

# Intercontinental Press

combined with **INPRECOR**

Vol. 19, No. 17

May 11, 1981

USA \$1

UK 40p

## Huge Washington Protest Hits U.S. Aid to Salvadoran Junta



Lou Howort/Militant

Washington, D.C.—May 3 march and rally to protest U.S. war moves in El Salvador showed depth of antiwar sentiment in United States.

Stop Torture of Prisoners!  
**Grant Demands of  
Northern Ireland  
Hunger Strikers!**

Behind Fighting in Lebanon  
***Israeli Attacks  
Increase Danger  
of Mideast War***

## Banks and Tanks and Polish Workers

By Fred Murphy

The governments of the United States and fourteen other capitalist countries agreed April 27 to allow the Polish regime to reschedule some \$2.6 billion in debts that were to have fallen due this year.

"The debt relief agreement was announced at a signing ceremony in the richly gilded salons of the French Finance Ministry," the *New York Times* reported April 28, "as waiters in white jackets served champagne in crystal goblets to delegates and the press."

Polish bureaucrats clinked glasses with imperialist financiers to celebrate what the *Times* claimed was "the first step in a concerted and prolonged effort by all of Poland's foreign creditors to prevent the country from going bankrupt and to enable it to buy essential imports of food and other goods."

In fact, the agreement represents an attempt to impose Thatcher-style austerity on the Polish workers and farmers. The imperialists are seeking to implement in Poland too their worldwide program to maximize profits and drive down the wages and living conditions of the working class.

The Polish bureaucracy hopes to use the loan agreement as a club against the revolutionary upsurge spearheaded by the Solidarity union federation.

As part of the loan pact, the *Times* reported, "the Polish Government has undertaken to impose stringent austerity measures on its people with the intention of eventually repaying outstanding loans and eliminating its need to borrow abroad. It acknowledges, however, that the measures will cut living standards and increase unemployment. . . ."

"The Polish economy is expected to contract about 10 percent this year, as investment projects are canceled, imports reduced and more goods switched from domestic consumption to the export market."

Polish Finance Minister Marian Krzak told reporters at the signing ceremony in Paris that "we are determined to do everything we can to improve our economy and improve cooperation with the West."

On May 1 the editors of the *New York Times* cynically expressed hope that the austerity plan could be enforced through "a mind-boggling compact among Polish atheists, a Polish Pope, capitalist banks and Soviet tanks."

The *Times* editors noted that the Catholic Church is "urging the unions to go slow," while "Western banks insist on

austerity to recoup their loans." And, "the Poles"—meaning the bureaucrats—"promise to put the money to work in ways that will throw tens of thousands out of work."

Thus, in the view of the *Times* editors, the "romantic" Polish people "are getting ready to pay for more freedom with less bread."

What the *Times* editors want to cover up, however, is that the current revolutionary upsurge in Poland was touched off precisely by Western bankers' demands that the bureaucracy force the workers to accept "less bread." Since then, the Polish workers and their allies have set the most powerful example in the entire world of how to fight back against capitalist austerity, for which the Polish bureaucracy

## Imperialists Veto South Africa Sanctions

By Ernest Harsch

"Verbally they condemn the policy of apartheid, but their daily practice is to support the racist South African regime both militarily and economically."

That was the assessment of U.S. policy toward southern Africa contained in a declaration issued by the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), the liberation movement that is fighting for the independence of Namibia. It was borne out a little more than a week later.

On April 30, the U.S. representative to the United Nations joined with the British and French delegates to veto four Security Council resolutions providing for trade and other sanctions against the apartheid regime. The sanctions had been demanded by numerous African governments in response to the South African refusal to grant independence to Namibia.

The same day, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker leveled renewed threats against Angola, warning that Washington would not recognize the Angolan government unless the Cuban troops stationed there were withdrawn. He also raised an implicit threat of new U.S. aid to proimperialist guerrillas fighting against the Angolan government.

In addition, Crocker maintained that steps to resume international negotiations on Namibia's independence hinged on a

serves as a transmission belt.

It is an example that is being closely watched by workers in the imperialist countries. When more than 20,000 U.S. railroad workers marched in Washington April 29 to protest Reagan's budget cuts, many sported buttons with the logo of Polish Solidarity.

The Washington demonstrators and their Polish sisters and brothers have the same enemy—the imperialist ruling classes. For all their propaganda about "freedom" in Poland, the imperialists know this, and they look to the Polish and Soviet bureaucracies as allies against the Polish workers.

The *New York Times* spelled this out as early as last August, when the first wave of strikes was at its height: "Both the Communist authorities and the capitalist bankers recognize a convergence of interests in stability—so much so that one Western banker who asked not to be cited by name said that if the Russians actually did intervene in Poland, the nation's creditworthiness might actually increase."

The new loan agreement makes this "convergence of interests" still clearer. □

Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola.

These developments are part of the Reagan administration's "new direction" in foreign policy. For southern Africa, that means moves to step up U.S. intervention against the African liberation struggles, coupled with closer ties to the barbaric white minority regime in Pretoria.

Namibia is a key focus of this policy. Like the South African authorities, the White House is exploring every possible means to prevent SWAPO from winning full independence for the colony.

In January, UN-sponsored negotiations in Geneva over the future of Namibia broke down. The UN negotiators had presented a plan for a South African withdrawal from Namibia following UN-supervised elections—a plan that both Washington and the apartheid regime had previously agreed to. But Pretoria, fearing that SWAPO would easily win such elections, scuttled the talks.

With some 60,000 South African troops based in Namibia, Pretoria has continued its brutal war against the Black population and its frequent air and ground attacks into southern Angola, where many Namibians have taken refuge.

Since the inauguration of Reagan, Washington has also abandoned support for the UN independence proposal. A State Department official confirmed this April 30,



stating that the plan was "dead in the water."

Instead, the U.S. government has proposed a new negotiating package, one that seeks to give the South African authorities substantial influence in Namibia even after formal independence is declared. The essential point in the U.S. proposal is that a new constitution for Namibia be written before elections are held, while Namibia is still under South African control. The constitution, moreover, would include "guarantees" to the country's white minority, which dominates much of the Namibian economy in close association with South African interests.

The imposition of such a constitution would be a mockery of the Namibians' right to self-determination.

The new Reagan plan has won approval from Pretoria, as well as from some of Washington's other imperialist allies. But it has been rejected by SWAPO. And during a tour by Crocker of twelve African countries to explain the proposals, he was met with much public opposition.

In pressing their campaign against the rights of the Namibian people, the U.S. imperialists are concerned about the opposition they will face from the Angolan government, which provides considerable backing to SWAPO.

They are particularly worried about the continued presence in Angola of thousands of Cuban troops. Originally sent to Angola in 1975 to fight off a direct South African invasion, the Cuban troops remain in Angola today as a shield against any new South African aggression. Washington likewise fears that they could be used to stymie imperialist moves elsewhere in Africa.

That is what lies behind the White House's renewed threats against Angola, which have been sharper than at any other time since Washington backed the South African invasion of 1975-76.

In March, the Reagan administration formally asked Congress to repeal a law (known as the Clark amendment) that bars covert U.S. assistance to the proimperialist guerrilla forces of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), led by Jonas Savimbi. Operating out of South African-ruled Namibia and often enjoying direct South African logistical support, these terrorist forces attack villages, bomb marketplaces, and mine roads in southern and central Angola.

Although the White House has maintained that repeal of the amendment would not necessarily mean new aid to UNITA, it has nevertheless been forging closer ties with the group. On April 1, the State Department confirmed that Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Lannon Walker had met with Savimbi in Morocco.

The Angolan government has responded sharply to these U.S. threats. On March

29, Angolan Foreign Minister Paulo Jorge said that the sending of arms to UNITA would mark an attempt to "destabilize our country" and "would have grave consequences for the whole region."

Jorge pointed out that the apartheid regime was being emboldened by Reagan's statements that Pretoria was an ally, by the recent secret talks between American Ambassador to the UN Jeane Kirkpatrick and head of South African military intelligence Lieut. Gen. P.W. van der Westhuizen, and by the moves to repeal the Clark amendment.

In an interview in the April 25 *Washington Post*, Jorge also defended the Cuban

aid to Angola, pointing out that the troops remained to protect the country against a full-scale South African invasion.

"When Namibia will be independent, and the aggression against Angola from South Africa finished," he said, "then we will say to the Cuban comrades, 'Thank you very much, you can go home now.'"

He characterized the U.S. demand for withdrawal of the Cuban troops as "a clear interference in our affairs."

"Why do the Americans not talk about the French troops in Djibouti?" Jorge asked. "Why do the Americans keep troops in Korea, in Germany and in Cuba, but object to Cubans being here?" □

## In This Issue

CLOSING NEWS DATE: May 4, 1981

IRELAND	476	Thatcher Vows "Not an Inch" to Hunger Strikers —by David Frankel
USA	477	Huge Protest Says "U.S. Out of El Salvador!" —by Fred Murphy
	480	Why Trial of Secret Police Has Rulers Worried —by Nelson Blackstock
NICARAGUA	478	May Day Rallies Affirm Workers' Central Role in Revolution—by Arnold Weissberg
	479	Sandinistas Charge U.S. Is Behind New Attacks From Honduras—by Arnold Weissberg
PUERTO RICO	481	FBI Steps Up Harassment of Socialists
MIDDLE EAST	484	Israeli Aggression Threatens to Provoke War —by Janice Lynn
LEBANON	485	What Is Behind the Fighting?—by Janice Lynn
EL SALVADOR	488	Military Sows Death and Famine —by Lars Palmgren
SOUTH AFRICA	489	Blacks Protest Rent Hikes—by Ernest Harsch
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	504	Regime Tries to Break Petr Uhl
DEBATE ON CUBA	490	Open Letter to Jack Barnes on Trotskyism in Cuba —by Adolfo Gilly
	493	The Role of the Trotskyists in the Cuban Revolution—by Angel Fanjul
	497	How Sectarians Misrepresented Trotskyism in Cuba—by José G. Pérez
NEWS ANALYSIS	474	Banks and Tanks and Polish Workers —by Fred Murphy
	474	Imperialists Veto South Africa Sanctions —by Ernest Harsch

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

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

**Editor:** Mary-Alice Waters.  
**Contributing Editors:** Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.  
**Managing Editor:** Steve Clark.  
**Editorial Staff:** David Frankel, Ernest Harsch, Janice Lynn, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.  
**Business Manager:** Sandi Sherman  
**Copy Editor:** David Martin.

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

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

material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Thatcher Vows 'Not an Inch' to Hunger Strikers

By David Frankel

With Irish political prisoner Bobby Sands in the sixty-fifth day of his hunger strike, the British government is continuing to refuse any concessions to the demand of republican prisoners in Northern Ireland for political status.

British troops and police are on alert throughout Northern Ireland. Backing them up are the thugs of the right-wing Protestant paramilitary gangs. In one instance 1,000 uniformed members of the Ulster Defence Association massed in a threatening show of force near Catholic neighborhoods in Belfast.

Dozens of nationalist leaders have been arrested and held by the British under legislation that allows them to be imprisoned without charge for a week. Leaders of the campaign for political status for the republican prisoners have been singled out, although their activities have been completely legal and peaceful.

Even the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), which represents the most conservative sectors of the Catholic population in the North, felt compelled to protest. An SDLP statement pointed out that while the British were making sweeps through the nationalist areas, searching houses and arresting political activists, they have done nothing about "the most obvious preparations and public threats emanating from [proimperialist] loyalist terrorist organizations."

In trying to break the spirit of the republican political prisoners and of the nationalist population as a whole, the British have been relying on Sands's death to provoke the kind of intense but short-lived explosion of protest that took place after the January 31, 1972 massacre of thirteen unarmed civil rights demonstrators by British paratroopers.

However, as Sands said to one of his visitors on May 1: "The British think my death will be the end of it, but they are wrong."

There are three other republican prisoners currently on hunger strike. Twenty-five-year-old Francis Hughes, now in his forty-ninth day of hunger strike, is already reported to be gravely ill.

Reporting from Belfast, *Intercontinental Press* correspondent Gerry Foley said that Hughes's brother Oliver told television interviewers May 1 that he was convinced his brother was nearing death. Oliver Hughes said, in the name of his brother's family, "we are sad, but we are proud that we have a son and brother who is prepared to give his life for his country."

According to Foley, the British press



Protest in Dublin.

An Phoblacht

itself has been speculating that Sands's death may touch off large-scale unrest.

In a May 1 editorial the *Irish Press*, the daily newspaper most closely associated with the governing party in the South, took up British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's provocative attacks on the hunger strikers as criminals, along with the statements of Humphrey Atkins, the British secretary for Northern Ireland.

"Safely ensconced in Westminster," the editorial declared, "British MPs may chorus 'Hear, Hear' while Mr. Atkins doles out the platitudes, buttressed by Mrs. Thatcher's reiteration of 'Not an inch.' But the fact is that Bobby Sands got more votes in being elected to the House of Commons than Mrs. Thatcher, 10,000 more, and the rest of the world is not shouting 'Hear, hear.' It is shouting 'Listen.' From New Delhi to Los Angeles. Something has moved over Northern Ireland. There is no status quo to go back to. The genie of discontent will not be returned to the lamp by a few sly rubs of England's legal code."

The editorial denounced the British administration in Northern Ireland: "Mr. Atkins certainly has some cheek when he can stand up in the House of Commons and appeal to people not to respond to provocations while at the same time presiding over an army and a police operation that is setting in motion a form of internment. So far sixty known H-Block activists have been picked up under seven-day

detention orders, which means that they can be released and picked up in a week's time and so on. Could anything be more provocative to the Catholic population at a time when tension rises like a tangible thing in the North as Bobby Sands's life ebbs away?"

Thatcher's handling of the crisis has also begun to elicit sharp protests from the capitalist media in the United States, as well as protests from Irish-Americans.

"... we urge President Reagan to put immediate pressure on his friend Margaret Thatcher to show more flexibility in dealing with Bobby Sands and the other IRA [Irish Republican Army] hunger strikers," an editorial in the May 1 *New York Daily News* declared.

While expressing solidarity with Thatcher's basic political stance, the editorial complained: "But Thatcher and her government just can't afford to seem indifferent to the prospect of a mini-civil war in Ulster. Nor can they afford to lose any opportunity to deprive Bobby Sands of the crown of martyrdom. . . ."

Similarly, the editors of the *New York Times* took Thatcher to task on April 29, saying that Sands "has made it appear that her stubbornness, rather than his own, is the source of a fearful conflict already ravaging Northern Ireland."

Suggesting that some concessions might help to defuse the crisis, the *Times* editorial asked: "Why shouldn't protesters be allowed civilian clothes provided by their families instead of by prison officials?"

In conclusion, it said: "By stressing only what Britain won't do, Mrs. Thatcher has sadly allowed the initiative to pass to a minuscule army of implacable nationalists. Having elected a dying hunger striker to Parliament, the I.R.A. and its supporters are now poised to elect another prisoner as Bobby Sands's successor. It is a nightmare that won't go away. . . ."

Whatever the hesitations about Thatcher's policy among ruling class circles in the United States, however, the U.S. government is continuing to back her up. On May 1 a U.S. federal judge ruled that the Irish Northern Aid Committee, which has publicized the plight of the republican prisoners and raised money to help their families, must register as an agent of the IRA under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

Such harassment and victimization, however, will not stop the supporters of Irish freedom in the United States, any more than Thatcher's policies will stop the struggle in Northern Ireland. □



## Huge Washington March Says 'U.S. Out of El Salvador!'

By Fred Murphy

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The most massive antiwar protest since the days of the Vietnam War was held here May 3.

Chanting "No draft, no war—U.S. out of El Salvador!" and "Money for jobs—not for war!", tens of thousands of persons marched across the Potomac River from the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial to a rally at the Pentagon.

Organizers of the action put the size of the huge crowd at more than 100,000. Washington police claimed that 20,000 participated, but even the most conservative estimates by demonstrators who sought to gauge the protest offered figures three times that size.

Marchers were still stepping off from the starting point as the rally at the Pentagon got under way. Contingents flowed across the bridge for more than two hours.

Meanwhile, in San Francisco, 10,000 people gathered in a similar demonstration against U.S. support to the Salvadoran junta.

The protesters came overwhelmingly from two generations of young people—those who had participated in similar actions at the height of the movement against the war in Vietnam, and still more from a fresh layer of youth that has begun to act against threats of renewed U.S. armed intervention abroad and the resumption of the military draft. Among the latter, there were thousands of high-school students, most undoubtedly participating in their first antiwar protest.

Contingents came from as far away as North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Texas, as well as from states along the Eastern Seaboard from Florida to Massachusetts.

Two hundred buses arrived from New York City alone, including several dozen that brought trade-union delegations of health workers, public employees, and retail-store clerks.

Heading the march were several hundred members of the Black United Front, which has led struggles against police brutality and racist terror in New York and other cities.

The labor contingent from New York City came next, followed by dozens upon dozens of delegations from El Salvador solidarity groups; student, religious, and community organizations; radical political groups; antidraft committees; feminist groups; and the movement against nuclear power and nuclear weapons.

Especially impressive were the Latin American and other international contingents. These included marchers from the Puerto Rican Socialist Party; the Antonio

Maceo Brigade (an organization of young Cuban-Americans who support the revolution and oppose the U.S. blockade); many Central Americans, including organized groups of marchers from Casa Nicaragua and Casa El Salvador in New York; Haitians demanding asylum for refugees fleeing the U.S.-supported Duvalier dictatorship; Iranians and Palestinians protesting U.S. intervention in the Mideast; Filipino opponents of the U.S.-backed Marcos dictatorship; and others.

Chanting in Spanish could be heard all along the march.

Solidarity with the Black community of Atlanta, Georgia—beset by a wave of unsolved, racist murders of Black children and youth—was widely expressed on the march. "Defend Atlanta's children, not El Salvador's junta!" was a popular chant, and thousands of marchers wore green ribbons, a symbol of solidarity with Atlanta.

The demonstration was initially called by the People's Antiwar Mobilization, a coalition that included the Black United Front and radical political groups such as the Workers World Party and the Communist Workers Party. Broader forces joined in, particularly the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the National Coalition Against Registration and the Draft, and Mobilization for Survival (an antiwar antinuclear group).

Virtually every organization on the U.S. left participated in the May 3 march—an example of unity that bodes well for further action against the Reagan administration's offensive against working people at home and abroad.

Opposition to Washington's support of the brutal junta in El Salvador and the threat of stepped-up U.S. military intervention there was the central theme of the demonstration. It was expressed in all the speeches at the Pentagon rally.

Arnaldo Ramos, representing El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), was greeted with a prolonged standing ovation when he mounted the speakers' platform. "The message here is quite clear," Ramos said. "The vast majority of the citizens of this country are totally and adamantly opposed to the militarization of Central America, to the aggression being conducted against the Salvadorans, against the Nicaraguans, against the Guatemalan people."

"Now the North American people and the Salvadoran people have joined hands and hearts and souls in a common strug-

gle," Ramos said. He hailed the demonstration as "the most significant solidarity day in the history of the relationship between the United States and Central America."

The May 3 march represented a thoroughly successful culmination of a series of El Salvador solidarity actions held across the United States this spring by CISPES and other groups. Tens of thousands of persons had participated in earlier, local activities on March 24 and April 18.

Speakers and demonstrators alike continually drew the connection between Washington's war drive abroad and its attacks on the living standards of working people at home. "Build schools, not tanks; we won't fight for Citibank," went one chant.

"While they are supporting the junta in El Salvador," said Rev. William Daughtry of the Black United Front, "while they are increasing the military budget, while they are courting the affections of abominable regimes the world over, here at home they are terminating programs of service to the aged and children, they are closing hospitals, they are shutting down schools, they are halting assistance for decent housing, they are ending employment programs and slamming the door in the face of handicapped people."

In combining demands for a halt to military intervention abroad and an end to attacks on working people at home, the May 3 demonstration registered once again the deep massive opposition to the Reagan administration's policies. It came just four days after 20,000 to 25,000 railroad workers had also marched in Washington, protesting Reagan's planned cuts in rail service and the elimination of tens of thousands of jobs.

Above all, the action served as a sharp warning to the warmakers of what they can expect if they pursue their interventionist policies in Central America. It showed that tens of thousands of American youth are already acting in the spirit of a slogan put forward at the May 3 rally by former Congresswoman and anti-Vietnam War leader Bella Abzug: "If we learned anything from Vietnam, it is that the time to stop a war is before it begins." □

You won't miss a single issue if you subscribe.

# May Day Rallies Held Across Nicaragua

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA—Chants of “poder popular!” (people’s power) could already be heard in the streets here at 7 a.m., as contingents formed for the celebration of May Day.

By 9 a.m. on May 1, when the rally was scheduled to begin, workers were still arriving in the Plaza of the Revolution. There were hospital workers, teachers, agricultural laborers, a contingent of women textile workers, and tens of thousands more. They filled the plaza and the nearby park and spilled into the streets beyond.

There were contingents from the universities and from the July 19 Sandinista Youth. There were militia units and army contingents and a group from the Sandinista Police.

In cities across the country, workers also poured into the streets—along with students, housewives, small merchants, and farmers—to hear speeches by FSLN and trade-union leaders.

The Nicaraguan people turned out to show they rejected the attacks from Honduras, the military threats from Somozaists in Miami, economic blackmail from the U.S. government, and pleas from the remaining Nicaraguan capitalists to turn against the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

Nicaraguans turned out to say “Yes!” to the Nicaraguan revolution and its vanguard the FSLN, and to acknowledge the central role that workers are playing in the transformation of the society—to say that this is *our* revolution.

Hundreds of small FSLN flags were strung across the Plaza of the Revolution. From the earthquake-damaged shell of the old Cathedral, which fronts on the plaza, hung a gigantic portrait of Augusto César Sandino.

The Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), which represents some 85 percent of the organized workforce, had also put up three big banners around the plaza reading, “Marx, Engels, Lenin—Giants of Proletarian Thought.”

The central theme of the May Day rallies was unity: Unity of the people in face of counterrevolutionary threats, unity of the working class to increase production, unity of the workers and the peasants.

“Unity” is not mere rhetoric in Nicaragua. Important steps have already been taken to bring workers into a single organization. Last year, on the initiative of the CST, union federations representing the overwhelming majority of organized workers formed the Trade-Union Coordinating

Committee of Nicaragua (CSN). The CSN organized the May Day rallies, and its representatives addressed all of them.

In Managua, Lucio Jiménez pledged that the CSN would press for the creation of a single labor federation. He called for strengthening ties with friendly countries, maintaining high levels of production, and defending the country.

These tasks, Jiménez explained, were necessary for the consolidation of workers power and the creation of a socialist society, which he termed the historic goal of the Nicaraguan working class.

Also speaking at the Managua rally was Junta of National Reconstruction member Rafael Córdova Rivas. Referring to Washington’s economic blackmail, Córdova Rivas said: “Today there are 100,000 people here. But if they take away our bread, next year there will be 500,000 to express loud and clear our intention to be free and independent.”

Córdova Rivas also announced major revisions in Nicaragua’s labor laws—including the jailing of employers who refuse to rehire illegally fired workers. Extensions of Social Security were announced; Córdova Rivas said this program now covers 100 times more people than in the days of Somoza. Wage increases to counter the effects of inflation were decreed as well.

Another important theme of the May Day rallies was internationalism. This found expression in various ways. Around the country, speakers recalled the origins of May Day in the struggle of U.S. workers for an eight-hour day. Representatives of working-class organizations from other countries were present. Speakers explained the international character of May Day, in which demonstrations by the working class register the level of struggle in each country.

Speakers also recalled that just two years before, ten workers had been killed by Somoza’s National Guard during an attempt to hold a May Day rally.

The main speaker at the Managua rally was Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrión. Recalling the words of Augusto César Sandino, “only the workers and peasants will go all the way,” Carrión noted that this phrase had not been uttered by Marx or Lenin or in Russia or Germany, but by a home-grown Nicaraguan revolutionist. That’s why, he declared, the FSLN puts the struggles of the workers and peasants at the center of the revolution.

Carrión emphasized the need for a single trade-union federation, and called on the CSN to deepen its struggle against the counterrevolutionary currents that still have some influence in the working class.

## Soviet Aid Averts Wheat Crisis

MANAGUA—The Soviet ambassador to Nicaragua announced here April 22 that his country was immediately donating 20,000 tons of wheat to Nicaragua.

The announcement means that Nicaragua will not run out of wheat, which had been a serious possibility after Washington cut off credit for the purchase of wheat in the United States in early March.

“Let the U.S. follow our example,” said Ambassador German Schliapnikov.

Besides keeping bread in the mouths of hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans, the donation will save the jobs of thousands of flour-mill workers and bakers. Nicaragua requires about 5,000 tons of wheat a month. A shipment of wheat from Canada is due in July.

Another important breakthrough for Nicaragua in fighting Washington’s

efforts to isolate the revolution was a \$100 million credit from Libya. The loan agreement was signed April 24, the result of a recent trip to the North African country by Commander of the Revolution Tomás Borge.

With Nicaragua’s trade deficit this year expected to reach \$350 million, the Libyan credit will play an important role in stabilizing the economy.

At the same time, a \$64 million technical assistance package has been signed with Cuba. This is \$4 million more than that provided during 1979 and 1980. Héctor Rodríguez Llompart, president of Cuba’s State Committee on Economic Collaboration, explained that collaboration between the two countries had not been one-sided, because Nicaragua’s example to the peoples of Latin America was its contribution.

—Arnold Weissberg



He pointed to the importance of worker-peasant unity and hailed the new organization of small and medium-sized farmers as a big step in that direction.

The revolutionary leader emphasized that the task of the trade unions was not only to struggle for material gains, "but to mobilize the class to build a new society." Carrión called on the unions not only to fight the counterrevolutionary plots of the private sector but also to overcome sloppy work habits on the job.

Carrión sharply criticized "demagogues" who try to convince workers that all their problems can be solved quickly. He explained that this was simply not true, that the state of the economy did not permit satisfaction of everyone's needs right away.

Carrión also called on the workers to make greater efforts to win over technicians and administrators to the side of the revolution. And he called on administrators to deepen consultation and collaboration with the workers. "The people," Carrión said, "have the right to participate in the fundamental decisions that determine

their destiny."

Turning to the series of recent military attacks from Honduras, Carrión said that the FSLN and the Nicaraguan people remain calm and resolute and are prepared to repel any aggression. "Is anyone here nervous?" he asked. "NO!" the crowd yelled back.

Striking the day's second theme, Carrión asserted Nicaragua's continuing support for the revolutionary struggles of the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala.

Also speaking were Gustavo Tablada, representing the Revolutionary Patriotic Front (a group of prorevolutionary parties including the FSLN); and Jiri Kubka, general secretary of the International Organization of Journalists, which just concluded its congress here.

Two right-wing union federations—which between them represent a maximum of 4 percent of the organized workforce, held a rally of their own on May 1. Despite big advance publicity in the reactionary daily *La Prensa* and on right-wing radio stations, only 700 persons turned out for the anti-Sandinista event. □

by using procapitalist Nicaraguans within the country had failed and that the U.S. was now turning to open military action.

Honduran government officials have made no secret of their desire to help Washington's anti-Nicaragua campaign.

Bands of ex-Somozaists freely operate training camps near the Nicaraguan border. The Honduran regime has shrugged off repeated Nicaraguan protests and, in fact, has labelled them "provocations."

Moreover, the Honduran army has provided covering fire across the border during raids by the Somozaist gangs.

As further evidence of Honduras's aggressive attitude, the Nicaraguan government announced April 27 the capture of two Honduran spies. The Honduran soldiers admitted they had been sent in to obtain information on the strength and positions of Nicaraguan border troops. The two were presented to the April 29 news conference for questioning by reporters.

Meanwhile, within Honduras, the government is trying to whip up anti-Nicaraguan hysteria. The Paz García regime recently slapped a 10 percent import duty on Nicaraguan goods, in violation of trade treaties.

The capitalist press in Honduras has called for increasing the size of the country's army.

In an open invitation to the ex-National Guardsmen, the Honduran army's chief of public relations has called for "a common front in case of a war with Nicaragua."

The campaign has met with resistance within Honduras, however. In a letter distributed May 1, trade unions, church groups, student organizations, and other opponents of the military regime called on the government to investigate the activities of the Somozaists. It denounced the army for permitting the violent raids into Nicaragua. □

## Ortega Sees U.S. Hand Behind Aggression

## Nicaragua Faces New Attacks From Honduras

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA—The Nicaraguan government has charged that Washington is behind the ninety-six military attacks the country has suffered this year from neighboring Honduras.

In a nationally televised news conference April 29, held in response to charges of "Sandinista expansionism" made by the Honduran regime to the Organization of American States, Defense Minister and Army Commander-in-Chief Humberto Ortega detailed the tons of weapons, vehicles, radar, and other sophisticated military hardware that Washington has shipped to the military dictatorship of Gen. Policarpo Paz García in the last two months alone.

Several examples—grenades and shells—were displayed at the news conference.

In addition, Ortega pointed out, high-ranking U.S. military officers have held a series of meetings with their Honduran counterparts.

Ortega also charged that U.S. spy planes have been flying over Nicaraguan territory.

The day before Ortega spoke, ex-Somozaists and Honduran army units assaulted several points along the border. The coordinated attacks were repulsed, with at least three attackers dead and one Sandinista soldier wounded.

Reviewing the history of U.S. aggression against the Sandinista revolution—including the Reagan administration's refusal to take any action against Somozaists training in Florida for an invasion of Nicaragua—Ortega said that Washington's efforts to promote counterrevolution

### Hondurans Rally to Defend Nicaragua

MANAGUA—Thousands of workers and peasants rallied in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on May 1 to reject their government's efforts to drag them into war with Nicaragua.

"Who are the enemies of our people?" a speaker asked the crowd. "The generals, the landlords, the capitalists!" came the response.

José Ochoa, president of the Honduras Press Association, asked the demonstrators if they wanted a war with Nicaragua. "NO!" shouted thousands of voices.

The Honduran Council for Peace and Friendship With Nicaragua (COHPAN) has called on the Honduran government to dismantle the Somozaist military bases in the country.

COHPAN, a coalition of twenty poli-

tical and social organizations, charges that high-ranking Honduran military officers have been working hand in glove with the Somozaist counterrevolutionaries. The coalition revealed that a Somozaist colonel has set up a radio station just five kilometers from Tegucigalpa, the country's capital, with equipment purchased in the United States.

COHPAN also revealed that the head of the so-called Army of Nicaraguan Liberation is living in Tegucigalpa. Pedro Ortega, a former business partner of the late Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, has granted numerous interviews to the Honduran and international press under the name "Juan Carlos."

—Arnold Weissberg

## Why Trial of U.S. Secret Police Has Rulers Worried

By Nelson Blackstock

[The following article appeared in the May 8 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

**NEW YORK**—As each day passes, the significance of this trial comes into sharper focus.

Nobody could have predicted it would turn out this way back in the summer of 1973. That's when lawyers for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) walked into federal court here to file suit against government spying and harassment.

Even last fall—when the socialists refused an out-of-court settlement on government-dictated terms, even though it included hefty damage claims—nobody could have foreseen what this trial would look like.

Today, the socialists and the government are driving in diametrically opposite directions. If there was any doubt about this before, it was cleared up April 15.

On that day, President Reagan pardoned top Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) officials Mark Felt and Edward Miller. A jury had convicted them of responsibility for a series of illegal break-ins. Reagan not only pardoned the two, he showered them with praise.

Interestingly, news reports indicate that Reagan had signed the pardon on March 26, days before the socialists' trial opened.

### Three Trials in One

To understand what's been unfolding at this trial, it helps to think of it as actually three trials in one.

On the first level is the trial a lot of people had been expecting for a long time.

During the long pretrial "discovery" process, the FBI was forced to turn over files documenting a far-reaching illegal campaign against the socialists. It included: Wire-tapping, bugging, forgery, and burglaries. Plots to disrupt antiwar demonstrations and civil rights actions. Behind-the-scenes moves to get people fired from their jobs.

As the evidence came out, the news sometimes hit the front pages.

The FBI is on trial for these crimes right now. And the case against them is devastating.

If this trial ends in damages being awarded to the socialists for these crimes—along with an injunction barring future actions of this sort—that will be a great victory for every Black person and worker in the country.

In light of the Felt-Miller pardon, such a verdict would mark a major setback for the Reagan administration.

That's the first trial. The government doesn't like it, but they can't deny much of what the FBI did. They quibble over details. They say former FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover was responsible for some of it, but he's gone now. They say the statute of limitations bars damages.

This first trial deals with illegal acts, "excesses," by the FBI.

The other two trials—built around the facts of this forty-year "investigation"—go beyond the crimes themselves to confront the legal and extra-legal framework on which they were based.

The government wanted very much to avoid this confrontation. That's why they pressed for an out-of-court settlement—and were willing to concede big damage claims to get it.

### Second Trial

The second trial challenges the arsenal of thought-control legislation assembled over the years.

Included are the Smith Act (designed to make it illegal to be a socialist), the Voorhis Act (restricting association with socialists in other countries), and the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952 (which threatens to deport you if you agree with socialists). All penalize people solely on the basis of what they think and say.

The battle began to be joined on these issues last December, when the government submitted to the court a response to an outline of the socialist case. The government stated:

"Without explicitly saying so, plaintiffs are in fact attempting to challenge the constitutionality of portions of the Immigration and Nationality Act which make advocacy of views such as those held by the SWP grounds for exclusion, deportation, and denial of naturalization."

It is true that by challenging the applicability of any of this legislation to themselves, openly proclaimed Marxists, the socialists are questioning the government's right to use it against anybody.

All this thought-control legislation is a danger to the labor movement as a whole.

It is used as a pretext for all sorts of "investigations" and attacks on Blacks, Latinos, and others.

That's the second trial—over thought-control laws.

### Third Trial

The third trial seriously began on April

13. That's when FBI agent Charles Mandigo took the stand.

Mandigo claimed virtually unlimited power for the president—over and above any laws, courts, or Congress—to go after "subversives." Although he was unable to explain what a "subversive" is.

He said the president derived this power directly from the Constitution. It was therefore subject to neither review by the courts nor limitation by Congress.

Here we get into the most fundamental questions raised by this case in eight years.

Mandigo had been called by the socialists to explain the public affidavit he had signed in February.

During Mandigo's stay on the stand, Judge Griesa took over the questioning for a time.

What was it that the FBI was looking for in its investigation of the SWP? the judge asked.

"Would you be just looking for, among other things, any specific acts as distinct from just ideas?"

Mandigo said the FBI was investigating "subversive activities."

"Subversive activities being defined as what?" the judge asked.

Mandigo said it had something to do with subverting "the government's constitutional form of government."

"Was [there] an attempt to uncover specific types of activities?" the judge asked. What about sabotage, he suggested as an example.

That, Mandigo answered, would be "a criminal investigation."

"I don't know what you are trying to get at," Griesa responded. "Are you trying to convey to me that the FBI investigation wasn't related to activity?"

"What were those subversive activities that they were interested in trying to ferret out?" the judge asked again.

"They were interested in activity which would tend to subvert our constitutional form of government," Mandigo answered.

"Specifically what? Give me some 'for instances,'" Griesa insisted.

He still did not get an answer.

### Who Are 'Subversives'?

This exchange started to get at the heart of the case. The FBI's so-called investigation of the socialists is not based on anything they do—but on who they are.

What is it that the socialists do that is illegal? Do they throw bombs? the judge asked at one point. There are laws against throwing bombs. Espionage? The same.

But "subversive activities?" What are those? Apart from acts that are illegal?



Looking at it another way, are there "subversive" acts that are not illegal? If so, what are these?

But deep down, everyone knows what the government is getting at.

Subversives are people they don't like. A lot of people fit the bill. Socialists, of course. But also militant workers and Blacks. And race-mixers, trouble-makers, peaceniks, and uppity women.

The fact that such people are living and breathing is a "subversive" activity, as far as the government is concerned.

Workers are familiar with this attitude. When a cop slaps you across the head, there doesn't have to be any law involved. He's not likely to cite one, and you had just as well not ask.

That is the capitalist state at work. At the trial we're seeing the same thing on a different level.

From the mouths of FBI lawyers in pin-striped suits comes the verbal equivalent of a blackjack across the base of the skull.

We're the government. We do what we want. There doesn't have to be a law. We know who subversives are. Don't ask.

### Terrorists

They don't use the term subversive exclusively anymore. Today they have an additional word. Terrorist.

Appended to the public Mandigo affidavit is a copy of "The Trotskyite Terrorist International." Compiled by professional red-baiter Herbert Romerstein, the thick, paper-bound volume was issued by a U.S. Senate committee chaired by Senator James Eastland. The cover states it resulted from a hearing, but only two people in addition to staff were present at the closed-door session

—Eastland and Romerstein. (Romerstein was secretary of something called "Friends of the FBI.") It is a concoction of lies designed to show the socialists are terrorists.

One way it's done is by showing socialists supporting the antiwar movement, which helped end the war, thus aiding Vietnamese "terrorists." Thus, people who throw out the U.S. and take over their own country are terrorists. And anyone who opposed the U.S. war is one, too.

Terrorism, like subversion, is a word that they can't seem to define. Certain deeds are against the law—such as kidnapping, bombing, assassination. For those you can be arrested and sent to jail. But what is a terrorist? Is there some terrorist act that is not already illegal?

If the word does have any meaning, it's the FBI men who are the terrorists. They force people to live in fear, get them fired from jobs, sponsor and bankroll Ku Klux Klan assassinations.

### Presidential Power

Mandigo spent much time citing the authority the FBI uses to justify its investigation.

In referring to the court's request for a list of illegal acts by the socialists, he said:

"There was an assumption that the investigations of the plaintiffs can be justified on strictly a list of possible criminal violations. It is not the case. There is independent authority underneath the President of the United States to conduct national security investigations."

That is, the president has the power to "investigate" you whether you broke the law or not.

The judge earlier asked Mandigo: "Did [the investigation] not have to do with violations of American law?"

"No, it did not," Mandigo replied. "It dealt with the Presidential Article 2, Section 1 powers [of the president in the Constitution]. . . ."

This is the presidential oath of office. An incoming president must swear "that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Griesa also asked Mandigo, "Are you trying to convey to me that the FBI investigation wasn't related to any activity?"

"We are dealing with a very complex problem here," Mandigo answered. "We are dealing with two coequal branches of the government—the Congress, which passes laws to protect the government, the people, criminal statutes; and we are also dealing with the President's duty, his authority to defend the Constitution. They are coequal branches. They both have an interest."

The constitution lays the basis for a republican form of government. A republic is a representative government based on law. The opposite is a monarchy or totalitarian dictatorship—where arbitrary, autocratic powers are invested in an individual.

Mandigo is saying that the president has powers *outside of any law* to "investigate" people he decides are subversive. This power is not restricted by any laws, nor by the Bill of Rights.

In other words, in order to protect the republican form of government, the president has the powers of a king or dictator.

Along these same lines, in his opening

## FBI Steps Up Harassment of Puerto Rican Socialists

Since the Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) suit against government harassment and spying went to trial on April 2, there has been a perceptible increase in police and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) surveillance of the Trotskyist Internationalist Workers League (LIT) of Puerto Rico.

People who were later identified as FBI agents have carried out surveillance of a building in which the companion of an LIT leader works. They detained her briefly to ask her questions about her companion.

Later the FBI spoke to the building owner, showing him a picture of the LIT leader, identifying him by name, and alleging he was being investigated in connection with "terrorism and arms smuggling."

On April 13 the office of another LIT member was broken into. None of the valuable medical equipment on hand was taken, but files were examined.

This kind of burglary is characteristic of FBI "black bag" operations.

The LIT's headquarters has also been placed under increased surveillance. For some time the office had been regularly watched on those nights when the committee to defend the Vieques fishermen meets there. The Vieques fishermen are protesting the U.S. Navy's use of their island as a gunnery range.

But recently the headquarters has been watched on other occasions as well. And on April 14 a police officer armed with an automatic rifle showed up at the headquarters. He claimed that there had been a report of a burglary in the building, although no such report had been made. After snooping around, the patrolman entered an unmarked car with two men in civilian dress and drove away.

The U.S. government's defense of its

harassment of the Socialist Workers Party has rested heavily on alleged SWP connections with international terrorism. The LIT has been outspoken in its advocacy of Puerto Rican independence, although it has had no connection whatsoever with so-called terrorist activities.

But the FBI clearly hopes to be able to brand the LIT as a terrorist organization, and then use that as a defense of government spying on the SWP.

FBI harassment of the LIT is also in the interests of the colonial government of Puerto Rico, which tries to discredit all proindependence forces. By branding the LIT as terrorist-connected, the Puerto Rican government would also be threatening the National Committee in Defense of Vieques, and the solidarity activities in Puerto Rico with El Salvador and Nicaragua. The LIT is active in both these areas. □

statement, government lawyer Peter Salerno had said this case involves "matters that are committed to the discretion of the executive branch in determining how many to investigate and how to investigate."

### Real Face of Capitalist Rule

In these proclamations the government is coming out with things they would rather not talk about.

But, forced to defend themselves, they are starting to reveal the naked face of class rule—with no pretext of abiding by laws or the common will.

This also brings to the fore an ugly fact about the evolution of modern capitalism.

There has been a growing tendency to concentrate arbitrary powers in the presidency.

During the Vietnam War and Watergate, there was talk of the "imperial presidency." Nixon had started to include members and representatives of the capitalist class in the category "subversive"—hence, the "enemies list." He turned some of the techniques perfected for use on "subversives" against members of his own class.

Buffeted by continuing crises, the ruling class is faced with the need to circle the wagons—to act more and more arbitrarily, violating democratic forms.

This tendency has become pronounced since the years leading up to the Second World War. On April 21, the socialists introduced into evidence the Church Committee report. It was issued in 1976 by a Senate committee on "Intelligence Activities." It documents the fact that President Roosevelt issued a secret executive order in 1936 that laid the basis for the FBI operation against "subversives."

The report quotes J. Edgar Hoover on his discussions with Roosevelt in preparing the order. The focus was on their fears of the rapidly growing unions. In particular, the coal miners were singled out.

Mandigo cited a related 1939 public order by Roosevelt as laying the groundwork for all subsequent actions against the SWP.

At no time did the American people—not even members of Congress—get to discuss or vote on these far-reaching actions. They never even knew about them!

### Logic of Capitalism

These directives came down as the ruling class was preparing for war.

Ordinarily, in time of war, the executive branch restricts democratic rights in order to overcome opposition.

What is now different is that arbitrary powers are being claimed in peacetime. In fact, the very power to declare war had been assumed by the president—in defiance of the Constitution, which reserves that power for Congress. The last two wars—Korea and Vietnam—have been waged without an act of Congress. Nobody voted on them.

Apart from executive orders (even the term reminds you of "royal decrees"), Congress has passed legislation giving the president sweeping powers never envisioned by

the founders of the country.

The Taft-Hartley Act, for example, gives the president authority to order strikers back to work under threat of stiff penalties. Passed in the late forties, the labor movement branded it the slave labor law.

Why is this happening? As modern monopoly capitalism develops, the contradiction between the needs of the wealthy few and the vast majority of working people becomes more and more apparent. The democratic façade starts to wear thin. It becomes more and more necessary to rule through force and arbitrary commands.

But, given the unpopularity of such actions, they try to hide what they're doing as much as possible.

When the ruling class is following the kind of policies they are today—right now they have forced 160,000 coal miners out on strike and are threatening the jobs and livelihood of 70,000 or more railroad workers—they will have to resort to undemocratic, arbitrary measures to carry them through.

You can't very well have a democratic vote over whether people will throw themselves out of a job and starve to death.

The final logic of this trend ends in military dictatorship or fascism—where even the pretext of democracy is wiped out, and there is open dictatorship of the very rich capitalists.

In its later stages, capitalism more than ever tends to reproduce in society the human relations we see in the factory, where you are supposed to do what you're told and shut up. Every worker is by definition a subversive—subject to the ever-present surveillance of foremen and snitches.

Into the Black community the government sends armed police with a licence to kill. As tension deepens, it gives a green light to extra-legal racist gangs to wage a campaign of terror.

The capitalist ruling class is forced to betray the democratic promises of the American Revolution.

### Conflict Built into Constitution

These contradictions are even built right into the Constitution. There is a conflict between the Bill of Rights—which guarantees freedom of press, of speech, of assembly and so on—and those sections of the Constitution that enshrine the rights of private property above the common good.

The government defends its violations of the rights of socialists by claiming the powers of a dictator for the president. These powers are necessary, they say, in order to protect the republican form of government (a government without a dictator).

This contradictory claim seems to make no sense. But it demonstrates the dead-end logic of a class that has to betray what are supposedly its own values in order to safeguard its economic dictatorship over the rest of us.

The socialists call for a republican form of government—but a new type of republic.

In history we have seen republics based on

slavery—in which the slaves were excluded from decision making, as in ancient Greece and in this country before the Civil War.

The socialists want to see a workers republic—in which there is the broadest kind of representative democracy. As the socialists have always stated, it's fair to assume that after a revolution the workers will keep the Bill of Rights and scrap those outmoded sections of the Constitution that stand in the way of human progress.

### Secret Affidavit

While the government is already being forced to openly confront these fundamental issues at the trial, they are making a last-ditch bid to block the trial from actually confronting all these issues. That's the role of a secret affidavit now in the hands of Judge Griesa.

What's in the affidavit? The government claims it contains evidence of "illegal acts" committed by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, and possibly other SWP leaders, including James P. Cannon, Farrell Dobbs, and Joseph Hansen.

The details of the affidavit must be kept secret, the government claims, to avoid exposing government "sources."

Hints of what may be in it came out during Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward G. Williams's cross-examination of Jack Barnes. Williams accused Barnes of heading something called the "Secret Operational Center of the Fourth International" in Paris in 1972. He also tried to link Barnes indirectly with the kidnapping of Fiat executive Oberdán Sallustro in Argentina in 1973. All this is a fabrication, as Barnes made clear on the stand.

The secret affidavit is a final gamble to avoid the real issues. And to prevent a court ruling on these issues.

As many observers have noted, one of the most striking things to come out of this case is this: after more than forty years of intensive spying—and eight years of open challenge in this suit—the government has not been able to produce evidence of a single crime, or even a "conspiracy" to plan one in the future.

The reaction of most people has been, why don't they get off the socialists' backs?

This sentiment became so strong, in fact, that the attorney general was forced to publicly announce in 1976 that he was calling off the FBI "Domestic Security" investigation of the SWP and YSA. (Although it continued under a different name, as the socialists later proved.)

The secret affidavit is a scheme to get around the fact that the FBI has nothing on the socialists.

The government hopes in this way to isolate the socialists from the millions who now sympathize with their fight for civil liberties.

If it can be established that the socialists are indeed law-breakers, many will conclude that it probably is a good idea to keep an eye on them.



At the same time, the government hopes to avoid a legal decision on the government's right to pursue an "investigation" that never turns up evidence of crimes.

The government says it just wants to "investigate" the socialists. But there is no such thing as a neutral, passive investigation. By its very nature it involves disruption of legitimate political activity. This the socialists want stopped once and for all.

### Settlement Offensive

The suit was filed during the depths of Watergate, when Nixon was still president.

Watergate bared a side of capitalist rule that is ordinarily hidden. The ruling class decided they had to make it appear that a genuine house cleaning was going on.

They let a lot of stuff come out. There were spectacular Senate hearings.

The exposures got big play in the news media. The revelations in the socialist suit became part of this process.

By the late 1970s, the rulers decided to call a halt. It was "time to put Watergate behind us," as their slogan went.

As part of this, the government opened what can be called a "settlement offensive."

The socialist suit was among the first against government spying, but many others had followed.

The government began offering settlements designed to create the illusion that the wrongs were being remedied—that the two sides, the government and the aggrieved parties, were shaking hands and putting the past behind them.

But if you look closely at what the government—including federal, state, and local in some cases—was offering, the illusion fades. As with the highly touted new FBI guidelines (also part of this process), the settlements gave the government new legal cover for what they had been doing all along. They were a dangerous setback.

Many who had previously taken a firm stand were swept up in the settlement offensive.

The socialists refused to be part of this. It wasn't that they opposed out-of-court settlements in principle. Such an agreement can be just as good as or better than the outcome of a trial. But the socialists would not put their name on an agreement that sanctioned in any way a continued "investigation" of the socialists. That was out.

The government became aware that the socialists would not be compromised on this last fall.

In a head-on courtroom confrontation, the illusions of the out-of-court settlements could not be maintained. The government would have to show its hand.

At this time, there was a shift in what the government was saying. The outlines of the government strategy we're now seeing at the trial began to become visible.

Lately the settlement offensive has come in for some rough sledding.

[Black rights leader and peace activist] Dick Gregory recognized the socialists' role

in spurring the resistance in his statement on the day the trial opened. He said:

"I'm glad the Socialist Workers Party has carried the fight through to the end and not faltered, but has gotten stronger and stronger. There are a lot of people that the government can appeal to with money but I thank God the Socialist Workers Party is not one of them."

Blacks have been especially quick to recognize the danger in agreeing to the government's terms. They were among the first and strongest opponents of the proposal settlements in both Chicago and New York.

### Wall of Silence

Watching the momentous developments in the courtroom, sometimes it's hard to believe that you won't be reading about what you're seeing in the next morning's paper.

The problem is the fight the socialists are waging runs squarely at odds with the ruling class agenda. That's why their media is turning a blind eye to the events at Foley Square.

Today, they're out to beef up the intelligence agencies, not "expose abuses."

Today on the front page you're more likely to see a headline like this one on the April 16 *New York Times*: "President pardons two ex-FBI officials in 1970's break-ins."

And the liberal *New York Times* editorially endorsed Reagan's action, while suggesting his wording could have been better.

After Reagan pardoned Felt and Miller, Miller said it would erase any reluctance that agents may have to "do their job 100 percent."

Reagan's statement pardoning the two touches on the very matters being fought out in court here. He said, in part:

"Their convictions . . . grew out of their good faith belief that their actions were necessary to preserve the security interests of our country. The record demonstrates that they acted not with criminal intent, but in the belief that they had grants of authority reaching to the highest levels of government."

"America was at war in 1972," Reagan went on, ". . . and [the two] followed procedures they believed essential to keep the Director of the F.B.I., the Attorney General, and the President of the United States advised of the activities of hostile foreign powers and their collaborators in this country."

To begin with, the country was not at war in 1972. No such bill had ever passed Congress, nor had the American people voted to go to war.

And, as was shown in their trial, they found no illegal links at all with "hostile foreign powers."

More important, however, is the endorsement of law-breaking. FBI agents can get away with anything, Reagan now says, as long as they think what they are doing is okay ("good faith"), do it without "criminal intent," and believe they have the president behind them.

Reagan is saying, quite simply, that the

president is above the law—as are those accountable to him.

He is endorsing the same kind of "executive branch discretion" upon which the government is basing its case in the trial.

A victory for the socialists in this trial would be a blow to Reagan's plans.

### Fight Is Just Beginning

A battle is under way. Both sides are marshalling the forces at their disposal. But they are not evenly matched in terms of resources.

The government has all the resources of the state to call upon.

The socialists have two small organizations and their attorneys.

The government has an army of FBI agents at its disposal. While the socialists cannot even afford the \$300 needed to buy the daily court transcripts, the government gets them at taxpayers' expense.

But the socialists also have powerful allies they can call upon—the millions of working people and others who have a vital stake in the outcome. The Political Rights Defense Fund is planning a round of national rallies to publicize the issues in the suit, gather support, and raise much-needed funds.

As the plaintiffs, the socialists are putting on their case first.

When it comes the government's turn, there could be more counter-moves along the lines of the "secret affidavit" and the threats to deport socialists.

The government does not want to lose this case. They want to continue to use their war on subversives to go after anybody they dislike.

They hounded Martin Luther King, Jr. for years on the pretext that he associated with subversives. The FBI has admitted they even schemed to drive him to commit suicide.

A victory in this case would be a slap at the whole informer system. Under the new guidelines, FBI director Webster says an FBI informer can murder you and get away with it if the FBI decides the protection of the informer is more important than your life.

An FBI agent recently said that some of the mothers in Atlanta were themselves responsible for several of the child murders. The mothers' response was simple: if you've got anything on us, then come forward and press charges. If not, drop the charges and apologize.

That's the same thing the socialists are now saying. Book us or let us go.

If the government thinks it has anything on us, then press charges, and we'll have it out on that level. But don't keep up this unending "investigation" as an excuse to harass and disrupt our activity.

A good ruling in this case will benefit every working person in the country. □

You won't miss a single issue if you subscribe.

## Israeli Aggression Threatens War in the Middle East

By Janice Lynn

The latest confrontation in Lebanon between Syrian and Israeli forces has underscored the danger of a full-scale war breaking out in the Middle East.

Fighting between Israeli-backed rightists and Syrian troops stationed in Lebanon broke out at the beginning of April.

The Israeli regime, which has been urging the rightists on and which openly admits that it is supplying them with arms, took advantage of this latest outbreak of fighting to launch new air and land attacks against Palestinian refugees in southern Lebanon.

Then on April 28, the Zionists escalated their provocations against the Syrian forces. Israeli jet fighters flew into central Lebanon and shot down two Syrian helicopters. Four Syrian soldiers were killed.

In response, the Syrian regime moved anti-aircraft missiles across the border into eastern Lebanon to defend against any further Israeli attacks.

Behind the Zionist military attacks has been a stepped-up campaign by Washington against the Syrian regime, which coincided with a visit to the Middle East by U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig.

Haig gave his approval to the Israeli attacks against Syrian forces when he declared in Jerusalem April 6, "We view the brutality of the Syrian action against the Christian enclave as a very, very serious turn of events which is unacceptable by any measure of appropriate international standards."

Haig had nothing to say about the brutal Israeli raids, nor those by the Israeli-backed Christian rightists, against Palestinian refugee camps and Muslim villages in southern Lebanon.

Just four days earlier, however, Richard Allen—President Ronald Reagan's national security adviser—made clear Washington's position. Over nationwide television, Allen declared that Israeli raids into southern Lebanon were "hot pursuit of a sort and therefore justified."

Prominent Arab-Americans and several Arab-American groups immediately denounced Allen's statement, calling for his resignation and a repudiation of his comments.

But the following day, the White House issued a statement defending Allen's position.

Washington has been stepping up its pressure against the Syrian regime because it has become an obstacle to U.S. military and diplomatic plans in the Middle East.

Syrian President Hafez al-Assad refused

to go along with the Israeli-Egyptian Camp David accords. He denounced Washington's abortive raid into Iran, formed an alliance with the anti-imperialist Libyan regime, signed a twenty-year friendship treaty with Moscow, opposed the Iraqi invasion of Iran, and is now opposing the Israeli-backed Phalangists.

The U.S. imperialists would like to see Assad's regime replaced with one that would be more amenable to their demands.

"The United States doesn't want friends in the Middle East," Assad pointed out in an April 11 speech, "it wants lackeys and agents and satellites like [Egyptian president] Anwar el-Sadat."

It was similar imperialist pressure against the Syrian regime that was behind the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. At that time, both the Egyptian and Syrian governments aligned themselves with the colonial liberation struggles against imperialism. Washington sought to overthrow these regimes.

Today, the U.S. rulers have a pro-imperialist regime in Egypt, and they are stepping up their pressure against Assad.

On April 9, a congressional committee voted to cancel \$130 million in economic aid to Syria. And it was announced that Reagan was seeking no aid for Syria in 1982.

On April 11, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee denounced the Syrian role in Lebanon and seventeen senators urged Reagan to call for the withdrawal of Syrian troops.

Editorials in the *New York Times* and a full-page ad in the *Washington Post* have also denounced the Syrian role.

"The new American attitude has apparently freed Israeli strategists to consider more extensive involvement in Lebanon," noted *New York Times* correspondent David Shipler April 29.

Israeli military figures began to talk more openly about their real aims. In an April 18 article, Shipler reported that Brig. Gen. Yaakov Even bragged:

"We are on the offensive. We are the aggressors. We are penetrating the so-called border of the so-called sovereign state of Lebanon, and we go after them wherever they hide."

The Israelis told Shipler that they were led to believe that Washington would not be upset over Israeli attacks on Syrian forces.

One of Washington's main concerns, noted *New York Times* Washington reporter Bernard Gwertzman April 30, "was the success of Syrian forces last weekend in

dislodging the Phalangists from a mountain ridge overlooking the Christian areas. . . ."

Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin revealed that Washington had been kept abreast of Israeli decisions and said that the Reagan administration understood Israel's motives for intervening.

Begin, who is also Israel's Defense Minister, warned that his forces might not be content with just the shooting down of the two Syrian helicopters.

The Reagan administration made no criticism of the Israeli regime for shooting down the Syrian helicopters. During the entire month of April, Washington was egging the Zionists on.

But the escalation of the fighting between the Israelis and Syrians began to go further than the U.S. government was banking on. The fighting threatened to escalate into a full-scale war. This was more than the imperialists were prepared for at this time.

Washington had to take into account the Iranian revolution and its impact in the Persian Gulf area, as well as the revolutions and anti-imperialist struggles in Central America, southern Africa, and Indochina.

In the immediate Middle Eastern area, the Syrian regime's relations with the Soviet Union posed the possibility of a wider confrontation with Moscow. It was one thing putting pressure on the Syrian regime, but quite another to open up the danger of confrontation with the Soviet Union.

A war in the Middle East could also lead to the overthrow of Egypt's Sadat. Would the Egyptian masses tolerate Sadat just sitting idly by and not coming to the aid of the Syrians if they were under attack by the Israeli regime?

Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs told reporters April 29 that in any Israeli-Syrian war, Egypt would back Syria despite its treaty with Israel. He later reversed his position, indicating the kind of pressures on Sadat's regime.

Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi pledged his country's resources to defeat Israeli aggression. Even King Khalid of Saudi Arabia and Kuwaiti leaders—among the most servile of pro-imperialist rulers—made verbal declarations of support for Syria in the event of a war with Israel, indicating their assessment of how the masses in their countries would react if such a war breaks out.

The danger of a full-scale war in the



Middle East led the State Department to issue a statement April 29 publicly dissociating itself from having "given a 'green light' to Israel to undertake any military actions in Lebanon."

Nevertheless, U.S. officials loudly protested the fact that the Syrian missiles in Lebanon were Soviet-made and even began to float rumors that Soviet advisers had accompanied the missiles into Lebanon.

Of course, the Israeli F-15 and F-16 jet fighters that were used in strafing runs against Syrian positions are all American-made, as are the majority of weapons supplied to regimes throughout the Middle East.

Soviet ambassador to the U.S. Anatoly Dobrynin denied the reports of Soviet advisers in Lebanon, and on May 1, even Haig had to admit that the rumors were unfounded.

Along with their propaganda against a supposed Soviet threat, Washington and Tel Aviv have made much of their "humanitarian" concern for Lebanon's Christian population.

"We do not want war with Syria, but we will not allow the Syrians to take over Lebanon and annihilate the Christians," warned Israeli prime minister Begin April 28.

A full-page *Washington Post* ad April 22 appealed to President Reagan, "Lebanon and its Christian community are being destroyed."

The hypocrisy of this concern about saving Christian lives can be seen by just looking at the admissions made by the Israeli army in 1978 following its invasion of southern Lebanon.

"Every move and advance by our forces was preceded by an artillery softening up, bombing from the air and shelling from the sea," said an official Israel Defense Forces report quoted in the April 30, 1978, *Washington Post*.

This was also the same strategy followed by Washington in its brutal shellings of civilian populations in Vietnam.

Syrian troops have been stationed in north-central Lebanon and have been in control of Zahle since 1976. In these five years there have been no massacres of the Christian population, no campaign of genocide. The same cannot be said of the indiscriminate bombings and shellings by Israeli forces.

The latest fighting is a Syrian response to military actions by rightist forces. It was the Israeli-backed Christian rightists who took the offensive action. It is they and the Israeli regime who hold full responsibility for the killings in Lebanon.

Washington has now begun talking about bringing peace to Lebanon and resolving the situation "through political and diplomatic means." But its aims remain the same—to maintain imperialist domination in the Middle East with the aid of the Zionist regime in Israel.

Washington has moved full steam ahead to secure new military bases in the Middle East, build a Rapid Deployment Force for use in the Persian Gulf, and is providing massive military aid for both the Israeli and Egyptian regimes.

Since the overthrow of the U.S.-backed shah of Iran, the Israeli regime has become even more central to the U.S. rulers' plans in the Middle East.

## Israeli Regime Steps Up Attacks

# What Is Behind the Fighting in Lebanon?

By Janice Lynn

At the beginning of April, large-scale fighting broke out in Lebanon.

Concurrent with this, the Israeli regime launched a new offensive, conducting some of the heaviest bombing raids in three years against Palestinian refugee camps and villages and cities in southern Lebanon. Hundreds have been killed and thousands wounded.

The fighting first broke out in the central Lebanese town of Zahle on April 2. Syrian forces that have been in Lebanon since 1976 under an Arab League mandate battled the rightist Christian militia known as Phalangists. The Phalangists—the largest right-wing paramilitary organization in Lebanon—are backed and supplied by the Israeli army.

The Syrians explain that the Phalangists provoked the fighting by occupying strategic positions around Zahle and starting to build a road linking Zahle with other Christian military enclaves in the north.

Construction of the road would have meant that the Phalangists would have had an uninterrupted military supply line from northern Lebanon south to the Israeli border. And Phalangist control of Zahle meant that Israeli forces would have use of a direct invasion route into neighboring Syria already secured by the Israeli-backed rightists.

Using the April 2 outbreak of fighting in Zahle and subsequent battles in the capital city of Beirut as a pretext, the Israeli army stepped up its raids on villages in southern Lebanon in collaboration with right-wing Lebanese forces stationed there.

The rightist Phalangists have been emboldened by these Israeli moves. And both the Phalangists and the Israeli regime have received encouragement from Washington for their aims.

### Roots of the Fighting

In order to fully understand the underlying causes of the present fighting in Lebanon, it is helpful to review its political history.

"Our defense requires that we should resist the hectic efforts currently being made to fill our region and to surround it with foreign military bases and forces with no other aim but to subject our area to imperialist and Zionist demands," declared Assad May 3.

The workers movement around the world must demand: U.S. Hands Off the Middle East! Stop Israeli Aggression in Lebanon!

The boundaries of what is today Lebanon were artificially established by the European powers. Before World War I, Lebanon was part of the Arab territory ruled by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The British imperialists promised the Arabs national independence if they would rebel against the Turks, who sided with Germany in World War I. But the British reneged on their agreement.

Instead, the British made a secret agreement with France to divide up the area. Britain got what became Iraq, Jordan, and Israel, and today's Syria and Lebanon went to the French.

Carving up the Middle East was a conscious policy aimed at blocking the Arab nationalist movement. The imperialist powers hoped to keep the Arab states weak and to pit them against each other to prevent them from uniting to struggle together against the colonialist powers.

In Lebanon, the French exploited religious differences to try to build a base for their continued domination and to counter Arab national consciousness.

In order to bolster their rule, the French colonialists guaranteed the Christians, who were originally a slight majority of the population, a privileged position. The Christians—especially the Maronites—became a majority of the university graduates, businessmen, government functionaries, and professionals.

Christians had only one-third to one-half the illiteracy rate of Muslims, noted *Le Monde* correspondent Eric Rouleau in a series of articles in the September 20-25, 1975 issues of the Paris daily.

In 1943, the French were confronted with mounting pressure for independence. They negotiated a formula for granting independence that guaranteed the various Christian sects a six to five majority over the Muslims in the Lebanese parliament. By this time, however, the Christians had become a minority and the Muslims a majority of the population.

Under this unwritten agreement, the

most powerful post in the government, the presidency, as well as that of army chief of staff, was reserved for Maronite Christians. The prime minister was to be a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of the Chamber a Shi'ite Muslim.

As a result of this arrangement, the leading Christian families were able to use their grip on the government to advance their economic interests. Economic inequality began to increasingly follow religious lines, with the majority of the Lebanese ruling class being composed of Christians while the bulk of the desperately poor were Muslims.

Hundreds of thousands of impoverished Muslim peasants had swelled the slums of Beirut, but the Maronite-dominated government refused to build badly needed schools, low-cost housing, or health clinics. These reactionary social policies of the government fueled demands for change.

Meanwhile, Rouleau noted, "The privileged lead ostentatious lives: several big cars, preferably American and sometimes fitted with telephones, per family; country homes in the hills with swimming pools, tennis courts, even a golf course, all surrounded by a big estate to which one escapes in the hottest times of the year."

In striking contrast to the way of life of the Maronite rulers, Rouleau described the poverty of the masses: "Six hundred thousand people are crowded into the 'belt of misery' which strangles Beirut and her suburbs . . . more than one-third of the population subsists on the brink of famine. The mortality rate there is two to three times the national average. . . . For their children, schooling and medical care are virtually out of reach."

In 1958, more than 14,000 U.S. Marines and Army forces landed in Lebanon to forcibly block the democratic reforms demanded by the Muslim population. But by the mid-1970s, the pressures on the government were greater than ever.

Extreme right-wing forces in the Christian community began organizing against the Muslim majority. The Phalangist Party—named after Franco's Falange in Spain—had been founded in 1936. It began to step up its activities.

The reactionary policies of the Phalangists are against the interests of most Christians as well as the Muslim majority. But the Phalangists carried out an extensive terror campaign aimed at silencing any opposition to their anti-Muslim ideology among the Christian population.

#### **The Palestinians and the 1975-76 Civil War**

The situation in Lebanon is directly intertwined with the struggle of the Palestinian people to regain their homeland. Palestinian refugees, physically driven from their land, flocked to Lebanon after the founding of Israel. Today there are some 400,000 to 500,000 Palestinians in Lebanon.

As long as the Palestinians live as second-class citizens in Israel, under military occupation in Gaza and the West Bank, and as destitute refugees in Lebanon, they will continue to fight against their oppressors. And their struggles will continue to provoke new Israeli aggression. The threat of war is built into the Zionist regime's occupation of Palestine.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the Palestinians emerged as an independent political force, calling for the dismantling of the Zionist state and its replacement with a democratic, secular Palestine where Muslims, Christians, and Jews could live as equals.

The rise of the Palestinian Liberation struggle also coincided with struggles of the Lebanese masses against the reactionary policies of the Lebanese government. The independent Palestinian struggle against Zionist oppression was continually pushing forward the class struggle in Lebanon.

The Lebanese government refused to defend the Palestinians in the face of terrorist Zionist attacks that took place throughout the 1960s and 1970s. And Lebanese government forces hounded the Palestinian masses when they took independent self-defense initiatives.

The result was a growing solidarity between the Palestinians and much of the Lebanese population, who were also victims of the Zionist raids. Both Palestinians and the Lebanese workers and peasants also faced the same economic and social injustices at the hands of the capitalist regime.

The rising tensions resulting from the inequalities in Lebanese society and the deepening misery of the masses, along with the government's inaction in face of Israeli terror, finally exploded. In April 1975, a brutal civil war broke out that lasted for nineteen months, causing the deaths of more than 40,000 people and some \$15 billion worth of damage.

A number of specific events led up to the outbreak of this war. In January 1975, a particularly vicious Israeli raid was launched against a Lebanese border village. The village was decimated and a wave of outrage resulted.

The Lebanese rightists saw a greater threat from the growing mass mobilizations of the Lebanese workers and peasants demanding government action to stop the Israeli raids than from the Israeli bombing attacks themselves.

In February 1975, the Lebanese army attacked a demonstration of Lebanese fishermen in the city of Sidon who were protesting a government ruling giving a fishing monopoly to wealthy Christian businessmen. Eleven demonstrators were killed. The fishermen had won support from Palestinian workers in their struggle and a general strike was called.

The Phalangists had already begun stepping up their agitation for ousting the

Palestinians from Lebanon. And on April 13, 1975, the rightist Phalangists attacked a busload of Palestinians. Twenty-seven Palestinians were killed. The bus had been returning from a rally protesting Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

This was what led to the outbreak of fighting and the resulting nineteen-month civil war. There was a sharp polarization in the country. On one side was a coalition of leftist forces, predominantly composed of Muslim workers, peasants, and poor city dwellers, in alliance with the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon. This leftist-Muslim-Palestinian coalition was known as the National Movement.

On the other side was a bloc of rightist forces led by the Maronite Christian ruling strata, composed of the Phalangists, the rightist National Liberal Party, and others.

#### **Syrian Intervention**

By early 1976, a victory of the Palestinian-leftist forces in the civil war seemed to be a likely outcome. But a total victory for the Palestinian-Muslim-leftist coalition would have inspired the masses to go forward to demand that their economic and social needs be met. Such revolutionary developments would have threatened the capitalist system in Lebanon and the neighboring Syrian regime as well.

It was this fear of revolution that led Syrian President Hafez el-Assad to take one step after another against the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition, and finally to launch a full-scale invasion of Lebanon on May 31, 1976. This was aimed at driving back the leftist alliance from its newly won positions and shifting the balance of the civil war in favor of the Christian rightists.

Both the Israeli and U.S. regimes backed Assad's intervention in Lebanon, although many Zionists would have preferred to do the job themselves. In April 1976, U.S. President Gerald Ford hailed the "constructive role" played by Damascus. U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger characterized Assad's intervention as "highly responsible."

Even Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin grudgingly praised the Syrian role. He declared on June 2, 1976, ". . . I will not stand in the way of anyone who wants to subdue Arafat's terrorists," referring to Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) head Yassir Arafat.

Within Lebanon, the Lebanese working people and the Palestinians called for the withdrawal of the Syrian troops. A general strike to protest the Syrian intervention was 100 percent effective in Beirut's Moslem-controlled districts.

On November 15, 1976, the Syrian army completed its occupation of Beirut. Its role was to limit any changes in the discriminatory governmental and economic system, repress the left-wing political groups, and put pressure on the PLO to go along



with a hoped-for negotiated settlement with Israel.

In the June 14, 1976, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, staff writer David Frankel pointed out, "The Israeli regime is perfectly capable of standing by while Assad does his dirty work, and then using the presence of Syrian forces as a pretext for taking over southern Lebanon, which has been one of its long-standing objectives." This was what, in fact, began to happen.

Assad's policy of preventing the Palestinian-leftist coalition from decisively defeating the Christian rightists enabled Israel to extend its domination to much of southern Lebanon. And once Assad had stabbed the Palestinians in the back, he was knifed in turn by Washington and Tel Aviv.

On March 14, 1978, 25,000 Israeli troops—backed by tanks, armored personnel carriers, heavy artillery, bombers, jet fighters, and gunboats—invaded southern Lebanon. Within six days, Israeli forces had occupied nearly all of southern Lebanon.

Israeli authorities said the takeover was in "retaliation" for an earlier Palestinian commando raid in Tel Aviv. But eyewitness accounts described how the Israeli invaders reserved their heaviest fire for civilians. There were more than 1,200 deaths, nearly 300,000 refugees, and systematic destruction of houses, schools, medical clinics, churches, and mosques.

#### Camp David Accords

In September 1978, U.S. President James Carter announced the Camp David accords. This separate deal between Egypt and Israel, engineered by Carter, did not even make a pretense of returning the Golan Heights of Syria. The Golan Heights had been occupied by Israel since the 1967 war.

In Lebanon, thousands of people protested the Camp David accords. Much of Beirut was shut down and in Palestinian refugee camps effigies of Carter, Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin were burned. The Lebanese government denounced the accords as ignoring the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

The Syrian regime also denounced the treaty between Cairo and Tel Aviv as "a denial of Palestinian rights."

With this changing relationship of forces, the Israeli regime was relieved of the need to counter the Egyptian army on its southern border. It began to strengthen its ties with the Christian rightists in Lebanon, to the north.

The Israeli regime encouraged the rightists not to cooperate with Assad and to carry out provocations against the Syrian troops.

In October 1978, Christian rightists assaulted Syrian troops in East Beirut, apparently hoping to provoke a crisis, that would allow Israel to intervene. The out-

break of fighting between the Syrian troops and the right-wing Christian militias did set the stage for further Israeli encroachments into Lebanon.

Israeli links with the rightist forces in Lebanon grew closer. Instead of withdrawing completely from southern Lebanon as required by various United Nations Security Council resolutions, the Israeli regime handed over a frontier zone to a Lebanese Christian force commanded by Major Saad Haddad.

Haddad takes orders directly from Israel and his troops are paid and armed by the Israeli government. Haddad's rightist militia coordinates its attacks against the Palestinian and Muslim population in southern Lebanon with Israel.

In April 1979, Haddad declared the region he commanded to be independent of the Lebanese central government.

#### Threats Against Syria

As the Israeli regime tightened its links with the rightist forces in Lebanon it also stepped up its provocations against Syria. In June 1979, Israeli forces shot down five Syrian jets. Four more were shot down in September of that year.

On August 19, 1980, Israeli forces launched their biggest raid into southern Lebanon since the March 1978 invasion. Five days later, Israeli jets shot down another Syrian plane. On December 31, 1980, Israeli forces downed two more Syrian jets.

These provocations made it clearer that every time the Zionist forces moved into Lebanon, seizing positions there, the Syrian regime faced the possibility that the Israeli moves were the beginning of a military thrust against Syria itself.

Faced with Israeli threats on its southern border, the hostile regimes of Iraq and Jordan on its eastern border, and with growing internal opposition, Syrian President Assad began looking around for support.

In October 1980, he signed a twenty-year friendship treaty with Moscow. And Assad was one of the few Arab leaders who refused to fall in line behind Washington's propaganda barrage following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Assad has also been forced to adopt a firmer anti-imperialist stance in the Middle East. Syrian relations with the PLO have warmed up and Syrian radio denounced Carter's April 1980 commando raid against Iran as "an act of piracy and aggression."

When Libyan leader Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi called for a union between Syria and Libya in September 1980, Assad responded immediately, hoping not only to receive economic and military aid, but further political support as well in the struggle against Israeli aggression and imperialist domination.

The official Syrian newspaper *Al Baath* strongly criticized the Iraqi regime's inva-

sion of Iran, explaining how its purpose was to "divert attention from the main struggle with Israel and give the United States and Zionist forces the alibi to interfere in the Gulf region. . . ."

#### Zionist Aggression

It was in this context that the latest provocations against the Syrian troops began. During 1980, Israeli forces had launched at least nineteen raids into southern Lebanon.

The fighting in Beirut and Zahle at the beginning of April 1981, was the pretext the Israeli government needed to escalate its attacks. The Israeli government claims that its self-appointed aim is to save the Lebanese Christians from genocide at the hands of the Moslems and Palestinians.

"Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel has said on a number of occasions recently," the April 20, 1981 *New York Times* reported, "that the assistance was being given to the Christian militia forces to prevent annihilation of Christians in Lebanon."

But this demagoguery about saving Christians covers up the real Israeli motives which are rooted in the economic, social, and political divisions within Lebanon.

Rather than saving lives, the Israeli regime's support to the rightists and its terrorist raids into Lebanon only result in more killing—Moslems and Christians alike.

One of the more brutal attacks came on April 19, 1981—Easter Sunday. Haddad's Israeli-supported Christian militia shelled the port of Sidon, a predominantly Lebanese Muslim and Palestinian city. The targets were houses, restaurants, banks, and movie theaters on the main thoroughfare.

That same afternoon, Israeli fighter bombers were hammering what they said were Palestinian positions five miles across the Lebanese border, in what they term "pre-emptive strikes." For the last two years, Israeli leaders have totally abandoned any pretense of these attacks being "retaliatory" raids.

These strikes are not against PLO bases as is claimed, but against Lebanese towns and villages and Palestinian refugee camps.

On April 20, thousands of residents of Sidon marched in a funeral procession for the sixteen victims killed the day before. Lebanese government officials joined with the protesters who carried placards that said, "We want the world to condemn Israel and its agents."

It is precisely the Zionist regime, the rightist forces in Lebanon, and above all the stepped-up pressure from the U.S. rulers in Washington, that are responsible for the escalating violence.

The Israeli regime's attacks today threaten to engulf the whole Middle East in a new war. The U.S.-inspired aggression must come to a halt. □

## Salvadoran Military Sows Death and Famine

By Lars Palmgren

SAN SALVADOR—"They are crazy," Manuel Valle said, referring to the Junta and the armed forces of El Salvador. "Totally crazy. We expect nothing from them, absolutely nothing."

"Their own actions have made us realize that," Manuel Valle went on. "They are the ones who have made us revolutionaries. Because all of us here know that the revolution is our only hope."

We are sitting in a small café on the Boulevard del Ejército in the industrial district of San Salvador. Manuel Valle, a stocky man about fifty years old, wearing blue work clothes, spoke forcefully—not at all in the slow, soft tones that are common in El Salvador today.

As if to emphasize what he was saying he brought his hand down sharply on the flimsy table with each sentence.

"They will have to reap what they have sown." Bang. "They will see." Bang.

We had just come into the capital from the southern highway. Just outside the city we saw two bodies on the roadside—the remains of two peasants, two headless chunks of flesh, the heads beside the bodies. One body without skin; the other horribly disfigured by machete blows.

Unable to talk, we drove on into San Salvador. Still mute, we sat down at the café and met Manuel Valle.

As if he could read in our faces what we had just seen he started to talk to us at once.

"I remember being in the reserves," he went on. "I've done military service, and I even learned how to command troops. I learned to use weapons, and I can organize a fight. I will apply my knowledge—not like they want, but against them. I'm ready, and when the day comes. . . ."

Manuel Valle was not a lone wolf. He was part of a collective willingness to fight, a collective hatred. One comes across this all the time in El Salvador—despite the repression, the fear, the isolation created by the curfew. One meets people who express their anger and hatred, their willingness to fight the regime.

### Forced Underground

Perhaps more than anyone I met in El Salvador, Manuel Valle was the expression of this attitude. At the same time, he expressed some of the difficulties the revolution in El Salvador faces today.

Manuel Valle is ready to fight. But today it is a question of waiting. He does not participate in any organized work on a day-to-day basis. He feels himself a part of the revolutionary movement, but he has no

organized channel through which to participate.

Why is this so? It isn't that Manuel Valle doesn't like organizational work, or that the revolutionaries would not like to offer him an organized channel. The reason has to do with the effects of the near-total militarization of El Salvador since the revolutionary offensive in January.

Even before the offensive, most of the mass organizations, their leaders and activists, had been forced to go underground. They could no longer hold meetings or organize massive actions. Nor could they have broad and open discussions in which the people could participate.

In the course of the January events, many of the leaders and organizers of the various mass organizations were integrated into the military structures of the revolutionary movement. The effect of that was that the situation of the mass organizations became still more difficult.

Many of the best and most politically experienced organizers were no longer present. Instead they went to form part of the armed revolutionary units in the areas controlled by the revolutionaries. These are far away from the towns and the big urban areas.

### Liberated Areas

The liberated areas were the product of long-term political work. Most of the armed revolutionary units that exist in them did not come from outside but were the product of years of organizing among the rural population by the revolutionaries.

As the struggle against the regime sharpened during the past two years, the people of these zones began to develop new forms of social organization. Instead of being part of the junta's El Salvador, the liberated areas were an expression of the society the people were fighting for, the El Salvador that would be created after the triumph of the revolution. These zones were mainly located in the provinces of Morazán, Chalatenango, San Vicente, La Paz, and Cabañas.

Such areas were important for other reasons as well. There, it was possible to give military training to new activists. Supplies of weapons and ammunition could be guaranteed.

Today, however, the character of these liberated areas has begun to change. The revolutionaries have not lost control over them, but instead of being areas where social life is organized on a basis different from the rest of Salvadoran society, they have become battlefields.

The regime's armed forces have been responsible for this.

During March and April the army and other units of the repressive apparatus carried out ongoing attacks against these areas. The attacks were concentrated around the following areas: Suchitoto and Guazapa in Cuzcatlán Province; Metapán in Santa Ana; Las Vueltas in Chalatenango; San Lorenzo and Tecoluca in San Vicente; San Agustín in Usulután; Volcán Conchagua in La Unión; Jucuarán Chirilagua in San Miguel; and Jocoaitique, Meanguera, and Corinto in Morazán.

The armed forces have launched rocket and grenade attacks from airplanes and helicopters. They have burned and killed. But their military success has been limited. They have not achieved their aim of "cleaning out" the revolutionaries.

The commander in chief at San Francisco Gotera, capital of Morazán Province, even had to admit in mid-April that "if we leave the town, they attack us." He also acknowledged that revolutionary units of up to 600 troops move freely within three kilometers of the city and that the army has been unable to do anything about it.

The lack of concrete military gains has no doubt exacerbated the demoralization among the regime's soldiers that existed even before the current counteroffensive.

### Scorched Earth

But the intense military attacks have had some effects. They have forced the revolutionaries to evacuate much of the population in the areas they control, both to save people from being killed by the army and to stave off famine and catastrophe.

The constant bombing and shelling have destroyed harvests and crops. The military cordon around the areas has made it almost impossible to bring food from outside.

Many of the tens of thousands of people who now subsist in refugee camps in El Salvador or in neighboring countries—especially Honduras—are people who have been forced away from the liberated areas. The majority are women, children, or the elderly. Many of the teenage and adult men have joined the armed revolutionary units.

The revolutionary forces are still defending themselves in the areas they have controlled. Their knowledge of the terrain makes this easier. But it has become considerably more difficult for them to move in and out or carry on broader offensive actions.



Such difficulties could become more serious because of a recent policy shift by the Honduran army. According to sources in Tegucigalpa, a meeting of 600 army officers at the end of March decided that the Honduran army will carry out coordinated actions with the Salvadoran army, attacking the border zones where the revolutionaries are concentrated. This also means that the entrance of matériel through Honduras will become more difficult.

Manuel Valle is prepared to wait: "We don't give up. When the time comes we'll be right here. They can kill us, they can jail us, they can hurt us, they can try to frighten us. But they will never win us over to their side. We know what our role is

and what theirs is, and they will soon find out we know."

But the difficulties exist, and the will of the people is still to be reorganized into a powerful collective force. The ability of the revolutionaries to break through their isolation and reactivate organizational work in the cities is thus of considerable importance.

Likewise, international solidarity must be redoubled to isolate the murderous junta in El Salvador, stop the imperialists from keeping it alive, and stop the Honduran and Guatemalan armies from intervening.

"If the junta wasn't armed by the United States," Manuel Valle said, "it would have fallen long ago." □

political organizations in the country.

Among those known to have been arrested were Zodwa Radebe, who led a mass march through Tembisa April 1, and her husband David Radebe; Kehla Mthembu and George Wauchope, Azapo's president and publicity secretary, respectively; Amandla Kwadi, a leader of the Women's Federation of South Africa; and Mogale Segale and Hames Moleya, former leaders of the now-banned Black People's Convention.

Kwadi's arrest came just two weeks after she spoke at a rally in Alexandra, another Black township near Johannesburg, at which she proposed that all Black movements in the country unite to organize a national protest against the apartheid regime on May 31.

An April 13 press release issued in London by the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (South Africa) declared, "This latest clampdown on AZAPO officials and members of allied organisations forms part of an endless harassment by the apartheid regime to repress and stifle by any means the role played by AZAPO in working with the people to organise resistance on a large and mass based scale in our country."

The ferment in the Black townships around Johannesburg is just one part of this mass resistance.

At the same time that the Tembisa protests were erupting, several thousand Black construction and sugar workers were walking off their jobs in Natal Province to press for wage increases.

The South African Allied Workers Union, one of the main Black unions in the country, had won another victory just a few days earlier when the American-owned Johnson and Johnson company agreed to recognize the union.

And in the Pietersburg, Tzaneen, and Potgietersrust areas of the northern Transvaal a mass boycott of buses, in protest against higher fares, was entering its ninth month. □

## Answered With Police Violence

### Blacks in South Africa Protest Rent Hikes

By Ernest Harsch

South African police, faced with mass protests against rent increases, have cracked down on the Black populations of Tembisa, Evaton, Sebokeng, and other townships around Johannesburg.

On April 5, they moved in with firearms and tear gas to break up a mass meeting called by the Tembisa Residents Action Committee.

A police van pulled up to the meeting and ordered the crowd to disperse. When the residents refused to do so, police reinforcements rushed in and began firing tear-gas canisters. The crowd attempted to regroup to continue the meeting, but were again dispersed. Three Blacks were admitted to the Tembisa Hospital with bullet wounds.

Police attacked residents of the township indiscriminately, firing tear-gas canisters into a crowd of worshippers at the St. Matthew's Catholic Church and into a group of commuters waiting for a train.

Angered by such provocations, Black youths throughout the township rebelled and attacked various symbols of the apartheid regime, including trucks and cars owned by the East Rand Administration Board, which administers Tembisa. Barricades were set up by protesters on a number of roads.

About the same time, the protests spread to Evaton, Easterville, and Sebokeng. The ferment erupted in Evaton after the police, for the second week in a row, refused permission for a meeting called by the Evaton Ratepayers Association to discuss higher rents and government moves to "replan" the township. Opponents of the rent hikes called on factory workers to stay home in protest.

Opposition to the rent hikes, which came into effect in Tembisa on April 1, had been simmering for several weeks. For Black

families that are already forced to survive on below-subsistence incomes, the hikes of 33 percent or more were an especially heavy blow.

On March 30, the Tembisa Residents Action Committee was formed to fight the hikes. At a meeting of more than 1,000 persons several days later, the protesters decided that they would not pay the higher rates and called for negotiations with the East Rand Administration Board. The board declined, and sent in the police instead.

In an effort to intimidate the Black population and obstruct efforts to organize further community resistance, the security police raided Tembisa, Soweto, and other areas to arrest top leaders of the residents association, as well as of the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo), one of the main Black

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

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Country \_\_\_\_\_

#### Make checks payable to

*Intercontinental Press*

410 West Street

New York, N.Y. 10014 U.S.A.

## Open Letter to Jack Barnes on Trotskyism in Cuba

By Adolfo Gilly

[In this issue we are publishing an exchange of views on some aspects of the early history of the Cuban revolution. First are two open letters, one by Adolfo Gilly and the other by Angel Fanjul. They first appeared in the May 24 and June 7, 1979, issues of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor*. The translations are by *Intercontinental Press*.

[The letters are in response to a speech given by U.S. Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes to a rally on December 31, 1978. The rally was a highlight of the eighteenth national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance. The text of Barnes's speech, "Twenty Years of the Cuban Revolution," appeared in the February 19, 1979 issue of *Intercontinental Press*, and the May 24, 1979, issue of *Inprecor*.

[It also appears in *'Twenty Years of the Cuban Revolution' and Selected Speeches by Fidel Castro*, Education for Socialists bulletin, Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, N.Y., N.Y., 10014, \$4.00.

[José G. Pérez, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and a member of the SWP National Committee, answers the Gilly and Fanjul letters on page 497.]

\* \* \*

Dear Comrade Barnes,

The speech you gave on December 31, 1978, "Cuba—Twenty Years of Revolution," seems to me an important document, both in view of its content and because of the occasion on which it was made. I think it was appropriate that you sought to draw an objective balance sheet of the Cuban revolution and the evolution of its leadership. This included appraising the revolutionary significance of Cuba's intervention in Angola and other African countries, and pointing out that in judging the Cuban *compañeros* one must understand that their alliance with the Soviet Union, while indispensable, at the same time puts them under terrible pressure from the bureaucracy.

It's true, as you said, that the Cuban revolution—particularly during the crucial years from 1959 to 1962—has been a test for all revolutionary tendencies, including tendencies in the Trotskyist movement. I thought that your summary of the activity in defense of the revolution carried out by Trotskyists in the United States during those years was impressive. The Latin American Trotskyist movement, which was then organized mostly in the International Secretariat of the Fourth International, did no less. (In fact we did a few more things that we were able to do because of our situation.)

I think, therefore, it would be of interest to apply the test you talked about to the positions and activity of all the tendencies in the Trotskyist movement at that time, those in the International Secretariat as well as those in the International Committee, not only in the United States but in other countries as well, including the countries of Latin America.

(At that time there was no "Posadista" tendency because that split took place in the beginning of 1962. In those days Posadas considered himself a "Pabloist." Furthermore, he was not by any means saying the kind of crazy things he came up with in later years, since he was subject to the control, the influence, and the political life of what was then the Fourth International-IS.)

The history of our movement is important. It's in that history—not in some abstractions—that our program lives on, and our young comrades find a source of confidence and education in party work. Throughout our history, experience has taught that none of the tendencies into which the movement has been politically or organizationally divided since the Second World Congress (1948) has a monopoly on Trotskyist principles and traditions, nor on the movement's achievements or its mistakes. (This doesn't mean, of course, that all these tendencies are the same.)

History is an indispensable tool for the development of our cadres. One thing we've learned from the likes of Stalin, Healy (whom I trust you know well), and Posadas (whom I know well), is that you can't build for the future by slandering or distorting the past. It's bad enough to do such a thing out of ignorance or carelessness. But it's even worse when done in the service of immediate political interests of a faction, sect, or clique, as was the case with those individuals.

The tradition of Trotskyism is a rich one, of tenacity in defense of principles, of the ability to stand up to long years of adversity, of devotion to revolutionary activity not just for three or five years as a student but for one's whole conscious life. Only a program that has passed all tests can provide such a continuity having had, so far, few victories and many defeats.

That continuity is embodied in men and women, in real militants. And regardless of which Trotskyist tendency they may belong to, what those militants do and have done for the revolution is something that has to be valued and respected. Otherwise our program would appear as merely some abstract truth, to be discovered by

the first novice who comes along, used however and for as long as he or she may like, and then discarded in favor of some other pursuit.

The attitude of veteran comrades who whip out their past (real or invented) to score points on authority whenever younger activists speak up or contradict them is arrogant and fatuous, in my opinion. Young comrades will pay little heed to such people—and rightly so. But on the other hand it seems to me unseemly for us to ignore or downplay all of the past (or the present) in which we ourselves have not participated, as if the movement only began at the point where each of us joined. If comrades come in with that sort of attitude and don't change it in the course of party life, they will not be firm in their convictions and their enthusiasm for Trotskyism won't last very long. As a rule, such people wind up becoming centrists or just dropping out of politics.

Slanders and amalgams have always been the weapons of Stalinists and centrists. Each in their own way, they use these weapons in their struggle against Trotskyism to make up for their own weakness or their lack of theoretical arguments.

This has been no less true of the Cubans, a typical current of centrist revolutionaries (whom you appraise too uncritically), who moreover have a powerful apparatus. From the writings of Blas Roca and Régis Debray up to Fidel Castro's speech at the January 1966 Tricontinental Conference—not to mention the innumerable bits of gossip spread around by paid functionaries or journalists—amalgams and slander have periodically been given free rein in their polemics. The focus of these slanders, and their intermittent character, are, to be sure, much more akin to the methods of centrists than of Stalinists. But there is no sharp division between the two. Centrists as well as Stalinists are pragmatists, who discount theory; what they believe in is the apparatus, or power.

Between 1959 and 1960 a vigorous theoretical polemic took place between the Trotskyists and Stalinists in Cuba (the latter then belonging to the PSP) over the immediate course of the revolution. The Trotskyists maintained that in order to survive the revolution had to continue, and grow over into a socialist revolution. The Stalinists said that this was an imperialist provocation to justify Yankee intervention. They maintained that the revolution was merely bourgeois-democratic. This polemic shows up in the documents of both sides



during those years. We all know who was proven right by the subsequent course of the revolution and of the Castro-Guevara leadership.

But although the Stalinists lacked cogent arguments, they cooked up other things. Among these, they said that the Trotskyists were involved in pushing the idea of a march on the naval base at Guantánamo, in order to prove that the Trotskyists really were provocateurs in the service of imperialism.

The Trotskyists, like all Cubans, beginning with the revolutionary government itself, denounced the military presence of imperialism in Guantánamo and called for its expulsion, just as in our propaganda we call for the expulsion of imperialism from all of Latin America. It should not be forgotten that the recovery of Guantánamo was among the five points raised by Cuba during the October 1962 crisis.

We Trotskyists have always proposed the expulsion of imperialism from the Panama Canal, as expressed concretely in propagandistic slogans such as "Imperialism out of Panama!" or "Imperialist military bases out of Latin America!" But there remains a qualitative difference between raising these propagandistic slogans and concretely proposing to organize a march right now on the Panama Canal. It's the difference between propaganda and provocation. It was the same in the case of Guantánamo.

Furthermore, that demand was by no means the center of the Trotskyists' program. They were fighting for nationalizations, for agrarian reform, for the revolution to take a socialist course. But the Stalinists—good pragmatists that they are—didn't bother themselves with such theoretical subtleties.

Lacking arguments, they found it expedient to invent (among other slanders) the charge that the Trotskyists were running around proposing a march on Guantánamo. There are dozens of documents that show what program the Trotskyists were really fighting for, documents in which Guantánamo doesn't even appear. But of course such a fact never stood in the way of any slanderers, least of all the Stalinists. They cooked up the slander and started it rolling. Others, whose purposes it also suited, picked it up and repeated it.

And now, twenty years later, you repeat this same anti-Trotskyist slander in front of six hundred youth at the YSA Convention on the anniversary of the revolution! Unbelievable!

In your speech you said:

The world Trotskyist movement must accept the responsibility for missing two great opportunities to influence the Cuban leadership. The first was right after the victory over Batista. Unfortunately, in Cuba Trotskyism was misrepresented by a group that followed a cult leader named Juan Posadas. Their specialty was pass-

ing out leaflets demanding a march on the Guantánamo naval base, while the Cubans were trying to consolidate the revolution.

They denounced the leaders of the revolution for not being socialists.

The center of your argument, in which you lay the blame on the world Trotskyist movement in general and on the Cuban Trotskyists in particular, is that their "specialty" (by which I understand main or almost exclusive activity) consisted of proposing a march on Guantánamo.

That's a lie.

The rest of your argument also collapses along with this point.

If there are documents in the SWP's files that prove what you said, I'd like to see them, and I'd be willing to correct my own view. Obviously, I can't prove a negative fact—that the Cuban Trotskyists *did not* have such a "specialty." That's the problem in cases like this, the same problem Trotsky faced in the Dewey hearings in Coyoacán.

But I can offer some other evidence. This includes documents of the Fourth International-IS published during those years in *Fourth International*; documents of the Latin American Bureau of the IS published in *Revista Marxista Latinoamericana* (1959); the pamphlet by Comrade Ortiz published in Cuba in 1960; and the resolution of the Sixth World Congress (December 1960) presented by Comrade Maitan, in which it is stated that Cuba was already a workers state.

(If I'm not mistaken it was the first organization to make such a characterization, even before the Cubans themselves did. Huberman and Sweezy had said the same thing a little earlier—almost at the same time. Prior to that, Comrade Mandel and Patrice had posed the idea in the IS and, as I recall, in the discussion Comrades Maitan and Frank supported it right away.)

I can also present articles by Posadas which show what his positions were at that time. They were within the same analytical framework.

Now believe me, I have no interest whatsoever in defending the political cadaver that Juan Posadas has become, a model slanderer (as shown first of all by his slander about the death of Che). But I won't try to take him on by using his own methods.

The old Latin American Bureau (and even the later "Posadista" current, despite its monolithism) was never Posadas's one-man show (he was the one that always held that it was). Around the time of the Cuban revolution (1959-60) it was quite a substantial current, a majority of the Fourth Internationalists in Latin America at that time.

I don't deny any of the good things that have been done since by other tendencies. But there's a whole series of comrades who

don't know about the past and who—whether out of pragmatism or expediency—don't take the trouble to learn about it. And I think it's time, it's high time, for those comrades to stop treating the lives, the traditions, the experience, the militant past of comrades who deserve to be respected and appreciated, like some kind of dead dog they can all join in kicking.

I should think that the documents I've mentioned constitute sufficient and abundant proof of what the position of the Fourth International and its Cuban section really was in 1960.

Comrade Barnes, you say you were there in the summer of 1960 and saw for yourself. Apparently you didn't see very clearly. I'm not criticizing you—at the time, you were barely starting to come around the Trotskyist movement, and you didn't know Spanish (at least I presume so, since you say you don't know it today).

In addition to documents, I can present the testimony of Latin American Trotskyists who were also in Cuba at that time. These were comrades who already had many years of experience in the Trotskyist movement (as many as you have now). They participated personally, as representatives of the Fourth International and its Latin American Bureau, in the Congress of Youth in Havana.

There against an overwhelming majority organized by the Stalinists in support of a democratic revolution, those comrades championed the program of a workers and farmers government, of expropriating the imperialists, of a socialist revolution in Cuba, of extending the revolution. They were attacked, threatened, and slandered. But just a few days later, they were thoroughly vindicated in fact when Fidel Castro made his historic speech launching the first wave of nationalizations and opening the socialist course of the revolution.

One of those comrades is Angel Fanjul, at the time a leader of the Argentine section, who now lives in exile in Europe (and to whom I'll send a copy of this letter).

As I recall, comrades from Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, and Peru participated in that congress as representatives of the Trotskyist current. They did not mouth "insanities," as you so lightly allege. They defended the program of socialist revolution. It's in the documents.

When you were there, you saw only comrades from the United States. That's understandable, given your situation and your comprehension at the time. But what is not understandable is why you, twenty years later, as one of the main leaders of the SWP, in a speech whose importance and the scope of whose objectives could hardly be overlooked, came out making it look as if the attendance of a few Trotskyists from the United States was the only thing that saved the honor and the pro-

gram of Trotskyism from the "insanities" of the Cuban and Latin American Trotskyists.

I don't know what the comrades you mentioned said, what they did, or what program they were putting forward at that time. I'm inclined to believe that their actions were quite good; I'd like to know about them in more detail. What I'm not prepared to believe, though, is your presentation of the facts.

Comrade B. Ortiz—later a member of the International Secretariat—also went to Cuba, and in 1961 published an article on Cuba in *Quatrième Internationale* in which he by no means preached insanities. Later, in 1961 and 1962, Comrade Juan, a member of the political bureau of the Argentine section, was sent to Cuba by the Latin American Bureau. Juan was a steelworker, one of the participants in the October 17, 1945, general strike in Argentina, who had been won to Trotskyism in 1946. I was also active in the Cuban section from July 1962 to October 1963 (when I was deported to Europe).

We never proposed any march on Guantánamo. On the contrary, we were extremely cautious in regard to the tactics we used to try to influence the Cuban leadership and revolutionary cadres.

I can also present one piece of material evidence. In 1963 I published a small book entitled *Inside the Cuban Revolution*. It appeared first in *Partisans* and *Marcha*, and later in expanded form in *Monthly Review*. What I wrote there was nothing other than the positions, the analysis, and even the tactical thinking of the Cuban Trotskyists. Had I not been there with the Cuban comrades, and most importantly with the Cuban people going through the day-to-day tasks of that period, I could never have written that pamphlet. The pamphlet was favorably reviewed by *The Militant*, as I recall.

You assert that Trotskyism was "misrepresented" by the Cuban Trotskyists. You can't present a single proof of what you said. I, on the other hand, present to you this pamphlet. That should be enough. You must now tell me where and why the positions in that pamphlet "misrepresent" the ideas and the program of Trotskyism on the Cuban revolution.

Cuban Trotskyism has a long history. You don't seem to be familiar with it. I'll try to trace some of it from my own limited knowledge. It would be useful for someone to do some research on this in the archives and libraries, including the United States.

According to a note that appeared on page 83 of the May 1960 issue of *Quatrième Internationale*:

#### Cuba

##### Reconstitution of the Cuban Section of the Fourth International

The Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Revolutionary Workers Party, Cuban section of the Fourth International) has been reconstituted. The Trotskyist movement has long traditions in

the Cuban mass movement. The Trotskyist organization in Cuba was founded in 1934, when Communist Party member Sandalio Junco returned from the USSR. Comrade Sandalio Junco was murdered by the Stalinists. The organization functioned openly until 1946, when repression was unleashed against it. Later on, some Trotskyists played an important role in the "Action and Sabotage" section of the July 26th Movement. There they met up with other militants expelled from the Communist Party in 1949 for opposing the pro-Batista policy, and others kicked out in 1953. The reconstituted Cuban section also included militants who have participated in the revolutionary struggle in Cuba. It will thus benefit from the real respect that exists in that country for Trotskyist ideas and traditions.

When the group was dissolved around 1947, I don't think it was because of the repression. After all, repression never breaks up any group that's not in crisis. What happened, then? As the older comrades relate it, the majority of the Cuban section came out in favor of the antidefensist or Shachtmanite tendency, and split away after 1946 to follow this tendency, and as a result soon disappeared.

In any case, the nonexistence of organized Trotskyism in Cuba during the phase of the guerrilla struggle for power (1956-59) must be seen as the main factor accounting for the paltry influence of Trotskyism on the Cuban leadership in subsequent years.

But all was not so dark. The Trotskyists did intervene. Since there was no section, and the International was unable to help them organize one, the Trotskyist comrades just went on getting involved in the revolutionary struggle wherever and however they could. They didn't just sit around meditating, waiting to sally forth after the victory to give advice and propose an "assault on Guantánamo." The case of Pablo Díaz, who in 1947 was listed as the editor of their newspaper, was not an isolated one. The central group that reorganized the section participated in the armed struggle.

Comrade Miranda was sent by the Latin American Bureau in early 1959. She helped reorganize the group and put it back into contact with the International. Miranda was far from taking a sectarian attitude toward the July 26th Movement. She intervened in its debates, and spoke on its radio broadcasts. She was well respected by the Fidelistas.

The Cuban section began putting out a printed paper, *Voz Proletaria*, in 1960. The Stalinists launched a brutal campaign against it, all the more so since their people—following their usual tactic—had gained control over the state media. In 1961 the Trotskyists' paper was shut down. After that it continued to appear in mimeographed form. It was not clandestine; we always rejected that option. We fought for the Trotskyist tendency's right to legal existence in the workers state. This was something far more important than our

little group and its little paper. It was a question of principles, a key point of our Founding Program—the right of revolutionary tendencies to exist in a workers state.

The comrades of the Cuban section participated on the job and in their neighborhoods in all the tasks of the revolution. They all belonged to the militia and all did voluntary work on Sundays. The section even adopted a resolution saying that no one could be a member who didn't join the militia and do voluntary work. The comrades participated in the literacy campaign, in the coffee harvest, in the cane-cutting brigades, in the Committees for Defense of the Revolution.

In 1962, during the missile crisis, all the comrades of the section were in their respective military or militia units, in the trenches or in the cities. We also placed ourselves, as an organization, at the disposal of the revolutionary government for whatever duty it might assign us. This was personally communicated to them on October 24. I understand that it was a symbolic gesture, given our numerical smallness. But it was a political position we took.

On at least two occasions during the time I was in Cuba comrades were thrown in jail for periods of a month or more. And I know that more than once Che intervened on their behalf. He never would have done that if he considered them a bunch of irresponsible provocateurs, as you make them out to be.

In jail the comrades' attitude was invariably one of defending the workers state and the revolutionary government against the counterrevolutionaries with whom they were confined (and who sometimes wanted to beat them up), while at the same time defending the Trotskyist program and the party's right to legal existence against their jailers.

Nevertheless the small Cuban group was by no means perfect. It had weaknesses, apart from its small size. The main weakness did not have to do with its conduct in political struggle, which was unimpeachable, nor its attitude toward the revolution, in whose tasks it participated in the front ranks. Its main problem was the theoretical weakness of the leading team, something that was unavoidable given the youthfulness of the section and its recent reorganization after the long period in which no Trotskyist party existed in Cuba.

We tried our best to overcome these failings. I know we didn't always succeed. It's probably not hard to look through the section's publications and find schematic analyses, political errors, theoretical weakpoints, or the sort of sectarian formulations you'd expect from a small group facing a great revolution. I don't ask anyone, nor do I try myself, to defend every single thing the comrades said or did. We're not a clique or a sect, we're a



revolutionary International.

But be that as it may, one cannot find in the comrades' writings a single attack on the workers state, a single provocative proposal. On the contrary, one will generally find a constant preoccupation with being pedagogical and persuasive. That at least is how I remember it. I trust my memory because it coincides with what's said in documents published abroad of which I have copies. We can probably corroborate it if we find *Voz Proletaria* in the archives.

Among the things you proposed for Cuba, you omitted the right to legal existence for revolutionary tendencies. I don't know how you envision the councils (soviets) you propose without this right. You mention the right of tendency only within the party in power, the single party. I don't know if you realize it, but when you repeat Stalinist falsehoods you are justifying—from a Trotskyist platform—the suppression of the right of the Trotskyists (and other revolutionary tendencies) to exist

and function within the legality of the workers state, to fight with our program for the revolution and as an inseparable part of the revolution.

This is the group that, according to your talk to the YSA comrades, "misrepresented" Trotskyism in Cuba in 1960.

I know two ways of "misrepresenting" revolutionary Marxism: One in its political positions, the other in the moral conduct of its militants. These generally go together, but in any case as far as I'm concerned I tend to give more weight to the second than the first. I always have.

If you believe that the Cuban comrades fit into the first of these two categories, you should demonstrate it with evidence from the documents I mentioned or others that prove what you say. If you think they were in the second category, you should cite facts, attitudes, or actions. (The Cuban Trotskyists were there in the guerrilla struggle, in the underground, and in the prisons, and they conducted themselves far better than others toward whom you

seem more lenient.)

If you can prove what you said in either of these two respects, I'm willing to make the necessary corrections in my statement.

But if you don't know about either case, if what you said in Pittsburgh and now print in the February 1979 *International Socialist Review* for the SWP and the International was just what someone told you, just your "impression," or just what you "heard said," then you know what you must do.

What I propose is that the International and the SWP, through the Cuban government or other possible means, investigate what has happened to the comrades of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Trotskyista) of Cuba and what their present situation is. I also say you should defend the right of Trotskyists (and other revolutionary tendencies) to function legally in the workers state.

With fraternal greetings,

Adolfo Gilly  
February 2, 1979

## A Testimonial

# The Role of the Trotskyists in the Cuban Revolution

By Angel Fanjul

Dear Comrades,

I just received a copy of the letter from Comrade Adolfo Gilly to Comrade Jack Barnes regarding Barnes's December 31, 1978 speech, "Cuba—Twenty Years of Revolution."

Comrade Gilly refers to my testimony regarding the activity of the Trotskyists, and about my own activity, during the first months of the Cuban revolution. I feel politically and morally obliged to repeat that testimony, not only in view of the importance of the question posed by Gilly (it is an important question in its own right), but also for the education of the thousands and thousands of young cadres who are joining our ranks today, and because I myself was a participant in the events in question.

I speak of "repeating" the testimony because a detailed report on the Trotskyists' activity was submitted to the Latin American Bureau and to the Secretariat of the Fourth International at that time (October 1960).

While the struggle was still going on in the mountains of Cuba, while Batista still ruled the island, we Trotskyists launched a campaign in support of the guerrilla struggle in Cuba. In an article of mine published in *Voz Proletaria* (I think around the middle of 1958) entitled "Batista's Downfall Is Nearing," I argued that within the July 26 Movement and in the guerrilla struggle a contradictory dynamic

was unfolding, a dynamic that we Marxists should strive to define. I said that within that movement, militants from petty-bourgeois tendencies fighting to humanize capitalism were coexisting with other groupings, including objectively Bolshevik elements that were looking toward a socialist solution. These were not my own ideas or predictions, but rather the predictions and conclusions shared by an entire team of Latin American Trotskyists, functioning under the leadership of the International Secretariat of that time.

While all this was going on, the Latin American Bureau of the Fourth International strained its resources in order to send two of its main leaders (Comrades Ortiz and Miranda) to Cuba to work in support of the Cuban revolution and, as an essential pivot of that support, to help build or rebuild the revolutionary Marxist party, the Cuban section of the Fourth International.

It would be wrong, however, to think that the reorganization of Cuban Trotskyism began when we arrived. A Trotskyist movement had existed for long years in Cuba and had a certain tradition. Gilly mentions some milestones in its history. So does Comrade Livio Maitan in his "Notes on the History of Trotskyism in Latin America." I refer the reader to them.

Part of the old movement survived the long, dark days of Batista's regime. But these were not isolated individuals, not

fighters who had lowered their banners; they were active on several fronts. (For reasons of security, since we do not know what has happened to some of those magnificent cadres today, I will only refer to things that are public and well known in Cuba, or to persons who are no longer alive.)

There is no doubt that Trotskyism had become part of the living tradition of the Cuban proletariat, regardless of the Latin American Bureau or the International Secretariat. How could anyone forget about Mella, who fell victim to the Stalinists; Sandalio Cujas; and so many others? What about Medina, who died of tuberculosis in Batista's jails for his defense of Trotskyism?

Do comrades know that Pablo Díaz, the official editor of our paper before it was banned by Batista, was the main leader of the opposition in the Cuban trade-union organization? Or that he is one of the twelve survivors of the *Granma* who managed to get past the lines of Batista's troops and go up into the Sierra Maestra? Or that he now holds the rank of *comandante* in the Cuban Army, or that he was in charge of the operation against the armed activity of the *gusanos* in Camaguey? Do they know that Pablo Díaz was responsible for the financial apparatus of the guerrillas?

Young and old cadres alike fought in the guerrilla struggle. I remember Mirella, who

was hardly more than a child, along with Juan and Idalberto Ferrara—the former a sergeant of a machine-gun squad, and the latter a medical corpsman in the guerrilla front in Oriente.

There was also Comrade Antonio Torres of Havana, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Workers. In his union paper I personally read many articles that had been taken from the Fourth International, including from *The Militant*, which in those days was in political solidarity with the International Committee.

From key posts in the class struggle all these comrades carried on an audacious struggle for the program of socialist revolution, for workers democracy, against the bureaucracy.

Other comrades, whom I cannot name but whom I know very well, worked in key positions in the campaign of urban sabotage in support of the guerrillas.

\* \* \*

When I arrived in Cuba I was officially received by the Cuban government and given housing at the site of the Latin American Congress of Youth. There I met up with the rest of the Trotskyist delegation, which as I recall included a delegate from the Chilean POR and one other Peruvian comrade in addition to those cited by Comrade Gilly.

From the beginning we could sense the charged atmosphere that forewarned of the ordeal to come. The Stalinist apparatus was ready to resort to any means to silence the Trotskyists. As soon as we arrived we were placed aboard a train—dubbed the “Freedom Train”—along with delegates headed for the Sierra Maestra, where the Youth Congress was to be held. That trip was an unforgettable experience for me.

The train stopped in each town and village, and the workers and peasants would gather around it demanding that the delegates make speeches about the Cuban revolution. Traveling on that train were Luis Naguil of Uruguay, Felipe Galván from Mexico, and myself from Argentina. We did not arrive in time for the opening of the congress because the crowds delayed the train much longer than anticipated.

In impromptu speeches we brought greetings to the Cuban people from the International Secretariat of the Fourth International. We also argued that the socialist revolution in Cuba should go forward in a process of permanent revolution, opposing every kind of conciliation with the capitalists, and opposing the bourgeois coalition. Along with this, we called for self-organization of the workers, for workers control, for expropriating the capitalist economy and establishing planning. We called on workers and peasants to remain active and vigilant, and constantly reminded them of what had happened in Guatemala. We urged them not to delegate power to anyone.

When we returned to Havana, the fight was already under way. The Stalinist leadership had decided to challenge our mandates and deprive us of the right to voice and vote in the congress. This was not just a conflict between the Stalinists and us; it was a conflict over the course of the Cuban revolution itself.

It was part of the class conflict in the Cuban revolution, the conflict over whether to build a bourgeois state or a workers state. We realized that these and these alone were the two alternatives. The Latin American Youth Congress was just a pale reflection of the debate that was taking shape within the leadership of the Cuban revolution.

Faced with this, the Trotskyist delegation did not waver. We printed up three thousand copies of the manifesto we were going to present as a set of theses to the congress, and we distributed it massively to all the congress delegates. Copies were also given to the Cuban authorities, to political, trade-union, and popular organizations, and to all official and private publications.

Unfortunately, for the reasons of clandestinity that I have already explained, I do not have a copy of that manifesto. But since I was the one who edited the document, I recall its general lines. In any case, the basic points in that manifesto were excerpted and published in all the Cuban and Latin American press of the time. I refer the reader to this.

In this situation, the Stalinists could no longer quietly exclude the Trotskyists. Therefore, they tried a new scheme. I was publicly accused of being a CIA agent.

Those were difficult times. The accusation was made on the front pages of all the newspapers in Cuba. They printed all our names—Naguil’s name, Galván’s name, my name, others. We were all CIA agents, with me heading up the list.

We were not intimidated by this. On the contrary, it only served to strengthen our conviction that it was necessary and important for us to intervene in the discussion. From then on, there was one provocation after another. A personal friend of mine from Chile, a delegate from a Christian organization in that country, expressed concern about my life—perhaps sincerely so—and offered to take me surreptitiously to the Chilean Embassy where I could seek asylum in order to avoid, as he put it, “being put up against a wall tomorrow.”

We firmly rejected any idea of going underground, of asking for asylum of any kind from anyone. The Trotskyists in Cuba resolved unanimously to confront the allegations, demand a judgment, and defeat the bureaucratic maneuver. And we proposed that if we lost that battle we would fight in any ensuing trials in defense of the International, in order to defend Cuba.

This provocation was not carried out by

just the Cuban Stalinist youth group. The high command of the Stalinist bureaucracy of the Western Communist parties, from Duclos to Blas Roca, was holding a conference in Havana at the same time. And that meeting—if we can take the word of *Hoy*, the daily paper of the Cuban PSP (as the Cuban Stalinist party was then called)—decided to come out in favor of the formation of an antioligarchical and anti-imperialist coalition government in Cuba.

The entire right wing, reformists of all shades as well as the Stalinists, had an interest in silencing the Trotskyists. We stood out as the coherent spokespersons, with a definite program, for a powerful wing within the revolutionary movement and within Cuban society that was calling for a socialist solution.

We stood up to the provocation and attended the first session of the congress. There, in the name of the entire Trotskyist delegation, I exposed the conspiracy against us and demanded the formation of a Revolutionary Tribunal to judge the revolutionary moral quality of the Trotskyists.

I made it clear that we would submit our revolutionary conduct to a review by such a tribunal, but that we would never agree that any such tribunal had the right to judge our program or our politics. Those we submitted to the judgment of the masses and to the test of history, not to any tribunal.

I also asked that if the proposed tribunal cleared us of the charges regarding our moral conduct, it should then put on trial those who had instigated, defended, and spread the slanders against us as defamers of revolutionaries, and expel them from the congress.

It was not easy to make such a presentation. When I requested to speak, the congress delegates and some of the others there stood up and drowned out my voice with shouts of “Cuba sí, Yankees no!” I estimate that the uproar against us went on for ten minutes.

We did not let ourselves be shouted down, however. I held on to the microphone, starting to speak over and over again, for as long as it took to make them shut up. I was finally able to speak when it became evident that they would not be able to silence us.

I had been given five minutes to state my case. I spoke for nearly half an hour to a completely silent audience. When I finished, there was rousing applause from the galleries, in particular from the Electric Workers Union and from the Mexican Teachers group, as well as from Caribbean revolutionary groups.

The Congress president, a member of the Workers Federation of Chile, Comrade Nuñez, took the floor to call for rejection of my motion for the formation of a tribunal. He noted that I was referring to accusations and characterizations that had been made outside the congress hall, and asked





October 26, 1959. Cuban workers and peasants demonstrate their support for new revolutionary government and protest U.S. threats.

if anyone among the delegates would take responsibility for the accusations that I was denouncing. If no one did, the case would be considered closed, and the congress could be considered to have confirmed that at no time had the Trotskyist delegation been attacked in word or in deed. Since no one took responsibility for the slander, that was the end of this first episode.

At dramatic moments such as this, the expressions and the words of revolutionary militants take on a special significance. I would like to cite three examples:

The peasant militia guard at the congress, when the attack against us intensified, gave me encouragement for my intervention by a single sentence: "Go on, buddy, go on."

A leader of the Cuban tobacco workers, told me that if the Congress did not put a stop to this outrageous attack against us, his delegation would walk out. As he put it, they "didn't make the revolution to go back to lies."

A third example is the actions of Trotskyists who were not members of the delegation. Among them was Comrade Juan Ferrara, a sergeant in the rebel army. Ferrara, dressed in his uniform, personally distributed to each delegate a statement condemning the slander. In addition, as the shouts of "Cuba sí, Yankees no" were growing louder a very young comrade from the United States, a member of the SWP youth group, broke through the barrier separating the public from the delegates, and without saying a word took a seat right at the table of the Trotskyist delegation.

As it turned out, a sort of revolutionary tribunal was set up. It was composed of members of the July 26th Movement, the PSP, the Chomón Movement and others which I do not remember. It was presided over by the General Secretary of the CTC (Cuban Workers Federation) youth section.

Two Trotskyists attended the hearing: Galván and myself. At the same time, the other Trotskyists were working incessantly, talking to the congress delegates in a number of meetings and speeches in order to beat back the Stalinist maneuver.

Our "trial" lasted several hours. A Stalinist was the "prosecutor," and I the "defense attorney." In the course of the hearing it was evident that the Stalinist maneuver had been repudiated, and by a very weighty authority.

A telephone call interrupted the sessions, and after that everything changed. My right to defend myself was guaranteed and respected.

My statement, on the future of the Latin American revolution and the socialist tasks of the Cuban revolution, lasted two hours. During my speech, the Stalinist "prosecutor," who had stepped out of the session temporarily, played his last card, in an obvious attempt at blackmail: they would be willing, he said, to retract their whole campaign against the Trotskyists if we would withdraw the theses we had proposed to the congress. When this proposal was made to me, it was clear that the battle had been won. My answer was clear and final. I recall its terms more or less: Neither the power of world imperialism, nor the attacks of the Soviet bureaucracy

with its falsifications and its Moscow Trials, had been able to silence the Trotskyist movement. Does the comrade 'prosecutor' think that we can be shut up by such a miserable attempt at blackmail as this? I reaffirm before this court that we will uphold, defend, and expand upon our theses so long as we are physically able to do so, and if we cannot, others will do so in our name."

That was the end of our "trial." The president of the CTC youth stated firmly that the commission considered that there were no valid charges against the Trotskyists, and that the congress would guarantee that we would not be subjected to physical or moral attacks.

What was in those much-talked-about theses? I repeat that I do not have the text at hand, but I can say that those theses were nothing but a reiteration of the Fourth International's transitional program for Latin America.

We were fighting for the expropriation without compensation of all imperialist and Cuban-owned companies in the public interest under workers control; for planning of the economy; for agrarian reform and agrarian revolution; for the dissolution of all organs of the bourgeois state and their replacement by a workers and peasants government based on freely elected workers and peasants councils subject to recall; for the establishment of armed workers and peasants militias; for breaking all economic, commercial, political, cultural, and military pacts that tied Cuba to world imperialism and Yankee

imperialism in particular; for the right to have more than one workers party; etc.

We placed special stress on the following points:

For expulsion of the representative of the Kuomintang and the ambassador of Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist China—whose presence was an insult to Cuba—and for recognition of the government of People's China, which up to then had not been recognized by Cuba;

For recognition of the Algerian government in exile (comrades should recall that at that time the Algerian war of liberation was in full swing, and a government in exile had been set up, which included Ben Bella and Ben Yusef Ben Khedda);

For Cuba to denounce the Organization of American States (OAS) as an imperialist den of thieves, and to call for a Congress of Latin American Peoples, with representatives of workers organizations and trade-union federations, political parties, youth organizations, peasants organizations, etc., in order to constitute a permanent Assembly of the People of Latin America.

Among the points that raised the most furor, in addition to those mentioned above, was one that said precisely: "For the expulsion of the Guantánamo naval base, the spearhead of the counterrevolution."

We never called for a march on this or any other base. The Stalinists took up this sentence as the basis for another slander. Very sensitive, no doubt, the Stalinists focused on our slogans calling for expropriation of the American, British, or French-owned refineries, for collectivization of the land, etc. They knew well that the basis for class collaboration lay in defense of private property.

Our manifesto, of which we had printed only 3,000 copies, attained a circulation of hundreds of thousands. It was cited by all the Cuban press, including the essential points I have mentioned. This aroused great popular sympathy for our positions.

As would have been obvious to any observer, we knew that our theses would be rejected by an overwhelming majority. We therefore decided to separate out each of the points in the theses and present them in the form of amendments.

Since our theses received only five votes—our own—that is what we did. As we proposed amendment after amendment, through the course of long sessions, the climate of the congress gradually changed. Some of our amendments were approved, by acclamation. I recall two of them: the ones on recognition of the Algerian Provisional government in exile, and on recognition of People's China.

Objectively, we changed the course of the congress. It had been expected to take two sessions, with things being approved by acclamation, without presentation of documents and without discussion. But the small Trotskyist delegation imposed a frank, open, and loyal debate. The con-

gress was greatly prolonged; I think it lasted ten days, with lengthy, exhausting sessions. The last forty-eight hours of the congress continued without a break, and the Trotskyist delegation got no sleep. The discussion was intense, and the resolutions adopted were oriented along the lines of proletarian internationalism.

I do not claim, nor is it my intention to say, that everything we did was correct, that we did not commit errors, that things could not have been better. No doubt they could have been. But the Trotskyist delegation did the best it could. And nobody, as I recall, came forward in the name of our International to do anything better than we did.

During the congress, on the evening of August 6, 1960, the government of Fidel Castro called a mass meeting in the national stadium in Havana.

As members of the congress, we were invited to attend that meeting.

We discussed whether or not we should accept the invitation, since in a mass meeting it would not be hard for them to carry out a new provocation against us. We talked it over and decided to go.

That was a memorable night. Fidel Castro denounced the OAS, and announced the expropriation without compensation of all the sugar refineries and the main imperialist companies. The revolution was back on its course—the course that we had been fighting for. The first workers state in Latin America was born that night, and Trotskyists participated in its birth.

As one last note on these events, I should mention an episode that took place in the sweltering afternoon of September 2, 1960, in what was then called the Civic Plaza of Havana (now, I believe, it is the Plaza of the Revolution). There, before hundreds of thousands of people, Castro announced the breaking of all military pacts that tied Cuba to U.S. imperialism, the expulsion of the representative of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang, and the simultaneous recognition of People's China. I stayed in the plaza for a long time, and when I finally left people were still cheering. The proposals of the Trotskyists—which reflected the vital need for the revolution to move forward as a process of permanent revolution—had taken on material and legal force.

And as Gilly well recalls, we had the privilege of being the first formally-recognized Trotskyist delegation in a workers state since the Stalinist Thermidor.

After the congress I received instructions from the International Secretariat through one of its members at that time, Comrade Juan Posadas. I was told to convey to the Cuban government the greetings, the support, and the program of action proposed by the Fourth International for international solidarity with the Cuban revolution.

We did this, and in a chance meeting with Guevara, following a brief discussion, we arranged a meeting. Comrade Miranda and I attended that meeting. It was I who spoke.

Guevara thought that we were going to talk about the incident created by the Stalinists, with their miserable slander. We let him know that was not what we had in mind—since such questions are not settled in a ministry—but rather to convey to him the message and the thinking of the Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The meeting had originally been scheduled to last fifteen minutes. Guevara extended it to more than two hours.

As instructed, I informed him of the International's concern, and conveyed our *unconditional* solidarity with the Cuban revolution (I couldn't call it a workers state, since we had not yet resolved to characterize it that way) and with the Cuban government. I told him that we were concerned with the question of the masses organizing themselves in order to exercise power, and that we considered the crux of the problem to lie in economic planning and workers control and administration. We stressed rather strongly the question of which social forces the defense of the Cuban revolution had to be based upon, and how important it would be from that standpoint to recognize People's China. (Note that this meeting took place at least fifteen days before September 2, 1960.)

We discussed our proposals with him rather extensively. Guevara was obviously very interested, especially in our interpretation of the Peronist mass movement, and the movements in Chile and Brazil. He discussed with us the process of workers administration, and asked our opinion on the emerging Sino-Soviet conflict. He wanted to know about Yugoslavia.

Several times Captain Manresa—his secretary—came into the office to remind him that the time had come for other meetings. Guevara ordered those appointments suspended, so that our meeting would not be interrupted.

Guevara gave great importance to the judgment of the Fourth International. He followed our press attentively. Several times during our discussion he referred to articles, from *The Militant* or *Revista Marxista Latinoamericana*.

In the course of that meeting we informed Guevara that our party was preparing to send me on another tour around Cuba, in order to organize the party and set up a branch in Guantánamo. At that point he said that they were moving toward the formation of a single party of the revolution, and that other parties would not be tolerated; but that nonetheless I could make my tour, since the government would guarantee my freedom of action.

Angel Fanjul  
February 2, 1979



## How Sectarians Misrepresented Trotskyism in Cuba

By José G. Pérez

On December 31, 1978, Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, gave a speech celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution. It was one of the highlights of the eighteenth national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance.

He contrasted this anniversary to the twentieth anniversaries of the Russian and Chinese revolutions, noting that in Cuba, twenty years after its revolution, a privileged bureaucratic caste does not govern. He pointed out that there have been no purges of the original revolutionary cadres, no turning back from proletarian internationalism, and no abandoning of egalitarian domestic policies.

He described some of the impressive achievements of the revolution and noted some of its problems. He explained how the Fourth International including the Socialist Workers Party, its fraternal organization in the U.S., from the beginning has unwaveringly defended the Cuban revolution.

Barnes also cited two opportunities to develop collaboration with the Cuban leadership that were missed by the world Trotskyist movement.

"The first was right after the victory over Batista," Barnes said. "Unfortunately, in Cuba Trotskyism was misrepresented by a group that followed a cult leader named Juan Posadas. Their specialty was passing out leaflets demanding a march on the Guantánamo naval base, while the Cubans were trying to consolidate the revolution. They denounced the leaders of the revolution for not being socialists."

Barnes recounted his own experience in Cuba in the summer of 1960 as a young, unaffiliated radical, and how he came to learn "that there was quite a difference between Trotskyism and the Posadista insanities."

"But the Fourth International lost an opportunity to influence the Cuban leadership as much as it could have because of the character of the Cuban organization that called itself Trotskyist," Barnes said. "This resulted, in part, from an unnecessarily long and brutal split in the Fourth International. This split, which wasn't healed until 1963, weakened the world movement, and blocked the international leadership from using its full strength to influence the Cuban Trotskyists."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>The Fourth International was founded in 1938 and led by Leon Trotsky until his assassination in August 1940. In 1953 the international split into two public factions, the International Executive Committee—more often identified by its subordinate body, the International Secretariat (IS)—and

The second missed opportunity, he said, occurred during the period "from about 1967 to a little more than a year ago. During this time a majority of the leadership of the Fourth International themselves turned toward a strategy of guerrilla warfare. The Cuban leadership was trying to think out how to move forward in the aftermath of the collapse of the guerrilla orientation in Latin America, symbolized by the defeat in Bolivia and the death of Che. At that very moment, several sections of the Fourth International were speeding right past the Cubans in the opposite direction.

"The Trotskyist movement was giving the Cubans an outmoded answer that the Cubans themselves were trying to move beyond.

"It took some years and much discussion, but the Fourth International has now rejected these errors and puts forward a revolutionary strategy for Latin America that does provide answers to the questions the Cubans

the International Committee (IC). It was reunified on a principled basis in 1963.

Among the most prominent supporters of the IC were James P. Cannon (U.S.), Joseph Hansen (U.S.), Farrell Dobbs (U.S.), Nahuel Moreno (Argentina), Gerry Healy (Britain), Pierre Lambert (France), and P'eng Shu-tse (China). Leaders of the IS included Ernest Mandel (Belgium), Pierre Frank (France), Michel Pablo (France), Sal Santen (Holland), Livio Maitan (Italy), and Juan Posadas (Argentina).

The groupings headed by Healy, Lambert, and Posadas refused to take part in the reunification. All of them split from the Fourth International. Pablo was expelled from the International in 1965.

The Latin American Trotskyists supporting the IS were affiliated to the Latin American Bureau, which had its own secretariat headed by Juan Posadas. In April 1962, Posadas and his followers consummated their split from the Fourth International. They organized an "extraordinary congress" that "expelled" all other Trotskyists in the world and set up a "Fourth International" of its own.

The IEC and IS publicly denounced the Posadas group's use of the name of the Fourth International in June 1962. Their statement, published in the July 1962 *Quatrième Internationale*, said that the Latin American Bureau "does not in the least way represent the Fourth International or its political line and that the positions expressed by the Argentine newspaper *Voz Proletaria*, particularly on the question of nuclear war and the Second Declaration of Havana, do not correspond to those of the Fourth International."

Gilly implies in his letter to Barnes that the 1962 split marked the beginning of the "Posadista" tendency. Before this, he says, "Posadas considered himself a 'Pabloist.' Furthermore, he was not by any means saying the kind of crazy things he came up with in later years, since he was subject to the control, the influence, and the political life of what

were weighing. But valuable time was lost in this process."

Barnes noted that the world Trotskyist movement once again has excellent opportunities to collaborate with and learn from the Cuban leadership. He specifically pointed to the changes coming in the United States that "are a great opening for deeply influencing the Cuban revolution. The rise of working-class struggle in this country and the role Trotskyists will be playing in it is going to spark some new thinking in Cuba about the revolutionary prospects in the imperialist countries."

Shortly following the publication of Barnes's speech, Adolfo Gilly and Angel Fanjul, two Latin American revolutionists, addressed open letters to Barnes disputing what he said about the first of these missed opportunities. They had nothing to say on the second missed opening and the opportunities that are unfolding today.

They take issue with Barnes's statement

was then the Fourth International-IS."

Gilly is essentially correct in noting that the "Posadistas," as a political tendency, distinct from the line of the IS, did not emerge until after the split. Long before the split, however, Posadas had developed a core of followers, personally loyal to him. This core followed him out of the Fourth International and supported "the crazy things" that Gilly concedes Posadas came up with in subsequent years.

The process that led to the split by Posadas began following the January 1961 world congress of the IS. Posadas opened up a public attack on Pablo in the press of the Latin American sections of the IS. On September 29, 1961, he sent a letter to these same parties calling for a new world congress.

Even as this split was being prepared in 1961, the political differences were not clear. In reply to Posadas's September 29 letter, the IS sent a letter to its Latin American sections that states that "this document [the September 29 letter], of around 10 pages, contains no exposition of political differences, with the exception of a few allusions to points of view formulated by Comrade Pablo on nuclear tests in which no one could find a valid reason for breaking with the International."

The IS further states that, "It is undeniable that the political debate of the Sixth Congress [January 1961] was not exhaustive. It did not have documents before it containing differences; at most, there were amendments proposed. The differences appear at most in the form of different emphasis in the course of the discussion."

The IS letter also pointed out that at every international meeting of the IS through the 1961 congress, Posadas had supported the other leaders of the IS, especially Pablo. It adds that, "The publications of the International, *Quatrième Internationale* in particular, have reserved a big space for writings of the Latin American comrades. . . ." This was true through 1961.

that the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Trotskyista) [POR(T)—Revolutionary Workers Party (Trotskyist)] the IS group in Cuba, “misrepresented” Trotskyism. The positions of the POR(T) at that time were generally correct, they claim, despite some minor errors. They say that the Stalinists originated the lie that the POR(T) called for Cuba to attack the U.S. base at Guantánamo. They accuse Barnes of repeating this alleged slander.

Gilly and Fanjul, both Argentines, were active in the Latin American Bureau. After the split, both continued to be leaders of the Posadista current. Gilly has also been a prominent journalist and figure in the Latin American left since the early 1960s. He is the author of several books and now is a frequent contributor to the Mexican daily *Uno más Uno*. By the 1970s the Posadistas had all but ceased to exist, and Gilly had broken from them. Fanjul also broke from them and returned to the Fourth International.

Gilly states that he was active in the Cuban POR(T) from July 1962 until October 1963. Fanjul describes his visit to Cuba in the summer of 1960. Speaking from memory about their experience, they question Barnes's credibility as a witness to the activities of the Cuban “Trotskyists.”

When Barnes visited Cuba in 1960, Gilly says, he was “barely starting to come around the Trotskyist movement” and “didn't know Spanish.” He suggests that a review of relevant articles and documents, published in official organs of the International Executive Committee, the Latin American Bureau, and the Latin American parties of the International Secretariat, will prove that Barnes is wrong.

The SWP's archives have an extensive collection of publications and leaflets published by the Cuban POR(T) and some from the POR(T)'s cothinkers in Latin America. We have complete sets of *Quatrième Internationale* and *Fourth International*, the French- and English-language organs of the International Executive Committee.

An examination of these materials incontrovertibly confirms that Barnes is correct, and that Gilly and Fanjul misremember what happened. The facts show that the Cuban POR(T) *did* have an ultraleft sectarian line that included passing out leaflets demanding a march on the Guantánamo naval base.

Like Gilly, we believe that the history of our movement is important and that clarifying the historical record of what the Cuban “Trotskyists” did in the early 1960s can serve a useful purpose. Reviewing this missed opportunity of the world Trotskyist movement is especially relevant today in light of the extension of the socialist revolution to Nicaragua and Grenada and its impact on Cuba. These developments are offering excellent opportunities for the Fourth International to develop fraternal collaboration with the revolutionary leaderships in these countries in defense of their revolutions and other revolutionary struggles.

To evaluate the views and actions of the Cuban POR(T), it is necessary to place them in the context of what was happening in Cuba during the first few years after the revolutionary government came to power.

Those years saw the revolutionary organization and mobilization of the workers and peasants that transformed Cuba from a virtual colony of U.S. imperialism into the first Free Territory of the Americas.

The provisional government that came to power immediately following the January 1, 1959, revolutionary victory was a coalition government of the various forces that had opposed the dictatorship. While it included leaders of the July 26 Movement, which had led the fighting, the most important posts went to bourgeois figures.

The government proved to be unstable, because the bourgeois figures were determined to block implementation of measures such as slashing rents and utility rates and a thoroughgoing land reform. Faced with the resistance of the capitalist politicians, the Castro leadership turned to the Cuban masses. During the course of a series of massive mobilizations supporting the government's radical measures, one bourgeois figure after another left the government.

Key turning points in this process included the replacement of Prime Minister José Miró Cardona by Fidel Castro in February 1959 and the resignation—under intense popular pressure—of President Manuel Urrutia in July.

The development of the Castro team as it led the revolution forward produced fissures along class lines within the July 26 Movement and its Rebel Army. The most important of these was the attempt by Huber Matos to split the army in October 1959 when he was military commander of one of Cuba's six provinces.

This last-ditch attempt by the bourgeois forces to reverse the course of the revolution led to the launching of the popular militias and the replacement in November of Felipe Pazos by Ernesto Che Guevara as head of the national bank.

These events closed this early chapter in the revolution's history. They made clear that the capitalists had lost control of the government. Cuba now had a workers and farmers government, although much of the economy was still in capitalist hands.

The workers increasingly asserted control over production and conditions on the job in order to counter economic sabotage by the employers.

In February 1960 trade was established with the USSR. At the beginning of June, the Soviet government announced that Premier Nikita Khrushchev would visit Cuba. Later that month, imperialist-owned refineries responded by refusing to process Soviet crude oil purchased by the Cuban government. Cuba answered by taking over the refineries of three U.S. companies, occupying them with workers militias.

In September, the democratic organization of the masses took a major step forward

with the formation of the block-by-block Committees for the Defense of the Revolution.

Between July and October, all remaining major capitalists were expropriated. The Cuban workers, led by the Castro government, had established a workers state, extending the socialist revolution to the Americas.

The following year, 1961, was marked by the massive literacy campaign and by Washington's attempt to crush the revolution militarily. In April, the U.S. government staged an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs with a mercenary force of nearly 1,500 counterrevolutionaries armed, trained, and led by the CIA. The invasion was crushed in less than seventy-two hours.

During the April events, Castro proclaimed the socialist character of the revolution. At the end of the year he gave a major address where he explained the evolution of the political thinking of the leadership and its adherence to Marxism-Leninism.

### The Position of the SWP

The approach, at the time, of the Socialist Workers Party to the revolutionary process unfolding in Cuba was clearly laid out in many articles and documents, the most important of which have been reprinted in *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution*, by Joseph Hansen (Pathfinder Press, 1978). Among these is a document, “The Character of the New Cuban Government,” that SWP leader Joseph Hansen wrote in July 1960. It gave a positive assessment of the nature and direction of the Castro leadership and the Cuban government.

Hansen, who along with SWP presidential candidate Farrell Dobbs toured Cuba in early 1960, explains that:

The Castro government has proved that its responses to the mass revolutionary movement in Cuba and to the counterpressure from the U.S. are not simply passive. The new government has courageously defied American imperialism, resisting blandishments, threats, and reprisals. On the domestic side, it has repeatedly mobilized the Cuban workers and peasants in political demonstrations, in taking over landlord and capitalist holdings, in disarming the forces of the old regime, and in arming the people. . . .

The Castro leadership has shown awareness of its own origin and its own leftward evolution, including the stages through which it has developed. What is remarkable is its acceptance of this development and its repeated declarations of intent to follow through to the end, “no matter what,” and despite its own surprise at the turns that open up. The constantly emphasized concept of the Cuban revolution as an example for Latin America, as the first link in a new chain of revolutions in Latin America against Wall Street's domination, is especially to be noted as an indication of awareness that the leadership of the Cuban revolution faces great historic responsibilities.

The dynamic rather than static character of the Castro leadership, of extraordinary interest to the revolutionary socialist movement, is undoubtedly ascribable in large part to the world setting in which the Cuban revolution occurs. . . .

In addition, this leadership is close to the mass movement of both the peasants and workers, who



have solidly and militantly supported each revolutionary measure and inspired their leaders to go further. The popular response throughout Latin America has had a further effect in the same direction.

All this points to the conclusion that the new Cuban government is a workers' and farmers' government of the kind described in our Transitional Program [adopted at the founding congress of the Fourth International in 1938] as "a government independent of the bourgeoisie."

In December 1960 the SWP Political Committee adopted a resolution which also appears in *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution*, characterizing Cuba as a workers state.

### A Sectarian Approach from the Beginning

Gilly and Fanjul accurately state that the International Secretariat and its Latin American Bureau supported the Cuban revolution from its beginning, approved of its key social and economic measures, and defended it against imperialism. By the beginning of 1961 they had recognized that Cuba had become a workers state.

But during the first period of the revolution, they took a sectarian attitude to the leadership team around Castro and sought to organize a left wing against it.

In March 1959, the Latin American Bureau issued an appeal on the rising tide of revolutionary struggles in Latin America. It was reprinted in the Spring 1959 *Fourth International*. In passing, the appeal refers to the July 26 movement and similar movements as being led by "bourgeois parties and agents of imperialism," whose anti-imperialist stance was due only to "the enormous pressure that the masses are bringing to bear on them."

Of course, this might simply have been an initial sectarian reaction easily corrected as the revolution unfolded and as the revolutionary character of its leadership emerged even more clearly. But this did not prove to be the case.

By 1960, the Latin American supporters of the International Secretariat codified their sectarian view of the Cuban leadership into a fully worked-out line that was reflected in several articles printed in *Fourth International* and *Voz Proletaria*, the newspaper of the Cuban POR(T).

The Latin American Bureau believed that while the Castroists had taken some progressive measures due to mass pressure, they were trying to hold back the struggle. In the view of the POR(T), a major conflict was developing in Cuba between the masses on one side and the Fidelista leadership on the other. It foresaw a coming confrontation between the mass organizations—the unions, peasant cooperatives and militias—and the Castroist-led Rebel Army.

Underlying this conflict, the POR(T) believed, was the struggle between a petty-bourgeois current, which was trying to limit the revolution to reforms within a capitalist framework, and the proletariat, which was trying to push the revolution forward to socialism. To the Latin American Bureau of

the IS the split between the Castro leadership and bourgeois forces such as Urrutia was "infinitely" less important than the confrontation they predicted was coming.

These views were clearly expressed in an article by A. Ortriz, a central leader of the Latin American Bureau, dated October 1, 1960, and published in the Autumn 1960 *Fourth International*. Ortiz writes:

There is in fact a parallel process going on: to the degree that the intervention of the masses ceases to be by mass-meetings and simple support, and that the movement is getting channelized into organizations and is intervening through its trade unions, militia, and coöperatives, the old political apparatus of the insurrection, based on the action of the petty bourgeoisie, is becoming inadequate and entering into conflict with the new forces.

Behind this dual process lies the basic contradiction in the development of the Cuban revolution and the elements of its most serious internal crisis, infinitely more serious than the crises with Urrutia, Diaz Lanz, and other capitalist elements.

Ortiz was elaborating the line laid out by Posadas in a feature article in the previous issue of *Fourth International* (Summer 1960). At the same time that a workers and farmers government had already been established that was on the road to consolidating a workers state in a couple of months, Posadas asserted that the masses were fighting "despite the leadership's hesitations, fears and raising of obstacles."

He argued that, "The Cuban working class must be in the first ranks in defense of its revolution against Yankee imperialism. . . . But it must do so directly and in a form independent of its own Cuban government." (Original emphasis.)

Posadas—in the summer of 1960!—called on the Cuban workers to "struggle for a workers' and peasants' government in Cuba." He warned against certain measures taken by the Castro government, such as organizing a student wing of the militia "directed by the state" instead of the trade unions, saying it was "a step backward" and at the present stage an embryo of a capitalist army. . . .

The general approach of Posadas and Ortiz was fundamentally the same as that of the International Secretariat. For example, an editor's footnote to Posadas's 1960 article stated that developments in Cuba since it was written "fully confirm the line indicated in this article."

The same issue of *Fourth International* that carried Posadas's article also included an editorial on Cuba that stated:

. . . the Fidel Castro leadership is advancing in an empirical way. It is taking steps forward under the pressure of the masses, but it remains a prisoner to its own conception of "humanist capitalism." There is a permanent contradiction between its underlying paternalism concerning the participation of the masses, and the impact made on it from below by those same masses who would like to control and even run the economy. At this level, when the centre of the tasks of the revolution is shifting from the countryside to the cities, it is evident that the revolutionary army cannot be the only source

of cadres for the revolution, the only "party" that organizes the masses. . . .

In the 26 July Movement, in the trade unions, there is a left tendency that is heading towards an understanding of the turning-point that the revolution is reaching. This tendency is posing itself the task of building, on revolutionary Marxist bases, a leadership that will apply in a conscious way a workers' programme for the purpose of overcoming the revolution's national and international contradictions, and ensuring a Latin American extension of the Cuban revolution. . . .

The action of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario, Cuban Section of the Fourth International, has as its aim to aid the development of this tendency, to speed up the building of a workers' leadership for the revolution, and to orient, by means of a workers' programme, the course of the revolution and the formation of the leading cadres of the next stage.

This orientation of building a "left wing" against the revolutionary government and the Fidelista leadership led the POR(T) to misjudge the situation in the summer of 1960 when a workers state was being established in Cuba.

For example, its first reaction to the August 6 expropriations of all imperialist companies in Cuba was to downplay their significance and to belittle the role of the Castro leadership in carrying them through. This is laid out in a speech by Posadas, excerpts of which were printed in the September 1960 *Voz Proletaria*. Posadas states:

Between what the rank and file wants and what the leadership wants there is a tremendous distance, no matter how radical this leadership might be. . . .

Fidel said on the sixth [of August]: we are going to expropriate with compensation and the masses shouted NO! . . . When collectively, at the rally, they shouted NO! it's because they want to go further. And when they shout "Arms to the militias!" it's because they want to advance, to go further. The masses were shouting "Militias!, Militias!," not army, but militias, because they have confidence in them.

Apart from the infantile ultraleft nostrums (counterposition of militias to a revolutionary army and elevation of noncompensation to a principle), the Posadas speech was dishonest. It was the Castro leadership that had organized workplace and neighborhood militias beginning in 1959. And the Cuban government offered compensation to the imperialist corporations on terms that would have meant the U.S. ruling class abandoning its economic war against the revolution.

The Cubans, for example, proposed to pay compensation only on the basis of property values officially listed by American companies with the Cuban government for tax evasion purposes. If the imperialists wanted higher compensation for their properties, they first had to pay off back taxes and penalties.

So there was little surprise when the U.S. imperialists refused this reasonable offer and no compensation was paid. In fact, later in his speech, Posadas acknowledged that the nationalizations were "really without compensation," apparently not noticing that

this contradicted his earlier argument.

It should be noted that Castro's political approach was clearly superior to refusing to pay compensation on the basis of principle as Posadas proposed, because it helped educate the Cuban masses about the extent of U.S. imperialist robbery and showed the entire world who was in the right.

The most striking thing, however, was not that, but rather where Posadas drew the battle lines. In the same speech he says, "But what's fundamental is that the proletariat is not in power, is not leading or intervening in the process of the Revolution, but rather is only a base of support."

He adds that:

Unless the Revolution advances it will stagnate and that is the greatest counterrevolutionary danger. The danger is not in an invasion, although there is a danger of an invasion. . . . But the biggest danger is that, while they speak of invasion, if the Revolution does not advance with the intervention of the masses, there is a risk that in the near future it will decompose.

That is, at a time when the Cuban masses were solidly arrayed behind their revolutionary government, responding blow for blow to the imperialist enemy, Posadas drew the line between the Cuban masses and the Cuban leaders.

A similar example is the POR(T)'s handling of the September 2, 1960, Declaration of Havana. This was Cuba's answer to the U.S.-inspired, anticommunist "Declaration of San Jose, Costa Rica," which had been adopted by the Organization of American States (OAS) shortly before.

Presented at a mass rally in Havana by Fidel, this declaration forthrightly condemned imperialism and proclaimed:

The right of peasants to the land; the right of the workers to the fruit of his labor; the right of children to receive education; the right of the sick to receive medical and hospital care; the right of the young to work, the right of students to receive free instruction, practical and scientific; the right of Negroes and Indians to "a full measure of human dignity;" the right of women to civic, social and political equality; the right of the aged to a secure old age; the right of intellectuals, artists and scientists to fight through their work for a better world; the rights of states to nationalize imperialist monopolies as a means of recovering national wealth and resources; the right of countries to engage freely in trade with all other countries of the world; the right of nations to full sovereignty; the right of the people to convert their fortresses into schools and to arm their workers, peasants, students, intellectuals. Negroes, Indians, women, the young; the old, all the oppressed and exploited; that they may better defend, with their own hands, their rights and their future. [*The Second Declaration of Havana, With the First Declaration of Havana, Pathfinder Press, 1979.*]

It affirmed "the duty of oppressed and exploited nations to fight for their liberation," and predicted that the toiling masses of Latin America, "the heirs of Zapata and Sandino," would "take up the arms of liberty."

It appealed to the Latin American masses for solidarity against the growing imperial-

ist plot to use the Latin American governments against Cuba.

In order to counter the imperialist lie that the Cuban revolution did not represent the interests of the Cuban people, the declaration was made in the form of a resolution adopted by an assembly of hundreds of thousands of Cubans.

"The people of Cuba, Free Territory of America," the declaration begins, "acting with the inalienable powers that flow from an effective exercise of their sovereignty through direct, public and universal suffrage, have formed themselves in National General Assembly close to the monument and memory of Jose Marti."

*Voz Proletaria* replied with a center-spread feature by Angel Fanjul in its October 1960 issue. After a few sentences of praise, Fanjul launched into an attack against Castro's "Bonapartist sui generis government" for having taken a vote on the declaration at the mass meeting.

"To which class does this so-called Direct, Universal, and Public Democracy correspond?" Fanjul asked.

It is based on an idealization and abstraction. It is based on the idealist conception of unity, which seeks to ignore or overcome the class struggle, to go above the classes. It is the negation of the existence of the class struggle, the idealization of democracy, and the ignoring or idealizing of the character of the State as an organ of class rule.

Fanjul's blindly sectarian potshots at one of the outstanding manifestos of the Cuban revolution totally missed the mark. His implication that the revolutionary government was unclear about bourgeois parliamentary democracy was absurd. The rally and the declaration, calling on the toiling masses of Latin America to revolutionary struggle, represented the exact opposite. They reflected the deepening of the Cuban revolution as a proletarian revolution and were part of its determined struggle against U.S. imperialism.

### Organizing a "Left Wing"

The ultraleft approach of the Latin American Bureau and its Cuban affiliate was also shown in their view of the fusion between the July 26 Movement, the Revolutionary Directorate, and the People's Socialist Party (PSP). Discussions around this proposal were in the air in 1960, and by July 1961, the three groups were fused into a single party, the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations. In 1965 this became the Communist Party of Cuba.

Criticizing the proposed regroupment in an article on "The Unification of the Forces of the Revolution" in the June 1960 *Voz Proletaria*, A. Ortiz argued:

The Party of the Revolution should be, not the sum of the "26" [of July Movement] and the old parties and movements, but rather, a new Party, structured around a revolutionary program. . . .

It should not be based on simple party organizations. It should be based on the already existing mass organizations. . . . It should be, therefore, a

labor party based on the unions and other organizations of the exploited masses.

The following May, in another article, Ortiz counterposed the formation of a "revolutionary Marxist Party" to the unification of the three main organizations supporting the revolution. In this article, published in the Spring-Summer 1961 *Fourth International*, he wrote:

The alternative to the Single Party is the achievement of political cohesion in the working class and the formation of its own party, of a revolutionary Marxist leadership which would not be swallowed up by the state apparatus, but would impose its will on that apparatus. There is a political force in Cuba which expresses that alternative, the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Revolutionary Workers' Party), the Trotskyist Party of Cuba.

This made no sense, unless one thought, as the POR(T) did, that the purpose of a new party was to represent the masses *against* the government and the Castro leadership. But this flew in the face of the way the leadership question was unfolding in the Cuban working class.

The July 26 Movement was a revolutionary organization that by its actions had won the loyalty of the toiling masses. Due to the revolutionary mobilizations of the masses, by 1960 the July 26 Movement was running the government and the armed forces and leading the workers to take over the economy.

The Revolutionary Directorate was based among the students and played a significant role in the struggle against Batista, especially in Havana.

The PSP was the old-time Stalinist party which had been bypassed by the July 26 Movement. It had many cadres, however, especially in the labor movement. Under the impact of the revolution and the rise of the July 26 Movement, thousands of PSP members were radicalized and were putting pressure on the party's leadership.

Joseph Hansen explained this process in a 1977 article, "Two Interpretations of the Cuban Revolution":

This pressure mounted greatly after the victory as Castro initiated measure after measure advancing the *socialist* revolution in Cuba. In view of its disintegrating base, the PSP faced a bleak perspective. It could collapse or it could possibly join the July 26 Movement. To succeed in the latter move it had to prove its reliability and loyalty to the July 26 Movement.

On August 21, 1960, Blas Roca, the general secretary of the PSP, made a collective self-criticism of the party's past errors, particularly the error of not having recognized the historic merits of Fidel Castro. The ranks of the party had already demonstrated their views by the way they pitched in to carry out the immense tasks facing the country. And during the Bay of Pigs invasion the following April they showed their capacity to carry out the directives issued by the government.

From this it ought to be clear to everyone that in moving toward a fusion of the July 26 Movement, the Revolutionary Directorate, and the PSP, Castro was engaging in a simple political operation. He was responding positively to overtures from political forces that had previously fought the July 26 Movement and had committed grave errors. He



did this in a generous way, making it easier for his former opponents to complete their turn. He did not even insist that the name of his own organization be kept. He assured posts for the leaders of the former groups in the top bodies of the new formation. All his moves were calculated to bring the greatest possible unity among these disparate currents in facing American imperialism. [*Revolutionary Cuba Today: The Record of A Discussion*, Education for Socialists bulletin, Pathfinder Press, 1980.]

Instead of becoming part of this important process that led to the formation of a new revolutionary workers party, the POR(T) remained outside of it, counterposing its own tiny organization to it. This sectarian folly was an obstacle to advancing the development of revolutionary leadership in Cuba and served to discredit the POR(T) among Cuban workers.

To this day Fanjul apparently considers this course to have been correct. In his letter to Barnes, Fanjul recalls approvingly informing Che Guevara that he was going to tour Cuba in order to organize the POR(T) and set up a branch in Guantánamo. Yet in the same meeting, Che had told him about the plans to establish a new unified party!

#### Intervention at the Latin American Youth Congress

Gilly and Fanjul devote a big part of their letters to defending what the Latin American affiliates of the IS did at the First Latin American Youth Congress held in Havana, July 28-August 6, 1960.

Gilly was not in Cuba at the time. But Fanjul, who was part of the Latin American Bureau's delegation to the congress, gives a vivid, blow-by-blow description of the conflict between the Stalinists and his delegation, creating the impression that this conflict dominated the proceedings.

Both the *Militant* and *Voz Proletaria* covered the congress at the time, and the SWP archives contain a record of the congress published by the Cuban government in the pamphlet series, *Obra Revolucionaria*. From this material, it is clear that Fanjul's memory is inexact on many points. For example, the public accusations of the Stalinists against the IS delegation, far from dominating the proceedings, were launched only on the next to the last day of the meeting.

Nevertheless, Fanjul's recent account and the September 1960 *Voz Proletaria* article do coincide in their analysis of the political forces involved in the youth congress.

According to *Voz Proletaria*:

Two conceptions clashed at this Congress. One, which had a majority, led by the communist tendencies allied with the right wing of the "26" [of July Movement] and with the most conservative tendencies, wanted to make the Congress a "Festival of Latin American Youth" with purely verbal support to the Cuban revolution. And the other conception, which found in our faction conscious, homogeneous, and coherent expression, fought to make this congress a real center of ideological debate, which would tend to lay down the programmatic, political, and organizational foundations of

the Latin American Anti-Imperialist United Front. . . .

There is no indication who represented the "right wing" of the July 26 Movement or where the "left wing" fits in. Since the pro-bourgeois forces in the July 26 Movement had left the year before, did the Latin American Bureau consider the Castro leadership to be the "right wing"? This would be consistent with the sectarian approach to the July 26 leadership that was being put forward in *Voz Proletaria* at the time.

But to make an amalgam of the Stalinists and the Castroists missed what was really happening in Cuba and at the congress.

In 1960 the revolution was rapidly advancing in a socialist direction, and the Castro leadership was leading this process. These gigantic events were the dominant theme at the youth congress and the source of tremendous enthusiasm for the delegates who came from many countries.

Leaving aside *Voz Proletaria's* prejudice that it is somehow suspect to have a youth festival, it must be stressed that the Cuban leaders did not view the congress as some kind of extended party. Raúl Castro and Che Guevara gave major speeches to the gathering, and Fidel symbolically inaugurated the congress with his July 26 address and closed the congress on August 6 by announcing the expropriation of hundreds of millions of dollars of imperialist property.

The central theme that ran through the speeches of the Cuban leaders and the resolutions approved by the congress was to extend the revolution. The objective of the Cubans was succinctly stated on a banner that decorated the congress hall: "Make the Andes the Sierra Maestra of Latin America."

The congress was clearly a move by the Cubans to win over the new generation of fighters inspired by the Cuban example to revolutionary positions. This was a constant axis of the Cuban leadership's activities at that time (and today). Among those who were inspired by the example of the Cubans, and who responded to their appeals to make a revolution in their own country, were the founders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua.

In carrying out this strategy, the Cubans did not rely primarily on polemical denunciations of the Communist parties or other reformists. They realized that many who still looked to these forces were sincere and dedicated militants who could be won over to a revolutionary outlook. The Cubans tailored their tactics so that they could get a favorable hearing among such people.

In doing this, the Castro leadership was applying on a broader arena the lessons they drew from the evolution of these kinds of forces within Cuba itself.

#### Stalinists Resist Revolution's Course

The PSP leadership, which before 1959 was openly hostile to the July 26 Movement, had been adapting more and more to it under the pressure of its own membership. By

mid-1960, the PSP was headed on a course toward fusion with the July 26 Movement.

At the same time, however, differences continued to be expressed, although less directly. For example, at the same PSP congress in August 1960 where Blas Roca explained that the PSP had been wrong about Castro, he criticized the idea that the revolution was "Communist." His report, reprinted in the October 1960 *Political Affairs*, magazine of the U.S. Communist Party, took to task many revolutionists who answered "The revolution is not Communist. It is Cuban." to the charge that the revolution was Communist.

"This is an unbecoming reply," Blas Roca argued.

Communism does not refer to the nationality of the revolution but to its character. . . . The reason our revolution is not Communist is . . . because it is not applying Communist methods or laws. . . .

The Cuban Revolution is not a Communist revolution; it is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal. . . .

The social classes that are objectively interested in the fulfillment of these historic tasks are the workers, the peasants, the urban middle classes and the national bourgeoisie.

Blas Roca's remarks were a thinly-veiled polemic against the central leaders of the July 26 Movement. In truth, the answer of many Fidelistas that the revolution was *Cuban* was not such a bad one, since the imperialists claimed that it was a plot cooked up in Moscow or Peking. But the July 26 leaders were already beginning to go beyond that formula. Only three weeks before, Che had announced to the youth congress that the Cuban revolution had "discovered, through its own methods, the roads pointed out by Marx." Far from looking to the national bourgeoisie for support, the workers led by the Fidelistas were expropriating them! Blas Roca's speech was a thinly-veiled attack on that course.

The differences between the Fidelistas and the Stalinists in Cuba in 1960, which were reflected at the youth congress, were far more central than any debates with the delegation from the Latin American Bureau. The truth is that the activities of this delegation were a convenient target for the Stalinists, who did not want to directly attack what they considered to be an ultraleft and adventurist line promoted by the Fidelista leadership.

In spite of the scandalous attempt of the Stalinists to exclude the delegation from the Latin American Bureau and to create a witch-hunt atmosphere against them, the majority, to their credit, refused to go along.

Peter Buch, who headed the delegation of seven observers from the Young Socialist Alliance (the only national youth organization from the United States to send an official delegation) noted this in his report on the congress in the September 5 and 12 *Militant*. Writing under the pen name "Peter Allan," he said that:

On the closing days of the Youth Congress, Gerardo Figueras, chairman of the Cuban delegation and president of the Congress called for unity

among all tendencies represented at the party—including the Trotskyists—to pursue the common struggle against imperialism.

Blinded by sectarianism, Fanjul and his colleagues totally missed the real battle-lines at the congress. Instead of forming a bloc with the Fidelistas, who were putting forward a revolutionary perspective, the followers of the Latin American Bureau centered their intervention on maneuvers designed to “expose” the Castro leadership. Instead of supporting the forces presenting a revolutionary outlook, the Latin American Bureau delegation counterposed to the resolutions backed by the Fidelistas their own sectarian manifesto. The full text of that manifesto—but not even a brief summary of the resolutions approved by the congress as a whole—appeared in both *Voz Proletaria* and *Fourth International*. Major excerpts from it were published in *Quatrième Internationale*.

The proposed manifesto attempted to present a comprehensive and ideal anti-imperialist program without relating concretely to the issues being discussed at the congress. For example, its proposals for anti-imperialist organizations included:

A Latin American Anti-Imperialist United Front; a Proletarian United Front; an All-Latin-American Trade Union Organization; single United Trade Union Organizations for each country; a Central Latin American Students' Association; and a Latin American Raw-Materials Pool.

As if all of these suggestions weren't enough for a youth conference, the Latin American Bureau manifesto also called for the Federation of Socialist Republics of Workers' and Peasants' Councils in Latin America and popular militias in all countries.

A section on the United States recommended replacing the leadership of the AFL-CIO. Almost as an afterthought, it threw in establishing a “. . . true workers' democracy in a planned economy with workers' management and a workers government” in the United States.

It's no wonder that the resolution was voted down with only five Latin American Bureau delegates voting for it. But not to be put off by that overwhelming rebuff, they proceeded to reintroduce the document piece by piece in the form of amendments to other proposals. The purpose of this exercise was to “expose” the congress majority, especially the July 26 Movement.

This is explained in the September 1960 *Voz Proletaria* account of the conference, which denounced “the sectarianism and opportunism of the majority of the delegations” for rejecting such motions as one calling for “a general strike in all Latin America the day of the meeting of the OAS.”

In spite of all this, eighteen years later in his letter to Barnes, Fanjul boasts:

Objectively, we changed the course of the congress. It had been expected to take two sessions, with things being approved by acclamation, without presentation of documents and without discus-

sion. But the small Trotskyist delegation imposed a frank, open, and loyal debate. . . . The discussion was intense, and the resolutions adopted were oriented along the lines of proletarian internationalism.

Fanjul then goes on to describe Castro's speech at the closing rally on August 6:

Fidel Castro denounced the OAS, and announced the expropriation without compensation of all the sugar refineries and the main imperialist companies. The revolution was back on its course—the course that we had been fighting for. The first workers state in Latin America was born that night, and Trotskyists participated in its birth.

Fanjul seems to be suffering from delusions of grandeur. The implication that the small sectarian delegation that he was part of seriously influenced the youth congress, or even more preposterous, helped put the revolution “back on its course” is ridiculous and flies in the face of all the facts. (It should be noted that the law authorizing the nationalization of all imperialist properties was adopted on July 6, 1960, three weeks before the youth congress began.) And, of course, this assumes that the revolution was ever off its course.

Fanjul's recollection that the revolution got “back on its course” is particularly puzzling in light of the fact that following Castro's August 6 speech the POR(T) continued, and even deepened, its sectarian approach to the Cuban revolution and its revolution and its revolution.

#### What Che Guevara Said

Evidence of the POR(T)'s sectarian course is corroborated by the one Cuban leader who both Gilly and Fanjul speak highly of as a person of integrity, Che Guevara.

Gilly refers to the imprisonment of POR(T) activists while he was in Cuba. “I know,” he writes, “that more than once Che intervened on their behalf. He never would have done that if he considered them a bunch of irresponsible provocateurs, as you [referring to Barnes] make them out to be.”

In a September 14, 1961, interview with Princeton University professor Maurice Zeitlin, published in a U.S. radical quarterly, *Root and Branch*, and excerpted in the April 9, 1962, *Militant*, Guevara was asked about the suppression of *Voz Proletaria* and *The Permanent Revolution* by Leon Trotsky. Guevara explained:

That did happen. It was an error. It was an error committed by a functionary of second rank. They smashed the plates. It should not have been done.

However, we consider the Trotskyist party to be acting against the revolution. For example, they were taking the line that the revolutionary government is petty bourgeois, and were calling on the proletariat to exert pressure on the government, and even to carry out another revolution in which the proletariat would come to power. This was prejudicing the discipline necessary at the time.

#### The March on Guantánamo Issue

One of Gilly's sharpest charges is that Barnes lied in saying that the POR(T) advo-

cated that Cuba militarily take over the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo.

Gilly says:

The center of your [Barnes's] argument . . . is that their “specialty” (by which I understand main or almost exclusive activity) consisted of proposing a march on Guantánamo.

That's a lie.

The rest of your argument also collapses along with this point.

And earlier in his letter Gilly says:

The Trotskyists, like all the Cubans beginning with the revolutionary government itself, denounced the military presence of imperialism in Guantánamo, and called for its expulsion, just as in our propaganda we call for the expulsion of imperialism from Latin America. It should not be forgotten that the recovery of Guantánamo was among the five points of the Cubans during the October 1962 crisis.

First, we should do away with a misunderstanding. Gilly interprets “specialty” to mean “main or almost exclusive activity.” However, “distinguishing characteristic” would be a better definition. For example, a restaurant could advertise that “desserts are our specialty” without implying that customers would find desserts the “main or almost exclusive” item on the menu.

More important to note is how Gilly throughout his letter confuses the demand on the imperialists to *withdraw* from Guantánamo with the call to *expel* imperialism from Guantánamo. The same misformulation occurs consistently in Latin American Bureau publications from the early 1960s, as well as in Fanjul's letter.

This distinction is not a question of playing with words; it has considerable practical significance. The demand to expel imperialism from Guantánamo could only be read as a demand on the government of Cuba to attack the U.S. military base. However, by focusing on the demand for withdrawal the fire is placed on imperialism, where it belongs.

It is certainly the right of the Cuban people to get rid of the imperialist base by whatever means they consider necessary. But if the Cuban government were to move toward expelling U.S. forces from the base, it would have had to weigh carefully the relationship of forces between the United States and Cuba.

Such moves would undoubtedly have been used as a pretext by Washington for invading Cuba. The Cuban leadership realized this and acted accordingly.

Gilly is simply wrong in implying that the Cubans included a demand to expel the United States from Guantánamo in their five point program in response to the 1962 missile crisis. The Cubans demanded that Washington *withdraw*; they were very careful *not* to make threats to expel.

Fidel presented this point precisely in a radio and television speech November 1, 1962, reprinted in the November 12, 1962, *Militant*. He stated that the Cuban government demands “the *withdrawal* of the naval base at Guantánamo and the *return* of Cu-



ban territory occupied by the United States." (Emphasis added.)

This point simply reaffirmed the revolutionary government's position on this question. In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September 1960, Castro stated:

The Revolutionary Government of Cuba has repeatedly expressed concern at the fact that the imperialist government of the United States of America may use the base in the heart of our national territory as a means of promoting a self-aggression, to justify an attack on our country.

... we have never spoken one single, solitary word of aggression, or any word that might be taken as implying any type of attack on the Guantánamo base, because we are the first in not wanting to give imperialism a pretext to attack us.

In polar contrast to this approach, *Voz Proletaria*, from its first issue in April 1960, waged a campaign to demand of the Cuban government that it expel the U.S. navy from the base at Guantánamo. In other words, their proposal would have led the Cuban government to fall into the trap Castro had warned against—giving "imperialism a pretext" to attack Cuba.

But the POR(T) and Latin American Bureau not only advocated expulsion. *They agitated for it and organized demonstrations demanding it. At one point they even proposed that the time had come to launch a military attack.*

Gilly claims that Barnes lies about this. In defense of Barnes, the following items are submitted:

- The centerfold article, "The Conflict at the Guantánamo Naval Base," in the April 1960 *Voz Proletaria* declares: "Although there be periods of 'armistice,' the workers of the Naval Base, the people of Guantánamo and Caimanera, the Cuban masses as a whole should prepare the struggle for the definitive expulsion of imperialism."

- The manifesto introduced by the Latin American Bureau delegation at the youth congress stated: "Here, in Cuba, the Congress vigorously reasserts its determination to liquidate the aggressive military bases of imperialism by expelling it from Guantánamo (Cuba), Ezeiza (Argentina), Fernando de Noronha (Brazil)."

- *Lucha Obrera*, newspaper of the POR, the IS section in Bolivia, in its issue for the second half of August 1961, ran an article under the headline, "Expel Imperialism from Guantánamo." The article proposed that, "Among the anti-imperialist measures of the Cuban revolution, the fundamental point must be the nationalization of the North American Naval Base at Guantánamo."

"This measure is today more important than ever, as the Revolutionary Workers Party (Trotskyist) of Cuba states. . . ."

- In the next issue of *Lucha Obrera*, an article under the headline, "Last Minute," declared:

We have received a letter from the Revolutionary Workers Party (Trotskyist) of Cuba, through which we are informed that the comrades distrib-

uted some leaflets calling the workers to a demonstration to ask for the expulsion of imperialism from the Guantánamo base.

The Stalinists were able to arrest the comrades to put them on trial for "distributing counterrevolutionary propaganda." The judge read the leaflet, and immediately freed them, saying there was nothing counterrevolutionary about the leaflet.

- In the February-March 1962 *Voz Obrera*, the Mexican paper of the Latin American Bureau, there is a reference to this demonstration. It says, ". . . the masses proposed to organize their own offensive to expel the imperialist aggressor from the Caimanera base in Guantánamo." Later, in the October 1962 issue of the same paper, a front-page headline, screamed, "For the Expulsion of Imperialism from Guantánamo."

- We also have the testimony of an expert and, moreover, one called to the stand by Gilly himself—Che Guevara.

In the interview printed in *Root and Branch*, previously referred to, Che was asked about the Trotskyists in the United States who were "enthusiastically approving" of the revolution.

Guevara commented, "I do not have any opinions about Trotskyists in general. But here in Cuba—let me give an example. They have one of their principal centers in the town of Guantánamo near the U.S. base. And they agitated there for the Cuban people to march on the base—something that cannot be permitted." (Emphasis added.)

- Finally, we have it from Juan Posadas himself. In an article mimeographed in the "Supplement to the Latin American Marxist Review, Cuban Edition" dated October 1962, he wrote:

"Yankee imperialism organizes a new invasion of Cuba. Fidel Castro charges that from Guantánamo the counterrevolution is being organized. The concrete measure to be adopted is the immediate expulsion of Yankee imperialism from Guantánamo." (Emphasis added.)

To underline that he was not just issuing demands on the imperialists but making concrete proposals for action, Posadas added, "The Workers States, the Communist Parties, the unions, the labor federations of the Workers States and the whole world, should openly come to the aid of Cuba, sending armed militias and all sufficient means to crush Yankee imperialism."

As Gilly himself explains, there is a "qualitative difference" between raising "propagandistic slogans and concretely proposing to organize a march right now on the Panama Canal. It's the difference between propaganda and provocation. It was the same in the case of Guantánamo."

We rest our case.

#### The Missile Crisis

The POR(T)'s position on Guantánamo was all the more dangerous, and "insane" if you will, given the situation Cuba faced at the time. Throughout 1962 President John F. Kennedy was looking for a pretext to invade Cuba with U.S. troops.

After the April 1961 invasion organized by Washington, Cuba asked the USSR to install nuclear missiles on Cuban soil to discourage a future invasion attempt. In October 1962, Kennedy "discovered" that the missiles were there and threatened nuclear war if they were not removed.

Kennedy sent U.S. warships to stop Soviet freighters on the high sea. Simultaneously he prepared a full invasion of Cuba.

The revolutionary government called the Cuban people to arms. The entire population rose up as one to defend their revolution. From one end of the island to the other workers took to the trenches with their rifles, while others poured into the factories, not only maintaining, but increasing production during the crisis.

The Soviet ships stopped at sea to avoid a confrontation. The Kremlin agreed to withdraw the missiles in return for a pledge by the Kennedy administration not to invade Cuba. Nikita Khrushchev's decision defused a U.S.-provoked confrontation that could have led to a nuclear holocaust. However, the way this decision was made—without consulting the Cuban government—was publicly criticized by Castro.

While the future of humanity hung in the balance, what was the POR(T) doing? It called on the Kremlin to launch nuclear war against the United States!

"General Strike and Worker-Peasant Insurrection in all the Capitalist Countries! Let the Soviet Army Strike the First Blow!" read a POR(T) Political Bureau statement issued October 23, the day after Kennedy's televised speech threatening war with the USSR.

"Atomic War Will Be Followed Instantaneously by the World Revolution" read the title of an October 26 letter from Posadas (under the name Luis) to all "Comrades, parties and Leaderships." This was published in the second half of November issue of *Voz Proletaria* in Cuba.

Such ultraleft ravings really leave one speechless. They were used by Stalinists all over the world to attack Trotskyism and the Fourth International, since the statements were signed by Posadas's bogus "Fourth International."

To give Gilly his due, he does admit that today he has "no interest in defending the political cadaver that Juan Posadas has become, a model slanderer (as shown first of all by his slander about the death of Che)."

This is an especially noteworthy criticism, since internationally one of the most prominent spokespersons for the Posadista slanderer that Castro ordered Che's death was none other than Gilly himself.

After Che dropped from public view in early 1965, there was considerable speculation about what happened to him. The Posadistas advanced the notion that to cement the political alliance with Moscow and support peaceful coexistence Castro did away with Che.

Gilly, writing in the April 1966 *Monthly*

*Review*, stated that, "The vertiginous political evolution of the Cuban leadership in recent months confirms the opinion that it is true that they have either assassinated Guevara or that they are restraining him by some means or other from expressing himself politically."

This scurrilous attack on the Castro leadership was shattered when Che later surfaced as a leader of the guerrilla struggle in Bolivia.

In a March 1978 article, entitled "Guerrilla, Program and Party in Guatemala," published in *Coyoacán* magazine, Gilly explained that, at the time, he repeated these slanders, although he knew that they were false, "out of a bad understanding of party discipline," and that he "shares, therefore, complete responsibility for these political insanities."

This rectification is welcome, of course. But why is Gilly so reluctant to apply the same corrective to the earlier "political insanities" of the IS section in Cuba in opposing the Castro leadership?

The answer is that Gilly still basically holds the same sectarian position on the Cuban revolution and its leadership that he held in the early 1960s.

In the same article from *Coyoacán* referred to above, Gilly argues that Che's leaving Cuba "was indisputably a defeat for the left wing of the Cuban revolution. . . . It would mean that the Cuban leadership would progressively take its distance from its policy of extending the revolution in Latin America. . . ."

This is an updating of the old Latin American Bureau line that Castro headed a "right wing" in the Cuban leadership that carried out progressive measures only when forced to by mass pressure and by the "left wing."

The attempt to pit Guevara against Castro by placing him in this imaginary left wing is too shameful for words.

Che himself most clearly refutes this insinuation in his farewell letter to Fidel written in April 1965. He wrote:

My only serious failing was not having confided more in you from the first moments in the Sierra Maestra, and not having understood quickly enough your qualities as a leader and a revolutionary.

I have lived magnificent days, and I felt at your side the pride of belonging to our people in the brilliant yet sad days of the Caribbean crisis.

Seldom has a statesman been more brilliant than you in those days. I am also proud of having followed you without hesitation, identified with your way of thinking and of seeing and appraising dangers and principles. [*Che Guevara Speaks*, Pathfinder Press, 1980.]

Gilly's assertion that the Cuban leadership stopped trying to extend the revolution in Latin America falls apart when confronted by the facts of the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions and the deepening struggles in El Salvador and Guatemala, which the Castro leadership clearly supports and seeks to advance.

The depth of Gilly's Castrophobia is most clearly seen in an article in *Coyoacán* written in March 1979 entitled, "The China-Vietnam War: 'National Socialism' and Bureaucratic Nationalism." Gilly wrote that, "The theory and the practice of all these leaderships—Tito, Kim, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, Pol Pot—is national-communist."

This outrageous amalgam was made only weeks after Pol Pot had been overturned and reports of the unspeakable atrocities committed by his dictatorship were making their way into the international press.

Does Gilly really believe that Tito—who backed U.S. imperialism in the Korean war and led the wing in the Movement of Non-aligned Countries most conciliatory to imperialism—can be lumped together with Castro, who has consistently opposed imperialism and has struggled for that course in the Nonaligned Movement? Does Gilly think that all these "national-communists" are part of "a typical current of centrist revolutionaries," which is how he characterizes the Castro leadership in his letter to Barnes?

Throughout the March 1979 article in *Coyoacán* Gilly repeatedly indulges in formulations like "the bureaucratic workers states," "the bureaucracy that dominates the states in transition [to socialism]," and "the struggle against bureaucratic power and for the socialist regeneration of the workers states" without attempting to distinguish between the workers states where

a Stalinist bureaucracy is in power and Cuba, which has a revolutionary government that, as Castro explains, is consciously combatting bureaucratic deformations.

By throwing these countries together in this all-inclusive way, Gilly leaves himself open to the charge that he favors the same course for Cuba as the Trotskyist movement advances in such countries as Yugoslavia and China, that is the overthrow of the present government by the working class. Such a position in relation to Cuba is counterrevolutionary and has nothing to do with Trotskyism or the positions of the Fourth International.

Gilly and Fanjul's attempt to discredit Barnes's evaluation of the Cuban Trotskyists in the early 1960s falls flat on its face when confronted with the documentary record. Not only does this record disprove their unrestrained charges, but it places them in the position today of defending and praising the sectarian policies that led to one of the most significant missed opportunities for the world Trotskyist movement.

We should not apologize for these sectarian blunders as Gilly and Fanjul do, but instead learn from them in order to get rid of the method underpinning them and their remnants today. This will help us to better meet the challenge we face in establishing collaborative relations with the new revolutionary proletarian leaderships and class-struggle currents that are coming forward from Central America to Poland. □

## Czechoslovak Regime Tries to Break Petr Uhl

Petr Uhl, a leading Czechoslovak civil-rights activist currently serving a five year prison sentence for his political activities, is being held under inhuman conditions according to a letter from his wife, Anna Sabatova.

Before his imprisonment Uhl, who is a revolutionary Marxist, was a leader of the Czechoslovak civil-rights movement Charter 77 and its subgroup, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS). Along with five other Charter 77 activists, Uhl was convicted in October 1979.

According to Anna Sabatova's letter to Charter 77, Uhl fears that he may be done away with while in prison. Her letter states that "he heard a prison captain say that 'that one won't leave the prison.'"

Since November 1980 Uhl has already been sent to punishment cells three times for having written to the authorities, protesting against living conditions in the jail. According to Sabatova there are thirty-two prisoners in fifty-five square metres of living space. They share a single toilet and are fed food that is often spoiled.

"The political prisoners," Uhl's wife writes, "are mixed in with common criminals, several of whom are psychotics or psychopaths, others of whom are homosexuals. The authorities give the common criminals freedom to persecute the political

prisoners. At the instigation of the authorities, their favorite target is Petr Uhl. The aim is to make him crack, to destroy him."

Sabatova also reports that Uhl is the subject of even more rigorous intellectual isolation than the other political prisoners. He is not, for example, allowed to take notes while reading. In addition, he is not allowed to directly read letters from his wife. After three-quarters of the contents of a letter are censored, the remainder of the letter is read to him, but the letters themselves are not given to him.

The sentences against the Charter 77 activists, pronounced after a two-day trial, were denounced at the time by the newspapers of the French and Italian Communist parties. Amnesty International adopted the six prisoners as "prisoners of conscience."

Charter 77 began as a 1977 petition presented to the Czechoslovak government demanding that the Stalinist regime adhere to the democratic standards embodied in the Czechoslovak constitution and the human rights covenant of the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. More than 1,000 people signed the petition, including some prominent former Communist Party members such as former Foreign Minister Jiri Hajek. □