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THE STRUGGLE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

- *Washington Dusts Off 'Food Weapon'*
- *Nonaligned Nations Condemn U.S. Role*
- *Salvadoran Junta Tries to Suppress Truth*
- *Nicaraguans Reply to Slander Campaign*



Nicaraguans rally in Managua, call for expansion of militias, vow to defend revolution.

Arnold Weissberg/IP

**Brazilian Dictatorship Sets Military Trial
for Thirteen Working Class Leaders**

Washington Dusts Off the Food Weapon

By David Frankel

Nicaraguan officials have said that their country may face a wheat shortage in March. Although Nicaragua has made great strides in overcoming the devastation inflicted by the Somoza dictatorship, its economic condition remains precarious. The country needs all the assistance it can get.

The response of the Reagan administration has been to hold up approval for a \$9.6 million sale of U.S. wheat to Nicaragua. State Department officials announced the delay February 10, referring once again to charges that the Sandinista government is providing arms to the liberation fighters in El Salvador.

A cruder case of blackmail would be hard to find. What the U.S. rulers are really demanding is that the Nicaraguans turn their back on the atrocities of the Salvadoran junta and withhold their moral and political support to the Salvadoran people. Otherwise, Washington will try to starve the Nicaraguan workers and peasants into submission.

Behind the Gun-Running Charge

U.S. officials talk about Nicaragua supplying arms to the revolutionary forces in El Salvador both as a pretext for this blackmail operation and as a means of covering up the real foreign intervention in El Salvador—that of the U.S. government.

Despite repeated charges by U.S. officials, Washington has yet to publish a single piece of evidence substantiating its claim that the Sandinistas are running guns into El Salvador.

One of the last acts of the Carter administration was to suspend \$15 million in loans to Nicaragua on the basis of false reports that guerrillas from Nicaragua had landed in El Salvador. Although the U.S. embassy in San Salvador initially backed these charges, it was forced to retreat. As the *New York Times* reported January 26:

"When Nicaragua's revolutionary Government strongly denied the charge that the boats had left its territory, United States officials appeared to retract their initial claim, conceding that 'our rush to believe what we were told was not totally warranted' and 'there was some overstatement in the beginning.'"

Such admissions, however, have not had the slightest effect on U.S. policy, as the latest move by the Reagan administration indicates.

While Washington continues to talk about Nicaraguan arms flowing into El Salvador, it has also begun to make its

political demands explicit. Thus, Alan Riding reported in a dispatch from Managua in the February 12 *New York Times*:

"In several meetings with [Nicaraguan] junta members, the American Ambassador, Lawrence A. Pezzullo, reportedly warned the Government to silence a Salvadoran leftist radio station, allegedly broadcasting clandestinely from Nicaragua. . . ."

Ideas, not guns, are what Washington is trying to stop in Central America. Nor did the *New York Times* seem to find anything strange about a U.S. ambassador demanding that another government act to suppress freedom of speech and of the press.

'The Greatest Weapon We Have'

As one Nicaraguan official explained to Riding, "The American problem is not with El Salvador but with the very existence of our revolution. Their idea is not to send in the Marines here, but to make us surrender through hunger."

John R. Block, Reagan's secretary of agriculture, blurted out his view on this without even waiting to take office. Speaking at a pre-Christmas news conference, Block declared December 23, "I believe food is now the greatest weapon we have. . . ."

Block predicted that the food weapon would continue to be useful "for the next 20 years, as other countries become more dependent on American farm exports and become reluctant to upset us."

Food as a weapon, of course, is not something that was originated by Block and his cronies in the Reagan administration. It has been a traditional part of U.S. foreign policy. Selective food aid played a big part in Washington's attempts to manipulate European politics following World War II.

In 1954, at the height of the Cold War, Congress passed the "Food for Peace" program, which was designed—in its own words—"to make maximum use of surplus commodities in furtherance of the foreign policy of the United States."

Speaking in the U.S. House of Representatives in August 1974, Representative Michael Harrington described the "Food for Peace" program in action.

The allocation of 43 percent, or close to \$500 million, of the fiscal year 1974 deliveries to just two countries, South Vietnam and Cambodia, clearly reflects the security-related priorities. . . . By comparison, the needy countries of the Sahel [sub-Saharan Africa] and Ethiopia, which together have a population twice that of South Vietnam and Cambodia and have a much

more severe hunger problem, received only \$56 million in fiscal year 1974.

Food was desperately needed by the people of Kampuchea in 1979, when famine stalked the country and the remaining forces of the genocidal Pol Pot regime were still wreaking havoc near the Thai border.

Washington, however, did its best to block aid to the Kampuchean government. Moreover, it sought to prolong the famine by funneling aid to the butcher Pol Pot. The U.S. rulers hoped to weaken the Indochinese revolutions and to use the weapon of starvation to wrest concessions from the Kampuchean and Vietnamese governments.

Effect of World Economic Crisis

Although Carter's attempt to pressure the Soviet Union last year by cutting off grain sales fell flat, U.S. officials continue to hold high hopes for the food weapon.

"The Agriculture Department is predicting that a year from now the world's reserves of cereal grains will be at the lowest level in five years in proportion to what is consumed," Seth S. King reported in the November 3, 1980 *New York Times*.

He added: "Insofar as food can be used as a diplomatic instrument, this tight supply strengthens the hand of the United States, which remains the largest producer of soybeans and feed grains as well as the largest supplier of wheat."

Even without the malevolent efforts of U.S. imperialism, the worldwide capitalist economic crisis has had a devastating impact on the masses in the semicolonial countries.

"To the surprise of demographers," Robert Reinhold reported in the February 8 *New York Times*, "progress in reducing mortality in the world's poorer countries over the last generation, which had been considered remarkable, now appears to be faltering."

Population growth in the poorer lands has begun to drop not just because of lower birth rates, but also due to persistently high death rates. Mortality rates in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have actually increased.

Reinhold notes that "the leading causes of death in the poorer countries now are diarrheal diseases, respiratory infections, malnutrition and other problems that do not yield easily to modern medical technology."

Not, that is, in the absence of adequate food. Lung diseases such as tuberculosis have long been associated with inadequate diet and poor living conditions. And no well-fed person ever died of diarrhea or malnutrition!

Reagan Lends a Hand

The normal mechanisms of the capitalist market condemn millions—especially the children who are too young to fend for themselves—to a slow and painful death. But that is not enough for Reagan and the

class that he represents.

By threatening to withhold wheat from Nicaragua, the Reagan administration has stated its willingness to offer the scourge of famine a helping hand.

What an admission of historical bankruptcy! The U.S. rulers are so completely incapable of inspiring humanity with a vision worth fighting for that they can only defend their interests by threatening to starve whole peoples.

Reagan, however, has not reckoned with the people of Sandino. Having won their freedom at such a cost in blood and suffering, the Nicaraguan workers and peasants are not about to sell their birthright for a few bushels of wheat. □

New U.S. Provocation Against Cuba

By Janice Lynn

In one more of Washington's continuing provocations against the Cuban revolution, the Reagan administration announced February 11 that Cuban diplomat Ricardo Escartín was being expelled from the United States.

State Department spokesman William Dyess said that Escartín, the first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section, which represents Cuba in Washington, was being ordered to leave because he tried to persuade U.S. businessmen to trade with Cuba.

Since 1962, the U.S. government has imposed a total embargo on trade with Cuba. This criminal blockade was intended to strangle Cuba economically and to isolate it from the rest of the world. The embargo even included such vital necessities as food and medicines.

Nevertheless, the Cuban revolution survived the blockade, taking impressive steps forward economically. Today, more than eighty countries trade with Cuba, despite Washington's sabotage.

In announcing Escartín's expulsion, the State Department spokesman said that Washington was concerned about efforts to circumvent the trade embargo which were "more open and more blatant than previously." Officials said there had been an upsurge in the number of calls received from U.S. firms asking about the status of the blockade.

But a report in the February 12 *New York Times* indicated that this charge was merely a pretext. Even officials at the Treasury Department said, according to the *Times*, that "the State Department was inflating the significance of Mr. Escartín's efforts to entice Americans into illegal trade."

Escartín was also accused of engaging in intelligence activities, a totally unsub-

stantiated charge.

A February 13 statement by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations declared that "the false accusations" against Escartín reflected "the intentions of U.S. authorities to continue their policies of hostility toward our country and harassment of our representatives in the United States."

The Cuban statement also noted that the charges constituted "a clear threat to U.S. citizens, including members of Congress, with whom our diplomat maintained relations that were entirely legitimate and perfectly well known to U.S. officials. The State Department is now portraying these

relations as if they were alien to normal diplomatic procedures."

What lies behind this new provocation against Cuba is the Cuban leadership's solidarity with the revolutionary struggles in Central America and the Caribbean. Reagan's move is a warning to the Cuban leaders that they should give up their internationalist stance.

But as Cuban president Fidel Castro declared December 20 to a million people gathered in Havana, "We will not make a single concession to imperialism! We will not renounce a single one of our principles!" □

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Can New Premier Rein in Polish Workers?

By Ernest Harsch

Poland's new prime minister, Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, has been handed an extremely difficult job: to keep down the country's powerful and well-organized working class and to safeguard the material privileges and authoritarian political control of the ruling bureaucratic caste.

It was the failure of former prime minister Jozef Pinkowski to do that that led to his dismissal on February 9, following a plenary session of the Communist Party Central Committee. The appointment of Jaruzelski—which marks the fourth change of prime ministers in less than a year—is a reflection of the depth of the crisis facing the Polish bureaucracy.

In a January 12 speech before the Polish parliament, Jaruzelski appealed for a three-month moratorium on strikes—"90 days of peace"—to give his government a chance to deal with the country's deep economic crisis.

In a bid to get Solidarity, the independent union federation, to go along with such a moratorium, Jaruzelski promised to carry through far-reaching economic changes and to work toward a democratic "renewal."

Unfortunately for the Polish rulers, distrust of the bureaucracy as a whole runs deep. As one Polish farmer was quoted as saying, "We've lost confidence in all of them, that's the problem. It's as though they're playing a game of musical chairs."

Jaruzelski's Prospects Dim

Whether Jaruzelski will be any more successful than his predecessor in keeping the lid on the Polish upsurge remains to be seen. If his first few days in office are any indication, his prospects do not look good:

- In response to an appeal by the national leadership of Solidarity for a temporary end to strikes, miners in Silesia and printing workers called off planned job actions. In a policy statement on February 12, however, Solidarity reserved the right to strike.

Lech Walesa, a central leader of Solidarity, stressed the need for the union's 10 million members to "build up our organization."

- On February 9, the very day that Jaruzelski was chosen prime minister, about 300,000 workers in the southwestern region of Jelenia Gora walked off their jobs, paralyzing some 450 plants and enterprises and shutting down transport and other services.

The workers were demanding the dismissal of a number of local officials accused of corruption and the opening up to the public of a rest house for Central Committee members and a sanatorium for the secret police. The general strike ended late the next day after the government agreed that the rest home could be used as a public hospital

until a new 610-bed facility is built.

- The Supreme Court on February 10 turned down an appeal by the new farmers' organization, Rural Solidarity, for registration as a trade union. The court proposed that the farmers organize themselves into an "association," a body that has fewer legal rights than a union.

Walesa, speaking to a crowd of 5,000 demonstrating farmers in Warsaw, termed the decision a "draw." Leaders of Rural Solidarity vowed to keep on fighting for recognition as a union.

- A student strike that began in Lodz in late January has spread to several other cities, including Poznan and Warsaw.

- Demands among rank and file members of the Communist Party for greater internal party democracy have been mounting. Party chief Stanislaw Kania's failure to set a precise date for the convening of an extraordinary party congress—as he had earlier promised to do—has already drawn protests from party members.

From one end of the country to the other, Poland is astir. Everyone is discussing and debating solutions to Poland's many economic, social, and political problems. More than one million copies of independent factory journals circulate each month.

Under such conditions, Jaruzelski will not find it easy to achieve the "normalization of life" that he called for in his February 12 speech, especially since the government has no intention of meeting the basic demands of the workers and farmers.

Regime Hopes to Whittle Away Gains

Whatever promises Jaruzelski may make, the Polish bureaucracy remains determined to hang on to its enormous privileges and to maintain its monopoly on economic and political decision-making. To give in to the demands of the workers for a democratic voice in the country's affairs would mark the beginning of the end of its position as a privileged caste feeding off of the Polish workers state.

The government's basic aim of trying to whittle away the gains of the workers was openly expressed in separate speeches by Kania and newly appointed Deputy Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski. Both said that the agreement signed between the workers and the government in Gdansk last August should be renegotiated. "The August accords must be confronted with reality," Rakowski declared.

Jaruzelski—who also remains minister of defense—has peppered his speeches with reminders that he heads up the Polish armed forces. His appointment was accompanied

by renewed slanders and attacks against the Solidarity leadership, which has been accused by various Polish officials of sowing "anarchy" and of aiding "anti-socialist" elements.

The Polish bureaucracy's slanders and threats have been reinforced by similar ones emanating from Moscow. Although the Soviet bureaucrats clearly hope that Jaruzelski will be able to keep the Polish workers in check without the need for direct Soviet intervention, Soviet Ambassador to East Germany Pyotr A. Abrasimov strongly hinted on February 9 that Moscow was prepared to send its troops into Poland.

The imperialists—despite their efforts to exploit the Polish situation for propaganda purposes—are likewise hoping that Jaruzelski will be successful.

Imperialists Wish Jaruzelski Good Luck

On February 12, State Department spokesman William Dyess said in Washington, "We wish the new Prime Minister and all the Polish people well in their efforts to resolve their problems themselves and we look forward to a constructive relationship with the new Polish Government."

Two days earlier, Dyess revealed that the Reagan administration was actively considering additional economic aid to the Polish regime. He also hinted to Jaruzelski that Washington would not look too unfavorably on a crackdown on the Polish workers movement. According to *Washington Post* correspondent Michael Getler, the "tone of his answers suggested the United States would react with restraint in that case."

An editorial in the February 8 British *Manchester Guardian Weekly* also argued for increased imperialist aid to the Polish regime.

"Since the Gdansk strikes six months ago," it said, "Western bankers, prodded by their respective governments, have been busily putting together economic aid and trade packages designed to keep Comrade Kania's show on the road. . . ."

"Now the bankers are pressing on because they see precious little alternative unless they are to lose their international stability and detente."

Like Moscow, the imperialists are also concerned about the impact that the example of the Polish workers movement could have on workers around the world. □

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Calls for Halt to Arms Shipments to El Salvador

Nonaligned Meeting Condemns U.S. Role

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA—Foreign Ministers of the Nonaligned nations meeting in New Delhi, India, during the week of February 9, delivered sharp rebukes to U.S. intervention in Central America.

In a February 12 speech, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto warned that U.S. interference could provoke a Central American-wide war.

"If the aggression against Nicaragua has the characteristic of a cold war—with lies, threats, and economic aggression—in the case of El Salvador, it is a good deal hotter—with arms and U.S. military advisers used against a people struggling for its liberation.

"This situation, we want to warn, endangers the peace of the entire region and makes possible, or almost inevitable, the generalization of the conflict to all Central America."

D'Escoto was elected chair of the conference political commission by unanimous vote of the eleven Latin American member countries. It had previously been decided that the choice would be Latin America's.

The danger of outside intervention in the region was also denounced in a declaration issued by the Latin American group for the inclusion in the conference's final statement.

The Latin Americans condemned the political and economic pressures against Nicaragua by "international financial organizations."

The group also condemned all forms of intervention and interference in El Salvador's internal affairs and called on all governments to stop supplying arms and other forms of assistance.

Also at the conference was a delegation representing the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador.

In an interview with the Cuban news service Prensa Latina, FDR leader Rubén Zamora explained that "intervention in El Salvador is tied directly to the attacks on Nicaragua, Grenada, and Cuba."

In his speech D'Escoto expressed support for the Grenadian revolution. He also called for U.S. withdrawal from its Guantánamo naval base in Cuba, independence for Puerto Rico and Belize, and the right of Panama to exercise full control over the Panama Canal.

The conference heard a message from Fidel Castro, elected president of the Non-aligned movement at the 1979 Havana summit meeting. Castro's message, read by Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Mal-

merca, declared that the search for a long-lasting peace was the first and most important obligation of the Nonaligned movement. But, the message said, "the problem of peace is indissolubly linked with another concern that the Nonaligned countries today always must focus on: economic development."

After explaining that without economic development there could be no peace, Castro said that the situation of the develop-

Governing Board of National University Arrested

International Tribunal Meets on El Salvador

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA—An international tribunal, meeting in Mexico City, has heard compelling evidence of U.S. responsibility for the slaughter in El Salvador.

The panel, known as the Permanent People's Tribunal, has among its fifty-six members Nobel Peace Prize winner Sean MacBride, Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez, and Nobel Prize winning biologist George Wald.

Testifying at the opening session February 9, Marianella García, president of the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador, revealed that last December's murder of three American nuns and a lay religious worker came only forty-eight hours after the women presented photographic evidence of government atrocities to a U.S. diplomat.

"I don't want to assert anything," García said. "I am only stating facts."

The tribunal also heard from two Americans—Robert Armstrong of the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) and Philip Wheaton of the U.S. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). The two described the decades-long U.S. domination of El Salvador, including ties between the U.S. government and the right-wing murder squad known as ORDEN.

The panel is to decide on charges of genocide and violations of human rights against the military/Christian Democratic junta ruling El Salvador.

Even while the tribunal was meeting the list of crimes by the junta was growing. On

ing countries was getting worse and worse, in particular, those countries that do not produce oil.

At its meeting the Nonaligned movement urged member states to vote against accepting the credentials of the Israeli delegation at the next meeting of the United Nations or its specialized bodies.

Other decisions made at the conference, which were applauded by the U.S. mass media, were to urge the withdrawal of "foreign troops" from Afghanistan and "foreign forces" from Cambodia.

A committee was set up to study ways to end the five-month-old war between Iran and Iraq. But the Iranian delegates at the conference noted that the meeting should have demanded "the immediate withdrawal of the aggressor forces" from Iran. □

February 10 the legal aid arm of the archbishopric of San Salvador announced that 2,644 people had been killed in January and that thousands of Salvadorans had been left homeless by the army's indiscriminate bombing attacks.

Also denounced were the killings of three young Salvadoran doctors who were arrested February 5 and taken away in an army truck. Two days later their bodies were found with signs of grisly torture.

"We ask the entire world's intervention in getting the U.S. government to halt its economic and military aid to the junta," the archbishopric said. "Because the aid only helps in the extermination of an entire people fighting for justice, peace, and social progress."

On February 10 the Salvadoran army arrested twenty-one members of the governing board of the national university in the middle of a meeting which had been announced in the press. Those arrested included the acting rector of the university and the heads of half a dozen departments.

Christian Democrat José Napoleón Duarte, El Salvador's president, said that the arrest had been made because of suspicions that the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) might be holding a meeting.

However, a government spokesman said that the twenty-one would be checked out and "those who have nothing to do with the FDR will be released."

The university has been closed by government order since last June, but had been given permission to reopen in early March. □

How Salvadoran Junta Tries to Suppress the Truth

By Fernando Torres

[The following article appeared in the February 23 issue of the U.S. Spanish-language socialist fortnightly *Perspectiva Mundial*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

On the night of January 25, 1981, Victor Medrano, the administrative director of the Salvadoran Human Rights Commission, was kidnapped from his home by heavily armed civilians. Days later he was seen in the National Police headquarters, where he was being subjected to "intensive interrogation."

Medrano had appeared in the U.S. television documentary, *El Salvador: Another Vietnam?*, which was first aired on January 18 by the Public Broadcasting System. Referring to the violence that afflicts his country, Medrano told the American people:

"If we are going to talk about repression against the people, we also have to talk about who's responsible for it. Repression

here comes from the armed forces and not from the paramilitary groups that they've been talking so much about.

"It's been made to appear that there's a struggle in this country between the ultra-left and far right organizations. . . . Even if it's true that paramilitary groups exist on the far right, the fact is that they are really an integral part of the state's official structure. It is a political struggle between two political alternatives, the government and the people."

'Those Who Spoke Knew the Risk'

Several days after Medrano's kidnapping, the Catalyst film crew, which produced the documentary, released a statement denouncing his abduction as an attack against freedom of expression and of the press and demanding that he be released.

"The horrible reality of the situation," the filmmakers stated, "only reinforces Mr. Medrano's statements," and they noted that "this recent act of repression may have

been triggered by the statements he made in the film" as director of the Human Rights Commission.

They call on journalists, film makers, and all defenders of freedom of the press to demand an investigation into the conditions that led to Victor Medrano's arrest and urge them "not to be intimidated by these tactics."

"Everyone who spoke in our film did so knowing the risk they ran," Glenn Silber, the film's producer, told *Perspectiva Mundial*. "But there is the situation down there that needs to be talked about, and therefore they took the risk—in order to speak to the American people."

While making their film, the journalists themselves worked under the constant fear that something might happen to them, Silber stated. "While we were filming, there were people taking our pictures, which made us nervous. In addition, reliable sources had warned us that an attack on a U.S. journalist might take place to

Salvadoran People 'Face an Emergency'

Canadian Conference Calls Solidarity Actions

More than 250 people from seven Canadian provinces attended an El Salvador solidarity conference in Montreal, Quebec, January 31-February 1.

"We are facing an emergency situation," Rafael Moreno of the Salvadoran Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) told the conference.

"Increased lethal aid from the United States government has made the repressive regime in El Salvador stronger militarily than it was before the recent offensive. New helicopters and other aid have reactivated the regime's air force striking power which had been successfully neutralized by the liberation forces. This will prolong the war and mean yet more bloodshed for the Salvadoran people. . . ."

As Moreno noted, "The lives of an entire people are at stake." He declared that "the situation demands *massive, visible actions, sustained actions* beginning *immediately*. The Salvadoran people will pay dearly for divisions caused by ideological differences."

In response to Moreno's appeal, the conference declared February 28 a day of

action in solidarity with El Salvador. In addition to a demonstration in the federal capital of Ottawa, protests will take place in other cities across the country on that date. A week of solidarity actions will also be held March 22-28.

A report on the conference in the February 9 issue of the Canadian fortnightly *Socialist Voice* pointed out, "For the first time, the main movement activists from across the country will be united in common and coordinated activity." □

'Support the People Against the Current Government'

Eight hundred members of the New Democratic Party (NDP)—Canada's labor party—met in Winnipeg, Manitoba, February 1. The convention of the Manitoba NDP unanimously passed a resolution on El Salvador which resolved:

" . . . that the NDP strongly condemn the mass murder and political repression which occurs daily in El Salvador, and

"Be it further resolved that this convention ask the federal NDP to condemn the actions of the U.S. government in this situation, and

"Be it further resolved that the NDP

demand that the Canadian government take a public position against continued U.S. intervention in El Salvador, and

"Be it further resolved that the NDP demand that the Canadian government breaks diplomatic and economic ties with the government of El Salvador, and that it recognize the FDR as the legitimate representative of the vast majority of El Salvadoran people, and

"Be it further resolved that the NDP undertake to educate the public on the nature of the struggle in El Salvador and the need to support the people against the current Government."



DUARTE

Contrapunto

'set some kind of example.'"

The Salvadoran civilian/military junta led by José Napoleón Duarte has constantly persecuted and harassed journalists. Dozens have been detained, tortured, kidnapped, and even murdered.

In an interview with *Perspectiva Mundial* on October 14, 1980,¹ Panamanian journalist Demetrio Olaciregui, who was the United Press International correspondent in El Salvador for some months, stated that "we know the Salvadoran general staff has held lengthy sessions to discuss what to do about the international press." The military "view the press as a grave problem—if it is not their number one enemy then it is certainly one with high priority." On December 2, following threats on his life, Olaciregui was expelled from El Salvador.

Complicity of U.S. Mass Media

While freedom of the press continues to be trampled upon in El Salvador, in the United States the mass media has been complicit in its silence. The reason for this is explained in a "Dissent Document" of the El Salvador/Central America Task Force of the U.S. State Department.² The document notes that in the U.S., "media coverage of El Salvador has been respon-

rights' dimension, effective use of the 'extremists of the right and left' formula."

This has led, according to the authors of the internal government study, to misrepresentation of "the situation in El Salvador emphasizing the viability of the current regime, downplaying its responsibility for the excesses being committed by security and paramilitary forces, exaggerating the positive impact of current forces as terrorists unsuitable for and unwilling to engage in constructive dialogue."

In other words, the American public has been shamelessly lied to.

Following suggestions from the State Department, the U.S. mass media has covered up atrocities such as the Río Sumpul massacre in May 1980, when the junta's troops murdered 600 Salvadoran peasants.

In addition, for a year the U.S. press has been trying to portray the more than 10,000 deaths as the result of "extremist" violence, although inside El Salvador and throughout the world it is well-known that the military junta bears direct responsibility for the massacres.

The so-called "agrarian reform" has been the object of a special campaign of lies in the American press. For example, the *New York Times* presents it as "the most radical program of land redistribution Latin America has known outside Cuba," which it claims "benefited nearly one million peasants."

Despite these claims, in El Salvador thousands of peasants were murdered or expelled from their homes by counterinsurgency actions—violence that led 700 technicians of the Salvadoran Institute of Agrarian Reform itself to carry out a strike on June 3, 1980 in protest against the genocidal way the "agrarian reform" was being carried out.

International Conspiracy Charged

Another central aspect of the propaganda campaign in favor of the civilian/military junta has been a barrage of charges that the Salvadoran rebels are receiving outside aid. The aim is to justify U.S. intervention in support of the junta.

On February 6, for example, the *New York Times* published a front page story by Juan de Onís which stated: "Indications that the Soviet Union and Cuba agreed last year to deliver tons of weapons to Marxist-led guerrillas in El Salvador are contained in secret documents reportedly captured from the insurgents by Salvadoran security forces."

De Onís went on to paint an incredibly elaborate scenario which traces the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front's weapons from Hanoi to Havana, going through Moscow, Ethiopia, and Eastern European capitals. In great detail the mysterious "documents" name names, catalog shipments, and provide dates.

Then on February 7 a tiny dispatch in the same newspaper reported: "The State

Department acknowledged today that... the documents' authenticity was not yet confirmed."

As the Paris daily *Le Monde* noted January 29: "For some observers, the junta's many denunciations of foreign support for the guerrillas reveals above all the [Salvadoran] authorities' desire to get more international military aid."

The U.S. mass media has not reported even a single word about the massive bombardment of villages and the army's murder of nearly 2,000 people, in the course of the junta's battle against the general offensive launched by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front on January 10.

The silence and the lies in the U.S.—and the war against freedom of the press in El Salvador—are part of the repressive apparatus that keeps the oligarchy and its junta in power. For that reason, the struggle to break through the wall of disinformation surrounding El Salvador is an indispensable component of the movement of solidarity with the Salvadoran people. □

Solidarity Committee Formed in Guyana

A Committee for Solidarity With the People of El Salvador was formed in the South American country of Guyana January 13. In its founding statement the committee noted that "the wind of change sweeping across the Americas has brought victory to the peoples of Nicaragua and Grenada," and urged moral and material support for the liberation fighters in El Salvador.

The Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union, which represents some 25,000 sugar, garment, and furniture workers, responded by offering \$2,500 to the El Salvador solidarity fund established by the committee.

On January 17, the U.S. embassy in Georgetown was picketed by the committee. The demonstrators demanded an end to U.S. military aid to the junta and called on the government of Prime Minister Forbes Burnham to officially denounce Washington's role in El Salvador.

One Million German Marks Raised for Salvadoran Opposition

An independent left-wing daily in Germany, *Die Tageszeitung*, recently launched a fund appeal around the theme "Arms for El Salvador."

In just a few weeks one million marks (US\$470,000) was raised for the Salvadoran opposition.

The fund drive was given impetus by the public support of a leader of the German Social Democratic Party, who explained the Salvadoran people's recourse to armed struggle in order to overthrow the Salvadoran junta.

1. See "The Salvadoran Junta vs. Freedom of the Press," *Intercontinental Press*, November 3, 1980, p. 1134.—IP

2. For the full text of the State Department "Dissent Paper," see *Intercontinental Press*, December 15, 1980, p. 1308.—IP

Nicaraguans Reply to International Slander Campaign

By Matilde Zimmermann

MANAGUA—Several international news agencies carried dispatches from Rome on February 6 alleging violations of human rights in Nicaragua. The source of the news was José Esteban González, the president of a group with the official-sounding name, "Permanent Commission on Human Rights in Nicaragua" (CPDH).

González charged that "the Sandinista government uses methods of torture and repression very similar to those used in the past by the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua."

He claimed that there are 8,000 "political prisoners" in Nicaraguan jails, and that the number of "disappeared" has reached 800.

González also announced that he had personally presented an appeal to Pope John Paul II "on behalf of the people of Nicaragua who are still fighting for their freedom, and in particular on behalf of the political prisoners and those who have disappeared."

To top it all off, González criticized international human-rights organizations for "giving more importance and publicity to 150 disappearances in the republic of El Salvador than to 800 in Nicaragua and 8,000 jailed there for political problems."

A Paper Organization

When the CPDH was established in 1977 it was a broad organization of opposition figures, including González, who wanted to denounce the real human-rights violations of the Somoza dictatorship.

But soon after the revolutionary victory, González and his fellow leaders of the Social Christian Party joined the list of bourgeois politicians who are today struggling much more energetically against the Sandinista government than they ever did against Somoza.

The vast majority of those who founded the CPDH left it when González turned against the revolution. Today it is a paper organization, consisting of little more than González himself. He spends most of his time traveling abroad in search of those who will take his slanders about atrocities in Nicaragua seriously.

But González has had little success. His bogus organization was excluded from the Latin American Conference of Families of the Disappeared, held recently in Costa Rica, as well as from the founding congress of the Latin American Association on Human Rights, held in Ecuador. The CPDH was denied even observer status at a prestigious international colloquium on

human rights in Paris January 30-February 1.

One unfortunate exception to this treatment is the citing of José Esteban González as a source of information in Amnesty International's 1980 report. González's charges are presumably the reason for Amnesty International's expression of concern about "large-scale detentions and delays in trial proceedings" in Nicaragua.

A genuine human-rights organization does exist in Nicaragua today. The National Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (CNPPDH) is responsible for monitoring the treatment and trial proceedings for the ex-National Guard prisoners.

Criminals, Not 'Political Prisoners'

Dr. Leonte Herdocia, president of the CNPPDH, answered González's charges in the Nicaraguan press on February 7. He pointed out that the number of Somozaist criminals in jail is 5,500 and not 8,000, and that a complete list of their names has been submitted to international agencies concerned with human rights.

González calls the ex-National Guardsmen "political prisoners," as if their crime was passing out leaflets. But they are actually being put on trial for rape, murder, kidnapping, and torture.

None of the ex-National Guardsmen are threatened with the death penalty, which the Sandinista government outlawed as soon as it took power. As many as 3,500 Somozaist suspects have already been released from jail; this has even led to protests on the part of the population, which suffered so much at the hands of Somoza's National Guard.

Nor have the Somozaist prisoners received the treatment they undoubtedly expected when their own former victims came to power. In fact, during the National Literacy Campaign last year, special classes were organized in the prisons for the ex-National Guardsmen, 70 percent of whom could not read or write.

Herdocia also ridiculed the charge that 800 persons had "disappeared." He pointed out that the list González himself had just submitted to the United Nations had only seventy names on it.

Jurists Slandered

One of the allegations González made in Rome February 6 was that a recent meeting of the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva actually issued two

reports on Nicaragua—one, a public document praising the Sandinista government's record, and the other, a "secret report" accusing the Nicaraguan regime of practicing "a policy of vengeance by the winners against the losers."

Herdocia asserted that González had slandered the International Commission of Jurists with his mythical "secret report" in order to undercut the influence of the commission's real report. Among other things, that document said:

"In cases of internationally recognized civil war in which the new government has not been able to assert complete control over the country, accusations of disappearances that might have occurred during the period following the taking of power can in no sense be considered policies of the new government. This is the case in Nicaragua, where such activities have never been policies of the new government."

Made in USA

An editorial response to González published in the FSLN daily *Barricada* February 10 said there was more to the slanders than the ravings of this "anticommunist pygmy":

"They carry the label 'made in USA,' and more concretely, 'CIA,'" *Barricada* said.

The charges, *Barricada* pointed out, seem ridiculous to Nicaraguans, who know only too well that the people González claims are political prisoners are actually brutal murderers, and who have seen the great respect for human rights in the new Nicaragua.

(In fact, González's latest lies were so outrageous that the reactionary newspaper *La Prensa*, which ordinarily doesn't pass up any opportunity to take a potshot at the FSLN, did not even report them.)

But González is not addressing a Nicaraguan audience. His entire purpose is to provide ammunition for the anti-Nicaragua propaganda campaign being orchestrated in Washington.

González's slanders found an echo in the State Department's annual report on human rights, which spoke of some 5,000 political prisoners in Nicaragua "whose cases are submitted to questionable norms of justice," and of restrictions on freedom of the press and assembly. (This same report praised Argentina, Chile, and Brazil for "improvements" in human rights!)

González's name has also been linked to Washington's decision to withhold a \$9.6 million loan to Nicaragua for the purchase

of U.S. wheat. Nicaragua was to use this loan to buy 5,000 tons of wheat a month from the United States, which accounts for almost the entire production of bread in the country. A shipment of 10,000 tons has already been halted.

Catholics Angered

In a February 12 speech, Interior Minister Tomás Borge blasted González:

"A man whose name I cannot even say because it makes me vomit went and told lies to the Vatican. That offends the Christian people of Nicaragua. The statements of this traitor have been used by those who are cutting off our loan to buy wheat. Is there anything more contemptible in this world?"

The official reason given by the State Department for the latest economic measures against Nicaragua was the same as that given last month for withholding \$15 million in promised loans: allegations of Nicaraguan intervention on the side of the revolutionary forces in El Salvador.

González's appeal to the Pope aroused special anger among Nicaraguans. On February 12 a delegation of prominent Nicaraguan Catholics held a news conference in Mexico City to denounce the efforts of the CPDH "to use Pope John Paul II himself as an ideological weapon against the people's revolution."

The delegation praised the humane treatment given to ex-National Guardsmen and said that no individuals have "disappeared" in the new Nicaragua.

The head of the delegation was Fr. Fernando Cardenal, former director of the National Literacy Campaign, who was recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

CPDH Shut Down

On February 11 the revolutionary government suspended the activities of the CPDH's office in Nicaragua. It charged that the organization has failed to comply with the laws on registering organizations and providing documentation.

The following day, governing junta member Sergio Ramírez told reporters that an initial examination of the CPDH's files had shown that it was not only publicizing false information but also printing the anonymous counterrevolutionary pamphlets that have been circulating clandestinely in Managua.

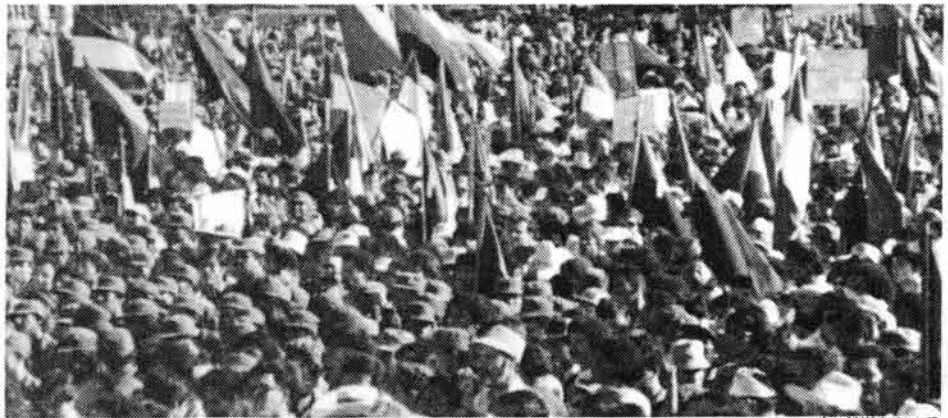
Ramírez said that this evidence would soon be presented to the public, along with information on the sources of the funds used by the phony "human rights" organization. □

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'We Have to Strengthen Defense of Revolution'

Nicaraguans Protest Attacks by Somozaist Gangs

By Arnold Weissberg



January 31 rally in Managua.

MANAGUA—Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans rallied January 31 to protest the murder of seven Sandinistas in an ambush January 27 at the Honduran border. The demonstration also marked the start of a campaign to enroll and train 200,000 new militia members.

The January 27 ambush was carried out by a Honduras-based gang, followers of ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza. The killings brought to nearly eighty the number of Nicaraguans killed by such counterrevolutionary gangs in recent months.

Massive crowds turned out in León and other cities to honor the dead. At the January 31 action in Managua, an honor guard stood over seven coffins draped with the blue and white Nicaraguan flag and the black and red FSLN flag. The victims' families were also given places of honor.

The Managua demonstration, held in the Carlos Fonseca Plaza of the Revolution, also marked the close of the First International Conference in Solidarity with Nicaragua. The delegates and observers were honored guests at the rally.

Cheers went up from the crowd as the names of the countries represented at the conference were read. The biggest cheers went to Cuba, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union, which has begun to supply Nicaragua with economic and military aid.

Speaking for the National Directorate of the FSLN, Humberto Ortega, commander in chief of the Sandinista People's Army, explained: "We have to strengthen our national defense; we have to strengthen the defense of our sovereign homeland and the defense of the revolution. . . .

"National defense means, economically, maximizing production; socially, maximiz-

ing defense of the gains the revolution has made, young as it is. Militarily, national defense right now means strengthening the Sandinista People's Militias. . . ."

Behind the speakers was a giant banner quoting Augusto César Sandino: "The sovereignty of a people is not to be discussed; it is to be defended arms in hand."

This idea was emphasized by Rafael Córdova Rivas, member of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction: "Imperialism has never triumphed over an armed people anywhere in the world. We are not Santo Domingo. Let no one stay at home. To die for one's country is noble." Córdova Rivas is a former Supreme Court justice who joined the junta last November after two procapitalist members walked off.

Other speakers at the rally included Guerrilla Commander Leticia Herrera, secretary general of the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDSs), Jean Zeigler, representing the Socialist International, and Hans Langberger, speaking on behalf of the solidarity conference participants.

Ortega explained the importance of international solidarity:

"We are sure that when things are difficult, the progressive and revolutionary governments, and the people of the world—like the ones who are here today representing the international conference in solidarity with our people, with our revolution—will be at the side of justice, at the side of the people of Nicaragua and our struggles."

The FSLN and Nicaragua's workers and peasants are confident of their ability to defend their revolution. As Commander Ortega said, "Let them come if they're ready. We'll smash them." □

Thirteen Brazilian Trade Unionists Face Military Court

By Fred Murphy

Thirteen Brazilian trade-union leaders will go on trial before a military court on February 23. They could face up to twelve years' imprisonment for their role in leading a strike by 150,000 metalworkers in the industrial suburbs of São Paulo last April and May.

The best known of the defendants is Luis Inácio da Silva, usually called "Lula." He is the central figure among the new layer of working-class leaders who since 1978 have spearheaded the fight against the military dictatorship's control of the trade-union movement.

Strike Leaders Jailed

When the São Paulo metalworkers went on strike last April to demand job security, a forty-hour week, the right to elect shop stewards, and wage increases to catch up with inflation, the regime declared the work stoppage illegal.

Lula and thirty-three other strike leaders were thrown in jail, accused of "incitement to collective unrest" and "distribution of subversive materials." They were also removed from their union positions and barred from ever holding office in a trade union again. (The latter measures were taken under legislation drawn up in the 1940s, using the laws of fascist Italy as a model.)

Despite the jailing of their leaders and repeated attacks on their picket lines by military police, the metalworkers maintained their strike for forty-one days. They received the solidarity of other unions in the state of São Paulo—at one point 325,000 workers were on strike in solidarity. But repression intensified and the employers threatened to fire all strikers who did not return to work.

After the strike ended on May 12, Lula and the other union leaders were released from jail. But thirteen of them now face trial under the dictatorship's repressive National Security Law.

"Incitement to collective unrest" carries a sentence of two to twelve years in jail, and "distribution of subversive materials" a sentence of one to three years.

The union leaders hope to turn the tables on the military in the course of the trial. "Those who incited collective disobedience of the law were the bosses and government," says Lula's attorney Luis Eduardo Greenhalgh, "and it was the police who incited violence."

Repression Curtails 'Opening'

The trial of Lula and the other metalworkers' leaders is part of a broader cam-



'LULA'

Fred Murphy/IF

paign by President João Figueiredo's government against the labor movement and the growing political opposition to the seventeen-year-old military dictatorship in Brazil.

When Figueiredo, a general and former head of the secret police, took office in 1979, he promised a "democratic opening."

A broad campaign for amnesty gained the release of most political prisoners and a halt to official press censorship. Several opposition political parties were legalized.

But Figueiredo's plans to improve the dictatorship's image had not included the rise of an independent and militant labor movement.

The workers took advantage of the "opening" to launch the biggest wave of strikes in Brazil's history in 1979 and 1980. They sought to overcome the drastic decline in their living standards that the dictatorship's "economic miracle" in the late 1960s and early 1970s had brought about. Younger leaders like Lula began to displace the bureaucrats that the military had installed atop the trade unions.

At the same time, peasants, agricultural laborers, students, professionals, and sectors of the Catholic Church also began to go into action against the regime, raising their own specific demands and joining

together to fight for democratic rights and an end to the dictatorship.

Workers Party

Because their struggles for economic demands usually ran up against the power of the military government, the workers felt a need for a political party of their own. So last year the Workers Party (PT) was founded, led by Lula and other militant young labor leaders and based on the big unions of industrial workers in São Paulo and other cities of southern Brazil.

Since its founding the Workers Party has become a key political expression of the broad antidictatorial movement in Brazil. It has established committees throughout the country and is preparing to present candidates in the 1982 elections for Congress, state governors, and municipal posts. A recent poll showed Lula in second place for governor of the state of São Paulo.

The military rulers of Brazil were alarmed by the fact that their "opening" produced a militant mass movement led by workers, instead of the docile bourgeois opposition parties they had been counting on. Their response was to step up both legal and extralegal repression.

Right-Wing Terror

Shortly after the metalworkers strike was broken, right-wing terrorist groups linked to sectors of the armed forces launched attacks on left-wing newspapers. Newsdealers were threatened, and those who continued to sell leftist publications were burned down.

In July of last year a leader of the Workers Party in the western state of Acre was murdered. Lula and PT general secretary Jacó Bittar (who is also president of the petrochemical workers union) went to Acre to speak at a protest rally. After a foreman on one of the state's big farms was killed, Lula and Bittar were charged under the National Security Law for "inciting class struggle."

In subsequent months Workers Party headquarters in São Paulo, Campo Grande, Jundiá, and other cities were vandalized or bombed.

Lawyers who had assisted the striking metalworkers were also victims of attacks. The most serious of these was the kidnapping and beating of Dalmo Dallari, an attorney who worked with the Peace and Justice Commission of the Catholic Church in São Paulo. In late August, the Rio de Janeiro offices of the Brazilian Bar

Association were bombed and a secretary was killed.

Credit for many of these terrorist attacks was claimed by right-wing groups calling themselves the "New Fatherland Phalanx" and the "Communist-Hunting Commandos."

Despite evidence presented by a Congressional deputy that these groups were linked to top army generals, no action was taken by the government. As of the beginning of February, only one person was in custody for the bomb attack on the Bar Association. No charges had yet been brought in the case.

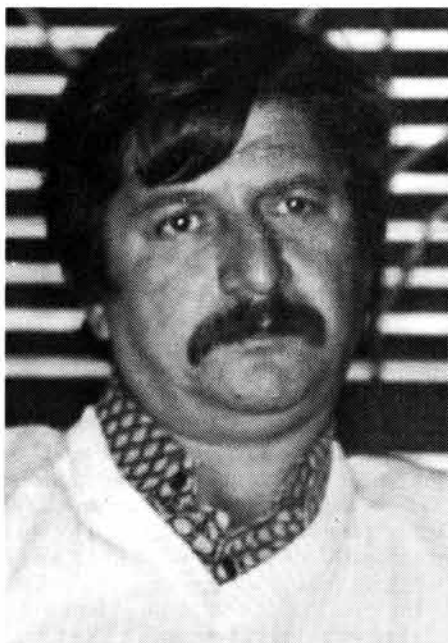
In October President Figueiredo expelled from the country an Italian priest who had been aiding impoverished sugarcane laborers in the state of Pernambuco. The move was based on a new law that provides for summary expulsion of foreigners who violate the "national interest." Brazilian bishops had unanimously condemned the law as "anti-Christian and wicked." Figueiredo's action confirmed the bishops' charge that the law was aimed at foreign priests who side with the poor.

In December the editor of one of Brazil's largest daily newspapers, *Jornal do Brasil*, was sentenced to sixteen months in prison for publishing an interview in which an opposition deputy criticized election officials.

Solidarity Needed

Thus the February 23 trial of Lula and the other leaders of the metalworkers will be an important test of whether or not the "democratic opening" forced on the regime by the mass movement will continue to be eroded by repression.

The dictatorship is faced with a di-



JACO BITTAR

Fred Murphy/IP

lemma: Workers' struggles must be curbed if Figueiredo is to impose the austerity policies demanded by the big banks that hold Brazil's huge \$56 billion foreign debt. But condemning Lula and his comrades to prison would expose the "democratic opening" as a fraud and call forth massive protests.

International solidarity can help tip the balance. In January and early February, Lula, Jacó Bittar, and two other Workers Party leaders conducted a tour of eight

European countries, the United States, and Canada to explain their case and seek support from political and trade-union leaders. They received numerous pledges of financial support and commitments to send delegations to Brazil to observe the trial.

While in Europe Lula met with Lech Walesa, leader of the independent Polish trade-union movement Solidarity, and also had an audience with Pope John Paul II.

Five U.S. trade-union presidents sponsored the Brazilians' visit to the United States February 9-12. They were Douglas Fraser of the United Auto Workers (UAW), William Winpisinger of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), Robert Goss of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers (OCAW), Charles Perlik of the Newspaper Guild, and Kenneth Brown of the Graphic Arts International Union.

The IAM's Winpisinger hosted a reception in Washington for the Brazilian union leaders that was attended by nearly fifty American union presidents and other top labor officials. The IAM and the 1.2-million-member United Food and Commercial Workers Union are both planning to send delegations to Brazil for the trial.

Under Brazil's system of military justice, the trial will last only three days and a verdict will be announced immediately afterwards. Thus it is important that telegrams demanding the dropping of charges against the trade unionists be sent immediately to Ibrahim Abi-Ackel, Ministro de Justiça, Brasília, Brasil.

Messages of support may be sent to the Partido dos Trabalhadores; Traversa Brigadeiro Luís Antonio, 21; São Paulo, S.P.; Brasil. □

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Iran Masses Disillusioned Over Government In-Fighting

By Janice Lynn

Rallies marking the second anniversary of the Iranian revolution were held throughout Iran February 11.

At the Tehran rally, hundreds of thousands of people heard President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr address two of Iran's most important problems—the five month war with Iraq and the state of the country's economy.

Also at the rally, a message from Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was read by his son Sayed Ahmad. For the third time in recent weeks, Khomeini appealed for national unity.

Iran's bourgeois government is trying to consolidate its control over a country still in the midst of a revolutionary upheaval. Since the beginning of the revolution, two factions of this government—the so-called liberals coalesced around Bani-Sadr, and sections of the clergy-led Islamic Republican Party (IRP)—have been engaged in bitter in-fighting.

This in-fighting has intensified in recent months. It reflects growing discontent among Iranian working people with the government's inability to expel the Iraqi invaders, and especially with the government's failure to fully arm and mobilize the masses. The Iranian workers remain determined to drive the Iraqis from Iran. Workers' units from the factories continue to volunteer to fight at the front.

Each faction of the government tries to blame the other for the failure to decisively defeat the Iraqi aggressors.

On the economic front, despite the war with Iraq and despite the U.S.-imposed economic boycott, conditions are not disastrous, as the imperialists had hoped.

Socialists in Iran report that although gas is rationed there, there are no severe shortages of goods. Food shipments from Europe to Iran increased over the last year, despite the trade sanctions. Common Market figures covering the first seven months of 1980 showed a 77 percent increase in exports to Iran compared with the same period in 1979.

A January 15 *New York Times* article reported that despite the war with Iraq, Iran's exports of crude oil have reached levels equaling, and perhaps exceeding, those that prevailed before the start of the war. Exports are estimated to be running as high as 1,000,000 barrels a day, up from the 800,000 barrels before the fighting.

However, serious social and economic problems remain to be solved—a legacy of imperialist domination and exploitation of Iran. And there is growing discontent on

the part of the country's workers and peasants with the government's inability to resolve these problems.

In his speech to the Tehran rally, Bani-Sadr noted that industrial production had declined by 30 to 40 percent and that inflation was running at a rate of 30 percent or more.

Khomeini is aware of this discontent on the part of Iran's workers and peasants, as well as the initiatives they are taking to try to resolve some of these problems on their own. This is what underlies his calls for unity among the government factions.

He fears that the factional in-fighting is discrediting the government, alienating the masses, and could encourage further independent action by the workers and peasants, and even a political break with the government.

There is also increasing dissatisfaction with some of the government's measures, such as the restrictions on democratic rights that have been stepped up since the

Iraqi invasion. Some Islamic clergymen have begun dissociating themselves from these measures.

The government has banned unauthorized street demonstrations, put restrictions on newspapers and leaflets, and has jailed revolutionaries such as Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) leader Nemat Jazayeri and Mujahedeen leader Mohammed Reza Saadati.

In defiance of the government's ban on demonstrations, more than 5,000 people marched in Tehran February 6. They carried banners and chanted slogans for jobs, bread, freedom, and independence. The action was organized by the leftist Peykar group and by one of the two wings of the Fedayeen. (The other wing, which calls itself the Fedayeen Majority leans towards the IRP faction in the government, as does the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party.)

The demonstrators were attacked with rifles, knives, and rocks by ultrarightist

French Supply Jet Bombers to Iraq

Iranian officials angrily denounced the French government's January 31 shipment of four F-1 Mirage fighter bombers to Baghdad. These are the most advanced planes in the French armory.

While shipping warplanes to Iraq, Paris continues to hold up delivery of high-speed patrol boats that Iran had ordered.

In addition to a total of sixty Mirage jets that the French government agreed to supply Iraq, it will also send 100 heavy tanks and an assortment of armored cars, antitank missiles, and helicopters.

Moscow has stopped supplying arms to Iraq. This was confirmed by Iraq's First Deputy Premier Taha Yassin Ramadan at a February 3 news conference. Ramadan said that the Soviet Union had stopped "implementing prewar contracts signed with Iraq."

The fighting in the war has slackened in recent weeks. A February 7 *New York Times* article by Drew Middleton reports that "Iraqi morale, which was very high during the first three months of the war, has deteriorated during the inactive winter period."

After capturing the cargo port section of Khorramshahr, the Iraqis were unable to gain any further ground. And an Iranian counteroffensive in January pushed Iraqi forces back some twenty-two miles from the provincial capital of Ahwaz, putting it out of Iraqi artillery range.

The refinery complex at Abadan is also still held by Iran, despite an Iraqi siege of more than two months.

The Iraqis have now begun a push on the Iranian city of Susangird.

Christian Science Monitor correspondent Edward Giradet, reporting from Baghdad February 2, describes rising discontent among Iraqi citizens with the hardships caused by the war.

Giradet reports that Shi'ite Muslims, Christians, and Iraqi Kurds deeply resent president Saddam Hussein's war policies. In the north, he reports, Iraqi Kurds often attack government and military personnel. In Baghdad, sporadic gunfire is frequently heard at night.

"It is quite apparent," Giradet concludes, "that public unity is not quite what the [Iraqi] government would prefer the outside world to believe it is."

—Janice Lynn

gangs known as *hezbollah* (meaning followers of the Party of God). Revolutionary Guards threw tear-gas grenades and fired their rifles into the air to disperse the demonstrators.

The forces around Bani-Sadr have tried to appear as the champions of democratic rights. For example, Bani-Sadr has called for an end to censorship and has come out against any trends "toward pressure, toward prison and toward torture."

Much of Bani-Sadr's support now comes from sectors of the petty bourgeoisie—the bazaar merchants, professionals, and government office workers. Many bazaar merchants oppose an IRP plan to nationalize foreign trade.

The IRP retains greater influence with factory shoras and Islamic committees in the poor neighborhoods than does the Bani-Sadr faction. But the masses show growing distaste for the bitter debates in the government.

Thus far the working class and the peasantry have not created nationwide, independent mass organizations of their own which could form the basis of a workers and farmers government, although initial steps toward forging such organizations have been taken.

This is one of the main reasons why the two pro-capitalist factions continue to monopolize political power.

Nonetheless, the workers and peasants are drawing their own conclusions. Peasants continue to press for land and workers demand an increased say in running their factories. The masses want measures to meet their social and economic needs. □

Yugoslav Regime Takes New Action Against 'Praxis' Group

The Yugoslav government has taken further repressive measures against the eight University of Belgrade professors known as the *Praxis* group. The eight—Mihailo Marković, Ljubomir Tadić, Miladin Zivotić, Zagorka Golubović, Svetozar Stojanović, Dragoljub Micunović, Triva Indjić, and Nebojsa Popov—had been associated with the Marxist philosophical journal *Praxis* at the University of Belgrade.

All eight were suspended from their teaching posts in 1975 and forbidden to teach, publish, or give public lectures because of their criticisms of the Yugoslav regime. In December 1980 the Belgrade professors were dismissed from their positions as "suspended" employees at the university after the Serbian legislature passed a special law to deal with their case.

And in January, Mihailo Marković was interrogated by the police and his passport revoked. Marković has held a number of teaching posts abroad and the regime may be trying to frame him up on that basis.

'We Kill Everything in Front of Us'

South Africa's Secret War Against Angola

The South African regime is carrying out a secret war against Angola and its people.

Ever since the end of the Angolan war of 1975-76—during which a South African invasion was beaten back by Angolan and Cuban troops—South African forces have repeatedly struck across the border. They admit doing so, but claim that their only targets are guerrilla camps of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), which is fighting for Namibia's independence from South African rule. But the Angolan government has frequently charged that they also attack Angolan villages.

Confirmation of this has come from a deserter from the South African armed forces, Trevor Edwards. In an interview published in the February 8 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Edwards described in graphic detail how South African units regularly terrorize the population of southern Angola.

During one incursion into Angola in October, Edwards said, two children suddenly jumped up from behind some bushes and began to run. "I said: 'Don't shoot them.' There was one of our guys who started shouting to them in the local language. Then these other kids popped up and started to run as well so obviously I said: 'Put them out.' We started shooting.

"More and more of them kept jumping up and running. Some of them were completely naked. They'd taken their clothes off to show they weren't armed. We shot this young girl. She must have been about five. And we shot her father. We shot about nine in all."

It was several weeks after that incident that Edwards deserted, claiming that he no longer liked what he was doing.

Edwards was part of the 32nd Battalion of the South African Defence Force, based in northern Namibia. Much of the battalion is composed of former troops of the Angolan National Liberation Front (FNLA), one of the proimperialist groups defeated by the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) during the 1975-76 war. It is officered, however, by whites, including mercenaries like Edwards himself, a British citizen who had fought for a while with the Rhodesian army before being recruited by the South Africans.

"Our main job," Edwards explained, "is to take an area and clear it. We sweep through it and we kill everything in front of us, cattle, goats, people, everything. We are out to stop Swapo and so we stop them getting into villages for food and water.

"But half the time the locals don't know

what's going on. We're just fucking them up and it gets out of hand. Some of the guys get a bit carried away. And Swapo still get by us and cross the cut-line between Angola and Namibia. It's not as if we are stopping them."

During Edwards's first operation into Angola, in May 1980, the force he was with took the town of Savate, about sixty kilometers inside Angola. He said that they knew there were no SWAPO fighters in the town, just Angolan troops. After the town was captured, two representatives of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) went in to "claim" it. The UNITA, like the FNLA, had been defeated in the 1975-76 war, but has continued to fight against the Angolan government with South African support.

"The point is that Unita are a lot of crap," Edwards said. "They hang around in the South-east where their tribe is and they can probably defend themselves, but they can't go out and take somewhere like Savate. We do it for them because it improves their bargaining position, gives them more talking power."

The 32nd Battalion's main purpose, however, is to comb a designated area of southern Angola for four or five weeks at a time.

"Some of it is pretty heavy," Edwards explained. "Sometimes we take locals for questioning. It's rough. We just beat them, cut them, burn them. As soon as we're finished with them, we kill them. We've got Angolan government soldiers and taken them back to base for proper questioning.

"Sometimes you have to do it to the children to make the adults talk. There was a 12-year-old boy. We wanted to know what was going on. We wanted his mother to talk, so we tied him up like a chicken with his wrists up behind his back, strapped to his ankles.

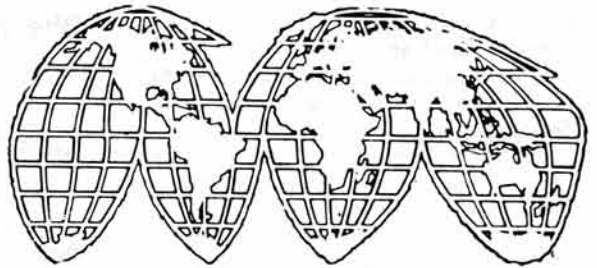
"Then we played water polo with him, put him in this kind of dam and pushed him about, let him sink. Every so often we took him out. He wouldn't cry. He just wet himself. The mother didn't tell us anything. In the end we just left him in the water and he drowned." □

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AROUND THE WORLD



Barbados Provocation Against Grenada

On February 6 Selwyn Strachan, minister of communications, works, and labor and acting minister of foreign affairs of the Caribbean island of Grenada, arrived at the Barbados International Airport on his way to a conference of the Nonaligned movement in New Delhi. Although other Grenadians on his flight were allowed to pass through the airport unimpeded, Strachan and his personal aide were singled out for harassment as part of the Barbados regime's hostile policy toward the Grenada revolution.

Strachan was traveling under the protection of a diplomatic passport, but the customs officials insisted on searching his luggage. After registering his protest, Strachan allowed them to carry out the search.

The officials then demanded that Strachan and his aide be taken to a private room for a search of their persons. They refused. When it became clear that the two Grenadians would not willingly submit to such treatment, they were confined to the customs area for several hours until their connecting flight was ready to take off.

A similar incident occurred at the Barbados airport in early November, when Grenada's agriculture minister, Unison White-man, was also harassed.

A press release issued February 7 by the Grenada Mission to the United Nations appealed for international condemnations of the Barbados government's aggressive policies toward Grenada.

In a news conference in New York the same day, Strachan explained, "The Barbados administration is undoubtedly a stooge of imperialism. They will go all out to ensure that the orders given to them—whether they are given in public or in private—are carried out.

"The Grenada revolution is one of the focal points for imperialism. They would like to see the end of the revolution as quickly as possible. And therefore they will use the neighboring states in the region, Barbados being one, to try to see if they can frustrate the revolution. . . .

"But we are not prepared to sit down and take those kinds of attacks. As long as the People's Revolutionary Government is there, we will stand up to any pressures."

Revolt in Eastern Sudan

Among the loudest voices condemning Libya's recent aid to the Chadian govern-

ment in putting down a French-backed revolt was that of Sudanese President Gaafar el-Nimeiry. Nimeiry's concern over the impact of the imperialist setback in Chad was understandable. He was afraid it would inspire the peoples of the Sudan itself.

His regime already faces significant opposition. In January the regional capital of El Fasher was briefly taken over by insurgents.

The Darfur region of western Sudan, which borders on Chad, is inhabited by Chadian nomadic tribes. It is one of the poorest areas of the Sudan. Economic hardships have led to a number of protests in recent months.

When Nimeiry appointed a non-Darfuri governor to administer the region, the people of El Fasher rose up. The locally recruited police refused to fire on them, and the town fell into the hands of the protesters. Nimeiry rushed in troops, who retook the town after killing a number of the demonstrators and wounding many.

The uprising was successful, however, in forcing Nimeiry to change the governor.

Uruguayan Officers Defect, Expose Widespread Tortures

Two members of the Uruguayan military, who recently fled that country, have provided documentary evidence of tortures carried out by the armed forces.

Daniel Rey Piuma had served as a photographer with the Navy Information Service for three years, while Rodolfo González Díaz was a lieutenant-colonel serving in the Ministry of National Defense. Rey Piuma brought with him photographs showing the practice of torture against political prisoners and evidence of mistreatment found on bodies washed up on the Uruguayan coast. He also confirmed that naval officers participated in torture sessions.

Lt.-Col. González Díaz revealed the existence of a special body in each army division called OCOA (Coordinating Body for Antisubversive Operations). OCOA has the job of investigating, interrogating, and torturing political detainees.

Before leaving for the Netherlands, where he has received political asylum, Rey Piuma held a news conference in Brazil. He revealed that he had in his possession more than four hundred micro-

film copies of secret documents from Uruguayan Naval Intelligence. These documents prove the existence of exchanges of information with the Brazilian and Argentine navies; prisoner exchanges with the Argentine navy; the opening of letters of prominent Uruguayan citizens; and evidence of widespread corruption by naval intelligence officers, including participation in narcotics trafficking, extortion, and smuggling.

20,000 Pakistanis to Guard Saudi King

Some 20,000 Pakistani mercenaries are being dispatched to Saudi Arabia. As part of the Saudi National Guard, their main function will be to serve as bodyguards for the Saudi royal family.

A report in the February 6 *New York Times* expressed hope that the presence of the Pakistani troops will be "far less provocative to Saudi society than an American or other Western presence would be. The net result, furthermore, is the immediate strengthening of the Saudi leadership. . . ."

The article goes on to point out that the need for these 20,000 "trustworthy troops" from Pakistan was brought home to the Saudi monarch following the rebellion in Mecca in November 1979. A rebel grouping occupied the Grand Mosque for two weeks and demonstrations in defiance of the Saudi monarchy broke out in other regions of the country as well.

As for the Pakistani military dictatorship, it is getting handsomely paid for helping to shore up the unpopular Saudi monarchy.

In addition to the mercenaries in Saudi Arabia, some 10,000 Pakistani troops are already serving in Jordan, Abu Dhabi, Libya, and elsewhere.

U.S. Troops Dispatched to Oman

A Pentagon spokesman disclosed February 12 that a U.S. military unit was being sent to the Persian Gulf country of Oman.

About 250 army and air force troops will conduct military maneuvers there.

Oman is one of the countries where Washington is setting up bases for its Rapid Deployment Force. Six C-130 aircraft were refueled in Oman as part of Carter's commando raid against Iran last April.

Karolyn Kerry: Fighter for the Working Class

By Mary-Alice Waters

[The following are major excerpts from an article that appeared in the February 20 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

Karolyn Kerry, an activist and leader of the revolutionary socialist movement in the United States for almost forty-seven years, died unexpectedly of a heart attack in San Diego, California, on February 5. She was seventy years old.

Karolyn Eudora McLeland was born December 11, 1910, in Louisville, Kentucky, where she spent the first years of her life. She described her family as southern "poor whites."

Her father died while she was still in grade school and her mother soon moved to Chicago. Karolyn finished the 8th grade at the Mary D. Hill Public School in Louisville, but when she got to Chicago she decided she had had enough of family and school. Barely into her teens, she set off on her own to make her way as a young working woman.

Karolyn got a job in a department store in Chicago. Like millions of others of her generation she was soon deeply affected by the economic and social catastrophe of capitalism following the crash of 1929. She began to search for explanations, to be interested in politics.

In 1930, through mutual friends, she met Tom Kerry, a young salesman for the Chicago Byproduct Coke Company. That was the beginning of a lifelong relationship as companions and comrades.

Tom introduced Karolyn to socialist ideas, but at that point neither of them belonged to any group. In late 1933, some acquaintances of theirs were expelled from the organization known as Friends of the Soviet Union for reading works by the Soviet revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky.

That was when Tom and Karolyn came in contact with the Communist League of America (CLA). The CLA was the small nucleus of revolutionists in the United States who had been expelled from the Communist Party for exposing and fighting against the development of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union which led to the counter-revolutionary destruction of Lenin's policies of revolutionary internationalism and workers democracy.

As was typical of Karolyn throughout her life, when she became convinced of something, she acted. At the end of 1934 she and Tom moved from Chicago to the Bay Area in California to see if life was any better on the West Coast. They went to a meeting to hear Communist Party leader Bill Dunne speak about the San Francisco general strike and



KAROLYN KERRY

massive labor battles taking place across the country.

Outside the meeting a group of young Trotskyists were selling the *Militant* and Karolyn bought a copy. Later that week Karolyn decided to join the San Francisco branch of the CLA, just before it fused with A. J. Muste's American Workers Party and became the Workers Party.

A few weeks later Tom joined too.

Karolyn was always tough and independent and knew how to take care of herself. She was not one to be intimidated. In those days, selling the *Militant* on the waterfront in the Bay Area took not only the conviction that the ideas expressed in the paper were correct, but courage and a capacity to defend yourself physically as well. The Stalinist goons of the Communist Party did whatever they could get away with to prevent the revolutionary Marxist point of view from being heard.

When Karolyn joined the San Francisco branch of the Workers Party there were only three other women—and a bakers dozen comrades in all. She often talked about how she and another very capable woman comrade whom she admired greatly, Eloise Booth, would sell the paper on the waterfront or outside union meetings, with a sturdy umbrella in hand.

Years later, at the end of World War II, Karolyn taught another generation of women comrades how to defend the party's right to sell our press. The Stalinists were then trying to prevent us from selling outside the

meetings of the National Maritime Union in New York City, too.

Karolyn and Eloise used to walk into union meetings and ask for five minutes to speak to the gathering about one or another pamphlet they were selling. Often the local leadership would be so surprised at their audacity they would agree, and then she and Eloise would stand out front and sell to the workers as they left the meeting.

That kind of bold approach was typical of Karolyn and her determination to let nothing stand in the way of reaching the working class wherever possible with the ideas of revolutionary Marxism.

Organizing Waitresses

The great San Francisco general strike in 1934 unionized the waterfront and helped establish the drive toward industrial organization in the U.S. In its wake, dozens of union battles were fought throughout the Bay Area. Karolyn threw herself into whatever battle came along.

In those days there were few opportunities for women to get jobs in industry. Women were generally restricted to employment considered suitable for "ladies." Karolyn, like many other working class women, spent many years of her life working as a waitress. And she was a good one.

She was always ready to give a helping hand to other young women who were struggling to earn a living and make their way in a rough world. Wherever she worked, she made friends and introduced her co-workers to political ideas through the *Militant*. She helped them see that their problems were not primarily their own fault, but the product of capitalism and all its rotten social relationships. They could only be changed by collective action of the workers themselves.

One of her first waitressing jobs was at the posh Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco, where she threw herself into organizing the waiters and waitresses. She often told the story of how the strikers organized an Easter fashion show to publicize their fight. While the hotel management displayed Easter finery for the ladies of the ruling class in the swank dining room, the striking waitresses pulled up a flatbed truck in front of the hotel and put on their own fashion parade. Karolyn was one of the more striking models. And they won the strike in short order.

Soon after, she became involved in strike support work for the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers, which at that time was an independent union. She had gone to a strike meeting to sell the *Mil-*

itant and the strikers invited her in. The meeting was discussing how to organize the strike and enable the workers' families to survive.

After listening for a while, Karolyn raised her hand and made a few suggestions. She talked about the successful struggles of the Teamsters organizing drive in Minnesota and encouraged the shipbuilders to follow their example: establish a women's auxiliary organization, set up a soup kitchen for the strikers' families, organize strike defense squads. She urged them to draw on the power and discipline inherent in a democratically organized rank and file. The strikers were impressed and asked Karolyn to help.

She and other comrades pitched in, and Karolyn considered that one of their greatest achievements was overcoming the resistance of the men to having their wives help out at the strike headquarters. As she explained in an educational panel discussion on women in labor history at Oberlin, Ohio, in 1974:

"The 'Ladies' Auxiliary' of the union. Today that sounds as though it was coined in the nineteenth century. But it wasn't really. In fact the idea was a militant and progressive concept that grew up as part of the innovative strike tactics of the new fighting industrial unions. It was introduced by the revolutionary socialists and communists active in the left wing of the AFL, the IWW, etc.

"While the term 'Ladies' Auxiliaries' has an odd sound to our ears today in the light of the rise of women's liberation, I can assure you, there was nothing the social register would consider very ladylike about the conduct of these militant working women's battalions."

Agricultural Workers

Karolyn participated in and gained experience through several other class struggle battles in California in the 1930s. Two made a special impact on her.

In 1935 and 1936, bitter struggles were being waged to organize agricultural workers. As usual the sheriffs and their deputies were brutally busting up strike headquarters and social centers, tear-gassing and beating up strikers and their families, and herding scabs into the fields.

The Workers Party together with the left-wing forces in the Socialist Party, especially the youth in the Young People's Socialist League, decided to do what they could to help publicize the strikers' conditions and the struggle to organize the fields.

Karolyn and others joined the picketing organized by the Mexican-based CUCOM, the United Confederation of Mexican Workers and Campesinos, on the Pales Verdes Peninsula. She was arrested along with some of the strikers, helped organize the relief kitchens and childcare centers, collected money to sustain the strike, found doctors and lawyers to help, and worked for the defense committee set up to aid victims of the strike.

In the end, few agricultural workers in California were successfully organized in the 1930s. The hidebound AFL disdained them and the new CIO was unequal to the task. But the battle waged and the unity in struggle sometimes achieved by Mexican, Filipino and other workers was an important part of the legacy of agricultural labor in California that contributed to the victories of the United Farmworkers in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Fish Canneries

Karolyn also took part in the drive to organize the fish cannery workers on the Pacific coast into the Seafarers International Union (SIU) after 1938.

The party had already begun to establish a sizeable maritime fraction through our work in the Sailors Union of the Pacific.



Kerry, left, marching in New York City demonstration against the Vietnam war on March 26, 1966.

When the SUP won a charter from the AFL and established the SIU, it also won jurisdiction over the AFL-organized fish-packing industry on the West Coast. The proviso was that each plant had to vote separately to affiliate to the SIU.

The fish-packing industry was one of the few that employed predominantly women. The women comrades in the newly formed Socialist Workers Party (which had been founded at a convention on New Year's weekend 1938) were now able to be part of this major industrial fraction. They jumped into the campaign to win affiliation votes in as many plants as possible and to improve working conditions.

In San Francisco, Monterey, San Pedro, and San Diego, women comrades went to work in the plants.

In San Francisco they packed sardines. "Three down and two up. A very romantic trade," was the way Karolyn used to describe it.

One of the biggest problems was the work schedule. The women were supposed to be on call. Whenever the sardine boats came in with a catch, the whistles would blow and everyone was supposed to turn up for work. Sometimes there would only be two hours of packing to be done. Other times they would have to work straight through twelve, sixteen, or even more hours, all at straight-time pay.

After refusing to go to work several times unless guaranteed four hours' work, they were able to establish a four-hour minimum and a graduated pay scale for time over twelve hours.

All these experiences were part of the class struggle that helped to shape Karolyn's political consciousness and instill in her that unshakable confidence in the capacities of the working women and men of this country to rise to the challenges that history has presented us.

Off to New York

As the ruling class prepared to take the workers of this country into the second imperialist slaughter, they first turned their artillery on the most conscious and militant sectors of the workers movement—those who were uncompromisingly opposed to the wars being planned by the U.S. rulers.

Under the infamous Smith thought-control act, eighteen leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Teamsters Local 544 in Minneapolis were convicted of advocating revolutionary ideas. Prison sentences were handed down in December 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor, but various appeal procedures delayed the prison terms themselves until 1944.

Tom and Karolyn came to New York at the end of 1943 to be part of the national and professional apparatus of the party while the majority of the eighteen served their time at Sandstone Federal Penitentiary in Minnesota. That "temporary assignment," as Karolyn once referred to it, lasted for some thirty-two years. There was one brief

interval between late 1953 and 1956 when Tom and Karolyn returned to Los Angeles to help lead the party in southern California following a major split in 1953.

Many of those years were the very hardest the revolutionary movement in this country had lived through. The postwar reaction, anticommunist witch-hunt, and bureaucratization of the labor movement brought declining membership and financial hardship. The enormous political pressure found its expression in splits and other political aberrations.

Only when objective conditions began to change in the late 1950s with the rise of the Black liberation struggle, the victory of the Cuban revolution, and then the struggle against the Vietnam war, did the workers movement in this country begin to show significant signs of new life.

Throughout this entire period Karolyn and Tom were both key components of the unshakable cadre of the party. When times got really rough financially, Karolyn went to work waitressing again, but for most of the years in New York she worked full-time for the party in whatever capacity she was needed.

She organized defense work for the jailed leaders of the SWP through the Civil Rights Defense Committee.

She helped raise funds to sustain European comrades and their families after World War II.

She managed election campaigns.

She was city secretary for the New York local of the party.

In 1958 she was chosen to study at the leadership cadre school organized by the party.

From 1959 to 1967 she served as the business and circulation manager of the *Militant*, bringing to that job all her experience and enthusiasm for selling the party's press from coast to coast.

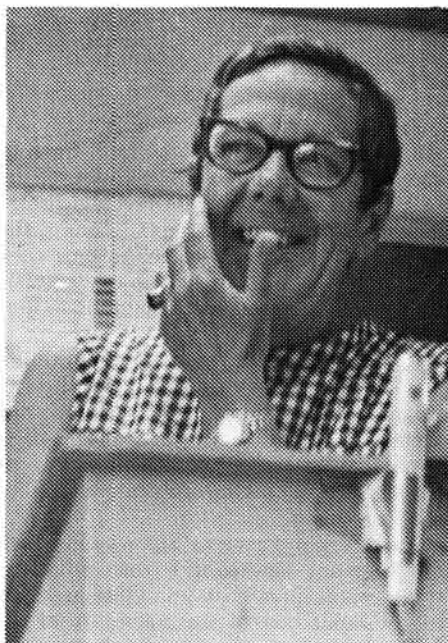
She also organized promotion work for Pathfinder Press.

A Party Leader

In every one of these assignments Karolyn led the cadres of the party in an exemplary way.

She insisted on carrying through every assignment in the most competent and professional manner. And with the least expense. She was always looking for ways to save the party a penny, to maximize what we could do with our meager resources. She was aggressive about asking friends and sympathizers of the party to give their money because she knew there was no better way to spend it to advance the interests of the working class.

Karolyn hated sloppiness—not caring about your work or about those you were working with. She asked the maximum of everyone, but never more than she demanded of herself. She insisted on teamwork and tried to organize every assignment to draw in as many comrades as possible, to train them to lead others.



Jo Hendrickson/Militant

Kerry speaking at panel on Women in Labor History held in August 1974.

Although her political self-confidence was never equal to her own abilities, she always went out of her way to encourage younger and newer comrades, especially young women, to make them feel comfortable socially and politically at ease.

In addition to whatever national assignments Karolyn was responsible for at any time, she was always one of the most active leaders of the New York branch of the party.

Political Inspiration

Throughout the years of full-time work for the party nationally there were three things especially that Karolyn drew strength and reinforcement from.

One was the rise of the civil rights movement in the South. As a Louisville native (she never did totally lose her Kentucky accent), she knew what conditions in the South were like and understood the power and revolutionary dynamic of the struggle for Black liberation.

In 1955, the bus boycott movement began in Montgomery, Alabama. When Karolyn and Tom drove across the country in 1956, returning to New York after several years in Los Angeles, they stopped in Montgomery on their way. They learned of the appeal by the organizers of the boycott for stationwagons to help sustain the struggle, so she and Tom decided to donate their car. Farrell Dobbs, the party's presidential candidate, drove it back to Montgomery as soon as they had arrived in New York and unpacked their few belongings.

For years Karolyn was a member of the NAACP and kept her membership cards from every city she lived in.

When the July 26th Movement came to power in Cuba in 1959 and the workers and peasants of that country began to take their

own destiny in hand, Karolyn was the business manager of the *Militant*—a very small *Militant* of only four pages a week.

Being responsible for the never-ending battle of trying to figure out how to keep down costs and raise money to publish the most essential things, Karolyn went to work in earnest. She was determined that we would somehow find a way to publish Castro's most important speeches and report on developments taking place in Cuba. And we did.

To publish one speech, we didn't have enough money for an eight-page paper, but we came up with enough for six pages, and Karolyn organized a crew of comrades to donate their labor and collate by hand the single extra sheet that had to be inserted in each copy before it was folded and sent out.

Right from the start, she wanted to be able to go and see the Cuban revolution for herself. For years the travel blockade imposed by U.S. imperialism precluded any possibility, but she was finally able to go to Cuba for a brief tourist vacation in 1978. She came back with renewed interest in developments taking place in Cuba and was especially interested in the conditions of women and the flowering of art, dance, and culture in Cuba.

The third political development in recent years that Karolyn drew great inspiration from was the emergence of the women's liberation movement. She was enthusiastic about the large numbers of women coming forward to fight for their rights, and the development of a broad new layer of leaders of the Socialist Workers Party who were women.

She understood how the different economic and social conditions of today created possibilities for women that were different from her generation and she wanted to encourage all her young women friends and comrades to take maximum advantage of every opportunity.

Karolyn belonged to both the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the National Organization for Women and was an active member of NOW in recent years, even after she and Tom "retired" from day-to-day political leadership responsibilities in 1977 and moved to the West Coast.

Karolyn's strongest conviction in life was that everything she had done that was worthwhile was because of the party. She understood that not everyone could sustain the pace and pressure, and she had many friends among sympathizers and former members of the party. But whenever she would hear comrades imply that they were making "sacrifices" for the party, she would immediately take them up on it. The only real sacrifice, she would tell them, would be to cease being a revolutionary, to no longer devote your utmost time, energy and ability to advancing the interests of the working class.

That, Karolyn knew, was what made her life worthwhile. □

Selections From the Left

ROUGE

"Red," newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Paris.

As the presidential candidate of the Revolutionary Communist League, Alain Krivine recently completed his first speaking tour, which took him to several dozen medium-sized towns around the country. The January 30 issue of *Rouge* contained an interview with Krivine in which he discussed the significance of this first phase of his campaign.

Krivine notes that these towns are places "where meetings are rare and where the workers, often from small factories, have few opportunities to express themselves in the political debate." In general the LCR's presence in those towns has been weak, meaning that "these workers know little about us."

Despite this, the meetings were very positive. The crowds were quite large, considering that the election campaign has only just begun. Most significantly, the composition of the audiences was quite different from the traditional gatherings of the "far left." There were "old activists from the workers movement and groups of young people. Many members of the [two main union federations, the] CGT and CFDT. . . . Many members of the Socialist Party and sometimes members of the Communist Party" also took part in the meetings.

One of the striking features of these meetings is that they turned into wide-ranging discussions of the questions at issue in the entire workers movement. According to Krivine, many of the workers at the meetings would begin their remarks by stating that this was the first time in a long while that people in that town had been able to get together with members of other political groups and other unions to discuss the problems of the workers movement in that area.

The basic theme of the Krivine campaign is the need for the workers movement to overcome long-standing and deep-going divisions that prevent it from acting in unison against the offensive of the employers and their government. In particular, Krivine is stressing the need for both the Communist Party and Socialist Party to agree in advance that either will withdraw its presidential candidate in the second round of France's two-stage election in favor of whichever candidate did best in the first round.

Krivine attributes the changing composition of the audiences at his meetings to the fact that the LCR's present campaign is viewed as "less marginal" than previous

ones. This is due to two factors.

First, the workers have had time to digest the experiences of the Union of the Left electoral bloc and its breakup before the March 1978 elections. "Today the workers are asking themselves how they can break out of the swamp of disunity; they are seeking a political solution to that question."

And second, "our responses seem tangible. We are also beginning to learn how to wage campaigns on more closely focused themes, how to concentrate more effectively—i.e. in a more agitational way—on the basic explanations of the present political situation."

According to Krivine, "the way in which the regional newspapers and radio stations report [our visits] provides an interesting indication of the credibility of the campaign's themes as far as the workers of these cities are concerned. The articles are generally in a prominent place. And then when I go to the factory gates, the journalists view it as an event for the city."

The next phase of Krivine's tour will take him to more than forty big industrial areas throughout the country.

la brèche

"The Breach," French-language organ of the Socialist Workers Party (PSO), Swiss section of the Fourth International. Published twice a month in Lausanne.

The Socialist Workers Party (PSO) of Switzerland launched a campaign in February to collect 100,000 signatures on a petition demanding the establishment of state-run vocational training schools with facilities for at least 10,000 students.

La Brèche points out in its January 24 issue that "the question of vocational training is especially important in a time of economic recession" and large-scale layoffs.

Further, the question has relevance to all sections of the working class. *La Brèche* notes that young people would have a chance for real vocational training for the first time. Women would be able to learn the skills that could permit them to break out of the low-paid "female" jobs.

La Brèche adds that a campaign around such training centers can help to prevent divisions between skilled and unskilled workers. Due to the rapid changes in technology and the introduction of new machinery, workers can "quickly find themselves catapulted from the ranks of the skilled to the unskilled."

To leave such retraining to the employers, *La Brèche* points out, means placing oneself at their mercy at a time when the attacks on the working class are increasing.

The article calls on the state to organize the financing of these training centers. The argument that there is little money available "has little weight when one considers that Switzerland devotes four times more to military expenses than to vocational training. Moreover, our plan calls for most of the financing (three-quarters) for the public training centers to come from a tax on employers."

The paper adds that "many figures from the workers movement, experienced comrades, have come out for the initiative and have entered the committee to launch it."

REVOLUTION SOCIALISTE

"Socialist Revolution," publication of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), Antilles section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Fort-de-France, Martinique.

The January 24 issue contains an account of a conference on the Conditions of Workers in the Caribbean.

The conference, held on the island of Grenada January 9-11, was sponsored by the New Jewel Movement (NJM) of Grenada, the Caribbean People's Alliance, and the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement.

The Socialist Revolution Group was invited to attend the conference, along with the Communist parties on the French-ruled islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe.

Revolution Socialiste reports that present at the conference were "anti-imperialist organizations with different orientations, but who all wished to work together on several points of agreement."

Other conference participants included representatives from the Communist Party of Cuba; a delegation from Surinam; a representative from the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador; a delegation from the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP); representatives from Panama, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, and representatives from the Caribbean islands of St. Vincent, Barbados, Dominica, and Jamaica.

"Maurice Bishop, NJM general secretary and Prime Minister of free Grenada, opened the conference, reviewing the successful efforts made in the twenty-two months of the Grenadian revolution and its significance for the peoples of the Caribbean," the article said.

The GRS was one of the groups, along with representatives from the PSP, the Dutch Antilles, and the Communist Party of Guadeloupe that presented a report at a plenary session on countries still under colonial domination.

"Resolutions in active solidarity with El Salvador and Grenada were unanimously adopted."

'A Profound Decentralization of the State Apparatus'

The System of 'People's Power' in Cuba

[The January 18 edition of the Cuban English-language weekly *Granma* carried a special eight-page supplement on the system of "People's Power," the elected government bodies that began functioning throughout Cuba in 1976. We are reprinting from *Granma* a set of questions and answers that explain the structure of the People's Power system; an interview with Raúl Roa, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and acting chairman of the National Assembly of People's Power; and excerpts from two interviews with delegates to People's Power bodies.]

* * *

What is the structure of People's Power in Cuba?

There are three levels of People's Power, the highest state power institution: municipal, provincial and national.

The municipal assemblies are composed of the delegates elected in each of the circumscriptions, the provincial assemblies are composed of the delegates elected in the municipal assemblies, and the National Assembly is composed of deputies, who are also elected in the municipal assemblies. In this way, the masses have institutional channels for participating in state decision making. Hence, the great historical importance of the establishment of People's Power in Cuba five years ago, as a means for building a truly democratic state.

How are the delegates elected at the municipal level?

The electors of a circumscription meet and propose those among them whom they consider most apt to represent them in local administration. There is no such thing as a single candidate. The rule is that no less than two and no more than eight candidates are to be put up. The biographies of those elected as candidates are displayed on bulletin boards where everybody can read them and be informed as to who they are and the merits they have to their name. In Cuba there's no such thing as an election campaign, bourgeois democratic-style. The people in each circumscription propose their own candidates because they know them, live near them in the same neighborhood and know best who are the most capable to fulfill the mandate. Furthermore, delegates must be residents of their respective circumscriptions, where the fact that they are familiar with the problems of the community is a guarantee of their work as people's dele-

gates. Each circumscription elects one delegate.

How are the delegates to the provincial assemblies elected?

The delegates of each municipality, meeting in a municipal assembly, elect the delegates to the provincial assembly. The candidacy commission submits a list of candidates who are residents of the province. One delegate is elected for every 10,000 inhabitants or fraction over 5,000. As can be seen, every representative of People's Power, whether a delegate or a deputy, is elected at the grass-roots level. The delegate's mandate is two and a half years.

What about the deputies?

They, too are elected at the grass-roots level. A person can be a delegate and a deputy at the same time. A deputy can reside anywhere in the national territory. The electoral body of each deputy is each of the 169 municipalities in the country. One deputy is elected for every 20,000 inhabitants or fraction over 10,000. A deputy's term in office is five years.

Can a delegate's and deputy's mandate be revoked?

Yes, of course. Article 112 of the Constitution reads as follows: "The mandate of the delegates can only be revoked by their electors, who may do so at any time according to the procedures prescribed by the law." As to the deputies, Article 83 states: "The deputies to the National Assembly of People's Power may be recalled by their electors at any time in the manner and procedure prescribed by the law."

Who can be elected delegate and deputy? What salary do they receive?

Every Cuban citizen over 16 years of age—including the members of the armed forces and the Ministry of the Interior, who are simply the people in uniform, that is, workers, peasants, intellectuals and technicians organized to defend the country and the Revolution—has the right to elect and to be elected delegate. Deputies have to be 18 years and over.

Excluded from this right are the mentally sick who have been legally declared so, and those who are serving a court sentence for having committed a crime and have therefore lost the right to vote. Voting in Cuba is free, equal and secret.

As to the second question regarding salary, neither delegates nor deputies are paid a salary for their specific work in People's Power. They earn the salary they're entitled to receive as workers, like all other citizens, because they do their People's Power work after normal work hours. They are not professionals in People's Power. They are simply comrades who help administer the state on top of their regular daily work. The mandate does not represent a sinecure or personal benefit of any kind, to either delegate or deputy.

What are the specific tasks of a delegate?

A delegate must be thoroughly familiar with the problems of his community and must convey to the executive committee, administrative divisions and commissions of the municipal assembly all that his electors put to him and use all the means at his disposal to find the most adequate solutions.

He must also meet with his electors at regular intervals in what is known as rendering of accounts meetings, and also report back to the municipal assembly. He must also be available to meet with his electors once a week on an individual basis, to take note of their suggestions, needs and problems.

What powers does the National Assembly have invested in it?

The National Assembly of People's Power is the supreme organ of state power and represents the sovereign will of all the working people. This is the way Article 67 of the Constitution, which prescribes the powers invested in the National Assembly, reads. We might cite among these powers: deciding on Constitutional reforms; approving, modifying and annulling laws; deciding on the constitutionality of laws, decree-laws, decrees and all other general provisions; approving and revoking, in full or in part, the decree-laws issued by the Council of State, which is the National Assembly's organ representing it in the period between sessions; discussing and approving the state budget; deciding on the monetary and credit system; and approving the general foreign and domestic policy lines.

Why did the establishment of People's Power represent a profound decentralization of the state apparatus?

With People's Power all production and the services in a given municipality working for the sole benefit of that municipality

came under the jurisdiction of the municipal assembly, and those in a given province working for the benefit of the province came under that of the provincial assembly; those working for the entire nation fall under the jurisdiction of the central state agencies. Prior to People's Power, all production and service units were directly dependent on central state agencies in Havana.

To mention a concrete example: a movie theater in Baracoa, the easternmost tip of the island, is no longer managed by the central state agency in Havana but by People's Power in that municipality. We could mention hundreds of examples in connection with schools, hospitals, hotels, etc. This doesn't mean that the organs of People's Power in each locality are entitled to do as they please regarding a school, a hospital or a hotel. In every case, the central state agencies are the ones to set the guidelines, but the direct running of those units is handled by People's Power. This is why the establishment of People's Power represents a profound decentralization of administration. Only the community in which a factory or a school is located can be truly familiar with where the problems lie and know what immediate solutions can be found. This way there's no having to wait for solutions to come down from Havana.

Thus, we have on the one hand a profound decentralization of the state apparatus at all levels and, on the other, the consolidation of the principle of democratic centralism, which, when applied by the state organs, means, first of all, that the members of the highest organs of People's Power are elected at all levels, from the base all the way to the top, by the vote of the masses; that, as we said before, those elected must report back on their activities to those who elected them; and that, at every level of People's Power, the ultimate power lies not with those elected but with those who elect them, as a whole and not individually. The subordination of the minority to the decision of the majority in all the organs of People's Power is one of the essential principles of democratic centralism.

What, then, are the relations between the central state agencies and the organs of People's Power?

Generally speaking, the central state agencies are in charge of establishing the standards, procedures and methodological principles; establishing the general organizational principles of the internal functioning of their respective branches or sectors; setting or modifying prices and tariffs; orienting the implementation of the wage policy; ensuring technical advice, the training of cadres, research, planning and statistics. People's Power is vested with full administrative powers to see to the efficient functioning of production and service units under their jurisdiction. Let us remember that the state is one and indivisible and that all activities must be based on a set of standards so that there are no differences be-

tween one region and another, between one province and another. As Fidel said, "You can't have socialism without observing set standards and methods, without coordination at all levels, without the cooperation of all."

What are the relations between the Communist Party and the organs of People's Power?

Lenin said that the dictatorship of the proletariat presupposes and signifies a clear understanding of the truth that, by virtue of its objective, economic situation, the proletariat in every capitalist society faithfully represents the interests of all the working, exploited masses.

This means that the proletariat exercises its dictatorship in alliance with the other working masses. However, as Lenin explained, this dictatorship can only be exer-

cised by the vanguard, in whose ranks revolutionary class energy is concentrated. That vanguard is the Communist Party, which shoulders the enormous responsibility of building socialism in our country.

The Party is the ruling organ of the entire society, but in order to carry out its functions as such it must have the support of an instrument that is essential to it: the state and its institutions. Thus, the Party advises and leads, and the organs of People's Power—the highest state authority—administers the state. The Party is the main force that guides, coordinates, channels and controls the work of the state apparatus.

Thus, the state carries out its functions, and, as opposed to the Party, its dictates are juridical in nature and are to be abided by, by all citizens. The Party's dictates do not have this direct juridical character; they are only compulsory for its members.

People's Power Delegates—Workers and Farmers

As part of its supplement on the People's Power system, *Granma* interviewed Jesús Díaz Mayor, delegate to the Batabanó municipal assembly in Havana province; and Guillermo Guerra, deputy to the National Assembly of People's Power from San José de las Lajas, also in Havana province.

Díaz Mayor, fifty-three years old, was a sharecropper at the time the revolution triumphed in 1959. He received ownership of his own plot of land when the agrarian reform was enacted, and he now belongs to a cooperative of sugar-cane farmers.

"People's Power was organized here in 1976; two candidates were chosen and I was the one elected," Díaz Mayor told *Granma*. "I put up some resistance in the beginning. I thought the other candidate was more suitable since he was more educated than I was—I finished 6th grade in 1975—but, well, the people voted for me: I got 447 votes out of 530 voters. . . ."

There were many problems when the municipal assembly was first set up in Batabanó, Díaz Mayor told *Granma*. "People here thought the delegate could do anything, that it was enough for them to raise a problem with me for the problem to be solved, and, of course, it wasn't like that at all. . . . But we drew up a list of the most urgent problems that needed to be solved: the road, that one in front of you, we built it little by little, for when we ran out of materials we had to stop work, but I kept telling them, 'Listen, friends, we can't stop now, we must go on, even clearing land, but we can't stop now. . . .' and so one day we finished it. . . ."

Since building the new road, the Batabanó municipal assembly has also established a bus service, reorganized the local school system, and begun an ambitious

electrification project.

Guillermo Guerra is twenty-eight years old and works as a machine fitter at the Paco Cabrera Foundry in San José de las Lajas. "At first I didn't even realize" what it meant to be a National Assembly deputy, Guerra told *Granma*. "It was my old man who drove home the point. He used to tell me, 'Guillermo, my son, do you realize what it means for a worker like you, and a black man at that, to become a deputy?' You see, he had lived under capitalism and found it hard to understand that his son—I was 24 then—was a deputy!"

Sessions of the assembly, Guerra said, are "real lessons where you learn a lot. Just imagine, you go there thinking that the problems in your own municipality are the worst, but that's not so. You start listening to the other deputies expressing their preoccupations and you begin to realize all the problems affecting the country as a whole; you come to realize that although the problems in your own municipality are indeed important they are not the most important, they all need to be analyzed and solutions have to be found."

Guerra also commented on Fidel Castro's role in the National Assembly's debates: "There's always a lesson to be learned in the objective nature of the points he raises and the calm way he faces problems. That's why I say that after each session we feel we've learned a lot and been strengthened in our work, with renewed energy for tackling new tasks. That's democracy, everybody voicing their opinion on this or that resolution and voting for or against or abstaining: there's absolute freedom. Our only desire is to do our best for the good of all."

Neither does the Party have the coercive force the state has. They have, therefore, different albeit complementary roles. The pow-

er of the Party rests on its moral authority, while the power of the state lies in its material authority. □

Acting President of National Assembly

Interview with Raul Roa

Question. Five years after the establishment of People's Power in Cuba, what, in your opinion, have been the most evident achievements resulting from the masses' participation, and what were the greatest difficulties that delegates and deputies had to cope with?

Answer. The main achievement, without a doubt, was the establishment of the organs of People's Power, which represented a great step forward in the institutionalization of socialist democracy.

The method for electing and recalling municipal and provincial delegates and the deputies is one of the most significant as far as participation by the masses is concerned.

However, on occasion the support of the masses for problems that could be solved at the circumscription level is neither channeled nor obtained the way it should.

There are times when, due to inefficiency on the part of the mass organizations, the delegates themselves have to handle the propaganda and arrange the places where the rendering of accounts meetings are to be held.

Another matter which has been brought up for discussion is the problems caused by negligence, lack of discipline and lack of demanding good work on the part of the managers of enterprises. Thus, the people bring up the same problem over and over again before the delegates, thereby increasing the delegates' work.

As to the deputies, we should say that during the exercise of their first mandate they've been learning as they go along how to exercise their right as representatives of the people before the supreme body of state power. About 80 percent of the delegates sit on the 20 working commissions of the National Assembly and take part in the tasks assigned to them according to the sector they represent, be it production or the services. These commissions have provided the National Assembly with valuable information during the sessions, a great deal of which has been used by the government in applying measures to benefit the population and the country.

Q. The bourgeoisie has tried to give universal status to its concept of democracy, based on a multiparty system, the division of power, and, to a great extent, parliamentarism. To this concept we oppose that of proletarian democracy. How is the latter's superiority over the former made manifest?

A. The superiority of proletarian democracy over the so-called bourgeois demo-

cracy based on a multiparty system and the division of power is evident, and it stems from the direct relationship between the former and the masses, whose will it represents in the legislature as the full expression of the people's sovereignty.

We must bear in mind the absolute separation that exists in the countries with "representative democracy," in which the political parties, as the tools of the exploiting classes, propose candidates who in no way represent their electors. The electors, as used to happen in Cuba, must sell their vote—a citizen's most cherished right—in exchange for the solution of a pressing problem which the politician helps him solve—but only this time.

Socialist democracy makes it possible to propose candidates selected from among the people, candidates who do not represent any political organization even in the case when they belong to it and whose only credentials are their record of service to their country. These citizens are not bound to any previous commitment with the exception of that of serving the interests of the working people to the best of their ability.

The balance couldn't be more satisfactory and the results have been evidently favorable to society as a whole.

The rest is pure fantasy of the class societies, where the exploited, oppressed people never see their needs satisfied because they don't have the channels through which to raise their problems and express their most cherished aspirations for well-being, progress, freedom and justice.

Needless to say, all this is hidden behind the veil of capitalist production and free enterprise, which gives the world an image of a society replete with material goods—which are within the reach only of the privileged classes, whom these so-called deputies represent in their country's legislature.

Q. Article 68 of the Constitution states that the National Assembly of People's Power is the only organ vested with constituent and legislative authority. And Article 93 states that the Council of Ministers is the highest-ranking executive and administrative organ of the Republic. Does this mean that our system envisions a division of power?

A. Article 68 of the Constitution states that the National Assembly of People's Power is "the only organ in the Republic vested with constituent and legislative powers."

The National Assembly of People's Power is, in effect, a state organ, the only one vest-

ed with the power to enact laws. And since it meets only twice a year in regular sessions, it is empowered to call as many special sessions as it deems necessary. The National Assembly of People's Power elects from among its members the members of the Council of State, composed of 31 deputies, and which is in charge of exercising, on a permanent basis, the functions of the Assembly. In turn, and by a motion of the president of the Council of State—who, according to our Constitution, is also the president of the Council of Ministers—the National Assembly elects the members of the Council of Ministers, which, as prescribed in Article 93, is "the highest-ranking executive and administrative organ."

The Council of State is vested with the power to enact decree-laws, while the Council of Ministers is empowered to enact decrees only.

The National Assembly of People's Power is the supreme organ of state power and all other organs are subordinate to it. Therefore, it constitutes a single power, the power of the people, who elect their legitimate representatives via a direct and secret vote.

The National Assembly of People's Power is also vested with the power to elect the president of the People's Supreme Court, the attorney general, the assistant attorneys general of the Republic and the professional and nonprofessional judges of the People's Supreme Court.

This in no way corresponds to Montesquieu's false concept regarding division of power. It is a concept that corresponds to the genuine application of socialist democracy.

Q. One often hears comments to the effect that People's Power functions more efficiently in the countryside than in the cities. Is there really a substantial difference between the work of the local organs of People's Power in the rural areas and those in the urban areas?

A. The work of the organs of People's Power has been similar in urban and rural areas. There have been no substantial differences with the exception of those stemming from the objective conditions that distinguish the countryside and the cities in terms of the degree of development of communications, industry, commerce and the services.

The thing is that, due to the characteristics of the rural areas and their age-old backwardness, the government's activity at the provincial and municipal levels takes on that much more significance.

Paradoxical as it may seem, in spite of the objective difficulties regarding mobility, communications, and the fact that some areas are practically inaccessible, the relationship between delegates and electors has been closer in the rural areas than in the cities.

In the capital, the reason for this can be found, in the main, in the coincidence between the activities of the central govern-

ment and the state agencies, whose functions are similar to those of the administrative bodies of People's Power in the different sectors of production and the services.

Besides, there's no doubt that the capital is the center of the country's political, administrative, economic, social and cultural life.

This is why the people sometimes say that the work of People's Power in the rest of the provinces seems to be more efficient but, actually, there's no noticeable difference in the work being done and the effort being made at all levels.

Q. When the organs of People's Power were established it was said that the masses' direct participation in the management of community affairs would be the most effective way to fight against all forms of bureaucracy. What has been the outcome in practice?

A. In this sense, we consider that the masses' participation in the institutionalization process of the country has been of major importance in the struggle to eradicate the various forms of bureaucracy.

It's evident that the masses' participation in the rendering of accounts meetings and the work done by the delegates, the working commissions, the Assembly itself and its Executive Committee have given vitality and a dynamic character to our methods for coping with problems.

However, there are still signs of bureaucracy in the treatment given to certain problems that affect the population to a considerable extent, and we must keep on struggling to eliminate them.

Q. What can you tell us about the National Assembly of People's Power's activities on the international scene? The 68th Conference of the Interparliamentary Union will be held in Cuba this year. What is the importance of this event for our country?

A. Ever since it was established in December 1976, the National Assembly has been working to broaden its relations with the legislatures of those countries with which Cuba maintains diplomatic relations.

In these last four years we have welcomed numerous parliamentary delegations from all parts of the world.

The National Assembly has also participated in international meetings of different kinds, chiefly those called by the Interparliamentary Union, an organization of 90 national groups. In this world parliamentary forum, Cuba has always made clear the Revolution's staunch and courageous stand regarding the international problems under discussion.

As you say, the 68th Conference of the Interparliamentary Union will be held this year in Havana, from September 15 through September 24, at the Palace of Conventions.

This world meeting of legislators is of great importance for Cuba, because it will enable us to demonstrate to the delegates attending it our system of socialist democracy,

and, at the same time, they will have the opportunity to take a firsthand look at the reality of the revolutionary process and appreciate the successes scored in a number of aspects of the Cuban people's social and cultural development.

Some of the items included on the agenda, such as disarmament, international securi-

ty and the energy crisis, are of the utmost importance for the international community, particularly for the developing countries, because these countries will have the opportunity to discuss their points of view in an open, cordial atmosphere and to adopt measures that will contribute to the solution of these pressing problems. □

Condemn 'Dock Mafia' Union Officials

Grenadian Dockworkers Answer Rightist Provocation

[The Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Union (SWWU) is one of the few trade unions in the Caribbean island of Grenada that is still saddled with a reactionary leadership. Although most dockworkers support the revolution—and some actively participated in the March 13, 1979, insurrection that toppled the Eric Gairy dictatorship—the top officials of the SWWU have repeatedly shown their hostility toward the ruling New Jewel Movement and the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG).

[The following are major excerpts from an article, entitled "Dock Mafia Tries to Strike Again," that appeared in the January 10 issue of the *Free West Indian*, published weekly in St. George's, Grenada.]

* * *

Through the efforts of patriotic forces within the labour movement, significant advances were made over the past 10 days in the interests of the poor and working people, despite attempts by some elements bent on subverting the Revolution.

On January 1, progressive dockworkers and other members of the community in St. George's offloaded a consignment of free milk, after leaders of the Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Union (SWWU) had called a sudden strike that would have left the milk to spoil.

The strike call on December 30, by senior SWWU officials, brought a sharp response from the People's Revolutionary Government.

The PRG, in an official statement, said the half-million pounds of powdered milk sent for free distribution by the European Economic Community had been anxiously awaited, especially by children and expectant mothers, because the free milk programme had been stalled for the past few months because of a lack of milk.

"It came as a great shock to those people of St. George's, who discovered that this undemocratic action had been taken by some of the union leaders, without consulting the rank and file members of the union," said the PRG.

"Many dockworkers were so annoyed and disgusted by this strike call that they refused to be part of the strike action and even offered to assist in offloading this shipment," the statement continued.

Condemnation of the SWWU action also came from a number of progressive and revolutionary organisations, including the National Woman's Organisation (NWO), which offered its members' labour, if necessary, to offload the milk.

"The women of our country see this action by the leadership of the union as an irresponsible act against our children, our pregnant and nursing sisters, our elderly sisters and our poor and working women of Free Grenada," said the NWO.

The SWWU leaders had justified their strike call by claiming to have the right, not only to unload the cargo from the ship onto the docks, but also to carry the goods from the docks to the government warehouse.

However, under the terms of their contract with Grenada Shipping Agents, the union's only obligation is to offload the cargo onto the docks. It is then up to the receiver of the goods, (in this case the PRG) to move the cargo from the docks to a warehouse.

A special issue of the newspaper *Workers' Voice* hit the streets of St. George's last Thursday [January 8] with the headline: "STOP the Docks Mafia."

It said many workers are still baffled about why the SWWU leaders preferred to call a strike rather than offload the big shipment of free milk for the poor and working people of Grenada.

The paper said that some "Mafia-type" elements in the SWWU leadership, "some of whom are trained by the CIA are to blame for this action.

"Can we forget that in 1974, just as Gairy was about to fall, these same elements called off the strike and kept Gairy in power?" asked *Workers' Voice*.

"They called off the strike and kept Gairy in power against the wishes of the majority of dockworkers after all the tears, blood and sacrifices of Grenadian workers,

farmers, businessmen and people generally."¹

The newspaper accused the "Dock Mafia" of corruption, of accepting CIA "blood money" and of counter-revolutionary actions. "When the equipment came for the International Airport in December 1979, the majority of dockworkers turned out

1. In early 1974, Grenada was swept by mass demonstrations and a general strike aimed at toppling the authoritarian regime of Eric Gairy. The upsurge, however, was brought under the control of conservative trade union leaders and supporters of the bourgeois opposition Grenada National Party, who called off the general strike.—IP

and landed all the cargo free in record time. The Mafia did not even pass to see the equipment land," it charged.

Long-time observers of the labour movement in Grenada are convinced that the SWWU leaders intended to gain political mileage from their strike call. They note that the "Dock Mafia's" motive was to make the boat leave Grenada with the milk, thereby embarrassing the PRG, denying our people free milk and ultimately destroying a very popular programme of the Revolution.

More and more patriots are now calling for this "Dock Mafia" to be put under manners by the Revolution. The people demand a stop to those who want to use

dockworkers for their own counter-revolutionary political aims, as was done in Chile in 1973, and as Stanley Roberts and Curtis Stuart tried to use the electricity workers at the power station in November 1979.²

"The same blood money that caused thousands of workers in Chile to be murdered is the same money from the American Institute of Free Labour Development that's paying Stanley Roberts, a leader of the 'Dock Mafia,'" said one dockworker. □

2. Stanley Roberts is a leader of the SWWU. Curtis Stuart was a leader of the Technical and Allied Workers Union, who left Grenada in 1980 and who has since been publicly denouncing the revolution.—IP

Life in a Cuban Rural Community

By Ernest Harsch

BENTRE—Before the revolution, this rural area, just a dozen kilometers west of Havana, was like the rest of the Cuban countryside at the time—poor.

The peasants who lived here faced conditions that are typical throughout the colonial and semicolonial world. Since they owned little or no land, they had to labor for low wages on the two large privately-owned estates in the area, a sugar plantation and a dairy farm. They lived in small, poorly furnished shacks and huts. Many could not read or write. Medical care, if it was available at all, was expensive. They had little control over their day-to-day lives. To the authorities in Havana, they counted for absolutely nothing.

But twenty-two years later, all that has changed.

The Cuban revolution was above all a revolution in the countryside. It expropriated the wealthy landlords who kept the campesinos in subjugation. It taught the illiterate how to read and write. It brought medical care to people who had rarely seen a doctor before. It transformed and reorganized agricultural production so that it could benefit society as a whole. It began to break down the barriers between the rural areas and the towns, allowing those living in the countryside to enjoy for the first time many of the social and cultural advantages of urban life.

Just as important, the revolution gave the Cuban campesinos a new sense of confidence and self-respect.

Bentre, one of the new rural communities built since the revolution, is a microcosm of what things are like today in the Cuban countryside.

When the construction of Bentre was completed in 1969, the peasants who lived in the area were able to move out of their old straw huts and wooden shacks and into a new and modern community, with

many of the features of a small town.

Although Bentre has only 700 inhabitants, it boasts a grammar school, day-care center, cafeteria, shopping area, playground, park, and other facilities.

The houses and apartments are modest, but sturdy and functional. All have running water and electricity. They are fully furnished, with refrigerators, stoves, radios, and television sets. Residents pay no rent, and there is just a minimum charge for water and electricity.

The house of Raúl and Daniela is typical. Built for a family of six, it has three bedrooms, a bathroom with a shower, a kitchen, a dining room, and a living room. In contrast, the house they lived in before was "very bad," according to Daniela.

Both Raúl and Daniela hold jobs, he at the dairy and she in one of the stores in the community. Their allegiance to the revolution is hardly in doubt—on the walls of their home hang portraits of Fidel Castro, Camilo Cienfuegos (the popular guerrilla leader who died in a plane crash shortly after the revolution), and Lenin.

Like Raúl, most of the workers in Bentre are now employed at the dairy, which is set up for both cattle breeding and milk processing. They work eight hours a day, six days a week, a big improvement from the long and grueling hours that agricultural laborers had to put in before the revolution.

On the average, workers in Bentre earn 150 pesos (about US\$200) a month. But since food costs are low, and they do not have to pay for rent, schooling, or medical care, that is enough to live on relatively comfortably.

Because of its small size, there are no medical facilities in Bentre itself. But a polyclinic equipped to deal with most common ailments and some emergencies is just five kilometers away. In addition,

there is one resident nurse in Bentre, and doctors and nurses from nearby towns come through on periodic visits.

As in the rest of Cuba, education is a priority here. Some 130 young students are enrolled in the local primary school. Others attend high schools in nearby municipalities, where they receive free room and board. Three students are currently attending university. And in line with the government's policy of improving the educational level of the entire population, thirty-five adult workers from the community are also going to school.

The residents of Bentre are not passive recipients of the government's programs. They are active participants in the revolution, and they play a direct role in the running of their community.

Most of Bentre's 700 inhabitants belong to one or another of the mass organizations: the dairy workers' union, the Federation of Cuban Women, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, and the Neighborhood Councils. According to Elba, a social worker, the proportion of members in the Communist Party and the Union of Young Communists is high here.

At least every two years, the residents of Bentre elect a worker from the community to be their delegate to People's Power, the body of local government. The delegate meets with community members once a week to discuss whatever questions and problems arise.

One of the most striking features of Bentre is the internationalism of its people. The very name of the community is a symbol of this. It is taken from the name of a Vietnamese village, where women played a particularly notable role in defending the village during the American war against Vietnam. The residents of Bentre erected a statue in solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese people, and built a reproduction of a Vietnamese

house.

According to Mirta, a leader of the community here, a number of Bentre's inhabitants have taken part in "internationalist missions." Eight fought in Angola, and a few are still based there. One person is now stationed in Vietnam.

"We are in solidarity with every people fighting for their freedom," Mirta said. "It doesn't matter what political system their country has. If they're fighting, we support them."

To the people of Bentre, the rural life of prerevolutionary Cuba now seems like an entirely different world. Their community shows what can be accomplished when the material resources and human energies of a country are mobilized through a deep-going revolution.

And to the tens of millions of campesinos throughout Latin America who still live under such wretched conditions, Bentre is an example of what they too can achieve. □

Martinique Communists Denounce Racist Policies of French CP

On February 2 the branch of the Martinique Communist Party in France denounced the "recent positions emanating from the P.C.F. [French Communist Party] concerning the problem of immigration."

The Martinique Communist Party branch pointed to "the inexcusable methods used at Vitry against the workers from Mali."

They were referring to a Christmas Eve attack on a dormitory in Vitry-sur-Seine where 300 workers from Mali had just been housed. The Communist Party mayor has been accused of participating in the attack.

Since then the French CP has justified the attack on the African workers, even organizing demonstrations in support of the mayor of Vitry.

The Martinique Communists also condemned the CP mayors of Nanterre and Saint-Denis for refusing housing to mostly Black immigrant workers from the French colonies.

The Nanterre mayor, in refusing a housing request from one person from the Antilles, complained about "their way of life: frequent and late night parties—noisy conversations—loud music."

Similar incidents have occurred elsewhere. On February 7 the Communist Party mayor of Montigny-les-Cormeilles led a demonstration at a housing project against a Moroccan family the CP accused of drug trafficking. And in another municipality, the CP opposed granting funds for an Islamic cultural center.

"We do not deny the scandalous fact that agencies and the government refuse to provide resources for municipalities having an immigrant population," the Martinique Communist Party branch stated.

But it emphasized that the way to resolve the problem is by "initiating and leading a united struggle of the French and the immigrants against the government's racist methods and through meaningful budgets for social services."

The statement called on the French Communist Party to "return to positions it never should have abandoned." □

tacks on immigrant centres in areas like Southall or Brick Lane?

The British Communist Party has to come off the fence.

Does it support an end to immigration in countries with high unemployment or not? Does it think immigration causes social unrest or not? Is it going to continue to support the disgraceful chauvinist and racist campaign of the French CP or not?

The immigrant communities and the anti-racist movement have a right to know the answers to these questions. Will the Communist Party provide them? □

Supports Racist Campaign by French Communist Party

British CP Says France Has Too Many Immigrants

By Davy Jones

[The following article appeared in the January 22 issue of the British Trotskyist weekly *Socialist Challenge*.]

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It's official—the British Communist Party supports its French counterpart's racist campaign against immigration.

In a grovelling article in last Thursday's *Morning Star*, Harry Samson justified the French Communists' call for a halt to all immigration. He claimed that the press in France and abroad had been "scraping the bottom of the barrel of anti-communism to smear the French Communist Party with racism."

The main argument of Samson's 750-word article, headlined "French media smears Communists," was that "to avoid adding to the 2 m[illion] French and immigrant workers already unemployed the French Communists are calling for a halt to immigration in the mutual interests of all workers in France, irrespective of their origin."

This echoes the speech by Georges Marchais, the French CP leader, to a party rally two weeks ago in which he said that it was "inadmissible to allow immigrant workers into France when we have 2m French and immigrant people on the dole."

Too strong a concentration of immigrants, he continued, "created tensions among the population and increased social charges on ratepayers."

In other words, French Communists think that immigrants cause social unrest, put the rates up, and aggravate unemployment. And now the *Morning Star* defends the French CP holding these views.

The common root of all these positions is the racist claim that immigrants are the problem, not racism. This argument is false and reactionary. We will not mince words: it is the same argument used by the extreme right wing of the Tory Party.

It is true that there is often social unrest

in areas where there are many immigrants—or black people born in France or Britain. This unrest is stirred up by racists.

The way to stop it is not by campaigning for a halt to further immigration but by confronting the racists and their arguments, and by attacking the social system that breeds unemployment, bad housing and poverty.

Immigrants are not responsible for increased rate charges; nor do they cause unemployment. It is capitalism and its economic priorities that produce these and other social ills.

If the economy was organised in the workers' interests money would be spent on jobs not bombs, on improved social services not interest repayments to the finance houses.

By campaigning for an end to immigration the French Communist Party is whipping up reactionary sentiment against one of the most oppressed groups in French society. It should instead be fighting for workers' unity against the capitalist class and its government, headed by Giscard D'Estaing, whose economic policies are responsible for the present crisis.

The British Communist Party's position is completely hypocritical. On the same day Samson's article appeared, the *Morning Star* carried a front page story attacking the Tory Nationality Bill proposals as racist. The paper declared its intention of campaigning against the proposals.

But the *Morning Star* can't have it both ways. If it is correct to oppose further immigration into France because there are 2m unemployed, then why should socialists oppose Tory restrictions on immigration and nationality in this country which also has more than 2m unemployed?

If the French CP mayor was right a few weeks ago to lead the bulldozing of an immigrant hostel as a protest against immigration, then would it be right for British Communists to lead similar at-