghanistan with reticence, particularly since it caused a difficult situation in the so-called Nonaligned Movement.

Despite this, Fidel Castro accepted, without reservation, Moscow's version. His allusions to the errors committed by the "revolutionary Afghans" did not in any way mean that Castro was taking his distance: the propaganda from the Kremlin itself has attacked Karmal's predecessors. The view of the current situation—wherein, according to Fidel Castro, "the new Afghan revolutionary leadership seems to be consolidating itself"—also coincides with what Moscow says.¹

It was the same with Poland. According to Fidel Castro, "imperialism is orchestrat-

ing a sinister act of provocation," which is at least partly behind the events. He spoke of "the success the reaction has had there," of the "initial setbacks" to "the courageous sons of this heroic people and their communist vanguard. . . ."

Does Fidel Castro believe that the big strikes that shook the bureaucratic regime were the work of imperialism? Were the gains won by the huge mobilizations of the working class, and the birth of a union of millions of members a victory for the reaction? Were Gierek, Kania, and Company the Polish communist vanguard?

True, Fidel hopes the Polish Communists can resolve their problems through their "own efforts." But by this he clearly means that they must resolve, to *their* advantage, the conflict created by "the antisocialists and counterrevolutionaries." Worse yet, if they are not successful in this, Fidel Castro recognizes, a priori, "the socialist camp's right to save that country's integrity," meaning the right of the Kremlin's army to intervene as it did in Czechoslovakia.

Here we can concretely see the bad consequences of aligning around the USSR's policies. The revolutionary-democratic and antibureaucratic interests and aspirations of the Polish workers are quite simply ignored, sacrificed on the altar of normalization and of the integrity of the "socialist camp." One could not place oneself more clearly on the side of this bureaucratic caste that continues to rule in Warsaw, and even more so in Moscow!

Nonaligned Countries and Industrialized Capitalist Countries

The congress also confirmed the political orientation toward the so-called Non-aligned countries.

It goes without saying that the Cuban workers state has the right to exploit, to the detriment of the imperialist great powers, the contradictions and conflicts created by the existence of these countries, as well as possible conflicts between the imperialists themselves.

Even so, it does not follow that the Cuban CP and its leadership should pro-

1. In an interview in *Pravda* on August 30, 1980, Brezhnev summarized the USSR's policy in Afghanistan as follows:

"Having responded to the appeal of the government of Afghanistan, which asked our aid in responding to aggression, we will fulfill, to the end, our duty in line with the Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty and the United Nations Char-

ter. No one should have any doubts on that subject.

We are for a political settlement of the situation. The only path to that is through cessation of the counterrevolutionary intervention through an agreement between the government of Afghanistan and those of its neighbors, especially Pakistan.

vide ideological cover to these ruling groups, which, in the majority of cases, brutally exploit and oppress the masses in their own countries. Even less does it follow that the Cuban CP must put forward sociopolitical characterizations that confuse the situation.

In expanding the list drawn up in the past, the report to the congress listed among the countries "that have opted for socialism or adopted a socialist orientation: Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Madagascar, Benin, São Tomé and Guinea in Africa; Algeria, Democratic Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and Libya. . . ."²

This is grotesque from a theoretical point of view. But, even more serious, it has *practical* consequences. One example will suffice. It is perfectly legitimate that Cuba, which has a position of responsibility within the Nonaligned Movement, should work to end the military conflict between Iran and Iraq. But the affair becomes more complicated when Fidel Castro speaks of "two peoples engaged in revolutionary processes." In this way he places on the same level the Iranian revolution and the Iraqi Ba'ath regime that has put itself in the "vanguard" of the struggle against the Iranian revolution.

The least one could say is that the Cuban Communists are avoiding a question that is very concretely posed before all revolutionaries.

On the other hand, the report very clearly defined Cuba's policy toward the capitalist countries other than the United States. "This policy is based on the possibility to maintain ties of fruitful cooperation and mutual respect, regardless of differences in social systems. It differentiates between countries with an average level of development that have not yet become great powers and those with greater economic power, which have never possessed colonial territories and avoid hegemonistic attitudes. It likewise takes into account the inevitable contradictions existing between major capitalist powers which lead them to positions which are not always unanimous; this had made it impossible for Yankee imperialism to have greater success in its policy of blockade against revolutionary Cuba. . . ."

To repeat, no one could question Cuba's right to profit from the contradictions between capitalist countries and to exploit special interests. Provided that this does not lead to inventing theories or covering

over the role of certain governments or certain figures.³

An Overall Appraisal

An essential part of Castro's report is devoted to an overall appraisal of the international situation. He places stress on the evolution of the relationship of forces to the detriment of imperialism in the years since the first party congress (1975). We agree with that judgment, especially since Castro states that:

"The important peoples' victories that have been won in the last five years should not, however, lead us to have a distorted view of the international scene—much less underestimate the great dangers that threaten the peoples' peace and national liberation.

"The threat posed to international détente by the most reactionary sectors of imperialism—a threat denounced by the 1st Congress—has become more and more evident. . . ."

The election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency of the United States naturally increases these dangers, especially regarding Latin America.

Nor does Fidel Castro skip over another problem: the possibility that the imperialists might react to Soviet actions "in any other part of the world" by striking at Cuba. More specifically, one need not resort to science fiction to raise the possibility that, in the event of a Soviet intervention in Poland, the United States might use that to carry out an intervention in Central America.

The response that Fidel Castro lays out to such an intervention is a response in the spirit of intransigence, the two pillars of which are a radicalization of struggles in Latin America and the preservation at all costs of the "integrity of the socialist camp."

It is not at all excluded that this attitude might be dictated, among other things, by fear that the Soviet leadership could seek a compromise with the United States at the expense of the peoples of Central America, and, in the final analysis, of Cuba.

We have already indicated what the implications are within Poland itself of an attitude that gives a blank check to a Soviet intervention in that country. We should add that from the international standpoint such an intervention, far from representing a blow to imperialism, would instead provide imperialism with much greater maneuvering room and would hit the international workers movement very hard because it would provoke disarray and demoralization and would help to discredit socialism.

In the final analysis, Cuba and Central America would be much more exposed to

blackmail and aggression by their enemies, and any Cuban solidarity with a move by the Soviet Red Army in Poland would be a major obstacle to an international anti-imperialist mobilization.

Regarding the other pillar, the radicalization of struggles in Latin America, the only response, according to Fidel, would be uncompromising struggle, carried out to the final consequences, a gigantic revolutionary mobilization on the scale of the entire continent. Only if faced with the perspective of a new Vietnam in Cuba, Central America, and other countries in Latin America will imperialism hesitate to and decide not to launch its aggression. If imperialism did not drop its aggressive plans, it would run the risk of being swept into an adventure that would have incalculable consequences for its future on a world scale.

In such a context, we might add, it would be enormously more difficult for the bureaucracy of the USSR to work out a compromise with Washington, and especially to impose it on Cuba and the other peoples of Latin America.

This approach is based on the best internationalist motivations and traditions of the Cuban revolution. It relies on the Cuban people's inexhaustible capacity for mobilization and spirit of self-sacrifice, and on the hope for "the day when all the peoples of Latin America are as willing to defend their country as Cuba is to defend itself. . . ."

The imperialists would be making a grave error if they viewed this attitude as simple demagoguery. Many times in the past we pointed out that a whole series of attitudes and policies adopted by the Cuban leadership since the early 1970s flowed from their analysis that revolutionary upsurges were not on the short-term agenda in Latin American countries.

Fidel Castro expressed this point of view most explicitly in his July 26, 1972 speech. In 1975, at the First Congress, he repeated that "At this moment, Latin America is not immediately on the threshold of overall changes leading, as in Cuba, to sudden socialist transformations."

Today the perspective has changed radically. Castro stresses the "resounding victories of the peoples of Nicaragua and Grenada and the irrepressible struggle of the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala. . . ." He notes "the readiness of the masses to fight—which has reached unprecedented levels" more generally throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. He notes that "revolutionary national liberation movements with a strong social content are on the rise," and points to the continuing opposition of the Chilean

2. The notion of "states with a socialist orientation" is part of the ideological arsenal of the Soviet bureaucracy. This was confirmed by Boris Ponomarev during last October's conference of representatives of Communist Parties and national liberation movements. According to the minutes, Ponomarev, however, had a list that was a little different than Castro's—Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, and Afghanistan.

3. This is not a gratuitous point. During the visit to Cuba of Spanish Premier Adolfo Suárez, Fidel Castro made a eulogizing assessment of the role Suárez played in post-Franco Spain.

4. See especially our articles "Problems of the Cuban Workers State" in the Autumn 1975 *Quatrième Internationale*, and "Cuba Twenty Years After the Revolution" in the April 23, 1979 *Intercontinental Press*, p. 419.

Statement of the Fourth International

Solidarity With the Salvadoran People!

[The following statement was issued by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on January 13.]

* * *

At the appeal of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) an insurrectionary movement was launched on Saturday January 10, throughout the territory of El Salvador. Since then, attacks made by FMLN fighters have already struck serious blows against the armed forces of the military junta.

On January 11, while dozens of targets were being simultaneously attacked, officials and many soldiers joined up with the insurgents. At Santa Ana, the second most important town in the country, half the garrison went over to the FMLN.

In several centers and in the suburbs of San Salvador whole neighborhoods rose up and built barricades. The revolutionary flag flew over Chalatenango, Metapán, Zacatecoluca and Perquín. While its regular units are harassing the headquarters of the National Guard and the air force, the FMLN has called on the people to everywhere set up organs of popular power, to step up and structure the mobilization.

A call for a general strike was made for

January 13. Despite threats, requisitions and assassinations of strikers, in cold blood and as "examples," the transport system, commerce and factories were largely paralyzed hours after the movement had started.

New massacres by the junta, the hundreds, if not thousands of deaths claimed by it since January 11, and the huge lies of the Christian Democrat civilian spokesperson can do nothing to change the new situation that has now opened up in El Salvador. In response to the appeal of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and the FMLN, the immense majority of the people have risen up to finish with illiteracy, misery, hunger, and death, to put an end to the superexploitation and terror imposed by this regime, by the oligarchy and American imperialism. How much hard combat, new sacrifices and additional suffering will be necessary in order for the Salvadoran people to secure an impregnable victory?

Incapable of restabilizing the situation, the junta has thrown out a direct appeal to Reagan. Carter has responded to it by restoring and increasing military aid. Forces from the Guatemalan and Honduran dictatorships are already massing on the Salvadoran frontiers.

Twenty-two years after the triumph of the Cuban revolution, eighteen months after the fall of Somoza, it is the Salvadoran people who are in the vanguard of revolutionary struggle in Latin America. For all those who are fighting against imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation the impact of a victory in El Salvador would be considerable.

The Fourth International, its organizations and its militants, are mobilizing for the victory of the Salvadoran people and its vanguard, the FMLN. It is a priority to immediately, and in any form possible, organize massive and militant solidarity. It is the priority of anti-imperialist and internationalist struggle today.

- Against any imperialist intervention in El Salvador!
- United States, Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, Hands off!
- Break all relations with the junta, for the recognition of the FDR!
- Defend the Nicaraguan revolution, the Cuban workers state, which are in solidarity with the Salvadoran struggle and directly threatened by an imperialist counterattack!
- For the victory of the Salvadoran people over its oppressors and its butchers!
- Victory to the FMLN!

people to the junta, "the staunch resistance of the Bolivian people," to "strikes of unprecedented magnitude" in Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, to "the workers of Argentina [who] have continued their struggle."

Such a situation, and especially the events in Nicaragua, which marked the turning point, represented a challenge and a test for Cuba. Its leaders have shown they understood the test and are determined to rise to the challenge.

We do not feel that all their present policies regarding Latin America are correct, or that all their ambiguous, confused, or clearly incorrect positions have been overcome. For example, it is hard to share their line of support for the Peruvian PSR, a party of those nostalgic for the military reformism of Velasco; or their apologetic attitudes toward the Mexican PRI government of López Portillo, which can only complicate the task of those who are fighting for the independence of the workers movement in Mexico; or the lack of a defined attitude toward the Argentine military regime as such.⁵

In addition, one could raise questions about the concrete content that is sometimes given to the "unity of revolutionary forces" that is a central axis of the Cuban attitude in a whole series of countries in struggle. (In some cases this unity seems to involve bourgeois forces with whom it would be more correct to establish specific convergences and agreements on a case by case basis.)⁶

Nevertheless, it is absolutely clear that Cuba was and is committed, in all fields, to contributing to the victory of revolutionary struggles in Central America, while accepting enormous risks. This is part of the decision they have made to defend the revolution and the workers state by extending the revolution in other countries.

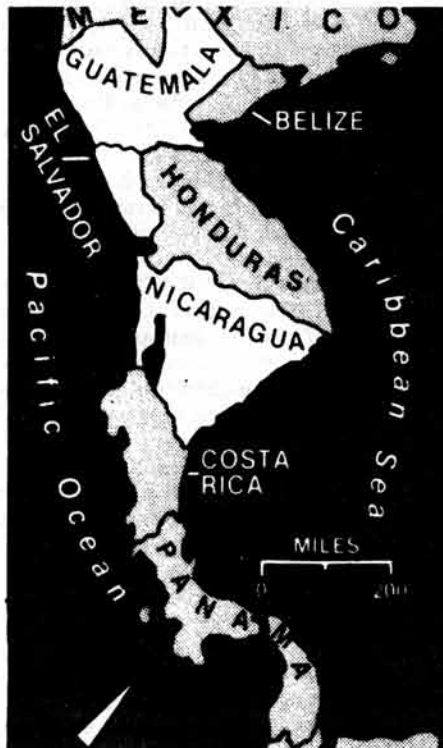
This is the basic difference between the Cuban leadership and the bureaucratic leaderships in all the other workers states.

January 3, 1981

5. However, we should note that during the year that just ended, the Cuban press devoted considerably more attention than in the past to resistance to the Videla dictatorship and to the struggles of the Argentine workers.

6. The congress clarified the party's attitude toward a "new element in the Latin American situation: the presence of the social democrats." The notion raised in the report of the "social democratization of old bourgeois and oligarchic Latin American parties" could create some confusion unless it is made clear that despite their transformation, these parties remain bourgeois and therefore qualitatively different from the Social Democratic parties of Western Europe, which remain part of the workers movement.

But the idea expressed in the report of, on the one hand, exploiting the contradictions and breeches that can be opened in the adversary's front, and, on the other hand, seeking convergences in the anti-imperialist struggle with sectors of the masses who are beginning to mobilize under the Social Democratic influence, is absolutely correct.



South Africans Scuttle Namibia Talks

By Ernest Harsch

The breakdown of the United Nations-sponsored negotiations in Geneva over the future of Namibia could not have pleased the South African government more.

From the very beginning of the talks on January 7, it became clear that the apartheid regime, which has ruled Namibia for decades, still has no intention of granting the more than one million Blacks of that country their right to self-determination.

The talks, however, did mark the first time that a South African delegation has agreed to sit down at the same conference table with leaders of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), the Namibian liberation movement. That it did so is testimony to the growing strength of SWAPO within Namibia, as well as to its increasing international support.

During the conference, the SWAPO delegation made it clear that it was willing to make some tactical concessions if that were necessary to reach an accord on Namibia's independence. In particular, it declared its readiness to sign a cease-fire agreement in return for guarantees that free and fair elections would be held to determine who would lead an independent Namibia.

But the South Africans, convinced that SWAPO would sweep the polls in any free election, were not interested. An agreement, according to one South African delegate, would now be "premature." Another speculated that it would take at least two years before the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, a coalition of pro-South African groups, would be in a position to run against SWAPO.

"It is clear now," SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma stated after the breakdown of the talks on January 13, "that South Africa fears for genuine, free and fair elections to take place in Namibia, because it knows its puppets, which it paraded here, will lose."

One important factor in the South African government's intransigence has been Washington's stance toward the struggle in Namibia. Although the White House gives lip service to Namibian independence, in practice it has backed the apartheid regime's position. Every time a resolution has been presented to the UN Security Council calling for the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa, the U.S. representative has vetoed it.

The South Africans have been further encouraged by the election of Ronald Reagan. One of the people Reagan appointed to his transition team, Marion Smoak, is

registered in Washington as an official lobbyist for the South African-installed administration in Namibia. The team drew up a policy report on Namibia (which was later leaked to the press) stating "our opposition to UN mandatory sanctions" against South Africa.

For the imperialists, the stakes in Namibia are considerable. A victory by SWAPO would be a serious political blow to the apartheid regime, and would further inspire South Africa's own Black majority. It would also encourage anti-imperialist forces in other countries.

The American, British, and South African ruling classes, moreover, have substantial economic interests in Namibia. Although Namibia is sparsely populated, it has vast mineral reserves. It is the world's second largest producer of gem diamonds and has important deposits of zinc, lead, copper, uranium, cadmium, lithium, and vanadium.

Thanks to the South African regime's racist policies in Namibia, the companies exploiting these mineral resources benefit from the extremely low wages paid to Black workers. In 1977, for instance, the average Black income was *one twenty-fifth* of the average white income.

As in South Africa, Blacks in Namibia are forced to live either in overcrowded and segregated urban townships or in isolated and impoverished rural reserves, which the authorities euphemistically call "homelands." Hunger and disease is widespread.

Blacks, moreover, face racial discrimination in most spheres of life. They have virtually no political rights.

It was to fight against such conditions that SWAPO launched an armed struggle against the South African colonial administration in 1966.

During the 1970s, SWAPO's influence grew considerably, bolstered by a massive strike in 1971-72 by thousands of Black workers and by the collapse of Portuguese colonial rule in neighboring Angola. Today, SWAPO enjoys the support of most of Namibia's Black population.

The apartheid authorities themselves are well aware of this. In 1980, a former agent of the South African Bureau of State Security, citing a BOSS report from April of that year, admitted that SWAPO would win as much as 83 percent of the vote if democratic elections were held in Namibia.

To try to prevent SWAPO from coming to power, some 60,000 South African troops have been sent to Namibia. They have uprooted tens of thousands of villagers, particularly in the northern region of

Ovamboland, where SWAPO has its greatest base of support. Much of Namibia is under martial law. Although SWAPO is formally legal, it has been driven into semi-clandestinity by a fierce repression in which scores of SWAPO leaders have been swept into detention. Political prisoners are routinely tortured.

South African jets and helicopter-borne troops regularly strike into Angola, both to hit Namibian refugee camps and to bomb Angolan villages, bridges, and factories in retaliation for the Angolan government's aid to SWAPO. According to Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos, the South Africans are conducting an "undeclared war" against Angola.

During 1980 alone, South African troops have killed more than 1,500 Namibians and Angolans.

Young Namibians, however, have not been intimidated. They are flocking in increasing numbers to join the liberation forces. As a report from Namibia in the January 6 *New York Times* pointed out, "The guerrillas seem to have no problem getting recruits. . . ."

As a result of this support, SWAPO guerrillas have been able to function in larger and larger military units. Although the South African press tries to minimize the army's losses, the guerrillas are also becoming more effective.

Despite the heavy repression in the cities, SWAPO supporters have continued to stage public protests against South African rule. In December, for instance, more than 2,000 SWAPO supporters rallied in Windhoek, the Namibian capital, to demonstrate against a new decree on compulsory military training.

With the attainment of Black rule in nearby Zimbabwe, the focus of the liberation struggle in southern Africa has now shifted more toward Namibia. Despite the country's small population, the outcome of the struggle there can have an enormous impact throughout the region.

What the people of Namibia are fighting for is both political independence and economic liberation. In the words of SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma, "We are not going to accept the present economic exploitation and oppression of the Namibian people. Disparity and inequality have completely to be wiped out." □

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