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Capitalists, Landlords on Defensive as Workers, Farmers Advance Where Nicaraguan Revolution Stands Today



May Day in Managua, 1981.

Arnold Weissberg/IP

Report from Poznan
**200,000 Polish Workers
Mark 1956 Uprising**

Reprinted for First Time
**December 1917 Interview
With Leon Trotsky**

Bombing of IRP headquarters an attack on Iranian revolution

By Janice Lynn

The June 28 bombing of the Tehran headquarters of the Islamic Republican Party (IRP), which resulted in the deaths of seventy-two top party leaders, is a serious attack on the Iranian revolution.

Among those killed in the powerful blast were IRP leader Ayatollah Mohammed Beheshti; Hojatoleslam Mohammed Montazeri, son of Tehran's main religious leader; four cabinet ministers; six deputy ministers; and twenty-seven elected members of parliament.

This action strengthens the hand of U.S. imperialism against the Iranian revolution. It facilitates Washington's campaign to disrupt Iran's war effort against the Iraqi invaders, to demoralize and wear down the working masses, and to open the door to outright intervention by U.S.-supported counterrevolutionary forces.

That is the effect of this violent attack on the elected government of Iran, a government still supported by the vast majority of Iranian workers and peasants who brought it to power in the course of their powerful struggle against the shah and U.S. imperialist domination.

Millions at funeral

The Iranian masses immediately responded to the attack on their revolution. More than 1 million people poured into the streets of Tehran June 30 to attend the funeral for the IRP leaders. They gathered in front of the parliament building and marched to the Behesht-e Zahra cemetery ten miles away. Tehran Radio announced that millions gathered at the cemetery.

Socialists in Iran report that this outpouring for the funeral, which turned into a mass action against imperialism, was one of the largest actions seen in Iran in a long time.

The major chants throughout the march were "America is the enemy" and "Death to America."

No group has claimed responsibility for the bombing. Contradictory statements were issued by Iranian officials as to who they believed was to blame.

Initial government statements charged U.S. imperialism was behind the blast. Tehran Radio blamed "mercenaries connected to the United States." Pars News Agency said it was the work of "counterrevolutionaries."

Haig's denials

U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig immediately held a news conference and strenuously denied any "American involvement in the recent tragic events in Iran." He hypocritically claimed it had always been and continues to be U.S. policy not to interfere in "troubled

areas."

Instead, Haig charged that leftists in Iran or the Soviet Union committed the bombing.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini declared in response that the bombing emanated from Washington and that U.S. imperialism was behind this attack.

The U.S. media have since played up reports that Khomeini also accused the Mujahedeen, a left group, of the killings. In a statement the day of the funeral, Khomeini blamed "blind people who claim they are strugglers for the people," and said they were tools in the hands of imperialism.

Two weeks earlier, after the government executed several of their members, the Mujahedeen declared it had taken up armed struggle against the Iranian regime. It vowed revenge for the deaths of its members.

There have been no reports in either the U.S. or Iranian media of any statement by the Mujahedeen since the killing of the IRP leaders. Nor any statement by recently-deposed Iranian President Bani-Sadr.

A statement was released by Shahpur Bakhtiar, the shah's former prime minister, who has been collaborating with U.S. imperialism and organizing counterrevolutionary forces from exile. Bakhtiar attacked the revolution at the same time he deplored the bombing, saying it "would never have taken place if a minimum

of freedom existed in Iran."

His statement appeared after a report in the June 30 *Wall Street Journal* suggested that an underground military group called Negab, which is associated with Bakhtiar, might be responsible for the explosion. The *Journal* quoted one Iran "expert" as saying, "They are the most organized and the most willing to use such power."

Aim of U.S. imperialism

Since the overthrow of the hated regime of the shah in February 1979, the U.S. rulers have been intent on reversing the Iranian revolution and overturning the Iranian government. Washington sees the Iranian government as an obstacle to its plans in the Middle East and a deadly threat to the giant U.S. oil companies' control of the vast oil resources in this region.

The U.S. rulers also fear that the weak, capitalist government in Iran will not be able to prevent the deepening of the revolution and the independent organization of the Iranian workers and peasants.

At this stage of the revolution, the Iranian working class is not powerful enough to replace the capitalist government with a workers and peasants government. So it defends this government—and its own position and organization—against imperialist-inspired attacks such as the September 1980 Iraqi invasion.

Washington's record concerning "American involvement"—so strenuously denied by Haig—is clear.

It was the U.S. government, through the CIA, that in 1953 reinstalled the bloody monarch to the throne. Even as the shah's reign was falling, the Carter administration sent Gen. Robert Huyser to Tehran to try to block

Release Iranian socialists!

On the morning of July 4, two members of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) in Iran were arrested and taken to Evin Prison.

Faranak Zahraie and Monavar Shir Ali—two young women workers at the Ray-O-Vac battery factory in Tehran—were arrested at work by order of the National Industrial Organization, which administers nationalized factories such as Ray-O-Vac.

The two women were falsely charged with starting a strike in the factory.

Both women had been active in the six-month campaign to win release from prison of Ray-O-Vac worker and HKE leader Nemat Jazayeri. This campaign succeeded in winning Jazayeri's release last March.

Zahraie and Shir Ali were also active in the factory's military mobilization and helped organize support for the campaign of military training and first-aid instruction for the fight against the Iraqi invasion.

The two women, both pregnant, had worked at Ray-O-Vac for more than a year.

Supporters of the Iranian revolution are urgently requested to send telegrams such as the following to Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Rajai and Speaker of the Parliament Hojatoleslam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani; Majlis Building; Tehran, Iran.

* * *

As a supporter of the Iranian revolution, I call on you to release from Evin Prison two anti-imperialist fighters—Faranak Zahraie and Monavar Shir Ali.

These two women Ray-O-Vac workers, arrested July 4, were playing an important part in the campaign to defeat the Iraqi military invasion.

Copies should be sent to *Jomhuri-e-Eslami*, Tehran, Iran and *Kargar*, Box #43/174, Post Area 14, Tehran, Iran.

the revolution.

Then, in a carefully planned provocation, the ex-shah was brought to the U.S. in October of 1979. This led to the occupation of the U.S. embassy.

Washington imposed an economic blockade, froze Iranian assets, and tried to whip up an anti-Iranian propaganda campaign aimed at freeing its hands for U.S. military intervention in Iran.

Warships were sent to the Arabian Sea.

And on April 24, 1980, Carter launched his commando raid into Iran. After the raid was aborted, the U.S. government admitted it had infiltrated CIA agents into the country and had set up an elaborate network of communication with counterrevolutionary forces inside Iran.

U.S. planned bombing

Just three months later, on July 10, 1980, the Iranian government announced it had crushed a plot by former army officers loyal to the shah who were planning a military coup. This coup was aimed at reinstalling the shah's former prime minister, Bakhtiar.

Washington never disputed Iranian charges of CIA complicity in the coup attempt, which was to include bombings of "various sensitive targets" and diversionary bombings by Iraqi air force planes.

According to the July 14, 1980, *Christian Science Monitor*, the coup plans called for bombing the home of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as well as a "teacher's club where most of the deputies in Iran's new parliament are staying, thus wiping out in a stroke the majority of the members."

Then came the September 1980 invasion of Iran by the Iraqi regime—aimed primarily at reversing and defeating the Iranian revolution.

The June 28 bombing and killing of top leaders of the Iranian government fits into this pattern of hostile actions by U.S. imperialism against the Iranian revolution.

The well-organized and carefully executed bombing attack reduced to rubble the entire IRP headquarters during a special meeting of the IRP's executive committee.

The meeting was called to discuss, among other things, the choice of a candidate for the new presidential elections, following the June 22 ouster of Abolhassan Bani-Sadr from the presidency.

Elections for the presidency and for forty-six vacant seats in the parliament are scheduled for July 24.

Socialists condemn bombing

In a statement condemning the mass murder of the IRP leaders, the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) pointed out how these types of attacks have been carried out by U.S. imperialism against revolutions throughout the world.

"They have taken place for more than twenty years against the Cuban revolution and its leaders, with U.S. imperialism trying many times to destroy the Castro leadership," the HKE statement said. "They are doing this right now against the Nicaraguan revolution and

they have planted bombs against Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop."

The HKE also pointed to the assassinations of Patrice Lumumba in Africa and of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X in the United States.

Its statement urged that the working class be mobilized to counter any moves by reactionary forces, saying that "in all the factories we call for mass assemblies of workers where the policies of U.S. imperialism would be explained. Factory guards should be elected to guard the factories against any imperialist attacks, or sabotage by their agents."

The HKE statement also criticized the executions of dozens of Mujahedeen youth, "which only contributes to the atmosphere of

confusion and helps U.S. imperialism carry out its plans."

There is opposition to these youth being executed among most working people.

In June the HKE itself came under attack by right-wing gangs known as "hezbollah." The offices of its newspaper *Kargar* were ransacked, and HKE members were injured in a number of other attacks.

In response to protests by the HKE, the head of the central neighborhood committees sent a letter July 2 to the local neighborhood committee where the *Kargar* offices are located. It stated that since *Kargar* is a legal newspaper and the *Kargar* office a legal office, it should be protected by the local committee in the neighborhood. □

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Why Zionist parties are moving right

Terrorism against Arabs comes home to roost in election

By Will Reissner

Elections for the Israeli parliament June 30 ended in a virtual dead heat between Prime Minister Menachem Begin's Likud bloc and the opposition Labor Party. When the process of counting votes is completed, Labor is expected to have 47 seats to Likud's 48 in the 120-member parliament. The Likud is attempting to form a majority coalition government through alliances with smaller parties.

The character and tone of the election campaign testified to the continuing rightward evolution of the Zionist parties in Israel. The election took place against the backdrop of jingoistic, ultranationalist propaganda regarding Israeli military actions in Lebanon and the bombing of an Iraqi nuclear power plant.

Campaign violence

The campaign was also marked by political thuggery and violence, directed primarily against the Labor Alignment, a coalition of the Labor and Mapam parties.

Although official and unofficial terrorism has been constantly used against Palestinian Arabs in Israel since the establishment of the state in 1948, and while right-wing vigilantes have long intimidated the Palestinian population of the occupied West Bank, in this election campaign that thuggery came home to roost. For the first time it was used against mainstream Zionist forces.

The June 15 issue of the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* described several such incidents.

Today a rioting mob in Petah Tiqva tried to break up a Labor Alignment election meeting addressed by Mr. Shimon Peres in the town center and attended by about ten thousand people. About 500 Likud supporters equipped with wooden boards, placards, bike chains, and tomatos rioted throughout the meeting. . . . As the shouts became increasingly loud, Mr. Peres shouted 'Khomeinists, fascists' at his attackers.

After the end of the meeting, the mob continued to riot in the streets. They stopped any car displaying a Labor sticker, and if the driver refused to immediately remove the sticker he was beaten up and his car was damaged. . . . The mob also rolled burning refuse bins into the Mapam Party headquarters in Petah Tiqva.

In Ashkelon, Likud supporters yesterday went on a riot and interrupted a Labor Alignment meeting. Speaker Abba Eban had to appeal to the police to let him make his speech.

In Ramle, the Labor Party offices were broken into and furniture destroyed. According to the June 22 *al-Ha'mishmar*, "Jerusalem mayor Mr. Teddy Kollek recently expressed his horror at the growth of fascism in Israel, when talking about the present atmosphere of

agitation and open violence, which are threatening the freedom of thought and speech."

'Begin, King of Israel'

Kollek also blasted "the hysterical personality cult that had arisen" around Prime Minister Begin. Begin was greeted at numerous campaign meetings by crowds chanting "Begin, Begin, King of Israel."

The article reported that Kollek felt that "the events he was now observing in Jerusalem were familiar to him from his experiences in Europe in the 1930s." Kollek came to Palestine in 1939 from Vienna.

Journalist Shulamit Har Even asked in the June 22 *Ma'ariv*, "Can't you see what is happening in Israel? Can't you see what the 5 or 7 percent of the public who today break up Labor meetings, beat up little girls, pull out knives and threaten voters are doing? Don't you realize that their brutality might, God forbid, determine the outcome of the elections by imposing fear and terror on individuals and entire neighborhoods?"

Although the Labor Party was the main victim of the rightist gangs, its election campaign also reflected the general rightward drift of Israeli electoral politics.

In a televised debate with Prime Minister Begin, Labor Party leader Shimon Peres insisted that the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967, is an integral part of the Zionist state. Israel's territory, Peres asserted, runs from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River.

Labor Party election advertisements also disputed the Likud bloc's claim that Likud had established 144 new Jewish settlements on the West Bank. The Labor Party's criticism was not that there have been new settlements. Rather it objected to Likud taking credit for many settlements that were established under the previous Labor government.

Who established settlements?

According to the Labor Party advertisement, of the 144 settlements shown in the Likud ad, "twenty-seven of them were approved or started by the Labor Alignment. Out of seven permanent settlements approved by the Likud, only three are populated."

In fact, the ad charged, "far from establishing and planning many new settlements, the Likud is actually evacuating existing settlements in the Rafah Approaches." The Rafah Approaches are part of Egypt's Sinai peninsula occupied by Israel.

One of the most blatantly racist, right-wing appeals in the election was made by the Kach

Party, led by the U.S. rightist rabbi Meir Kahane.

The Kach program called for a five-year prison sentence for "any non-Jew engaging in sexual relations with a Jewish woman. . . ." A Kach election advertisement declared: "We have heard the bitter cries of Jewish parents whose daughters have fallen victim to the Arab temptation. They live with Arabs, they marry Arabs."

The Kach Party takes Israeli territorial claims to their logical conclusion, arguing that Israel's real borders run "from the Nile to the Euphrates. All of it belongs to the People of Israel, and it has no room for gentiles." With those borders Israel would gobble up large portions of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq and all of Lebanon and Jordan.

Although the Kach Party is still marginal to Israeli politics, an editorial in the June 11 *Jerusalem Post* noted that "by now, the lunatic-fringe Kach, instead of being ostracized, has acquired a measure of legitimacy, even if not respectability. This is largely due to the pious indifference of the country's right-wing parties, which have evidently seen no advantage to themselves in openly disavowing Meir Kahane."

Jacobo Timerman, the exiled Argentinian newspaper publisher, who was jailed and tortured by that country's military government, was appalled by the climate of political intimidation he found in Israel. Timerman, who lives in Israel and is a Zionist, told the *New York Times* that "I have seen the growing up of clandestine armies, terrorists, in Argentina. I see very clearly a repetition of what happened in Argentina here."

The roots of the rightward evolution of Israeli politics lie in the fundamental character of the Zionist state. The attempt to create a Jewish state in an area already inhabited by the Palestinian people necessarily required the forced expulsion of the bulk of the native population. The subsequent occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza strip, with their 1.2 million Palestinian inhabitants, brought with it a permanent military occupation apparatus to maintain Israeli rule.

West Bank settlers

In addition to the regular Israeli troops stationed as occupiers in the West Bank and Gaza, Labor and Likud governments have fostered the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

A dispatch in the June 25 *New York Times* describes how these settlers act in the occupied areas.

"On the West Bank," the *Times* reports, "a



few of the nationalistic, militant settlers trying to establish Jewish control have taken on a vigilante role, using their automatic rifles to terrorize Arabs, smashing windows, breaking in to homes and issuing threats.

"The Government has reacted mildly, arresting rarely and punishing lightly.

"Inside Israel proper," the dispatch continued, "Arabs who are Israeli citizens have sometimes been confined to their hometowns and had meetings and organizations banned for political reasons."

Last year under the Prevention of Terrorism Law, the Israeli parliament made it an offense punishable by up to three years in prison to display the Palestinian flag or sing the Palestinian national anthem.

The Israeli dispossession of the Palestinian people has made Israel a pariah in much of the world. In order to maintain the Zionist state in the midst of a hostile Middle East, successive Israeli governments have relied on the support of U.S. imperialism and alliances with some of the world's most unsavory dictators.

The Israeli government has allied itself with other international outlaws like the South African racist regime, Somoza's dictatorship in Nicaragua, the bloody regime of the shah of Iran, and the current U.S.-backed military junta in El Salvador.

Economy in tatters

Despite the decades of Zionist propaganda about turning deserts into gardens, by any objective standards Israel's garrison-state economy is in tatters. In the last four years, prices have risen by 1,210 percent. The current inflation rate is 133 percent per year.

The Israeli foreign debt has reached a staggering \$21 billion. The impact of that debt can be better understood by comparing it to Poland's foreign indebtedness, which is usually cited as one of the major causes of that country's economic crisis. But although Poland has

nearly ten times as many inhabitants as Israel, and a far stronger economy, its \$24 billion foreign debt is only slightly higher than the Israeli figure.

Only hand-outs from the U.S. keep Israel afloat. Each year Israel receives \$2.2 billion in governmental aid from Washington, and another \$1 billion from the U.S. Jewish community. This subsidy, which comes to more than \$1,000 per year for every Jewish man, woman, and child in Israel is all that keeps the country's economy from total collapse.

And the economic prospects are getting worse. In a pre-election vote-buying ploy, Begin's government slashed import duties on luxury consumer goods. Although this provided a temporary bonanza of cheaper stereos, appliances, and color televisions, it also meant that foreign currency reserves were squandered to buy votes for the Likud bloc.

300 percent inflation?

Some economic experts have forecast that as a result of this move, the Israeli inflation rate will rise to above 300 percent by the end of the year.

The economic hardships and physical insecurity of Israeli life have led to a drastic decline in the number of Jewish immigrants to Israel, while emigration of Jews from the country has sky-rocketed in recent years. Every day long lines form in front of the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv as Israelis seek visas permitting them to enter the United States.

Israel's international isolation and the debacle of the Israeli economy have grown out of Israel's permanent war against the Arab peoples—a war that must be pursued for as long as Israel is to be maintained as a Zionist state. For that reason, none of the Zionist parties can point any way out of the impasse.

Although the Labor Party is a member of the Socialist International, and outside Israel it projects itself as a socialist party, Labor was

the main party of the Israeli ruling class for nearly three decades after the establishment of the Zionist state in 1948.

It can offer no alternative to the Likud bloc because it shares Begin's basic premises. Whatever tactical differences may divide the Labor and Likud parties at any given moment, they share the same Zionist framework.

Both must crush the Palestinian national liberation struggle. Both favor continued occupation of the West Bank. Both support Israel's intervention in Lebanon. Both follow a reactionary, proimperialist foreign policy.

During the election campaign, for example, the Labor Party raised only the most timid criticisms of Begin's military adventures. Peres's criticisms of the Israeli bombing raid that wiped out the Iraqi nuclear power plant on June 7 were restricted to questions about the timing of the raid.

Due to the rise of the Palestinian national liberation struggle, the revolutionary tides sweeping the Middle East since the Iranian revolution, and the deep crisis of the Israeli economy, the maintenance of a Zionist state in the region requires draconian measures against the Palestinians, the Arab revolution, and the living standards of Jewish workers within Israel.

This is what is behind the rightward thrust of Israeli Zionist politics. And this is why all political formations that remain within the Zionist context must succumb to this rightist tide.

It is evident from the results of the Israeli election that the working class there has not yet broken out of the political trap of Zionism. At the same time, it is also evident that there is deep discontent, and that the masses are looking for an alternative.

As the ruling class tries to carry out its dual program of austerity and war, this disillusionment and dissatisfaction will eventually lead the working class into political opposition to Zionism itself. □

200,000 rally in Poznan

Mark 25th anniversary of 1956 uprising

By Ernest Harsch

POZNAN—By 8:00 a.m., Adam Mickiewicz Square in central Poznan was already beginning to fill up. Within several hours, more than 200,000 people had packed the square and the surrounding streets to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the June 28, 1956, Poznan uprising, the first major workers revolt in the history of the Polish People's Republic.

Long neglected, distorted, and slandered in the official history books, the courageous struggle of the Poznan workers has at last begun to regain its proper place in Poland's heritage.

But the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations were more than just an effort to revive a suppressed chapter of history. Coming in the midst of a new series of attacks by government and party officials against the Solidarity union movement, the June 28 rally—one of the largest held so far this year—was a powerful expression of the unity of Polish working people and their determination to continue their fight for democratic and social freedom.

Amidst thunderous applause, Solidarity leader Lech Walesa responded to recent charges by Tadeusz Grabski, a member of the ultra-Stalinist wing of the ruling Polish United Workers Party, and Stanislaw Kociolek, the party first secretary in Warsaw, both of whom accused Solidarity of harboring "antisocialist" and "counterrevolutionary" elements.

"Let us not be divided," Walesa declared. "Let us not be set against each other. Let us not allow anyone to search for 'antisocialist' and 'counterrevolutionary' forces."

Walesa indicated that the most recent charges against Solidarity were like earlier accusations of "hooliganism" and "trouble-making" leveled against rebellious Polish workers, such as those of Poznan in 1956.

"In a society like this," Walesa continued, "there are and, of course, always will be different opinions. But working people are not counterrevolutionary. They are not 'anti.' They are honest and hard working."

"So stop insulting us, stop dividing us, because we will no longer let ourselves be insulted or divided. Let those who are looking for antisocialist and counterrevolutionary forces first look for a name for those who have been slandering us."

Walesa concluded, "Victory is in our hands—if we do not let ourselves be divided and set against each other, if we march together whenever necessary to show the solidarity of working people, the solidarity of honest people against the dishonest and the dictators."

The vast crowd of people surrounding the podium was a clear expression of such solidarity, as well as living proof of Walesa's statement that "working people are not counterrevolutionary."

The memorial activities to commemorate the Poznan revolt actually began the day before, on June 27, the anniversary of the first workers strikes in Poznan. Polish flags went up by the thousands, flying from the windows and balconies of houses and apartment buildings, from the roofs of public offices, from the backs of buses. Poznan was a sea of white and red.

Photo displays of the 1956 revolt drew large crowds. Posters were tacked up on walls and in windows everywhere. Plays, film showings, and other cultural events were staged.

In front of the ZNTK railway plant and the Cegielski metal factory, two of the centers of the 1956 strikes, workers and their families rallied to pay tribute to the struggle of the Poznan workers. They marched down the newly named June 28 1956 Street.

The rally on the morning of Sunday, June 28, was the center of the commemoration, tak-

ing place exactly twenty-five years to the hour after the mass rally of 100,000 that was held in the same square (then called Stalin Square) in 1956.

While most of the participants were from Poznan, there were individuals from other parts of the country as well. This outside participation would have been larger if the government had not adopted a policy of suppressing news of the anniversary actions in the national news media.

Workers contingents marched to the rally site behind Polish flags and banners of their local Solidarity chapters. Coal miners from southern Poland came in their black ceremonial uniforms, with plumed hats. Steelworkers came in tan uniforms, behind an elaborate embroidered Solidarity flag. Almost everyone

Intercontinental Press staffwriter Ernest Harsch is currently in Poland. Harsch will be covering events around the upcoming congress of the Polish United Workers Party, which is scheduled to open July 14.

wore Solidarity badges, many of them designating the factory or region where they worked. Contingents from Rural Solidarity, the independent union of individual farmers, also joined in.

Some of the older participants came in the uniforms of the Polish Home Army, which fought against German occupation of Poland during World War II. At least one former inmate of the German concentration camps wore



Striking workers during Poznan uprising of 1956.

his old camp uniform.

Young people, families dressed in their Sunday clothes, and other Poznan residents turned out. Much of the city's population of 700,000 watched the rally on the local television station, which broadcast it live.

At the very beginning of the rally, the sirens of nearby railway engines were sounded for one minute in tribute to the martyrs of 1956, a deafening peal that was audible throughout much of the city.

Rising up from Adam Mickiewicz Square was a huge monument that had just been completed the night before, built mainly by workers from the Cegielski factory. Comprising two giant crosses and a stylized bust of the Polish eagle, it bears the main slogan of the Poznan revolt: "For freedom, right, and bread," as well as the years 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, 1980, all high points of the Polish workers movement.

A banner hung down from the tower of the old German castle next to the square, bearing the names of seventy-one of the known martyrs of 1956, plus three anonymous victims to symbolize the many whose names are not known (it is estimated that up to 120 were killed in June 1956). The names of the known martyrs were read out at the beginning of the rally.

Besides Walesa, other speakers included Archbishop Jerzy Stroba, Zdzislaw Rozwalak of the regional Solidarity leadership, Poznan Mayor Stanislaw Piotrowicz, and Stanislaw Matyja, a leader of the 1956 strikes.

A message from Pope John Paul II was read, and a mass followed the unveiling of the monument.

"When I look back twenty-five years," Matyja declared in his speech, "one feels a great joy in his heart, but also a great feeling of pity for the workers who were oppressed, who were simply humiliated and deprived of human dignity, and who had to turn to a demonstration to realize their own dignity."

Matyja, elaborating on a point made a few minutes earlier by Walesa, explained one of the lessons of the 1956 revolt: that more could be achieved through an organized struggle than through spontaneous, unorganized actions.

"I am here today as one of those who organized the demonstration at Cegielski," he said. "It had its roots in our inability to take any measures other than the most extreme. This outburst overwhelmed common sense and reason. The same mistake was then repeated in Gdansk in 1970.

"Today," Matyja continued, "Solidarity has achieved what we failed to achieve over all those years. We owe a great tribute to the shipyard workers (of the 1980 Gdansk strikes), whose demands were the same as ours, the Cegielski workers and the rest of the Poznan population."

Matyja also dealt with the continued difficulties facing Solidarity and the Polish people as a whole, particularly the present tense situation and the failure of the government and party leadership to carry through on its promises

of a democratic "renewal."

"There is a lot of talk about a renewal," he said, "but somehow we cannot see it. . . . The people are fed up with the nervous atmosphere and the false accusations. We must do away with such things."

Matyja at the same time stressed the need to avoid another bloody police crackdown like the one in 1956.

"Let's talk, talk, and talk again, but let us never shoot at each other."

This point was underlined by one of the banners carried at the rally: "Let no Pole ever

again shoot at another Pole."

There is hope for Poland, Matyja pointed out. That hope lies in the young people. "Let's give credit to the young, who are too young to have had their minds poisoned as we—the older generation—have had for the last thirty-six years."

Matyja then concluded his speech, his last words virtually drowned out by applause. "When we are united, there will no longer be any layers of privileged people. Then we will really be able to do what Poles are capable of doing. And a Pole can do things." □

What happened in Poznan on June 28, 1956

POZNAN—Twenty-five years ago, the simmering discontent against bureaucratic rule in Poland began to boil over.

On June 8, 1956, here in Poznan, the workers at the railway carriage factory of the Stalin steel fabricating plant (now renamed Cegielski) held a mass meeting to discuss their demands against illegally deducted taxes, speed-up, working conditions, economic mismanagement, and other ills. They elected workers delegates independently of the official unions to represent them. Their main spokesman was Stanislaw Matyja.

In response to the authorities' refusal to negotiate with the workers, protest stoppages were organized and mass meetings were held. Contacts were established with other workplaces in Poznan, and a consultative body was formed.

Finally, on June 27, a strike was called at the ZNTK railway plant. Early the next morning, about 80 percent of the workers at the Stalin steel plant left their factory and started to march down Dzierzynski Street (now called June 28 1956 Street) toward the city center. Along the way they were joined by the ZNTK strikers and workers from other parts of the city, shouting slogans for "freedom" and "bread" and singing nationalist and religious songs.

The marchers ended up at Stalin Square (now Adam Mickiewicz Square) where their numbers soon swelled to more than 100,000.

A workers delegation attempted to negotiate with the government, but with no results. Meanwhile, demonstrators at the square listened to speeches. Rumors swept the crowd that the workers delegation had been arrested.

One group went off to the prison, taking it over, disarming the guards, and freeing the prisoners. The radio station was occupied, and equipment for jamming foreign radio broadcasts destroyed.

The crowd at the square then moved on

to the building of the provincial Public Security Forces, where they were fired upon by the police. In anger, the demonstrators overturned streetcars and built barricades. With the guns seized from the prison guards they began to shoot back at the police.

Troops were sent against the demonstrators, but the first contingents were friendly and easily disarmed. Some even went over to the side of the demonstrators with their guns and tanks. But when other units arrived, the battle raged.

An estimated 150 to 200 armed civilians took part in the fighting, ranged against several thousand troops and police. Tanks occupied all key parts of the city. By evening a curfew was imposed, and more troops poured in.

Though there was still some fighting on June 29, the rebellion had been crushed. Besides the estimated 120 who had been killed, hundreds were arrested. Nineteen soldiers were executed for "treason." Show trials were staged of "criminals" and "hooligans." The Stalinist press accused them of being "fascists" and "imperialist agents."

In October 1956, however, Wladyslaw Gomulka came to power, and in his first major speech felt compelled to vindicate the Poznan workers. "They were protesting against deviations from the fundamental principles of socialism that is their ideal," he said.

Though Gomulka himself later cracked down on the Polish workers, and the Poznan revolt was again vilified, its memory lived on in the revolutionary heritage of the Polish people.

As an actor in a play on the Poznan uprising declared on the stage of the Teatr Nowy on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the revolt: "Their blood was not shed in vain. Their blood was like a fertilizer in the soil. Their blood was for the people, for the future."

—Ernest Harsch

Ballot victory for PRT

Will present candidates in 1982 elections

By Fred Murphy

The Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International, has won a major victory against the government and secured ballot rights for the 1982 elections.

On June 11, Mexico's Federal Electoral Commission ruled that the PRT had met all of the government's legal requirements for "provisional registration" as a political party. This means that the PRT will be able to present candidates in the 1982 presidential and congressional elections. Parties that receive 1.5 percent of the votes in a general election are entitled to permanent registration.

"Registration of the PRT is a genuine victory for the party and for all the forces that mobilized in support of its rights," said an editorial in the June 15 issue of the PRT's weekly *Bandera Socialista*. "There can be no doubt about it—the government did not 'bestow' registration on the PRT. It was wrenched from the government by the power of an intense campaign of mobilizations; propaganda in the streets, workplaces, schools, and communications media; united actions with other organizations; and activities by the party. These demonstrated unquestionably that the PRT would not give the government the slightest pretext to deny the registration, even under the current antidemocratic conditions laid down in the Federal Law on Political Organizations and Electoral Processes."

The law in question was promulgated by the López Portillo government in 1977. Ever since then, the PRT had been fighting for legalization and ballot rights.

López Portillo had wanted to open a safety valve for discontent among workers, peasants, and students, and channel it into parliamentary activity.

The PRT collected the signatures of 65,000 supporters, as demanded by the new law, and presented its request for legalization to the Federal Electoral Commission in 1978.

The commission granted legalization and ballot rights to the Communist Party and sever-

al other groups at that time, but it refused to certify the PRT. It did, however, recognize the PRT's legality as a "political association." The commission indicated that the question of ballot rights could be reconsidered if the PRT carried out activity for one year as a "political association."

From then until earlier this year, the government stalled by simply refusing to reconvene the electoral commission. So, beginning in early March, the PRT and other groups seeking legalization began campaigning to force the regime to reopen the registration process.

After several demonstrations and other protest actions, the government convened the commission on March 31. The PRT and at least six other parties submitted the required documentation and pressed their demands before the commission.

The high point of the PRT's campaign was an April 5 rally in Mexico City attended by some 1,400 members and supporters. The rally also launched the PRT's proposal that Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, the leader of the National Front Against Repression (FNCR) and Mexico's most noted human-rights fighter, be the presidential candidate of the entire working-

class and popular movement in 1982. The PRT announced it would present Ibarra de Piedra as its presidential candidate if it gained ballot status. (See *Intercontinental Press*, April 20, p. 374.)

In subsequent weeks, the PRT and Ibarra de Piedra were the target of death threats from a so-called National Patriotic Anticommunist Front. This outfit was widely believed to be linked to the government's repressive apparatus.

Similar threats against the PRT were made in 1978 when the party was beginning its campaign for legalization. But at no time has the PRT backed off from vigorously demanding its rights under the law. Its intransigence paid off with the June 11 victory.

The electoral commission chose to grant ballot rights to only one other party besides the PRT, a bourgeois grouping that calls itself the Social Democratic Party (PSD). The government apparently hoped to sow resentment among other leftist organizations by granting ballot status to some and denying it to others.

"The decision to reject the other requests is a violation of the democratic rights of those organizations to exist legally and enjoy electoral status," the *Bandera Socialista* editorial declared. "The PRT protests this and will bring it up in its first appearance before the Federal Electoral Commission as a registered party. The PRT also opposes the fact that the commission's decisions are not subject to appeal, and it pledges to keep fighting for the registration of all parties." □



Collecting signatures for registration of PRT in Tlanepantla in 1978.

Bandera Socialista

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Anti-apartheid movement on the rise

South African rugby tour puts government on the spot

By Mike Treen

WELLINGTON—Mass opposition is developing in New Zealand to the planned Springbok (South African) rugby tour.

In New Zealand the campaign to isolate the apartheid regime has focused for many years on this country's long-standing sporting ties with South Africa.

But with the latest sports' tour planned to begin on July 19, the anti-apartheid movement has reached unprecedented proportions. A national antitour mobilization on May 1 brought out 75,000 people, almost two and a half percent of the total population. (See *Intercontinental Press*, June 15, p. 635.) This was twice the size of the biggest demonstrations against the Vietnam war in the early 1970s.

Recent opinion polls show a majority of New Zealanders opposed to the tour. The Labour Party has been campaigning on the question, with its central leader, Bill Rowling, giving his endorsement to further mass demonstrations.

The Federation of Labour, the national trade union federation, is also outspokenly antitour, and has undertaken to give backing to any workers who take industrial action against the Springbok team. It stopped short of calling for protest stoppages, though the Seamen's Union has voted for a one-day strike on the day the South Africans arrive in the country.

Pressure on Muldoon government

The National Party government of Robert Muldoon is in a very tight spot. For years the Tory leaders have campaigned for the "right" of New Zealand to continue playing sport with South Africa. After a perfunctory condemnation of apartheid, they have spoken about "building bridges" to the apartheid regime through contact with New Zealand's multiracial society. They have tried to play up the alleged changes in the racist policies of the South African government.

But throughout the 1970s the pressure built up on them. It culminated in 1977 with Muldoon being forced, at a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' conference, to sign an agreement condemning sporting contact with South Africa.

Since the New Zealand Rugby Union began planning the 1981 Springbok tour, however, the government's opposition to it has been purely formal. A number of polite letters have been sent to the rugby officials, citing the 1977 agreement.

And as the controversy around the tour has heated up, a number of National Party parliamentarians have publicly supported a continuation of sporting contact with South Africa.

The Minister of Police, Ben Couch, has even voiced support for apartheid policies in South Africa.

Muldoon has shown his hand by directing his main attack on the anti-apartheid movement, not the Rugby Union. Several million dollars have been allocated to the police to help them cope with the large-scale protests expected during the tour.

'No Maoris—No tour' to 'No tour'

The anti-apartheid movement in New Zealand dates back to the 1960s. At that time the Rugby Union used to exclude Maoris, the indigenous people of the country, from the national rugby teams it selected to go to South Africa. This was done to accommodate the South Africans' objections to playing sport with non-whites.

The movement began around the slogan "No Maoris—No Tour," and was successful in forcing the Rugby Union to call off one tour.

With the mounting international campaign against South Africa in the 1970s, the anti-apartheid movement shifted gears. It began to campaign against *all* sporting contact with South Africa, beginning with a campaign against another rugby tour to South Africa in 1970. This time the South African authorities allowed Maoris to tour as part of the national team, entering the country on "honorary white" visas.

The Labour Party and the Federation of Labour spoke up against this tour. Demonstrations of several thousands took place. The campaign began to have its effect on leading rugby players, with two refusing to participate in the tour and another saying he would never play South Africa again when the team returned to New Zealand.

Since that time, the 1972-75 Labour government stepped in and forced the Rugby Union to cancel a Springbok tour of New Zealand planned for 1973. The National Party kicked up a huge hue and cry over this move, and made the issue of "freedom" to play sport with South Africans one of the main planks in its 1975 election campaign.

Rugby in New Zealand

In doing this, the Tories were playing to the very large following which the game of rugby has in New Zealand. Traditionally, this has been the country's national sport. Of all the other countries in the world where rugby is played, only in South Africa and Wales does the game have that sort of national following.

What's more, New Zealand teams have had a record of being among the best in the world; and the clashes between New Zealand and the

Springboks have always been especially fierce. When the Springboks toured New Zealand in 1965 around 700,000 people went to the games.

In playing to this sentiment, though, the Tories miscalculated on the degree to which people could come to see beyond the length of a rugby field. The National Party won the 1975 elections, and allowed another Springbok tour to proceed in 1976. The anti-apartheid movement was able to organize demonstrations involving 15,000 people before the tour took place. There was another widespread public debate.

It was this tour which provoked the boycott of the Montreal Olympics later in 1976, an event which caused many tour supporters to consider the issue a little more deeply.

Realities of apartheid brought home

New Zealand television journalists produced an award-winning documentary series on South Africa during that same year. It had a major impact on thousands of viewers. Since then, the apartheid regime has refused visas to television crews from this country.

While the New Zealand team was touring South Africa in 1976, the realities of apartheid were being brought home to the New Zealand public by the Soweto rebellion which was unfolding at the same time. Two New Zealand rugby players were accidentally tear gassed as South African cops tried to break up one of the demonstrations.

This long history of debate, and the continuing exposure of the policies of the apartheid regime, has brought the anti-apartheid movement to the huge proportions it assumes today. Along with the organized labor movement, most of the major churches are now against the tour.

Borough councils and city councils throughout the country are having to debate whether they will give an official welcome to the Springboks, and whether to give them access to sports grounds and training facilities.

Organizations representing Maoris and Pacific Islanders have also come out strongly against the tour. Maoris and Pacific Islanders make up at least 15 percent of the country's population, and are heavily concentrated in the industrial working class.

Traditionally, New Zealand's rulers have cultivated the reputation of having created a wonderful "multicultural" society. This is a myth, of course. But some ruling-class observers have been concerned about the message Maoris and Pacific Islanders will take from the Muldoon government's insistence on

allowing sporting contact with the apartheid regime to continue.

International pressure

In the meantime, a number of leading rugby players have announced that they will be unavailable for selection in the New Zealand team to play the Springboks this year. One of these players is the current captain of the New Zealand team.

International pressure is also building up against the Muldoon government. The Commonwealth Games are to take place in Australia next year; there is a strong possibility of a number of nations boycotting them if New Zealand participates. Kenya has already announced its intention to do so, and the Australian Labour Party has asked that New Zealand be excluded from the games.

A Commonwealth Finance Ministers' conference is scheduled to be held in New Zealand in September. The Nigerian government has called for the venue to be changed, or face a boycott led by the Black African Commonwealth nations.

To the Muldoon government's chagrin, the anti-apartheid cause is being helped along by three international guests of the movement. For weeks now they have been speaking all over the country—at union meetings, public gatherings, to church assemblies. They have received widespread attention in the news media.

One is Father John Osmers, a New Zealand-born priest who now works in Lesotho with refugees from apartheid. He had his hand blown off by a parcel bomb he believes was sent to him by the South African secret police.

Another is Donald Woods, a white South African newspaper editor who was driven into exile when he spoke up against the murder of Steve Biko, the famous leader of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa.

The third is a Black South African trade unionist, Andrew Molotsane, a leader of the South African Congress of Trade Unions. He told a meeting of meat workers that South African authorities "get all sorts of aid from countries around the world—economic aid, military aid, the guns they shoot us with and so on. We want to see that support cut off."

Referring to the fact that many of New Zealand's major companies have big investments in South Africa, he warned: "New Zealand workers should see that the companies which operate in both countries keep their South African workers in much worse conditions. They

may want to bring the same conditions to this country one day."

As for the future of the apartheid regime, Molotsane says: "The days of apartheid are numbered. The days of racism throughout the world are coming to an end. Colonialism is coming to an end as in Vietnam, Cuba, Angola, and Nicaragua. The rights that have been

won in Nicaragua and Angola will soon be ours."

This message, and the demand to isolate the apartheid regime are being received more favorably than ever before by working people in New Zealand. The issue has produced one of the biggest crises yet faced by the Muldoon government. □

Canada

El Salvador solidarity

NDP leader Broadbent roasts U.S. policy

By Bob Braxton

[For two weeks in late May and early June, Ed Broadbent, leader of Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP), toured Central America and the Caribbean as part of an effort by the Socialist International to seek a "political solution" to the civil war in El Salvador. Broadbent's proposals for international mediation of the conflict were rejected out of hand by the Salvadoran junta and by the U.S. State Department.

[The following major excerpts from an article in the June 29 issue of the Canadian fortnightly *Socialist Voice*, report on the role that the labor party leader has been playing in building the solidarity movement with El Salvador since returning to Canada.]

* * *

During the week June 15-21, NDP Leader Ed Broadbent stepped up his attack on U.S. arms to the Salvadoran junta and Canadian complicity.

Speaking in Montreal June 18, Broadbent brought home the horror of the civil war in El Salvador: "So far in that war in Salvador there have been in numbers killed [in the last 18 months] the equivalent . . . of the number of Canadians who were killed throughout World War Two. Twenty-two thousand deaths in El Salvador compare . . . with the 45,000 Canadians who were killed in the Second World War when you consider the fact that the population of El Salvador is about half of what it was in Canada at that time."

He disputed the U.S. thesis of the war being a product of an "international Communist conspiracy." "It's as absurd to say that the civil war in El Salvador was created by some people or indeed by some arms that are coming from the outside as it would be absurd to say that the French revolution in 1789 occurred because certain Frenchmen happened to read the revolutionary tracts published by the Americans in 1776," Broadbent argued.

"A revolution is occurring today in Central America because the situation is unjust, because millions of people are suffering."

The NDP leader disputed the claim that the Duarte government is a government of the

"center" opposed to the violence of the "far left and far right." Quoting the findings of the legal advisor to the Archbishop of San Salvador, he said that "80 to 90 percent of the [terroristic] killings have been done by the security forces which are under the control . . . of the government of Duarte."

Broadbent defended the Salvadoran people arming themselves in self-defense: "When a people is repressed . . . if that people has no recourse but to get arms from another country because the United States is supplying the junta, I say it would be immoral to condemn those people for getting arms to protect their lives."

As for the Duarte government's promise to hold free elections, a "democratic solution" championed by the U.S. and Canadian governments, Broadbent insisted that "it is a total mockery of democracy to pretend that you can have elections in a country where 22,000 people have been killed in the last 18 months [and where] the slaughter is going on daily."

"Can you have an election in that country now, when no candidate left of Genghis Khan would dare present himself as a candidate?" Broadbent asked. "A genuine democrat wants peace first and then you have elections. Those who are talking about elections are attempting to deceive us."

Outspoken opposition to U.S. arms to El Salvador by the New Democratic Party and the El Salvador solidarity movement in Canada is beginning to pay off.

On June 16, Broadbent introduced a motion in the House of Commons calling on the Canadian government to change its stance and support a negotiated settlement in El Salvador. Despite the arrogant rejection of these proposals by Canada's External Affairs Minister Mark MacGuigan, Broadbent's stand won wide support throughout the country.

In an editorial entitled "Glory, honor, praises to NDP Leader El Broadbent," the June 19 Montreal daily *La Presse* editorialized, "One would have to go a long way back in Canada-U.S. relations to find comparable audacity and courage among Canadian parliamentarians." The same day, CTV-Montreal reported that a number of Liberal backbenchers in the House now oppose the Canadian govern-

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ment's position.

At the Montreal meeting June 18, the NDP leader spoke on a common platform with former Parti Québécois immigration minister Jacques Couture. This is an important step for the solidarity movement, since the NDP and the PQ are the two major Canadian political parties which oppose the Canadian-U.S. government position and support the Salvadoran Revolutionary Democratic Front.

Echoing Broadbent's stand, Couture called for "a vast interparty movement to rally deputies and militants of every party and mobilize provincial governments" to the cause of El Salvador. □

Mitterrand blasts U.S. policy

Newly elected French President François Mitterrand has sharply criticized U.S. policy in Central America.

"The people of the region want to put an end to the oligarchies that, backed by bloody dictatorships, exploit them and crush them under intolerable conditions," Mitterrand said in a July 1 interview with the Paris daily *Le Monde*.

"A tiny part of the population owns almost everything," Mitterrand said. "How is it not possible to understand this popular revolution?"

Referring to Washington's charges against Central American revolutionaries, Mitterrand said that "it is not at all a question of Communist subversion. . . . It is a question of the people's refusal to submit to misery and humiliation."

In a July 1 dispatch from Paris, *Washington Post* correspondent Jonathan Randal reported that "American officials who have had intensive recent contacts with French officials have let it be known here that the Reagan administration is seriously concerned about this kind of French approach, especially were it to become translated into militant policy.

"These officials have left the impression that such policy differences on Central America . . . could be as damaging to bilateral relations as Mitterrand's inclusion of four communist ministers in the new French government."

Referring to the *Le Monde* interview with Mitterrand, Randal noted that "although West Germany's Social Democratic leadership was uneasy, no major U.S. ally until now has voiced such public reservations about U.S. policy in Central America."

United Press International reported from Paris July 2 that "Mitterrand's Socialist Party today promised 'total support' to two visiting Salvadoran leftist leaders in their fight against their nation's United States-backed Government."

Namibia

OAU condemns Reagan policy

Denounces 'unholy alliance' with South Africa

The U.S. government was strongly condemned for its "collusion with the South African racists" in a formal resolution adopted June 27 by all fifty members attending a four-day meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The resolution denounced "the unholy alliance between Washington and Pretoria" and accused the Reagan administration of sabotaging efforts for achieving Namibian independence.

The more than one million Namibians have been struggling for an end to the South African regime's racist colonial rule. They want the establishment of a genuinely independent state.

The South African regime has occupied Namibia since the end of the First World War. Pretoria has sent in more than 60,000 troops to terrorize the Namibian population and to strike at the main proindependence group, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO).

The OAU's denunciation was provoked by the Reagan administration's position that Namibia should only receive its independence after a new constitution is drawn up that would include political and economic "guarantees" for the white minority in Namibia and for Pretoria as well.

The OAU resolution also condemned the governments of Britain and France for supporting the South African regime. Washington, London, and Paris recently vetoed a move in the United Nations Security Council to impose new economic sanctions against South Africa.

Chester Crocker, Reagan's assistant secretary of state for African affairs, told a congress-

sional hearing at the end of June that Washington had offered to train members of the South African Coast Guard and to increase the number of military attachés and consuls each country maintains in the other.

These moves are all part of what the Reagan administration describes as its policy of "constructive engagement" with the South African regime. It is a further step in Washington's long-standing alliance with Pretoria aimed at holding back the liberation movements in southern Africa.

Washington also wants Namibian independence linked to the withdrawal of Cuban troops in Angola and to the inclusion of the South African-backed National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in the Angolan government.

At a June 7 rally in Zimbabwe, SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma blasted Washington's attempt to impose conditions on the Namibian people's right to self-determination. "We will not accept any other country, no matter how powerful, to draw up our constitution. That is the prerogative of the Namibian people and nobody else."

Nujoma also said that white settlers were "welcome to live side by side with us in an independent Namibia. . . . We just say we want to have a share in running the state, and we want the majority to have the final say. The wealth of the country must be shared among the people."

The OAU resolution concluded that in the absence of agreement on Namibian independence, "armed struggle remains the most effective form of action." □

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Vital issues raised by socialist suit

Trial ends but political campaign continues

By Tom Martin

NEW YORK—"It was a remarkable performance," said Judge Thomas P. Griesa. That echoed everybody's feelings.

After twelve weeks the trial of the lawsuit brought by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) against the United States government and its police agencies had finally come to an end on June 25.

The case was remarkable, though, from the day it was first filed in July 1973. For decades the left had been pursued through the courts by the government. Now the SWP and the YSA had the nerve to turn the tables on the mightiest ruling class in the world, demanding \$40 million in damages for illegal acts against them; an injunction against such activity in the future; and a ruling that there was no basis for any sort of investigation of them.

It seemed at first sight to be no contest. Capitalist justice gives you plenty of rights on paper, but it costs a fortune if you want to insist on asserting them. Where were the socialists going to find such resources with a combined membership of only 2,000?

Wide support

They had just one thing going for them: their ideas, and their confidence in winning a hearing among working people in the wake of Watergate and the Vietnam War. So right from the start the suit was seen as a public campaign on behalf of all the victims of U.S. government

harassment. And the response was overwhelming.

Actor Ed Asner (Lou Grant in the TV show of that name) spoke for many when he said: "I look forward to the trial of the Socialist Workers Party lawsuit as the culmination of a long struggle for justice against governmental abuses."

Public support broadened as the case uncovered a fantastic array of dirty tricks by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other agencies.

Practically everything the socialists had charged the government with turned out to be true: burglaries, wiretaps, bugs, mail openings, use of informers, collaboration with right-wing terrorists in physical attacks—the lot. The case seemed cut-and-dried.

But gradually it became clear that the stakes were a lot bigger. For the government had a defense to all this whose implications were breathtaking.

It simply claimed that the "inherent power and responsibilities of the President" in matters of national security allowed the FBI to do what it liked to the SWP and YSA—or anyone else, for that matter.

In effect, it argued that the government is above the laws it makes for other people. And that this is necessary to defend democracy!

A striking example came in a discussion of the Federal Communications Act of 1934. This seemed to outlaw wiretapping. But in stepped then-Attorney General Jackson with what gov-

ernment witness Robert Blakey admitted "can only be fairly described as an imaginative interpretation of the act." In Blakey's words: "Magically, wiretapping becomes lawful."

Blakey, a law professor, was called as an "expert" by the government. And he certainly qualified in the field of "imaginative interpretations."

FBI doublespeak

One thing which has been bothering the government is an FBI memo from the 1960s which described agency break-ins as "trespass" and "clearly illegal." It seemed a clear admission of guilt. But not according to Blakey.

"Trespass" didn't really mean that, he said. The word implied wrongdoing, and with presidential authorization for the FBI's activities that just could not be.

All "trespass" meant was that the agency hadn't sought permission for its entries; but then it didn't need to!

The same went for "illegal." No, they couldn't have meant that either—"it was a classic example of confusion."

The entries themselves were not unlawful, Blakey explained. It was just that any information obtained could not be used as evidence in court.

Blakey was perhaps the government's most important witness in the closing days of the trial. Although currently an academic, his career includes long stretches of government service. He knows the score, and that's why he was brought on.

Blakey's purpose was to underline what has become increasingly obvious in the course of the trial: that big constitutional questions are at stake.

More blatantly than ever before, the government is in effect asking the court to rule that the Bill of Rights offers no protection when it comes to "national security."

And who defines matters of national security? Why, the government of course!

Blakey pointed out that important aspects of this clash between presidential powers and constitutional rights have never been ruled on by the courts. This applies, for instance, to the question of entries without a search warrant—which would seem to be in clear breach of the Fourth Amendment, which outlaws arbitrary searches.

Running through a series of findings on the legality of different FBI techniques, Blakey noted that the courts had almost always made a "conscious decision" not to rule on the consti-

Revocation of Agee passport upheld

The United States government's case for sweeping presidential powers in matters of "national security" received a new boost with the Supreme Court decision on June 29 to uphold the withdrawal of former CIA agent Philip Agee's passport.

The court's seven to two ruling has serious implications which highlight the current drift of ruling-class politics.

1. It gives the President, "acting through the Secretary of State," the right to stop anyone from traveling simply by labeling them as a threat to national security.

2. It extends the concept of national security to include U.S. foreign policy in general, arguing that the two "cannot neatly be compartmentalized."

In other words, if you actively oppose American involvement in El Salvador your

passport rights could now be in jeopardy.

3. Its claim not to be limiting free speech—the withdrawal of Agee's passport is described as "an inhibition of action"—fundamentally changes the meaning of the term free speech.

The minority opinion of Justice William Brennan put it well: "Under the Court's rationale, I would suppose that a 40-year prison sentence imposed upon a person who criticized the Government's food stamp policy would represent only an 'inhibition of action.' After all, the individual would remain free to criticize the United States Government, albeit from a jail cell."

Philip Agee stands accused of no crime under United States law. Yet the Supreme Court says it's quite all right to punish him anyway.



Tom Kirkpatrick/Militant

Socialist suit won widespread support. Above, Lester Cole, one of the "Hollywood Ten" witch-hunt victims of the 1950s and currently a drama critic for the Communist Party's West Coast weekly *People's World*, speaking at June 13 rally in support of the suit in San Francisco.

tutionality of FBI actions in intelligence investigations. But that's not an option here.

The real stakes

This is no small matter. At stake are the methods the capitalist class needs to maintain its rule over working people—the vast majority of the country. This is especially true at a time of growing class conflict like the present.

Sections of the ruling class are well aware of the problems they face. After popular pressure forced Senate rejection of Reagan's nomination of Ernest Lefever for assistant secretary of state for human rights, the British magazine *Economist* warned in its July 13-19 issue against mistaking the result of the presidential election "for a general 'mandate' for the Reagan administration to impose its will. In reality it is nothing of the kind. People voted for Mr Reagan in November not because they agreed with everything he said, but because they were fed up with the Carter administration."

The *Economist* cited a new book compiled by political scientists at Rutgers University, *The Election of 1980*, which "says that on most of the domestic issues, most of those who voted for Mr Reagan voted for him personally, not for his policies."

The magazine mentioned in particular popular support for the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion rights, and opposition to Reagan's tax-cut proposals.

It might have added that on foreign policy too the polls show overwhelming rejection of U.S. support for the junta in El Salvador.

A sign of the times is the national demonstration called by the AFL-CIO trade-union federation for September 19—its first such action in six years. In New York, the local leadership of the public-employees union AFSCME has already pledged to send 300

buses.

Yet the capitalist crisis means that the ruling class has little alternative but to pursue its current attacks on working people. That will mean clamping down on any independent political leadership that begins to emerge in the labor movement. A whole battery of secret police powers will be required—all those used

against the SWP and YSA and more.

Who defends democracy?

This is the central irony of the lawsuit. An affidavit prepared by FBI agent Charles Mandigo cited as authorization for investigating the SWP its threat to that section of the Constitution which reads: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican form of government." Yet the socialists are *in favor* of this.

The SWP and YSA want to give meaning to Lincoln's famous definition of government "of the people, by the people, for the people" through the establishment by working people of their own workers and farmers government based on the democratic rule of the majority.

It is the ruling class which has emptied the "Republican form of government" of all content in the United States today.

That is the fundamental issue in the lawsuit brought by the socialists; and although the trial itself has ended, the case as a whole is far from over. Both sides now have to prepare written briefs summarizing their arguments, after which there will be oral argument before the judge. It could be early 1982 before there is a ruling—some or all of which may then be appealed right up to the Supreme Court.

So the campaign continues, focusing attention on just those issues that are most vital for working people to understand as they seek ways of resisting the government's attacks.

In a way the outcome is already out of Judge Griesa's hands. History is ruling for the SWP and YSA. □

Reagan bans Cuban periodicals

In a major new escalation of the U.S. blockade against Cuba, the U.S. Customs Service has begun seizing all Cuban newspapers and magazines sent to the United States.

The new policy, initiated in May without fanfare, marks a break with the twenty-year practice under which the American people were allowed to receive Cuban periodicals despite the U.S. government's economic embargo.

It appears that virtually all individuals and organizations receiving subscriptions have been affected.

Contrary to government regulations, the overwhelming majority of subscribers have not received the required notice from the Customs Service telling them their periodicals have been seized.

Employees of the Customs Service claim that all that is involved is that a loophole had been discovered in the enforcement of the blockade. "There are thousands of these papers lying around here," a U.S. Customs official in Boston told the *Militant*. "The

Washington people feel some commercial transaction must be going on."

This is a brazen lie. Many subscriptions are gifts. Others are exchanges for U.S. periodicals. Still others have been obtained by U.S. visitors while in Cuba—which is legal under U.S. regulations.

The real reason for the tightening of the blockade is Washington's escalating war propaganda and preparations against the revolutionary movements in Central America and the Caribbean. Reagan seeks to portray freedom struggles such as that being waged by the Salvadoran people as Machiavellian plots hatched by a bearded, cigar-smoking tyrant in Havana.

The White House can ill-afford to have thousands of Americans reading Cuban publications that tear to shreds Reagan's lies.

Washington is reportedly working on another lying "White Paper" against Cuba. Among other things, it is said to threaten Cuba with escalation of the U.S. blockade. The first victim of this escalation has already been the rights of the American people.

Case of the political prisoner who wasn't

Capitalist media spins web of lies

By Will Reissner

Enemies of the Cuban revolution have recently seized upon the case of Armando Valladares as the latest stick with which to beat the Castro government. In recent months there has been a spate of articles in the press in Europe and North and South America about Valladares, the paralyzed poet political prisoner.

In the June 4-17 *London Review of Books*, for example, Cuban emigré novelist G. Cabrera Infante wrote of Valladares:

"Let me speak now of sadder, wiser men, like Valladares and Cuadra, poets in prison, captive minds in captive bodies. Armando Valladares, the poet in a wheelchair as he has been called in France, was condemned to 30 years in gaol in the early Sixties, when he was barely 20. In prison, as a result of ill-treatment and his various hunger strikes in protest against ill-treatment, he became an invalid."

In a June 3, 1980 dispatch, the Associated Press described Valladares in these terms: "Valladares, age 43, a nationalist Catholic, took part in the struggle against the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, but was sentenced to 30 years in prison in 1960 by the Castro regime."

According to Agence France-Press, the French news service, "Valladares, a nationalist and Catholic, 43, has been in prison for twenty years. When he was a student he took part in the fall of the dictator Fulgencio Batista. When Fidel Castro came to power, Valladares was taken into custody and sentenced in 1960 to 30 years in prison."

An article in *Diario de las Americas*, a right-wing Miami daily, adds the detail that "in 1970, as a result of hunger, beatings, and other mistreatment, Valladares lost the use of his legs."

A made-to-order case

So here we have a case that seems made to order for enemies of the Cuban revolution. Valladares is the perfect political prisoner—a participant in the struggle against Batista and by implication a disillusioned supporter of Castro, a poet, a Catholic, crippled by mistreatment in the dictator's prisons.

And because none of these dispatches mentions why he was imprisoned, the reader is left with the impression that it must have been something he wrote, or perhaps his Catholicism.

The reason this case is made to order for opponents of the Cuban revolution is precisely because it really has been almost entirely made up! There's hardly a word of truth in the whole thing!

Let's look a little more carefully at the de-

scriptions of Valladares contained in these reports.

First, Valladares was 24, not "barely 20," when he was arrested; he did not take part in the revolution against Batista; and he was not a student. In fact, he was a *police*man under Batista. On October 7, 1957, at a time when thousands of students were involved in the struggle to overthrow the Cuban dictator, Valladares joined Batista's police force, and remained on active duty until the victory of the revolution.

Second, Valladares was not a poet. He did not publish a single line of poetry prior to his arrest and began writing only after he had been in prison for quite some time.

Third, Valladares is not paralyzed!

Finally, none of the reports on Valladares mentions why he was imprisoned. The reader is left with the impression that it was for something he wrote, for some political offense. Very convenient, but not true.

Valladares's real story was revealed in an article by Prensa Latina reporter Hector Fernández Pardo and in an article by Spanish reporter José A. Pagés in the magazine *Interviú*. Pagés visited Valladares in the Combinado del Este Prison in December 1980.

Valladares was arrested on December 27, 1960, with sixteen other people. All were charged with planting bombs in public places. In the house where they were arrested, police seized ammunition, weapons, dynamite and other explosives, and materials for making bombs.

The arrest took place at a time when Washington was stepping up its attacks against the Cuban revolution. Less than two weeks earlier, the Eisenhower administration had totally eliminated the Cuban sugar quota.

Following a trial, Valladares was sentenced in 1961 to thirty years in prison. In March 1973 that sentence was reviewed and reduced to twenty-five years. It should be noted that the leader of Valladares's terrorist group, Oliver Obregón Obregón, who was also sentenced to thirty years, was released in November 1979 because of good behavior while in prison.

So Valladares was sentenced to prison as a terrorist, not as a poet or even as a former member of Batista's police force. In fact, Valladares suffered no reprisals for his police duty. With the victory of the revolution he was dropped from the police force "for the good of the service." But after a period during which he worked as a traveling perfume salesman, he was hired by the Ministry of Communications, where he was employed until his arrest.

Much has been made of Armando Valladares's physical afflictions. His one volume of poems was published in Europe under the title

From My Wheelchair.

Valladares has engaged in numerous hunger strikes while in prison. As a result he began to exhibit difficulties in movement. He has been treated in various hospitals, including the Frank País Orthopedic Hospital in Havana one of the most modern facilities in all of Latin America. While he was a patient there (October 26, 1978 to April 2, 1980), he was diagnosed and treated by a team of specialists including Raúl Candesat, Tais Ramos, and Humberto Barrera.

The doctors described Valladares's case to Spanish journalist José A. Pagés. According to the physicians, "Armando Valladares suffered from a 'polineuropathic deficiency' due to a failure to take food. Valladares has carried out at least 15 hunger strikes.

"His muscular development," the doctors continued, "was that of a healthy man; we detected the presence of reflexes, and there was definitely no muscular atrophy.

"Therefore, his rehabilitation was not difficult. We carried out a therapy based on high doses of B-complex vitamins, vitamin C, intensive physiotherapy, and a high protein diet (fruit, vegetables, meat, milk, etc.), including foods that had to be imported."

The attending physicians added that "generally, he refused to follow the treatment, because he was tired or because he felt like writing, etc. He was released [from the hospital] when he refused to follow the treatment.

"In December 1979, a consultation was held with the best specialists in the country, and it was determined that he suffered from a 'polineuropathic deficiency,' but not of the intensity that he is claiming."

In short, he doesn't need a wheelchair.

Although the capitalist press claims that Valladares was subjected to constant mistreatment and beatings during the years he has been in prison, Pagés visited Valladares in the prison hospital and found that "Armando Valladares doesn't look like he is 42 years old [actually he was 44 at the time]. He could pass for a man of 35." This hardly fits the image of a poor intellectual wasting away in prison.

Eliseo Diego, a prominent Catholic writer in Cuba, told Pagés that "it was irritating to have foreign sources impose 'an intellectual' on us, whom we don't even know, who has only written one book of poems—quite bad to be sure, and who is in prison for a crime of terrorism." □

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The Sandinista revolution today

Despite problems, workers continue to advance

By Matilde Zimmermann

MANAGUA—Nearly two years after the Sandinista victory over the Somoza dictatorship, what is the current relationship of forces between Nicaragua's capitalists and the country's workers and peasants?

This is a question much discussed here, sometimes in exactly these terms and sometimes less directly. It is also a question that undoubtedly crops up in meetings between Reagan and his advisers.

A look at the events of the last few months shows big advances in the confidence and level of organization of the working masses and increasing isolation of the employing class. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) has demonstrated that it is consciously helping both of these processes along.

A class-divided society

Open class conflict affects every aspect of daily life here. An ongoing tug-of-war over control of the economy determines whether a worker will find rice to buy at the market.

The Catholic Church is divided between those who identify with the rich and those who stand with the poor.

A fierce ideological debate between the two classes is going on in front of the whole country in the Discussion Forum on National Problems.

The two sides have widely different approaches to the country's defense—not an abstract question at a time when Nicaragua is subject to continual armed attacks by counter-revolutionary bands.

In international affairs, the local capitalists are more and more closely tied to U.S. imperialism, while the workers look increasingly to revolutionary movements and to the workers states.

There is even a war of humor going on, as the Sandinista youth poke fun at the capitalists with irreverent skits and the satirical weekly *La Semana Comica* mercilessly lambasts the bourgeois politicians.

But to say that there is deep and open class conflict in Nicaragua is not the same as saying there is a crisis. The right-wingers and their news media talk constantly about a "crisis." One even claimed a state of near civil war existed.

Unlike Costa Rica, to say nothing of Guatemala or Chile, Nicaragua is not a country in crisis. In spite of frequent military clashes with counterrevolutionary terrorists, the day-to-day atmosphere in the country is quite calm.

Nicaragua is a place where people are busy building new roads and marketplaces, vaccinating children, planting more beans and rice,

and cleaning up the capital for the July 19 festivities that will mark the second anniversary of the revolution.

The class relationship of forces is shown in small, everyday ways as often as in big national and international events. A fifty-five-year-old part-time house painter listening to his radio in the park says he likes the news now. The owners of the house where he boards won't let him listen to the FSLN's Radio Sandino or to the government station, La Voz de Nicaragua, so he takes his radio with him everywhere. He volunteers the information that last week he joined the militia.

The Nicaraguan capitalists lost political power when the FSLN-led revolution triumphed in July 1979. They have made several attempts to regain some of this power by provoking a governmental crisis and undermining the FSLN's authority.

Two capitalist figures—Violeta Chamorro and Alfonso Robelo—resigned from the five-person Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction (GRN) in April 1980. Seven months later, in November 1980, all the capitalist parties and business associations walked out of the Council of State (a legislative and consultative body subordinate to the Junta). In both cases, their departure made remarkably little difference, except to deepen further the political isolation of the capitalists.

In March 1981 the largest capitalist party, Robelo's Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN), attempted to hold an anti-Sandinista rally in the town of Nandaime. Large and militant anti-MDN demonstrations, sometimes involving the building of barricades, broke out around the country, and the organizers decided to cancel their rally. (See *Intercontinental Press*, March 30, p. 294.)

Since this stinging defeat, the capitalists have attempted no new political initiatives.

The Council of State began its second session May 4, still without the capitalist parties, but with six new members. Forty-one of the Council's fifty-one seats are now occupied by representatives of the working class and its allies—political parties, trade unions, Sandinista mass organizations, the new association of small farmers, the army, and prorevolution Christian groups. The capitalists theoretically have ten seats, but nine are vacant because of the boycott.¹

1. The only capitalist organization currently seated in the Council of State is the minuscule Constitutionalist Liberal Movement (MLC), a long-dormant splinter from Somoza's Liberal Party. The MLC's single spokesperson says the organization was part of the opposition to the dictator but kept a very low profile.

One of the new delegates to the Council of State is there as a result of an important political victory scored when the Sandinistas won the professionals' association away from its former reactionary leadership.

The FSLN had proposed a new set of statutes to the Nicaraguan Council of Professional Organizations (CONAPRO). The theme of the new statutes was that professionals must serve the interests of the majority instead of the exploiters.

The new statutes were discussed at more than ninety assemblies of technicians and professionals all over the country. The Sandinista platform won the support of a big majority of the organization, but was opposed by the pro-capitalist leadership.

At a stormy meeting in February 1981, the organization split. The old leaders remained with a rump CONAPRO, while the bulk of the ranks organized CONAPRO "Heroes and Martyrs" and elected a new leadership.

The old CONAPRO was affiliated to the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), which walked out of the Council of State in November 1980. In May 1981, CONAPRO "Heroes and Martyrs" was seated in the council.

FSLN proposes dialogue

The FSLN, meanwhile, had taken a further political initiative. At the end of March, shortly after the cancellation of the Nandaime rally, the FSLN publicly invited all interested parties to a frank discussion of the country's problems. Sandinista leaders first met with representatives of the trade unions and of prorevolution organizations, and then with the right-wing parties, to determine the feasibility of such a dialogue.

Negotiations over the format and agenda of the Discussion Forum on National Problems dragged on for more than two months. Various public statements during this period give a picture of how the FSLN viewed the dialogue with the capitalists.

Commander of the Revolution Bayardo Arce, for example, told an unfriendly audience at a meeting of the Ibero-American Association of Chambers of Commerce on May 18, that "revolutions are inevitable in countries where injustice and exploitation reign—and they take place with the businessmen, without the businessmen, or against the businessmen."

Commander of the Revolution Tomás Borge, speaking to a much friendlier crowd at a public rally in the town of El Viejo on May 24, said the FSLN was ready to talk to anybody. But, he warned, "our revolutionary principles are not on the negotiating table, nor will



El Nuevo Diario

Thousands of Nicaraguan workers are joining the Sandinista People's Militias. Commander Tomás Borge inspects a training unit in Managua.

they ever be."

Among the topics which would not be on the agenda in the forum, Borge said, were changes in the mass organizations and the army. "If they tell us to give up our rifles," he declared, "we will tell them that's not up for discussion. Because our rifles are already in the hands of the workers."

A joint statement issued on May 20 by the prorevolution participants said that one of the aims of the forum was "to neutralize the activity of the counterrevolution." The statement explained the limited purpose of the dialogue with the capitalist forces:

"Without agreeing to any general pacts or accords, which are impossible, we should be able to search for points of convergence on concrete problems and arrive at some understandings that will help maintain the stability and calm we need to allow the country to develop."

Step towards unity

The forum was conceived from the beginning as a dialogue between two opposing camps, and one of the positive results of the negotiations was to strengthen unity among the parties that make up the prorevolution camp.

The Sandinistas had previously brought together several parties that support the revolution and recognize the leading role of the FSLN, organizing the Revolutionary Patriotic Front (FPR).

In addition to the FSLN itself, the FPR includes the People's Social Christian Party (PPSC), the Independent Liberal Party (PLI), and the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN), which is one of two pro-Moscow Communist parties. Two significant working-class formations remained outside the FPR, however: the Nicaraguan Communist Party (PCN) and the People's Action Movement (MAP).

The trade-union current linked to the MAP, the Workers Front (FO), plays a prominent role in the Nicaraguan Trade-Union Coordinating Committee (CSN). Its members have participated actively in mobilizations for the cotton harvest and in organizing the militias in the factories. Political discussions between the MAP and the FSLN in the course of organizing the forum thus occurred in the framework of considerable unity in action already achieved between the FO and the Sandinista trade unions.

MAP leader Alejandro Gutiérrez told reporters May 20 that preparations for the forum had given a new impulse to the process of unifying the revolutionary forces. "On the basis of what we have achieved so far," he said, "we can anticipate that our discussions will continue after the forum is over."

The importance of the efforts to forge a common front among the revolution's supporters was apparent as soon as the forum opened. The leading spokesperson of the capitalist parties, Alfonso Robelo, tried in his opening statement to portray himself as a big defender of the rights of the MAP and the FO. He argued that the January 1980 closing down of the daily newspaper *El Pueblo*, which expressed the MAP's views, had shown that freedom of the press does not exist in Nicaragua.

Robelo's ploy fell flat. In the forum the opposing groups square off, seven on a side, at two long tables facing each other about ten feet apart. Directly opposite Robelo was Commander of the Revolution Carlos Núñez. And next to Núñez, the MAP's Alejandro Gutiérrez.

All forum sessions are broadcast live over the radio, and large segments are televised as well. Carlos Núñez used his opening statement to educate about the nature of the revolution and the state. He went over the attacks the rev-

olutionary government has been subjected to, by enemies both outside and within the country. The only way to understand these attacks, he noted, is to look at what the revolution has accomplished:

"The uprising of the population, arms in hand, to overthrow the hated dictatorship of Somoza, and then the people's victory, opened the door to the development of a new state and the birth of a new power. The state which came into being after this triumph is a revolutionary one. It is the negation of the past and a guarantee of the future."

Núñez described some of the fundamental characteristics of the new revolutionary power: "In the first place, an economic system in which those who used to be in power no longer have the means that they formerly used to foster social inequality, make themselves richer and richer, and exploit the working masses in every possible way."

The second characteristic he pointed to was "the combative participation of workers and the masses as a whole in the affairs of the nation. They know that they themselves are the source of all power."

While not mentioning countries like Chile by name, Núñez left no doubt that Nicaragua is on a different course: "The experiences of other revolutions have shown clearly, through tragic events, that revolutions that show themselves to be incapable of establishing order and thereby creating the type of society the masses are striving for, fail and end up in agonizing defeat. This is not the case with the Sandinista revolution."

Growth of mass organizations

The relationship of forces between classes is not reflected only, or even primarily, in encounters between political parties. Even more important than the forum in strengthening the hand of the workers and peasants has been the growth and proliferation of the Sandinista mass organizations during the last few months.

Nicaragua today is a country of intense political activity—union meetings, barrio gatherings, regional and national conferences, seminars, speeches, demonstrations. A round of workers assemblies to evaluate May Day was followed almost immediately by another round to prepare for a national conference of the labor movement. There are scheduled meetings and impromptu ones; meetings in factories, plazas, schools, and farmhouses.

Everywhere Nicaraguans are discussing the questions that affect their lives and making decisions they never had a right to make before.

Nothing exemplifies this explosion of popular democracy better than the development of the new farmers organization, the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG).

Many thousands of peasants have participated in meetings, discussions, rallies, seminars, and assemblies organized by the UNAG, both before and after the organization's national congress in late April.

UNAG quickly won improvements for small farmers, such as more liberal credit policies

and a law protecting peasants who rent land.

UNAG often comes into conflict with the organization of big growers and landlords, the Union of Agricultural Producers of Nicaragua (UPANIC), especially when it calls for tough punishment of landlords who finance counter-revolutionary bands or who decapitalize their property and hold back production.

With two seats in the Council of State, UNAG gives Nicaragua's campesinos for the first time a strong voice in national politics.

'Eyes and ears of the revolution'

The Sandinista Defense Committees (CDSs) in recent months have also begun to take on more responsibilities. The CDSs have existed since the beginning of the revolution; in fact, they developed out of the Civil Defense Committees that organized the barrios during the insurrection. But the CDSs have now been organizationally strengthened and have been playing a much more prominent role since the Nandaime events. The CDSs organized most of the protests against the planned antigovernment rally at Nandaime.

When the Reagan administration suddenly cut off pending loans to Nicaragua April 1, the CDSs immediately held an emergency meeting in the Plaza de Toros in Managua. Guerrilla Commander Omar Cabezas called for the CDSs to establish vigilance committees and become "the eyes and ears of the revolution."

The CDSs have formed "committees of revolutionary vigilance," in conjunction with the Sandinista Police, and are an integral part of organizing the militias. In May the Managua CDSs carried out a campaign to sign up 5,000 new militia members.

The CDSs have also begun to organize the marketplaces, taking on problems like transportation difficulties, shortages, sanitary norms, and the need for child care.

Isabel López Cisneros, a CDS leader at one of the modern new markets, puts out a "war bulletin." She says the CDSs "are in open war against hoarding, theft, disorganization, and acts of sabotage, and against the reactionary movements."

Developments in trade unions

All of the Sandinista mass organizations have an overwhelmingly working-class (or, in UNAG's case, small-farmer) membership. But the organizations in which the workers participate most directly are, of course, the trade unions.

The unions have not only experienced rapid numerical growth since the revolution. They are also playing increasingly active roles in the organization of the economy and in national politics.

Before the overthrow of Somoza, less than 8 percent of nonagricultural workers were members of trade unions. Now, almost all of them are. Where there used to be fifty union locals, there are now eleven times that many.

The political process that is underway in the labor movement is similar to what is happening in society as a whole: growing hegemony

of the Sandinista current, increasing unity among the preroevolution forces, and deepening isolation of the right wing.

In November 1980 the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) joined with two smaller federations led by the PCN and PSN, and with the FO, the associations of health workers and teachers, and the Rural Workers Association (ATC), to form the Nicaraguan Trade-Union Coordinating Committee (CSN)².

To drive ahead in unifying the workers movement, which is regarded here as crucial to building a new society, the CSN is organizing a Second Assembly for Workers Unity, to be held in early July.

'The future belongs to the workers'

One of the things the capitalists hate about the new Nicaragua is the social esteem for working people. "The future belongs to the workers," said a recent headline in the FSLN daily *Barricada*.

Through television spots, political speeches, posters and banners, and in a variety of other ways, Nicaraguans are constantly reminded that workers produce the wealth of the country, that workers are the force that can move the country forward.

This obviously adds to the confidence workers feel. As one agricultural worker involved in contract negotiations at a plantation owned by Alfonso Robelo said, "The time has come to show Robelo who holds power in Nicaragua."

Nor do the capitalists like the idea that workers and their organizations have a right to, and should, be involved in all aspects of society. Unions in Nicaragua discuss many things that in some countries might not be considered "union business."

At a recent meeting of the union at the El Eskimo ice cream factory, for example, there was a discussion about ways in which workers could exercise stricter control over production.

The union members also discussed the need for better public transportation to the factory, particularly for night-shift workers. There was a report on sanitary conditions, said to be good, and a discussion of a couple of specific health and safety problems. And there was also a point on participation in the militias.

Through their unions, workers intervene directly in the economic and political life of Nicaragua. Over the last two years, there have been a number of experiments with different forms of workers control over production and workers participation in administrative decisions. An intense discussion is now under way at workplaces and in union meetings, drawing the lessons of these experiences and looking

2. The only trade-union body not in the CSN is the procapitalist Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers (CTN). When the CSN was formed, the CTN represented 4.6 percent of all organized workers; as of March 1981, according to *Barricada*, the CTN had been reduced to representing 2 percent of organized workers. A CTN representative is seated alongside the delegates of big-business organizations in the Discussion Forum on National Problems.

for ways to increase workers participation.

Unions have successfully defended the interests of their members. Marches, legal actions, petitions, and temporary takeovers of plants or offices are among the means that have been used to win reinstatement of fired workers.

Workers act against decapitalization

The unions have also taken action against decapitalization schemes by the employers. This is not a new problem in Nicaragua. The capitalists sent an estimated \$800 million out of the country in the two years leading up to the revolutionary victory.

Since July 1979, even more capitalists have decided to get everything they can out of the country. The difference is that the workers are now beginning to have ways of dealing with this type of owner sabotage of the economy.

The current case of La Perfecta dairy is typical. In late March, workers at La Perfecta convinced the government to intervene the company after they demonstrated a history of decapitalization by the private owners: phony loans, padded salaries, a refusal to invest or to repair or replace necessary equipment, holding back on production.

The owners tried to fire 60 percent of the workforce immediately after the revolution, and the workers kept the plant open only by working for half pay for several months.

Within a month after the government stepped in and assumed temporary responsibility for administering La Perfecta, the workers had raised production to an unprecedented 22,000 gallons of milk a day and taken on a goal of producing 30,000 gallons a day. At one point when the owners were controlling the factory, only 6,000 gallons a day were produced.

The union at La Perfecta used their accomplishment to insist that the government confiscate La Perfecta. Demonstrations around this demand were organized. A series of solidarity actions were held in other workplaces to press for confiscation of La Perfecta. On June 9, representatives of fifty-five unions argued the case for confiscation of the dairy to government junta member Sergio Ramírez. A final decision has not yet been announced.

Workers must 'keep an eye on things'

On June 10, the San Martín slaughterhouse in Nandaime was taken over by the workers, after the owners made known their intention to lay off 188 workers and close the facility for at least two months.

The union documented another typical decapitalization story: indiscriminate slaughtering of cattle, including pregnant cows and newborn calves, to realize a fast profit; the sale of necessary equipment.

(One interesting sidelight to the San Martín story is that the MDN's antigovernment rally was to have taken place on the slaughterhouse grounds. At the time the workers issued a strong protest against the capitalist rally.)

Nicaraguan workers, through their unions,

intervene directly in politics and affect the government's decisions. The FSLN encourages the unions' intervention in social and political questions.

As Commander of the Revolution Víctor Tirado told workers at the Victoria brewery May 24, "you as workers must speak out about the shortcomings of government bodies, because through your demands you are politically strengthening the revolution."

If the workers don't pressure the administration, the FSLN leader warned, "things will move at a snail's pace."

Commander of the Revolution Bayardo Arce told leaders of sixty-five CST union locals May 24 that the FSLN would support the just struggles of workers even when the workers went against the government. Noting that it is impossible to hide the truth, especially from workers, Arce acknowledged that "not everything is in marvelous shape within the government apparatus, so there has to be a vigilant attitude on the part of the workers."

Sandinista leaders visit factories

In late May, Sandinista leaders began a series of visits to the country's most important factories to find out workers' most pressing concerns and listen to their suggestions—and complaints.

No topics were off limits. One worker asked Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrión, "If you are always talking about unity in the ranks of the workers, why don't the FSLN and the PCN and the PSN all unite?"

Carrión's answer was that "the revolutionary forces are striving for such unity."

Workers complained about bureaucracy in state agencies, shortages in certain consumer goods, decapitalization and arrogance on the part of private owners, deficiencies in public services, the inadequacy of proposed labor-law reforms, and conflicts between work schedules and militia training.

The commanders took notes, sometimes explaining that certain situations would take time to change; on others, asking for further details about particular problems.

If a commander doesn't come to their workplace—or even if one does—workers do not hesitate to take their concerns directly to the government.

On June 1 more than 1,000 banana workers from northwestern Nicaragua showed up at the Casa de Gobierno (Government House) in Managua. They were protesting the fact that promised new housing had not been built. Sergio Ramírez explained that the planned housing had been one of the projects scheduled to be paid for with U.S. loans, and that when Washington cut off aid it took some time to arrange other financing.

Less than two weeks later, 600 sugar workers came to Managua, delegated by 2,500 workers, to complain about the lack of decent housing, shortages of basic foodstuffs, and owner decapitalization.

Minister of Agricultural Development Jaime Wheelock met with them and took the opportu-

nity to make a tough speech about sabotage by private enterprise. "If we're going to have an economy that involves stealing and decapitalization, then it's better to do away with this type of economy altogether," Wheelock said.

Complaints get results

On May 30, hundreds of meatpackers from all over the country met with government leaders to discuss the critical situation caused by indiscriminate slaughtering of livestock and other forms of decapitalization. They demanded confiscation of some plants and conversion of others to different forms of production.

"We want to be relocated in other jobs," one worker said. "We don't want to be parasites. We want to be productive members of society because we are loyal Nicaraguans and revolutionary workers."

In Nicaragua workers' complaints are listened to and produce results. After a series of protests about food shortages, and a formal expression of alarm by the Sandinista Workers Federation, the government announced June 14 an immediate emergency purchase of 5,500 tons of rice from Costa Rica.

One of the reasons for shortages has been speculation and hoarding by private merchants. In early June the minister of domestic trade announced stiff new measures to deal with speculators, including the dispatching of "people's inspectors" to all parts of the country. He acknowledged, however, that the amount of private commerce that exists today makes it impossible for the government to eliminate speculation altogether.

As a result of exposés by both urban and agricultural workers, the government is currently drafting new laws to deal more rapidly and effectively with decapitalization.

New, stiffer penalties have already been introduced for management violations of health and safety regulations. On June 11 the Ministry of Labor announced that persistent non-compliance could result in owners being jailed. Fines were quadrupled and inspectors were given the power to levy fines on the spot without first taking the employers to court.

A continuing battle

The Nicaraguan workers' ability to win battles with the bosses is continuing to increase. This process is not over. As a local FSLN leader told workers at a metal factory in Masaya June 20, Nicaraguans won political independence but have not yet achieved economic independence from the capitalist system.

Or, as CST leader Denis Meléndez told a June 18 rally, "It is true that we beat Somoza's National Guard, but we haven't yet beaten our main class enemy, this stubborn bourgeoisie."

One of the themes of hostile articles in the U.S. press and the capitalist media here is that Nicaraguans are disillusioned with the FSLN. To prove their point, reporters may throw in a quotation from a market woman or a taxi driver about how bad things are.

These quotes are not necessarily invented by

the writers of the articles. A lot of people can be heard to complain about one or another aspect of the situation in Nicaragua. And not all of them are capitalists.

The most common complaints from working people concern inflation, which was 27 percent in 1980, and shortages of basic consumer goods. There are even individuals who insist that the reason they cannot find sugar at the markets is because the Sandinistas are sending it all to Cuba—despite the fact that Cuba produces thirty times as much sugar as Nicaragua!

The Nicaraguan government has launched a health-education campaign to reduce per capita sugar consumption—among the highest in the world—and thus to boost exports. But the warnings from dentists seem not to have had much effect so far.

Spot sugar shortages apparently result as much from speculation and hoarding as from the government's decision not to increase domestic supplies in response to increased demand. But there is no doubt that people complain when they cannot buy sugar.

Everywhere there are complaints about bureaucracy in state agencies, about long lines, endless paperwork, and arbitrary and counter-productive procedures. At the level of clerks, many state employees are still doing basically the same jobs they did before the revolution, and old ways of doing things have not been completely overcome.

'Popular discontent'?

Less commonly expressed, but nonetheless present, is a certain war-weariness. Some Nicaraguans resent the fact that after suffering so much and seeing so many loved ones killed they are still subject to attacks, still forced to be on a war footing.

The revolutionary government has not been able to deliver all the material improvements that people want and expect. One reaction this can produce was illustrated at a recent celebration of the second anniversary of the liberation of a Managua neighborhood.

The guerrilla commander who had organized the barrio during the insurrection asked community leaders why the celebration wasn't better attended. They blamed the low turnout on "the lack of concrete solutions to the real problems of the barrio."

They told the commander they needed paved streets, better public transportation, and street lighting.

These are frustrations that the reactionaries try to capitalize on. This was precisely the hope of the organizers of the abortive rally at Nandaime—to mobilize a large number of people on the basis of blaming the FSLN for economic and social problems, and in that way strike a political blow against the government.

One of the reasons this scheme failed so utterly was that most Nicaraguans who complain about this or that problem do so on the basis of wanting things to move forward faster. They may feel some frustration that the revolution has not been able to produce basic changes more quickly, but that is quite the opposite of

wanting to overthrow it.

Those who are determined to turn back the Sandinista revolution know this quite well. They are not waiting for the "popular discontent" they give so much credence to in their newspapers to do the job.

Terror and disinformation

Recently there has been an escalation of counterrevolutionary terror—the killing of seventeen people, many of them militia members, in two weeks, and acts of intimidation and violence against peasant families.

One of the things that has exacerbated class conflicts here is the extent to which local capitalists are viewed as being in collusion with the Somozaist armies based in Honduras and Florida, and with the U.S. government that stands behind them.

It is widely believed—and evidence has been published indicating this—that the counterrevolutionary bands operating in the mountains north of Matagalpa are supported and financed by the area's wealthy coffee growers. In May a correspondent of the reactionary daily *La Prensa* from a town near the Honduran border was arrested and jailed for selling fundraising bonds on behalf of an armed counterrevolutionary group.

The propaganda of the capitalists and their parties is designed to facilitate the economic and military campaigns of the Reagan administration and other enemies of the revolution.

A barrage of stories about human-rights violations, Russian and Cuban infiltration, and a buildup of military forces has been used by Washington as justification for cutting off economic aid and stepping up arms shipments to reactionary regimes in the region.

Sometimes the scare stories backfire. In early June a reporter claimed to have discovered a Soviet helicopter at Managua's airport. International wire services transmitted a murky photograph apparently taken from an airplane landing or taking off.

It turned out that almost two months earlier a daily paper had announced the arrival of two emergency relief helicopters on loan from the Soviet government. After the attempt to provoke an international scandal over the helicopter, reporters were invited to go along as the aircraft ferried doctors, medicine, and emergency supplies to an area cut off by floods.

The anti-Cuban, anti-Soviet campaign of the Nicaraguan capitalists is not the only area in which their politics coincide with the State Department. As tensions between the Nicaraguan government and Washington have grown, the tendency of the capitalist parties here has been to identify more and more openly with the U.S. government and to blame every conflict on the FSLN.

Sandinista counteroffensive

The Sandinistas, meanwhile, have tried to reduce their vulnerability to attack from Washington both by mounting a diplomatic offensive and by diversifying their economic and political relationships. They have reached out



"You've gone too far! Removing Somoza was enough!"

to certain Latin American countries such as Mexico, to the workers states, and to the Socialist International.

Their success in this was exemplified by the "Bread for Nicaragua" campaign. It showed that the moral authority of the revolution remains high and that solidarity with Nicaragua is a worldwide phenomenon.

One of the most bitterly resented actions the Reagan administration has taken against Nicaragua was the suspension in March of loans to buy wheat. All of the 5,000 tons of wheat consumed each month in Nicaragua had previously come from the United States, and with no more shipments coming in supplies dwindled rapidly.

Bakery workers were temporarily laid off. For about two weeks in May it was almost impossible to find bread in Managua, and the scarcity was more prolonged and severe outside the capital.

But the government had already begun its own international drive to undercut Washington. The results have been impressive. The first shipment of a 20,000-ton donation from the Soviet Union arrived May 25, and by early June the stores and markets were again well-stocked with bread.

And the Soviet contribution was only part of a total of 107,000 tons donated or promised to Nicaragua. The wheat—almost a two years' supply and nearly all of it free of charge—will also come from East Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Bulgaria, and Canada.

Like most things in Nicaragua today, foreign policy is also explained in class terms. In speeches and articles, the Sandinistas explain that the foreign policy that flows from the needs of the workers and peasants is anti-imperialism. And they also explain why the capitalists have such a hard time standing up to the imperialists.

In the pages of *Barricada*, Nicaraguans can read every day now about which class overthrew Somoza.

In a series marking the second anniversary of the insurrection, FSLN leaders such as Sergio Ramírez and Carlos Núñez explain how

the COSEP and other capitalist bodies opposed the FSLN's June 4, 1979, call for a general strike; how the capitalist opposition maneuvered with the U.S. government and a wing of the National Guard to try to preserve "Somozaism without Somoza"; and how Alfonso Robelo was always a vacillator, especially on questions of military defense.

When Robelo argued on the Discussion Forum on National Problems that all the political parties participated equally in the revolution, *Barricada* explained that this was not true.

A column by Edmundo Jarquín broke down the opposition to Somoza into three groups:

- The consistent revolutionaries of the FSLN.
- Those who were for a bourgeois-democratic government because they didn't think a real revolution was possible, but who now realize they were wrong and who support the revolution. In this category Jarquín placed the PPSC, PLI, and PSN.
- Those who were never interested in a revolution and only sought the departure of Somoza—that is, the capitalists.

Sandinism and socialism

So if the Nicaraguan revolution is not a capitalist revolution, which is clear, then what is it?

The answer most often given here is that the revolution was made by the workers and peasants, who are building a new society in the interest of the majority. Sandinista leaders generally do not use the word "socialism" to describe the revolution or the type of society that is being built.

However, references to socialism are becoming more common. CST leader Lucio Jiménez spoke in his May Day speech about "the necessity of consolidating workers power in order to build a socialist society, the historic goal of the Nicaraguan working class."

At that massive rally there were three CST banners saying "Marx, Engels, Lenin—Giants of Proletarian Thought." Almost two months later, the banners are still up in the Plaza of the Revolution. The Nicaraguan Trade-Union Coordinating Committee held a rally April 22 to celebrate the 111th anniversary of Lenin's birth.

On the birthday of Nicaraguan revolutionary hero and FSLN founder Carlos Fonseca Amador, *Barricada* featured a 1970 speech in which Fonseca outlined the FSLN's program.

"The fight for socialism and for national liberation," Fonseca said, "come together in the Sandinista People's Revolution. We identify with socialism, although we do not fail to examine critically certain socialist experiences.

"Fundamentally, socialism has fulfilled the hopes that history and humanity have placed in it. Its shortcomings have been the exception and not the rule.

"I could add that the guerrilla fighter only exists because of such a program, and that the guerrilla will never triumph unless that program triumphs."

June 29, 1981

Interview with Iranian socialists

Comparing two revolutions and their leaderships

[Siamak Zahraie and Reza Arefpour are leaders of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) of Iran. In June they spent more than two weeks in Nicaragua. *Intercontinental Press* correspondent Matilde Zimmermann interviewed them in Managua about their impressions of the Nicaraguan revolution.]

* * *

Question. First, why don't you explain what brought you half way around the world from Iran to Nicaragua?

Zahraie. As the international editor of our newspaper *Kargar*, I have been following the Nicaraguan revolution from afar. It seemed like it was about time and maybe even a little late for us to come and see for ourselves.

Arefpour. As someone who participated in the insurrection in Iran, it was a dream for me to come to Nicaragua.

I work in an auto factory, one of the largest factories in Iran, and with the problems the workers are facing right now with our efforts to organize ourselves and participate in management and production, learning about the experiences of Nicaraguan workers presented a big opportunity for us.

Also as someone who participated in the militias and recently returned from the front, I wanted to learn about the experiences of Nicaraguan workers in the militias, and take this back to the workers in our factory and other factories in Iran.

Q. What kind of response have you gotten from the Nicaraguans you have talked to?

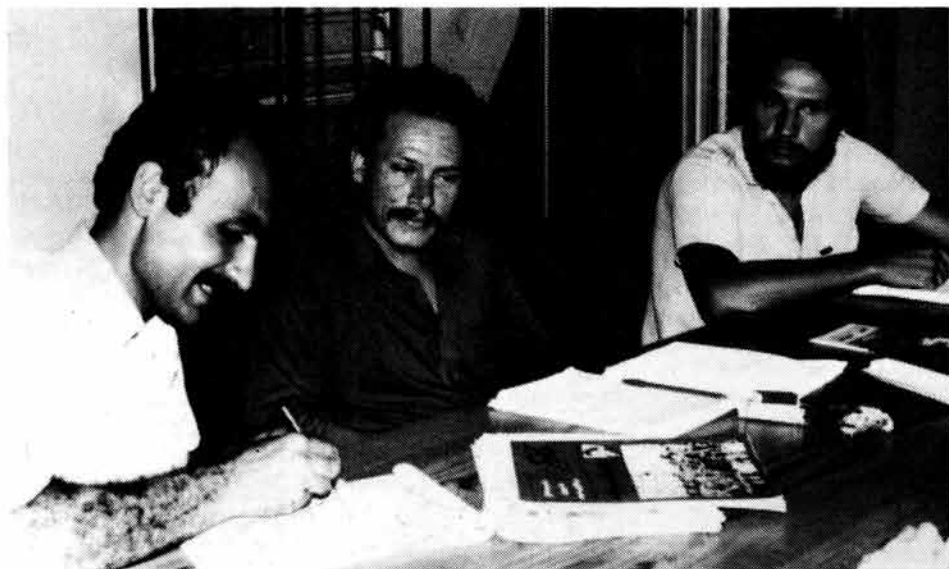
Zahraie. It was surprising at first, because we expected that very few people here would know about Iran. But the response was immediate. Everywhere we went, as soon as we introduced ourselves as two socialists from Iran, people wanted to meet with us and make sure we had every opportunity to see as much as possible in Nicaragua.

Q. What has impressed you most?

Zahraie. The most striking thing for us coming from Iran was the degree of calmness that exists here.

We are also impressed with the way the Sandinistas, the leadership of the Nicaraguan revolution, respond to the initiative of the masses and welcome it, and try to move from there toward solving the problems. This is in contrast with what is happening in Iran and to some extent also with some other revolutions we have studied.

Nicaragua is a very poor country and not



Matilde Zimmermann/IP

Siamak Zahraie (left) with José Lovo Téllez of the Nicaraguan Institute of Agrarian Reform, and Reza Arefpour (right).

very industrialized, and what has been accomplished in terms of organizing the masses represents a big achievement.

Another thing that strikes you is the way the Sandinistas try to unite working people. They don't have a sectarian approach. They start from the need for unity and from campaigns to advance the interests of the masses.

We were told that there have been three big campaigns. The first was the insurrection to overthrow Somoza. The second was the literacy drive. And the third is the current campaign to produce enough food for the entire population.

These are campaigns around which the leadership has been able to unify the masses and help them to organize themselves.

Arefpour. One thing surprised me. I knew that Nicaragua was one of the poorest countries in Latin America. But the relative abundance of essential goods shows the direction that the leadership of the revolution is taking.

All the basic things exist, even though obstacles have been put in their way in terms of getting the grain or other materials they need. When you go to the neighborhood stores the prices are reasonable and the basic things are there.

In Iran we have shortages of all kinds, because of the war and because of the role the capitalists are playing.

It is also fascinating to see how the unions and especially the CST [Sandinista Workers

Federation] are moving forward. A comrade from the CST explained to us how they are moving forward toward more control over the section of industry that is still under private ownership.

They gave us several examples of cases where the workers reported efforts of the management to decapitalize by sending money out or not buying spare parts. These factories were put under the management of the workers and the government immediately started to investigate the charges. This is the kind of thing needed to keep the economy healthy and productive.

Q. What similarities do you see between the Iranian revolution and the Nicaraguan?

Zahraie. We saw similarities as soon as we got off the plane. The young people in military uniforms looked similar. Of course there were a lot of soldiers around during the shah's time, and probably here under Somoza too. But the whole character and attitude of the people wearing the uniforms now is new. When we got off the plane we felt like we were in a familiar situation.

The similarities that exist are not surprising. The shah's regime and Somoza's regime played similar roles. Both were puppets of imperialism. Both exercised total dictatorial control. Both were overthrown by mass insurrections, and in both countries popular organizations came into being as a result of these upris-

ings.

We were struck by the great interest Nicaraguans have in international events. The same thing exists in Iran. A sense of solidarity with the Irish fighters, with the Nicaraguan revolution, with the South African people, and with anti-imperialist movements all over the world.

Arefpour. Another similarity is in the human impact of the two revolutions.

In the factory where I work, a worker used to be forbidden to talk to another worker. People would be put in jail for that. But now they have rights, they have a sense of identity, they

We were struck by the great interest Nicaraguans have in international events. The same thing exists in Iran . . .

are human beings. No one can force them to do inhuman things. And you feel the same thing here.

Q. And what about the differences?

Zahraie. I mentioned the similarity of the young people in uniform. But here right away we saw a difference too. And that was in the active participation of women, on an equal basis with men as far as we could tell. We saw women in uniform, shoulder to shoulder with men.

In Iran, even though women came out into the streets in great numbers in the revolution that overthrew the shah, there are obstacles to their participation in various activities. Some of these obstacles are traditional, and women are fighting against some of them now in Iran.

Another difference is the calmness I mentioned before. This has to do with the Sandinista government's attitude toward working people. By organizing the masses, they are able to channel the energy and desires people have in a creative way.

In Iran, because the government doesn't have the same quality as the Sandinistas, you see things like clashes in the street, which you don't see here.

Reza talked about how the Nicaraguan government has been able to accomplish a lot in terms of meeting the basic needs of the masses. Iran is a much richer country, but there are greater problems in terms of supplying these necessities.

Iran has a broader and more varied industrial base than Nicaragua, which should make it easier to achieve more equality and supply basic needs. But instead there are more difficulties, shortages of every kind of essential goods—eggs, milk, chicken, soap, detergent.

The capitalists and landlords have maintained a much greater ability to disrupt the economy in Iran. They create these problems in order to demoralize the masses about their capacity to overcome these problems. Here it is the other way around. The leadership consciously goes about organizing the masses in order to overcome these problems.

The difference is reflected in many spheres. In terms of freedom of expression, for example. Papers get banned in Iran, left papers and also bourgeois papers. Then some of them get reopened.

And this continual conflict hampers the free exchange of ideas. This makes it harder for the masses to have a discussion about how to confront the problems imperialism and capitalism are causing for the revolution.

Arefpour. As soon as you arrive here, you get the feeling that the leadership has actually changed the basis of running the country to one that puts human needs before profits. In Iran people are still fighting for this, and aspects of the old government still exist.

Here when we went to different ministries and government agencies we could tell right away that they had nothing to do with the old regime. In Iran the picture is different. Things have a dual character. When you go to offices, you see some things that are new, and some things that are from the shah's era.

The ministries have two faces. You see new, revolutionary young people, but they face obstacles because there are still the old people in their same positions.

There's another difference. We come from a country that is in a war, that has been under an imperialist-inspired attack for eight months now. The war has changed the face of Iran.

The main concern of everybody in Iran is the war. That's what the newspapers are about, the latest attack from Iraq. Although there have been some clashes at the border here, it is not the same.

Zahraie. When we talk about the differences, the whole thing comes down to the kind of leadership that arose after these two insurrections. The Nicaraguan leadership started with

The capitalists and landlords have maintained a much greater ability to disrupt the economy in Iran . . .

the concerns of the masses. And one thing they were dead serious about was abolishing old institutions like the army.

In Iran that didn't happen. Popular organizations came into being as a result of the insurrection, but parallel to them a leadership came to power that kept the old institutions, the old army and police and state apparatus.

In Iran there are constant complaints about how these old institutions are insensitive to the needs of the masses, how there are still elements that sympathize not with the revolution but even with the counterrevolution.

Q. What do you plan to do with the information you have gathered here when you get back to Iran?

Arefpour. I'm sure that my colleagues at the factory, and at other factories in Iran, will be very interested in hearing about the Sandi-

nista government, about the working-class organizations, about how land has been distributed, about the literacy campaign, which is a big issue in Iran.

So we want to get these experiences out as widely as possible all over the country.

Zahraie. We hope that this trip will open up new avenues for collaboration and solidarity. We think that when we go back, we'll be able

Here when we went to different ministries and government agencies we could tell right away that they had nothing to do with the old regime . . .

to organize more and better solidarity with Nicaragua.

We would like to see a representative from the Iranian government come here, so they could see for themselves, exchange experiences, and open up channels of communication.

Our goal is to build a stronger front against imperialism, and we got the feeling here that the Sandinistas also feel the need for this and want to move in this direction. □

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Workers control and nationalizations

Taken up in rediscovered Trotsky interview

By Fred Murphy

A reader of *Intercontinental Press* recently sent us a copy of the March 9, 1918, issue of a long-defunct weekly U.S. newsmagazine called *The Independent*. She had discovered it while shopping for antiques. The yellowed, dog-eared cover carried a large photograph of Leon Trotsky, below which a headline announced the magazine's featured article: "A Talk with Trotsky," by Edward Alsworth Ross.*

We are reprinting the article below. So far as we have been able to determine, this is the first time that Ross's interview has ever been reprinted. Louis Sinclair's authoritative *Leon Trotsky: A Bibliography* carries a listing for the interview, but cites no reprints of it as of March 1980.

In responding to the questions posed by Ross, Trotsky concisely summarized the economic policies of the Bolsheviks in the first months after the October Revolution. He explained such key questions as workers control of production, the attitude taken toward the capitalist owners of industry (whose holdings had not yet been confiscated), the means of preventing sabotage and decapitalization, and the problem of labor productivity under workers' rule.

The experiences of the Bolsheviks in the early months of Soviet power hold rich lessons for revolutionists today. The leaders of the workers and peasants governments that have come to power in Nicaragua and Grenada are grappling with problems similar to those faced by Lenin and Trotsky.

Not long ago, *Intercontinental Press* published speeches by two leaders of the Nicaraguan revolution—Commanders Jaime Wheelock and Tomás Borge—in which they gave their views on some of these same questions.

Wheelock explained how Nicaragua was seeking "to emerge from poverty and underdevelopment, to counter dependency, and to rehabilitate and reactivate our economy. . . ."

* Edward Alsworth Ross was a leading liberal sociologist at the University of Wisconsin. He spent six months in Russia in 1917 and later authored two books on the Russian revolution. In 1937 Ross served as a member of the Dewey Commission, which investigated the charges made against Trotsky in the Moscow Trials. Trotsky had occasion in September 1939 to write a brief letter to Ross, which opened as follows: "Of course I remember very well our meeting in November 1917. (You were more or less in favor of the Social Revolutionaries!) But I remember incomparably better that you were a prominent member of the Dewey Commission, which demanded moral courage, alas, not very common in our days."

How could this be done, he asked, "while large sectors of our economy are still subject to forms of exploitation that are characteristic of capitalism in underdeveloped countries?"

Having established "a people's unity with people's armed power," Wheelock said, Nica-

sheviks were "not ready yet to take over all industry. That will come in time, but no one can say how soon. For the present, we expect out of the earnings of a factory to pay the owner five or six per cent yearly on his actual investment."

Can the capitalists live with such a state of affairs? Commander Tomás Borge noted that the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie feels "insecure"—even though "this revolution has been extremely flexible."

Such insecurity, Borge said, leads the capitalists into a "vicious circle, because this insecurity they feel causes them to decapitalize their businesses. But when they begin to do that, their workers become aware of what they are doing. And then the revolutionary government becomes concerned. . . ."

"But we are not going to let them decapitalize their businesses, because that means taking resources out of the country and destroying those enterprises." (*Intercontinental Press*, March 16, p. 252.)

Likewise, Trotsky told Ross that "we will not allow the capitalist to shut up his factory in order to starve his workmen into submissiveness or because it is not yielding him a profit."

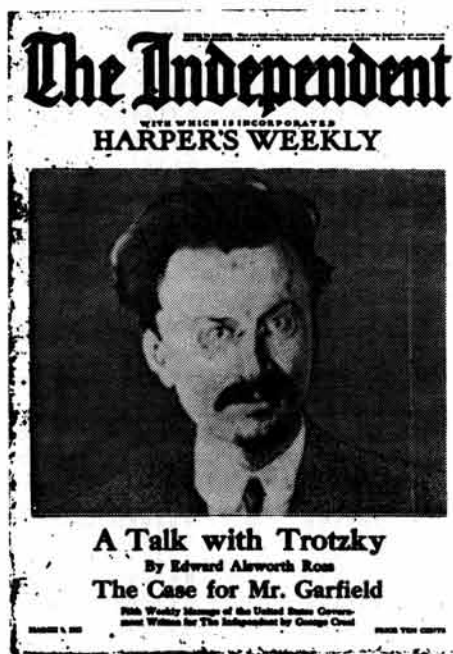
As a check on the capitalists, the Bolsheviks instituted workers control of production. Among other things, as Trotsky told Ross, this implied "that the books and correspondence of the concern will be open to the public, so that henceforth there will be no industrial secrets."

Workers in Nicaragua on numerous occasions have exposed attempts at decapitalization by their private employers. In response, a growing number of enterprises have been put under government intervention.

On June 23, Commander Humberto Ortega warned Nicaraguan workers that some capitalists "are decapitalizing their enterprises and abusing the democratic liberties conquered by the people." He declared that decapitalization should be viewed as counterrevolutionary activity, and announced that new laws were being prepared that would put a stop to such maneuvers.

The system of workers control that Trotsky described to Ross was one powerful tool that the Bolsheviks had for combating sabotage and decapitalization. But by mid-1918, the bulk of the Russian bourgeoisie had openly gone over to the armed counterrevolution. With the beginning of the civil war, the Bolsheviks were forced to decree the nationalization of all basic industry—an indispensable defensive measure, under the circumstances.

Once the counterrevolutionary invasions had been routed, though, the Bolsheviks re-



ragua was no longer "that old backward economy where a big manufacturer could do as he pleased":

In the first place, a big manufacturer has to contribute to the financial system and has to pay a fixed interest rate reimbursing the money that was lent to him by the state, by the people.

Secondly, when he produces, he has to pay production taxes, export duties, capital gains taxes, and real estate taxes, as well as income taxes. . . . And of course, there is our political capacity, the capacity to regulate what some call the reproduction of capital.

We nationalized foreign trade and the banks. This means that the state receives all the foreign currency. No big cotton producer here can obtain dollars, only córdobas. With those córdobas he has to pay bank interest, production taxes, export duties, capital levies, and income taxes.

Somewhere, usually in a bank, he will keep a rather significant amount. And that money is also available to be used by our economy as a whole.

Thus, we are able to also use these resources, these individuals, as workers in national reconstruction. Their contribution is significant. [*Intercontinental Press*, March 2, pp. 184-85.]

Wheelock's words echo Trotsky's December 1917 statement to Ross that the Bol-

laxed the highly centralized economic policies of "war communism" and allowed a certain breathing space to capitalist enterprises. This was essential for the revival of economic activity and for the reconstruction of the war-shattered country. The "New Economic Policy" (NEP) was inaugurated.

Discussing the NEP in a 1922 speech to the Communist Youth League, Trotsky returned to some of the themes touched on in the 1917 interview with Ross. He first noted that when the bourgeoisie holds state power it is often forced to "make concessions to the working classes." However, "while power is in the hands of the bourgeoisie they will measure out each reform but they know up to what point they can grant a reform. And just for this purpose they have the power in their hands."

'A talk with Trotsky'

By Edward Alsworth Ross

It was on a short Petrograd December day but a little over a month after the capture of power by the Bolsheviks that I ran the gauntlet of the soldiers that guard the long corridors of Smolni Institute and was ushered into the presence of Leon Trotsky, *nee* Bronstein, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Bolsheviks and right hand man of Lenine, *nee* Oulianoff, the economist and strategist of Russian Socialism. I found a square-shouldered man of medium height whose advertisement of intellect in his broad wall-like forehead was balanced by a firm, square chin announcing will.

After telling him I was interested in his economic program rather than his peace program, I asked: "Is it the intention of your party to dispossess the owners of industrial plants in Russia?"

"No," he replied. "We are not ready yet to take over all industry. That will come in time, but no one can say how soon. For the present, we expect out of the earnings of a factory to pay the owner five or six per cent yearly on his actual investment. What we aim at now is *control* rather than *ownership*."

"What do you mean by 'control'?"

"I mean that we will see to it that the factory is run not from the point of view of private profit but from the point of view of the social welfare democratically conceived. For example, we will not allow the capitalist to shut up his factory in order to starve his workmen into submissiveness or because it is not yielding him a profit. If it is turning out economically a needed product it must be kept running. If the capitalist abandons it, he will lose it altogether, for a board of directors chosen by the workmen will be put in charge.

"Again, 'control' implies that the books and correspondence of the concern will be open to the public, so that henceforth there will be no industrial secrets. If this concern hits upon a better process or device it will be communicat-

Then Trotsky explained that "the same interrelation between state power and reform" existed in the Soviet Union, "but with just that tiny difference that here the working class is in power and it likewise makes concessions to the bourgeoisie: trading concessions, free trade, the right to profit and the right to carry its bourgeois soul and its bourgeois body through the streets of Moscow with impunity. This considerable concession has been granted but it has been granted by the ruling working class which holds the debit and credit book of its state and which says: 'To this line here I will make a concession but not any further.'"

Or, as Tomás Borge put it when speaking to a rally in Nicaragua in late May, "If they tell us to give up our rifles, we will tell them that's not up for discussion. Because our rifles are already in the hands of the workers." □

ed to all other concerns in the same branch of industry, so that the public will promptly realize the utmost possible benefit from the find. At present, it is hidden away from other concerns at the dictate of the profit-seeking motive and for years the article may be kept needlessly scarce and dear to the consuming public.

"'Control' also means that primary requisites limited in quantity such as coal, oil, iron, steel, etc., will be allotted to the different plants calling for them with an eye to their social utility. On a limited stock of materials of production, concerns that produce luxuries should have a slighter claim than those which produce necessities.

"Don't misunderstand me," he added, "we are *not* ascetics. Luxuries shall be produced, too, when there is enough of fuel and materials for all the factories."

"On what basis will you apportion a limited supply of the means of production among the claimant industries?"

"Not as now according to the bidding of capitalists against one another, but on the basis of full and carefully gathered statistics."

"Will the workmen's committee or the elected managers of a factory be free to run it according to their own lights?"

"No, they will be subject to policies laid down by the local council of workmen's deputies."

"Will this council be at liberty to adopt such policies as it pleases?"

"No, their range of discretion will be limited in turn by regulations made for each class of industry by the boards or bureaus of the central government."

"In a conversation last week with Prince Kropotkin," I said, "he urged that each center be autonomous with respect to the industries carried on within it. Let the city of Moscow, for example, be owner and mistress of all the mills in and around that city. What do you think of it?"

"Kropotkin's communalism," replied Trotsky, leaning forward a little in his earnestness, "would work in a simple society based on agriculture and household industries, but it isn't at all suited to the state of things in modern industrial society. The coal from the Donetz basin goes all over Russia and is indispensable in all sorts of industries. Now, don't you see that if the organized people of that district could do just as they pleased with the coal mines, they could hold up all the rest of Russia if they chose? Entire independence of each locality respecting its industries would result in endless friction and difficulties in a society that has reached the stage of local specialization of industry. It might even bring on civil war. Kropotkin has in mind the Russia of sixty years ago, the Russia of his youth."

"Then you are centralist rather than federalist?"

"Not at all," he answered quickly, "on economic matters the degree of centralization should correspond with the actual stage of development of industrial organization. But unitary regulation of production is very different from the centralization that characterized the old regime. There is no call for the steam roller to crush the different nationalities among us into conformity of speech, religion, education, etc."

"What should be done to meet the wishes of the diverse nationalities in Russia, Finns, Letts, Lithuanians, Little Russians, Georgians, Armenians and Tartars?"

"The only solution is a Federal Union such as you have in the United States. Let each of the states of future Russia be free to do as it will in respect to language, schools, religion, courts, laws, penal systems, etc."

"Do you propose that the profits earned by a concern shall be divided among its workers?"

"No, profit-sharing is a bourgeois notion. The workers in a mill will be paid adequate wages. All the profits not paid to the owners will belong to society."

"To the local community or to the central government?"

"They will be shared between the two according to their comparative needs."

"What will be shared—everything above running expenses? Or will you set aside something for depreciation, so that when the plant is worn out there will be money enough to replace it?"

"Oh, of course, it is only *pure* profit that will be divided."

"By sticking to this principle you can keep up the existing industrial outfit. But in some branches—say the making of motorcycles or tractors—new factories are called for to supply the expanding needs of the public. Where will the money come from that will build these new factories?"

"We can impose on the capitalist to whom we allow a dividend of five or six percent on his capital the obligation to reinvest in some industry—a part, say twenty-five per cent—of what he receives."

"If in Russia you hold the capitalists down to

five or six per cent while in other countries they can hope for twice or thrice as much return, won't Russia be stripped of capital?"

"They won't be allowed to remove their capital from Russia at will," said Trotsky significantly.

"Besides," he went on, "do you imagine that capitalist control is going to survive everywhere save in Russia? In all the European belligerent countries I expect to see social revolution after the war. So long as they remain in the trenches the soldiers think of little but their immediate problem—to kill your opponent before he kills you. But when they go home and find their family scattered, perhaps their home desolate, their industry ruined and their taxes five times as high as before, they will begin to consider how this appalling calamity was brought upon them. They will be open to the demonstration that the scramble of capitalists and groups of capitalists for foreign markets and exploitable 'colonial' areas, imperialism, secret diplomacy and armament rivalry promoted by munition makers, brought on the war. Once they perceive that the capitalist class is responsible for this terrible disaster to humanity they will arise and wrest the control from its hands. To be sure, a proletarian Russia cannot get very far in realizing its aims, if all the rest of the world remains under the capitalist régime. But that will not happen."

"Everywhere in Russia I go I find a slump of forty or fifty per cent in the productivity of the workmen in the factories. Is there not danger of an insufficiency of manufactured goods if the workmen of each factory follow pretty much their own gait?"

"The current low productivity is a natural reaction from the labor-driving characteristic of the old régime. In time that will be overcome by standards of efficiency being adopted by each craft union and the denial of the advantages of membership to such workmen as will not or cannot come up to these standards. Besides, collectivist production will make great use of the Taylor system of scientific management. It has not been popular among the proletariat because as now applied it chiefly swells the profits of the capitalist with little benefit to the working man or the consuming public. When all the economy of effort it achieves accrues to society as a whole, it will be cheerfully and generally adopted, and premature labor, prolonged labor and overwork will be abandoned because needless."

Such are the ideas of the leader. I submitted them to various Russian economists and all agreed that the Russian workmen are too ignorant and short-sighted to submit themselves to the sound economic principles which may be held by their leaders. Conscious of being masters of the industrial properties, they will not submit themselves to indispensable discipline. They will not follow the counsel of technical men and they will "eat up the capital," so that before the factories have been long in their hands it will be impossible to keep them going. □

United States

Appeal for international support for Irish hunger strikers

By Steve Bride

NEW YORK—With a fifth hunger striker nearing death in Northern Ireland, a Belfast city councilman and the relatives of two other hunger strikers went before the cameras and microphones here July 3 to appeal for support from the American people.

The hunger strike by Irish political prisoners has been going on since March 1.

"The people of America have shown clearly in recent demonstrations that a large section of the population is prepared to act," Belfast Councilman Fergus O'Hare told a packed news conference.

"Now we are asking that you take whatever action you can to further isolate Britain, to show Britain that she is a leper in the world" for refusing to grant political status to H-Block prisoners.

O'Hare, a member of People's Democracy, the Irish Trotskyist group, was recently elected to the Belfast City Council on a platform that centered on support for the prisoners.

O'Hare's words came the day after last rites were administered in Maze Prison to hunger striker Joseph McDonnell, on the fifty-sixth day of his fast. McDonnell would be the fifth inmate to die at Maze protesting British refusal to meet their demands.

Joining O'Hare at the July 3 news conference was Oliver Hughes, brother of the late hunger striker Francis Hughes. Oliver Hughes recently won election to the Derry City Council, also on an H-Block platform.

Alice McElwee, mother of current hunger striker Thomas McElwee, also spoke.

O'Hare pointed to the election of hunger striker Bobby Sands to the British Parliament, two hunger strikers to the Irish Parliament, and others like himself and Hughes to local elected bodies as proof that British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is lying when she says the prisoners have no support in Ireland.

The elections, he said, combined with "the mobilizations of tens of thousands in the streets," have dealt "massive body blows against the British."

In fact, Sands's election so damaged Thatcher's pretense that the hunger strikers are common criminals that the British government has introduced a bill in Parliament that would bar "convicted felons" from entering elections to that body.

U.S. supporters of the hunger strikers were represented at the news conference by former New York City Council President Paul O'Dwyer, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and Father Daniel Berrigan.

Responding to a question from reporters, O'Hare said the recent U.S. demonstrations against Prince Charles "boosted the morale of people in Ireland immensely.

"We've had a long period of intense struggle," he continued. "People are weary but determined. Any activity such as the Prince Charles 'welcome,' as well as having vital importance internationally, lifts people's morale in Ireland. It gives us more determination and courage to carry on." □



Goretta McDonnell, wife of hunger striker Joseph McDonnell, speaking to rally in support of prisoners.