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Polish Unionists Hold First Congress



Delegates to Solidarity's conference in Gdansk sports arena.

Martin Koppell/IP

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The crackdown in Egypt

By David Frankel

On September 3, President Anwar el-Sadat initiated the biggest wave of repression in Egypt since he came to power in 1970.

According to Sadat himself, who gave a three-hour speech on his crackdown September 5, some 1,536 people were arrested, six publications banned, and sixty-seven journalists and sixty-four professors removed from their posts.

Sadat justified these measures as necessary to stop communal violence between Muslims and Coptic Christians. A communal riot in June left sixty dead and dozens injured, and in August four people were killed when a hand grenade was thrown into a Coptic wedding.

But dozens of those arrested had no connection with religious groups. They included Mohammed Hassanein Heikal, perhaps the best known journalist in the Arab world, who opposed Sadat's break with the Soviet Union and his signing of the Camp David accords with Israel.

Also arrested was Ahmed Khawaga, who was recently removed by the regime as head of the bar association because of his opposition to the Camp David treaty.

Most of the leadership of the Socialist Labor Party—the official opposition party—were arrested and its newspaper was shut down. The editor of the Unionist Progressive Party newspaper was also arrested.

As *New York Times* correspondent William Farrell noted September 7, "The list of those detained read like a who's who of Egyptians who have spoken out against the President and his policies."

Furthermore, the religious figures arrested in the crackdown were not picked up because they were necessarily inciting communal violence. In his September 5 speech, according to *Washington Post* reporter David Ottaway, Sadat singled out a number of Muslim religious leaders and figures in the Muslim Brotherhood.

"All, he said, were echoing the attacks of his worst enemies—Muammar Qaddafi of Libya and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran—on his peace treaty with Israel and alliance with the United States."

On September 7, the government announced that it would gradually take over control of 40,000 Egyptian mosques. An official of the Ministry of Religious Endowments said that only government-approved clerics would be allowed to preside at Friday prayers and that there would be "more coordination on all matters dealing with sermons, with no politics at all."

Having indicated what kind of treatment dissenters could expect, Sadat then held a plebiscite September 10 in which voters were asked to approve his actions. Since there was not

even the pretense of a secret ballot, Sadat may have actually received the 99.45 percent approval that he claimed.

Meanwhile, however, there have been a number of large demonstrations in Cairo that have been broken up with tear gas.

It is already clear that Sadat's crackdown has done his regime damage, despite the rigged vote of approval. Within Egypt Sadat made a big point of promising democratic rights and relief from some of the police abuses of the Nasser period as part of his turn toward Washington in the mid-1970s. The prosperity promised by Sadat as a result of that turn never did materialize, and now there is not much left of his claims of democracy either.

Furthermore, two and a half years after the signing of the Camp David deal, Sadat remains isolated in the Arab world. Sadat's pretense that Camp David would lead to gains for the Palestinian people has been completely destroyed, and his political position has been further weakened by the murderous actions of the Zionist regime in Lebanon, in particular its terror-bombing of Beirut in July.

Nor can Sadat expect much help from Washington on this score. The Israeli raids in Lebanon and the destruction of the Iraqi nuclear project in Baghdad were not even raised by President Reagan when he met with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin this month. Instead, Reagan promised Begin more weapons and a new "strategic relationship" with Washington.

An indication of how vulnerable Sadat feels came at a September 9 news conference where he complained bitterly of commentary in the U.S. press suggesting that Egypt had become

"unstable and unreliable" and that he was the "shah number two."

"Do not fear that we shall be having a Khomeini here," Sadat told the assembled press corps.

Echoing President Carter's January 1978 endorsement of the shah, Sadat declared that Egypt was "an island of stability in a very troubled area."

Not surprisingly, Sadat's imperialist backers have not been impressed. The editors of the *Washington Post* pointed out September 8 that his "arbitrary two-bit crackdown" raised an "implicit hint of his own shah-like mortality."

A slightly more diplomatic editorial in the September 10 *New York Times* said: "Egypt is not Iran, and Anwar Sadat is hardly the hapless Shah. But there is a parallel now between Cairo and Teheran. Islamic fundamentalists and secular leftists are winning allure as martyrs, as a pro-Western regime claps them in prison. There is much at stake: if President Sadat has miscalculated, the results could be calamitous for Egypt's allies as well as for Egypt."

Sadat, of course, is an easy target. Ultimately, however, it is the imperialists who are themselves responsible for his deteriorating position.

It was Washington that pushed through the Camp David deal while continuing to arm Israel to the teeth and to give it a free hand in carrying out its attacks on Lebanon and its occupation of the West Bank.

It was U.S. imperialism that demanded the opening of the Egyptian economy to foreign investment, but which will not and cannot insulate it from the effects of the capitalist economic crisis.

And it was Washington that has pushed for U.S. bases in Egypt.

Sadat's troubles are one more example of how the policies pursued by imperialism undermine the very regimes that the exploiters depend upon and seek to preserve. □

Pretoria seeks 'buffer zone'

By Fred Murphy

Angola's chief delegate to the United Nations, Elisio de Figueiredo, denounced the continued presence of South African troops in his country on September 9. Despite Pretoria's claim to have withdrawn, de Figueiredo said some 15,000 South African troops remained massed around the town of Ngiva in southern Cunene Province.

"In Cunene, only the city of Cahama—virtually a ghost town after repeated South African bombing—remains in Angolan hands," a dispatch from Luanda by Sara Rodrigues published in the September 16 issue of the U.S. weekly *Guardian* reported.

South Africa's invasion of Angola was launched in July, but only acknowledged by Pretoria on August 26. It is the largest military move into Angola by the apartheid regime

since Cuban troops helped the Luanda government drive out a massive invasion in 1975-76.

South African Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha claims his troops have the right to "hot pursuit" into Angola in their operations against the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO). For almost two decades, SWAPO has been fighting to liberate Namibia from South African colonial rule.

But Pretoria's aims clearly go beyond mere "pursuit" of Namibian guerrilla fighters. The current invasion of Angola has brought devastation to a wide area along the border. South African troops have advanced up to 100 miles into the country. Peasants have been forced to flee their homes. Towns and crops have been burned and bombed to the ground. Water holes have been sabotaged and cattle slaughtered.

The aim of this scorched-earth policy was

noted in the September 7 *Newsweek*: "to sanitize all of southern Angola and turn the territory over to Pretoria's own favorite Angolan guerrilla: Jonas Savimbi, the pro-Western leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)."

Savimbi's UNITA collaborated with the 1975-76 South African invasion and since then has become a more and more open tool of Pretoria.

UNITA is armed, trained, and financed by the South Africans. Operating from bases in northern Namibia and in the sparsely populated southeastern Angolan province of Cuando-Cubango, UNITA troops have terrorized villagers, blown up bridges, and attacked Namibian refugee camps. Savimbi's forces also provide information to Pretoria on the whereabouts and activities of SWAPO.

UNITA "will never let them [SWAPO] operate against the South Africans in Namibia," Savimbi told a U.S. journalist in 1977. Since then the Angolan renegade has tried to live up to his word.

In attacking Angola and bolstering Savimbi, the South African regime has received encouragement from the Reagan administration in Washington. "UNITA represents a significant and legitimate factor in Angolan politics," Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker said in a major policy speech on August 29, as the South African invasion was in full swing.

When a resolution condemning the South African invasion came before the UN Security Council on August 31, Washington's representative cast a veto. The September 5 *London Economist* summed up the effects of this, saying it was "likely that the American reaction encouraged the South Africans to stay on in Angola and do a more thorough job of routing out the Namibian guerrillas' bases there, while tying down the Angolan army so that Mr. Jonas Savimbi could use his UNITA rebel forces more freely and extend his southeastern region of control. If he could establish a buffer state right across southern Angola, the Namibian guerrillas would be cut off from all further operations out of that country."

That may well be the ultimate goal of both Washington and Pretoria, but they are playing a dangerous game. The invasion of Angola has met with near-universal repudiation internationally, even from such staunch U.S. allies as Britain, France, and West Germany. At the same time, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos has vowed that "Angola will use all the ways and means available to repel South Africa from our sovereign territory."

Luanda has indicated that it might be forced to call again for Cuban assistance, or to invoke Article 51 of the UN Charter, which recognizes the right of countries under attack to "individual and collective self-defense."

In the hope of blunting the opposition to its aggression and winning support from imperialist powers other than Washington, Pretoria dramatically announced on September 1 the capture in Angola of a Russian noncommis-

sioned officer. It was no accident that this ploy was launched less than twenty-four hours after the vote in the UN Security Council. But it did not have the desired impact. "So what else is new?" the editors of the *New York Times* asked September 3.

(According to the Rodrigues dispatch quoted earlier, "Foreign journalists traveling to the frontlines have reported there is no evidence of Soviet troops involved in Angola, either with SWAPO or the Angolan army. The only Soviet military personnel they have met in Angola are military instructors 'with clipboards, not guns.'" The Russian soldier displayed by Pretoria was an instructor in mechanics, not a combatant.)

Instead of falling in with the apartheid regime's hue and cry about "Russians in Ango-

la," the conservative editors of the *London Economist* issued a sharp warning to Reagan about his more and more open alliance with Pretoria. "The penalty for such an association," they said in the September 5 issue, "would not merely be paid in the rest of Africa and the United Nations, but also in the allies' internal cohesion."

"The revulsion against South Africa," the *Economist* editors warned, "explodes all the way from the playing fields of New Zealand, through the streets of Harlem and Brixton, to university campuses and to congregations of sober, decent, liberal people everywhere."

Mobilizing such revulsion in action, as has been done recently in New Zealand, can be an important part of halting Pretoria's aggression against Angola. □

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Solidarity holds first congress

'We are a social movement'

By Martin Koppel

GDANSK—To thunderous applause, Lech Walesa proclaimed: "I hereby open our Congress—the First National Congress of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union, Solidarity.

"We are here," continued the president of Solidarity, "at the will of those who elected us—the working people of all Poland. Each of us separately does not count for much. Taken together, we all count for as much as the strength of those millions of people who constitute Solidarity. It is they, they alone, whom we want to remain faithful to during the present debates.

"We shall debate important issues of our union and the entire country. We are unionists, but we are Poles in the first place. Therefore we shall debate as Poles and unionists. We shall debate the road we are to follow and how to uplift our Poland."

As Walesa uttered these words, 100,000 Soviet troops, accompanied by tanks, planes, and warships were beginning an eight-day series of military maneuvers near the Polish border and in the Baltic Sea. Code-named "West-81," it is reported to be the largest exercise of its kind in the region since World War II.

Even more ominously, the Soviet authorities began to stage gatherings in factories in Leninograd and other cities to denounce Solidarity, accusing it of plotting "counterrevolution." Such "spontaneous" rallies are designed to turn Soviet workers against their brothers and sisters in Poland and could help serve as political cover for a possible intervention.

'There is no turning back'

But these attempts at intimidation did not seem to fluster the 892 delegates assembled at the congress. As the union president said in his opening address: "There is no turning back from the road we opened in August. . . . Solidarity is a fact and it shall stay whether you like it or not."

It was clear to everyone present that Solidarity truly is an established fact. The hundreds of delegates, chosen from their regions in democratic elections over the past three months, arrived from every corner of Poland.

The congress, held in the spacious Olivia sports hall on the outskirts of Gdansk, was professionally run. Teams of interpreters translated the proceedings into five different languages for foreign observers. Security guards were posted at all the entrances. Helpful union supporters staffed the reception, concession stands, telephone switchboard, and press information desk and performed a myriad of other tasks.

Delegates and observers were supplied with stacks of documents and countless other congress materials. A special congress newspaper, *Glos Wolny* (Free Voice), appeared daily, along with an English edition.

Both inside and outside the hall hung colorful banners with the word "Solidarnosc" painted in huge letters.

Enormous speakers set up outside enabled crowds of local residents to listen to the entire proceedings.

This historic event was held in Gdansk, scene of the strike in August 1980 at the Lenin Shipyard that sparked a vast working class upheaval, leading to the formation of the first mass trade union in any of the bureaucratized workers states.

The first part of the Solidarity congress, originally scheduled from September 5-7, and extended another three days, discussed amendments to the union's charter, heard initial discussion on proposals for a program of activities and demands, and elected commissions and working groups to lay the groundwork for the second part, to be held from September 26 to October 3.

At this second session the delegates will adopt a program, as well as a plan for national economic reform and for workers' self-management. They will also elect a new leadership body.

During the interim period, delegates will go back to their regions to report on and discuss with the membership the various proposals presented before the first session.

The first couple of days were taken up mainly with the establishment of numerous congress bodies.

One impressive aspect of the congress was how smoothly and democratically the proceedings went. Every question was discussed and voted on, ranging from when to take a coffee break to whether or not to hold mass in the hall every morning (the delegates voted not to hold daily mass after the second day).

'A revolution has been accomplished'

A number of substantive matters were also taken up. Andrzej Celinski reported for the National Coordinating Commission (KKP) on the union's first year of activity.

"It is no exaggeration to say," stated the report, "that a revolution has been accomplished in Poland, the main force of which is Solidarity." It explained that the economic crisis had obscured the fact that Poland had become a very different country since Solidarity's creation.

The report described the history of the fledg-

ling union, a history of constant conflicts and repeated agreements with the authorities. Despite serious threats to its existence and to the future of Poland itself, Solidarity had been able to consolidate itself as a permanent feature in the country's life. Now it needed to safeguard its gains by ratifying them legally through laws in the Sejm (parliament).

The union leadership stated that Poland faced the threat of economic catastrophe due to the mismanagement and policies of the government, dating from well before the strikes in July-August 1980. The most critical problems were food, housing, transportation, and inflation.

Solidarity had fought not for high wages but for just wages, including cost-of-living increases. It was prepared to participate with the government in plans for economic recovery as long as families with the lowest incomes were protected and mass unemployment was avoided.

The KKP report outlined a strategy of dialogue rather than confrontation, in order to achieve real and realizable changes. But some groups in the government did not want any changes. Although the union had not made progress in realizing some of its demands, it had to push forward toward economic reform.

On international relations, the union maintained contact with a number of foreign trade unions. It was committed to peace and good relations with neighbors, but on the basis of equality, respect for the independence of all nations, and the international solidarity of the working class.

In summing up the state of the union, the report stated that Solidarity, with a current membership of 9.5 million, was the most powerful social movement in Poland. The union's elections at the factory and regional levels were a lesson in democracy. It had preserved three points as its guiding principles of functioning: democracy, action, and solidarity.

"Above all," the KKP report concluded, "we have to remember that society has granted Solidarity enormous trust and sees in our union a guarantor of the renewal of the country's social life and protection of the highest national interests."

Celinski's report was followed by discussion. One Solidarity activist pointed out, as an example of the democracy of the event, the fact that *Glos Wolny* itself commented very critically on the report, describing it as "superficial." Yet the feeling of many delegates was that the report made fundamentally the correct points. The main point, echoed by delegates several times during the congress, was that Solidarity's greatest achievement was its survi-

val and consolidation after one year of existence.

A key issue for Solidarity, access to the mass media, came to the fore during the congress.

The government's failure to honor earlier agreements on this question and stepped-up slanders against Solidarity in the official press had led to a protest strike by printers and distributors that effectively shut down most official daily newspapers on August 19-20.

Then, leading up to the congress, negotiations broke down after the government refused Solidarity's conditions to ensure fair coverage of the event. In response, congress delegates voted to bar access for Polish television crews to the Olivia hall. This move was roundly applauded by the assembly.

International guests

Solidarity had invited representatives from trade union federations from many countries, some of whom addressed the congress. These included the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the World Confederation of Labor, the World Federation of Trade Unions, and union federations from Britain, France, Italy, Japan, West Germany, Denmark, Portugal, Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, Yugoslavia, and the United States.

In addition, the congress heard a speech by Polish Minister of Trade Unions Stanislaw Ciosek. He spoke of the need to increase productivity and to "build socialism" to the delegates, who listened politely, if not enthusiastically.

The greatest ovation probably went to Andrzej Wajda, the famed film director who made *Man of Marble* and its new sequel *Man of Iron*, two films that dramatically portray the long struggle by Polish workers for dignity and human rights.

The point on the agenda dealing with the union charter led to a considerable amount of discussion around various proposals concerning the structure and election of the national leadership body, the KKP. It was clear that the assembly wanted to ensure a democratically elected body responsible to its ranks.

In the structure that the assembly eventually approved, half of the members of the KKP are to be made up of the presidents of the different regional union bodies. The other half will be elected at the congress (in this case, at the second part of the congress). Each region will prepare a list of candidates, with the number of candidates based proportionally on the size of the membership in the region. The congress will then vote on the total list of candidates.

During the latter half of the congress, the discussion made a dramatic shift from more procedural and organizational questions to some of the vital social issues facing Poland.

Workers' self-management

In a resolution passed with only one dissenting vote, Solidarity called on the government to hold a nationwide referendum on workers' self-management of industry. Most delegates



Wałęsa and other delegates voting at congress in Gdansk.

seemed to share the view of Zbigniew Janas, from the Ursus tractor plant near Warsaw, that "our only hope is for self-management to put the economy in order," since the government is incapable of doing so.

Zbigniew Kowalewski, a delegate from Lodz, described workers' self-management to me as "the passing of power in the factory to the workers. The self-management body should make the basic decisions on the running of the enterprise. The manager of the enterprise should be elected and subject to recall."

In fact, self-management organizing committees have already sprung up spontaneously in countless enterprises. According to one estimate by the Polish Economics Society, there now exist 14,000 self-management organs, accounting for 60 to 70 percent of all factories in Poland.

Because of such popular sentiment for self-management, even the government has come out with a proposal on it.

The main difference between Solidarity's and the government's proposals is that the union wants to guarantee the right of workers to elect their own manager, something the authorities reject.

Solidarity, in its resolution, stated that if the government adopts an inadequate law on self-management, "we will boycott it and undertake the activities implementing the reforms in our own way."

Already there have been conflicts between Solidarity and the state over the issue of electing the manager.

The most recent test case is at the giant Huta Katowice steelworks in Silesia. The workers there held a referendum and voted on Sep-

tember 10 to dismiss the unpopular manager, Stanislaw Bednarczyk. The government has declared it will not recognize the results.

Support for workers in Eastern Europe

A second major resolution expressed support for workers in other Eastern European countries who might seek to form their own independent unions. "As the first independent union of Eastern Europe, we deeply feel a sense of community and, contrary to the lies spread in your country, we are the authentic representatives of the working class in Poland. Our aim is to struggle for better living standards for all working people.

"We support those of you who have decided to enter the difficult road of struggle for free and independent unions. We trust that our representatives can meet soon to exchange experiences."

A roar of approval from the assembly followed the near-unanimous vote in favor of this statement. This is the first time that Solidarity has addressed itself to workers in other workers states.

The response from the Polish government was immediate and predictable. A statement by the party read on national television that night attacked the resolution as an "attempt at interference in the internal affairs of other states." The Soviet government also stepped up its denunciations of the union.

Another important resolution called for elections free from party control to the Sejm and to the local People's Councils. National elections are scheduled for 1984 and the local elections for early next year.

Currently candidates are nominated by the National United Front, composed of the Polish United Workers Party (the Communist Party) and its two satellite parties, the Democratic and Peasant parties. The congress called for an unlimited number of candidates, to be nominated by any citizens' group or political organization. It demanded that the union have the right to send representatives to the polling places and that elections be held by secret ballot. The text said, "The road to the nation's sovereignty leads via democratic elections to representative organizations."

In addition, throughout the congress a number of other demands were made: that citizens be allowed to keep their passports for foreign travel until expiration, that history books be rewritten to tell the truth, that May 3 be restored as a national holiday to mark the adoption of Poland's 1791 Constitution, that the government allow Solidarity to double the circulation of its weekly national newspaper to one million.

The delegates demanded that general prosecutor Lucjan Czubinski be dismissed for having closed the investigation of a police attack on Solidarity activists in Bydgoszcz last March. No one was found responsible for that incident.

On the other hand, the congress decided not to take up a proposal by Leszek Sobieszak from Gdansk that the clause in the union char-

ter recognizing "the leading role of the party" be deleted.

At the close of the first part of the congress the delegates parted and began to return to their home regions, taking back to their fellow members the important decisions and propos-

als made in the Olivia hall. Now begin several weeks of discussion in every factory, mine, office, and union hall across Poland, preceding the second phase of the congress.

It is clear that, as a resolution passed at the Solidarity congress expressed it, "We are liv-

ing a great moment and the fate of the nation is being decided upon now. A new Poland is being built on the banks of the Vistula. We are not only a trade union, but a social movement of conscious citizens aimed at working for the independence of Poland." □

'Solidarity is a fighting union'

Lech Walesa on Solidarity's tasks

[As part of the discussion preceding Solidarity's first national congress, the following article by Lech Walesa appeared in the August 7 issue of *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, the independent union's national weekly, published in Warsaw. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

1. Solidarity had, has, and must have a sense of responsibility for the nation. No one can make us turn away from this road. In answer to all those who would seek to teach our movement lessons, we say: "Physician, first heal thyself."

2. Solidarity is a fighting trade union. We were, after all, born out of struggle, as a social movement. And we are a *movement*, not an institution or an official gathering.

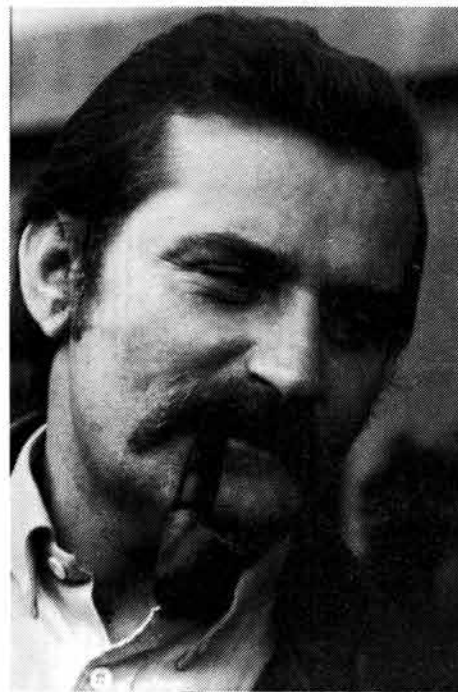
Our struggle is not concerned with power, because we are not and will not become a political party. Our program is straightforward:

- We want working people to be able to live in dignity in their own country.
- We do not want the life of any Polish family to be burdened by poverty or hunger.
- We want an end to the squandering of our labor.

3. Solidarity cannot be just a name—we must act in solidarity with each other. We cannot let ourselves be divided, either by region or by industry. Given the current difficulties in the supply of basic necessities, we cannot accept that the stronger regions are assured of better supplies, nor can we allow privileges for particular branches of industry. Our program emphasizes solidarity and justice.

4. We are well aware that everything the government promised in the social agreements signed last year in Gdansk, Szczecin, and Jastrzebie has not been fulfilled. We do not think that those agreements need to be renegotiated, but only extended and implemented over time. We cannot let ourselves be divided through the signing of several hundred agreements, one for each individual industry. It is necessary to look at last year's agreement, to consider what is possible to realize now and what should be put off until later.

We have given the government credit—not money, but confidence. But this requires caution. We have had bad experiences with giving too much in the past; now it is necessary to watch the authorities very carefully. We need the right of control, for that is the precondition



LECH WALESA

Ernest Harsch/IP

for our confidence.

5. We are not looking for a confrontation with the authorities. We want to have a dialogue and to negotiate. But we have to state clearly and firmly: It would be a mistake to think that it is possible to fool ten million unionists. A dialogue must be honest. It cannot be honest if the authorities introduce a plan on prices or safety gloves, and then on reducing noise, without letting us know what overall social and economic plans they intend to adopt or what bills on trade unions, enterprises, or workers' self-management they want to pass.

We have to remind them: We represent the interests of working people. Nothing can be done that affects us without us.

6. For the entire past year we have been putting out fires around the country. Sometimes they were lit as provocations; often they were the result of human error. We put out those fires because it was necessary to extinguish them. The country's higher interests demanded it. But we will also go beyond that, in order to firm up our ranks and to march forward in a common front.

The union must act in line with a strategic

plan, to address itself to those tasks that have to be achieved. Since August 1980 we have already attained much—we cannot lose anything that we have already won.

7. The country is in a catastrophic situation. We must understand that and together look for a solution. No one will save us but ourselves.

This does not at all mean that the union has ceased to struggle or stopped defending the interests of working people. But we must always remember that in fighting for something, we want to build, and only to destroy that which gets in the way of building.

8. We have waited for a year for the government to introduce a program for overcoming the crisis and to begin carrying out the economic reform. We cannot wait any longer. We must do it ourselves.

This does not mean that we want to seize power or to substitute for the government. It does mean that as a general union, a broad front, we will exert pressure on the government and the whole central economic apparatus to introduce a program of salvation and reform, as well as to begin implementing it. It does mean that as a factory and regional organization we will ourselves, at the same time, begin to sort out matters from below. We cannot stop, no matter how much the ship we are sailing on breaks apart.

This is, after all, our country. Poles have the right and obligation to decide the fate of their own country.

9. We are for workers' self-management. We know that it is a good tool for changing the situation in the enterprises and the country as a whole. With self-management, we will know that things depend on us. If something is better, it will be because our ideas and work were good; if it is worse, then it will be because they were bad.

Self-management must not be cosmetic; it must not be a farce like the KSR.* Self-management needs to have its own authority.

However, we are well aware that self-management by itself can settle nothing. We can foresee the idea of self-management becoming discredited if economic reform is not carried out at the same time. We have to move forward

*Konferencja Samorządu Robotniczego (Workers' Self-management Conference), the phony, party-controlled workers' self-management bodies introduced under the former regime of Edward Gierek.

on all fronts.

10. For several months now, our union has been marking time. This is not necessarily bad; we need to be able to rest for a moment. But let's not think that this can last for long.

We have given the government and party time to get things in order. We want the authorities to be strong, because that is what the country needs. But we want strong authorities who themselves have the support of society; shouting loudly is not enough.

The country also needs a strong and wise Solidarity, one that can speak with the voice of ten million members and that can act the way society expects it to. Otherwise, bitterness, want, and injustice will only lead to hatred and chaos. If we were to give up, or if Poland were to suddenly be without us, who would take our place?

Solidarity—strong, dynamic, and in the lead—that is the best guarantee of social peace and the survival of Poland. □

Wall Street vs. Solidarity

U.S. business fears example of Polish workers

By Suzanne Haig

Last month—the first anniversary of the Gdansk shipyard strikes—the big business media in the United States made some sober assessments of events in Poland.

Gone, for the most part, were the buoyant editorials of a year ago, when the *New York Times*, for example, called the demands of the Polish workers “exhilarating.”

In their place appeared more candid, and for them, more disquieting appraisals. An NBC television special noted, for instance, that “the closest thing to a Marxist revolution is taking place in Poland.”

This shift was due to two factors. The revolution in Poland has deepened, as shown by the August hunger protests, strikes by Solidarity for access to the media, as well as the burgeoning movement for workers’ self-management. And Moscow has decided, at least for the time being, that it cannot afford to attempt to militarily crush the workers’ movement.

Moscow’s retreat from intervention was an inspiring development for all supporters of the Polish workers. But for Washington’s cold warriors, it was a setback.

They counted on exploiting a Soviet invasion to beat the drums for a stronger NATO, a bigger military budget, reinstatement of the draft, and intervention in El Salvador.

And they used the threat of a Soviet military intervention in an attempt to bury the real lessons of the Polish workers’ struggle in a stream of anticommunist propaganda.

With the Reagan budget cutting basic social services and with the brutal union-busting against the air controllers, it is getting harder to conceal that the goals of the Polish workers are exactly the opposite of everything the Reagan administration and U.S. big business stand for.

So the employers’ spokespeople have begun to talk more openly about the Polish workers as an obstacle to their drive to increase profits by reducing the living standards and rights of the working class. An immediate worry plaguing them is the billions in loans owed big Western banks by Poland. In a lead editorial on this subject, the *Wall Street Journal* suggested that President Reagan would “soon have to make

some decisions on what he wants to do about Poland in the event that the Soviet Union doesn’t invade.”

The big business media increasingly predict that the Warsaw bureaucrats will prove unable to impose on the workers the severe austerity measures needed to pay back the loans and meet the usurious interest rates.

Not Jamaica

The banks “have no way of forcing the Poles to pay . . .,” *Fortune* magazine states, September 7. “The worst thing that could happen, the leading bankers agree, would be for some banks to bolt, declare a default, and try to seize Polish property—an airliner or a freighter, perhaps . . . that would bring down the curtain.” If they tried that, you see, Poland could cancel the debt—and get away with it.

Poland, they are complaining, is not Turkey or Jamaica. It is a country where capitalism has been overturned. The economy is nationalized and the state does not serve the profit interests of private capitalists.

The banks can’t force Warsaw to denationalize industries. They can’t put reactionary generals in power, who can slash public services, eliminate food subsidies, throw people out of work, and bust unions—as they have done in Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay.

The biggest obstacle to the banks in Poland isn’t the bureaucrats in Moscow and Warsaw. All they are interested in is retaining their privileges. They have tried to impose the sacrifices the banks demand.

The big obstacle facing the banks is the existence of Solidarity. They can’t expect anything near the scale of sacrifice imposed on American workers, British workers, Turkish workers, or Jamaican workers, because the Polish workers united and organized to fight back.

Workers ‘going too far’

Comparing the air controllers strike in the United States with actions called by Solidarity, the *Christian Science Monitor* observed August 7, “President Reagan had a stronger hand than Polish Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzels-

ki partly because there were only some 13,000 air traffic controllers in the strike that defied the U.S. government.

“In Poland the entire labor movement, supported by the farming population, was in the real opposition.”

Speaking bluntly about these problems, the *Wall Street Journal* editors called “naive” any idea that the International Monetary Fund can get a foothold in Poland and steer the economy toward capitalism.

This “assumes that the Soviet commissars on the one hand and the Polish labor unions on the other would roll over and play dead while the IMF, in return for its lines of credit, tried to enforce certain liberalizations in the structure of Poland’s economy and a severe austerity program,” they wrote in their August 27 editorial.

As for more loans, “*quid pro quos* from Poland would be worthless,” they warned. “The only proper condition that a lender could attach to a loan is that Poland go capitalist . . . [a gamble] the west, in the long run, will lose.”

They oppose any more loans by Washington, the banks, or the IMF. Their solution is to try to put on an economic squeeze.

The real enemy, these articles openly admit, are not the officials in Moscow or Warsaw, but the Polish workers who are “going too far,” and need to “buckle down and get to work,” as the *Monitor* put it.

More and more, the media is viewing Poland in the context of the impact of the world capitalist economic crisis on workers everywhere. After all, what the banks—with the cooperation of the Polish bureaucrats—are trying to do in Poland is only what big business is doing in the United States under Reagan, in Britain under Thatcher, and around the world.

They recognize the Poles as a dangerous example to workers of how to resist the demands of big business.

The British weekly *Economist* had this to say in an article that was highlighted on the front cover with a photo of Marx’s grave bearing the words, “Workers of all lands, unite!”

“Most people through most of the past five years have wanted to throw their existing governments out. Poland today is a mirror that East Europe holds up to the bourgeois world, where incumbent heads of government in the five largest democracies . . . have lost six out of their seven elections since late 1976.”

‘Rather be in Poland’

But while big business was taking a hard look at Poland, so was the labor movement.

“I would rather be a controller in Poland,” proclaimed a placard carried by a picketer on the first day of the strike by air-traffic controllers.

In Chicago, controllers carried the Polish flag on the picket line.

Speaking to the strikers at a rally August 8 in Oberlin, Ohio, American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations head

Lane Kirkland pointed to Reagan's hypocrisy, praising the workers in Poland for doing what he was jailing controllers for doing in the U.S.

To working people all over the world, Poland has become a beacon of resistance against the austerity drives.

In Poland the workers are fighting—and winning. They have a labor leadership that consistently fights in their interests. They know the importance of resisting all attempts by their enemies to divide them among themselves or from their allies.

Poland has become a link in the chain of working-class resistance to the big business offensive.

The demonstrations and strikes of the Polish workers are linked to the British youth fighting austerity and racism; to the Irish hunger strikers giving their lives to end British rule in Ireland; to the freedom fighters in South Africa, Namibia, and Angola; to the heroic Vietnamese, Laotians, and Kampuchean who refuse to bow in the face of hunger; to the Salvadoran workers and farmers who have stymied Rea-

gan's attempts to stabilize the junta; to the French workers, who are putting their stamp on many of the policies of the Mitterrand government; and to the Cubans, Nicaraguans, and Grenadians who are shaking Central America, the Caribbean, and the world by their revolutionary example.

And the Polish workers are linked as well to the air controllers in the United States who are defending their human dignity, and to all who are fighting against Reagan's budget cuts and antiworker policies. □

Iran

Testament of Mohammed Reza Saadati

Mujahedeen leader questioned bloc with liberals

By Nader Avini

[The following article appeared in the August 4 issue of *Hemmat*, a weekly newspaper published in Tehran by the Workers Unity Party (HVK). The HVK is one of three organizations in Iran affiliated to the Fourth International. The Translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Mohammed Reza Saadati, member of the Central Committee of the People's Mujahedeen Organization, was executed in Evin Prison in the late hours of Sunday, July 26.

Saadati, a comrade-in-arms of such anti-imperialist fighters as Rezai, fought for years against the American-backed Pahlavi regime's repression. He spent time in Evin as a prisoner of the shah, and was repeatedly tortured by SAVAK.

It is an irony of history that Saadati was executed in Evin Prison, after the power of the masses of workers and toilers had liberated him from there in the course of the February [1979] insurrection. Saadati was executed by the very regime that came to power through that insurrection.

Shortly after the February insurrection, Mohammed Reza Saadati was arrested by officials of the Islamic Republic and accused of spying for the Soviet Union. This charge and his arrest were part of the poisonous propaganda against the Mujahedeen that is still propagated to this day by certain circles in the government. Despite widespread demands for Saadati's release, he languished in jail without trial for more than one year.

Saadati denied the charges, and he was defended in that by such nationally known figures as Ayatollah Taleghani and the leaders of the Mujahedeen. Nonetheless, the courts sentenced him to ten years imprisonment. This sharpened the antagonism between the country's leaders and the Mujahedeen leadership, which in turn brought about the bitter events of

these last few months and laid the basis for Saadati's execution.

Such an outcome was fostered by the political bankruptcy of the Mujahedeen leadership, which politically disarmed the organization and its members and supporters. The leadership's approval of and support for terrorist activities—particularly the treacherous bombing of the headquarters of the Islamic Republican Party [IRP], and, even worse, the Mujahedeen's political-military communiqué placing terrorist activity on the order of the day—opened the way for the arrest and execution of a large number of Mujahedeen members and supporters. At the same time, all this rendered impossible vigorous campaigns for the release of Saadati.

We do not have any information about the proceedings in Saadati's second trial. It was only two days after his execution that the Islamic Revolutionary Court published a statement giving as the reasons Saadati's continued spying for the Soviets, continued relations—from inside prison, of course—with the Central Committee of the Mujahedeen, and participation in the assassination of Mohammed Kachuyi [governor of Evin Prison, killed in June].

Not a shred of evidence was presented to the public to substantiate these charges.

Let us ignore the first two, since one cannot take seriously the charge of spying for the Soviets from solitary confinement, and since it is only natural for a member of the Central Committee of the Mujahedeen to maintain relations with the leadership of the organization, which has not been declared illegal.

The third charge—participation in the killing of Mohammed Kachuyi, governor of Evin prison—is clearly contrary to Saadati's political character. We have the testament Saadati left, which essentially is a reflection of his political views in the days leading up to his death. It was addressed to the members of the Mujahedeen and was printed in every mass-circu-

lation newspaper.

This testament refutes the charge that Saadati participated in the killing of Mohammad Kachuyi.

Saadati wrote: "My brothers, before they hand down the death sentence, I have been able to safeguard my ideas from the danger of death."

In response to the Mujahedeen leadership's political-military communiqué number 25, Saadati said: "My dear brothers, I call on you to consider this carefully. I do not in the slightest way want my death to be the source of tensions; rather, I hope that while my life has not promoted peace and love, my death can at least spread a spirit of unity and peace in our society, the spirit that our enemy, the imperialists, are deeply afraid of."

The main conclusion of Saadati's testament is, in fact, the centrality of the imperialist danger to our revolution and the need for solidarity with the anti-imperialist positions of Imam Khomeini. Saadati writes about this in his statement:

"My dear brothers, in closing this testament, I must state my position on Imam Khomeini very clearly. Brothers, in the current circumstances of our beloved homeland, Imam Khomeini embodies the indignation of the destitute masses of Iran—and even of the rest of the region—against the world-devouring plunderers and criminals. My brothers, why do we not fortify this indignation? . . .

"Brothers, the imperialists and their mercenaries are trying to eliminate this symbol, or at least weaken it. We must not be like the liberals. There is a difference between liberal forces and a revolutionary people's organization."

In this way Saadati's testament and his entire political thought discredited the charge that he participated in the murder of Kachuyi, and the other charges as well.

Saadati indicated that the bitterness between the country's leaders and the leadership of the

Mujahedeen has deep roots in the past, but that deepening this bitterness is not in the interests of the revolution. He said:

"I think we are still caught up in problems that we faced in prison [under the shah] and that are already behind us. In prison we stubbornly furthered the development of bitterness and animosity. This finally led to polarization. But current circumstances, based on post-revolutionary reality, are different from those in prison."

Saadati criticized the policies presented by the Mujahedeen leadership. "My brothers," he wrote, "I bear my share of responsibility for taking this course, a course that is rapidly creating the conditions for a coup d'etat. Perhaps you will say that we were not the ones who chose this course, and that it was imposed on us. But, my brothers, since we are a party to this conflict, we could have gotten out from under such an imposition, just as we are now remaining under it."

Saadati emphasized instead the need for a vigorous struggle against imperialism, based on the experiences of the revolution. "Brothers, no matter how much I searched for such a line of demarcation, I couldn't find it. In Vietnam, Kampuchea, Algeria, Cuba, Nicaragua, and elsewhere, the revolutionary forces depended on the people as a whole. The imperialists, dependent capitalists, feudalists, nobility, and their mercenaries were on the other side. But where did we draw our line of demarcation?"

Mohammed Reza Saadati correctly pointed to the basic problems with the Mujahedeen leadership's line. Emphasizing the centrality of the imperialist threat and opposing the sectarian policies of the Mujahedeen leadership—which are based on hostility toward the IRP from the viewpoint of the liberals—Saadati said:

"My dear brothers, we need to reconsider the basic aspects of our policy. With the forces we have all around the country we can effect a principled and historic turn, and thus transform the bleak atmosphere so pleasing to our homeland's enemy into one overflowing with struggle, organization, and love. History will judge us, my brothers. Let us not be the ones who tomorrow will bear responsibility for defeat on our shoulders."

Saadati's errors

While the development of Saadati's views on the suicidal political positions of the Mujahedeen leadership is positive, it must still be noted that he was not aware of the need for independent action and organization of the masses in moving the struggle forward, nor of the historical role of the revolutionary party.

Thus, in reacting against the sectarian policies of the Mujahedeen leadership, Saadati said: "In the end, brothers, you will bring up the fact that the likes of a Sadat will eventually emerge out of the ruling system. But why pose it this way when what we are now faced with is a Nasser? Is it not the duty of revolutionaries to strengthen a Nasser?"

But the duty of revolutionaries is not to

"strengthen a Nasser"; rather, it is to unite in anti-imperialist action with such a government. On the agenda for today is an anti-imperialist united front. At the same time, revolutionary experience has shown that only in maintaining class independence and independent action by the workers and toilers can the struggle against capitalism and imperialism be strengthened.

Defending the achievements of the February insurrection—and even defending the lives of anti-imperialist fighters like Saadati—comes about through successfully organizing, strengthening, and broadening the independent organizations of the workers, peasants, and other toilers. Advancing the war and revolution depends on the independent actions of the toilers in the field of class struggle. The workers, the backbone of our revolution, play the leading role in this. They must have their own independent party if they are to face up to the enfeebling and divisive policies of the capitalist

politicians and the conciliationist parties and thus strengthen unity in the anti-imperialist trenches.

Mohammed Reza Saadati was a brave fighter who strove to advance our revolution until the last moments of his life. The tragedy of Saadati's execution will convince real revolutionaries and anti-imperialist youth—especially, little by little, members and supporters of the Mujahedeen—of the need for a resolute struggle against imperialism and capitalism.

While the capitalist policies of the government are responsible for Saadati's martyrdom, the suicidal line of the Mujahedeen leadership—which prepared the ground politically for his execution—cannot be passed over in silence. Saadati called on the Mujahedeen's members and supporters to reconsider their basic policy. Revolutionary socialists can only reiterate that socialism is the only way to liberate semicolonial Iran and the rest of humanity as well. □

HKE's proposals on economy

'Put levers in hands of oppressed'

[The following article appeared in the August 24 issue of *Kargar*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) of Iran. The HKE is one of three groups in Iran affiliated with the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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According to the August 11 issue of *Jomhuri-e Eslami*, the Cement and Construction Materials Group of the National Industries Organization has prepared a plan to centralize the cement industry and form a National Cement Company.

The report noted that the workers' expectations were based on active participation in the affairs of the factories and solving their difficulties with their own forces: "Conditions require measures to meet production needs through mutual assistance and an exchange of necessities, machinery, and experts among similar factories in a given region."

The problem of national economic recovery—overcoming the current irrationality and crisis—is one of the vital issues that the broad masses of toilers have been faced with ever since the February insurrection.

The country remains in bad economic shape. The high cost of living, inflation, hoarding, and unemployment fall most heavily on the shoulders of the workers and the oppressed masses. Thus the workers and the Islamic factory *shoras* (committees) have often raised their own demands, based on the need to end the current economic crisis and advance the anti-imperialist struggle. They have exerted themselves in various ways in order to further these revolutionary aims.

After referring to such efforts, the article in *Jomhuri-e Eslami* concluded: "If we want the

cement industry to be reliable and under control, a sound plan must be carried out. This means taking up the problem of generalizing consumption, and, because the cement industry is considered part of heavy industry, a plan to centralize it should be established."

Carrying out a plan for a National Cement Company would be a positive step toward implementing further measures to put an end to the current economic chaos—which is a result of the long repressive rule by the Pahlavi dynasty and the imperialists, as well as U.S. imperialism's economic blockade against the Iranian revolution.

Capitalist sabotage

After the February insurrection, U.S. imperialism and its internal agents—that is, the 500 capitalist and landlord families—saw that all their interests were in jeopardy and plotted in various ways to defeat the Iranian revolution. Besides their efforts to bring about a coup and military intervention, they stopped at nothing to blockade the revolution economically, sabotage industry, and starve the revolution. The experience of the vast majority of workers shows how the capitalists have closed factories, halted production, and hoarded raw materials and commodities during the two years since the insurrection. They aim to bring the oppressed masses to their knees, ruin the economy, and create chaos.

The Cuban revolution's more than twenty years of experience, as well as the experience of the Nicaraguan revolution (which occurred after the victory of the February insurrection), confirm that an economic system geared toward meeting the needs of the broad masses of working people can be achieved despite the intrigues of imperialism. What is required is a

clear and vigorous anti-imperialist program.

Among the key aims indicated by the plan for the cement industry are "increasing productivity and sound utilization of resources and capacity." This is true for all heavy industry. In backward countries that face illiteracy, a low level of technology, and a shortage of specialists, centralizing and incorporating similar industries allows for economizing on these specialized resources. It makes it possible to use them more soundly.

Moreover, incorporating the cement industry into a single economic unit will make it possible to supervise distribution and prevent hoarding and profiteering by the capitalists. Incorporating the cement industry with the building materials industry is also necessary for putting a housing plan into effect.

Since many industries are tied together, it is clear that centralizing the cement and construction materials industries is not sufficient by itself.

It is necessary that all related industries be centralized and unified in order to face the U.S. imperialist economic boycott and boost production of essential commodities, thus meeting the needs of the majority of the people and of the fighters at the front. All industrial sectors—such as transport, mining, automobiles, food, textiles, and so on—must be centralized. In implementing such measures it will become clear how production is proceeding, what imports are badly needed, how much we can export, and so on. In this way the basis is laid for a planned economy.

It is clear that the oppressed people and the fighters at the front stand to gain the most from implementing such a revolutionary step. Only the profiteering capitalists and hoarders, who line their pockets by fleecing the workers and toilers, could be opposed to such measures.

Although the proposal to centralize the cement industry points up the need for workers' participation in determining how the factories are run, attention has not been paid to the need for workers control over production and distribution by the Islamic factory shoras. In factories where the Islamic shoras have taken control over production, experience shows that this is the only way to raise production and halt capitalist sabotage.

The revolution and the eleven months of war against the Iraqi/imperialist invasion have shown that while the workers and toilers have sacrificed, the profiteering capitalists have been busy robbing the oppressed and dealing blows to the revolution. Since the workers and toilers have been in the front ranks of production and fighting imperialism, the country's economy must be put under their control and at the service of meeting social needs.

Opening the books

Experience has also shown that unless the account books are opened and capitalist business secrets abolished, workers control by the shoras is only an empty promise. All the workers shoras that have clashed with manage-

ment over the supervision of production in the factories know that opening the books is one of the most common points of contention.

In fact, management tells all sorts of lies with their secret records, balance sheets, and production account books. This has taken on particularly vast proportions in heavy industry. In order to impose control by the state and the shoras of working people in this field, the account books of similar industries should be consolidated, and the facts and secrets of the concerns, the deals made by the capitalists, and the wage scales should all be under the workers' supervision and subject to review by the shoras.

The most important thing is for the government to adopt a law abolishing all business secrets and providing severe penalties for capitalists who do not obey. Control over the account books by every shora and workers' organization would guarantee the effective implementation of this law in the interests of the oppressed.

In the cement and building materials industry, a general union of shoras is gradually being formed. Forming such general unions of the shoras in similar industries is the best way to establish control over the production and distribution of necessary commodities.

All of industry, and the country's economy as a whole, are tied together by a banking network. Banks are the centers of economic life in our times. So it stands to reason that control and organization of production and distribution in the cement industry, or in any other industry, would be meaningless without control over banking.

A basic step in solving our country's economic situation would be to nationalize the banks and incorporate them all into a single state bank. Real control is only possible through one state bank with a central accounting system, supervised by the bank employees and the workers shoras. By doing this, the government could see where, how, and when billions of tomans are coming and going. This would make it possible to set all the country's economic affairs in order. Production and distribution of basic products could then serve the interests of the masses of toilers and advance the revolution—not in words, but in action.

The experience of two years of revolution shows how to achieve these goals.

After eleven months of Iraqi/imperialist military intervention, the functionaries of the government and the officials of the Ministry of Labor and the National Industries Organization have yet to propose a plan for cutting the hands of the profiteering capitalists away from the country's economy and putting an end to their sabotage of industry.

Workers demonstrate

In marches to the Ministry of Labor and to the National Industries Organization, many workers and Islamic factory shoras have demonstrated against the inaction and inefficiency of these institutions in solving the economic

crisis and putting all the country's economic resources into the struggle against U.S. imperialism and the Iraqi military invasion.

Thus, many revolutionary and Islamic workers have rapidly grasped that in order to confront capitalist sabotage and solve the problems of high living costs, inflation, and hoarding, one cannot rely on the bureaucracies left over from the times of oppression. Instead of looking toward the procrastinators and do-nothings in the bureaucracies, the workers and their organizations need to mobilize their own forces.

Mobilizing the workers for control over the centralized industries will open up the possibility of planning the economy in such a way as to meet the country's needs, from military production to the day-to-day requirements of the majority of the people. All the experience in management acquired by the shoras must be generalized in order to prevent capitalist sabotage and profiteering, produce for the war effort, and meet the overall needs of the population.

The experience of two years of revolution, as well as the experiences of other revolutions, shows that without such decisive measures against capitalist profiteering and without putting control over the levers of the economy into the hands of the oppressed, there is no way out of the current economic crisis. □

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Qaddafi denounces U.S. aggression

At a September 1 rally in the Libyan capital of Tripoli marking the twelfth anniversary of the overthrow of the monarchy, Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi denounced Washington's efforts to destabilize his regime. On August 19, U.S. warplanes shot down two Libyan jets over the Gulf of Sidra, a body of water claimed by the North African country.

The Reagan administration has justified its provocations by claiming that the Qaddafi regime is "a patron saint of terrorism."

Colonel Qaddafi replied that "America is the kingdom of terrorism—it terrorizes the peoples who resist imperialist domination, who only seek their place in the sun. . . ."

In his speech, Qaddafi indicated that his government was considering closer ties with the Soviet Union and other workers states. "We are obliged to ally ourselves militarily with anyone who is prepared to defend us against America," he declared. "No neutralism is possible in time of war. The neutrals are only the fainthearted and the capitulators. . . . For my part, I think that we should ally with the enemy of our enemy, who would thus necessarily be our friend."

The Tripoli rally was preceded by a "conference of solidarity" with Libya. According to the September 8 *Le Monde*, it was attended by more than 1,000 persons representing governments or political organizations of eighty-five countries.

Among those attending the conference and rally was Commander Daniel Ortega, coordinator of Nicaragua's Junta of National Reconstruction. Ortega hailed Libya as an "international center of the struggle against imperialism and racism." Libya recently granted a \$100 million loan to Nicaragua after Washington cut off aid to the Central American country.

Torture in South Korea

Beatings and torture of political prisoners is "routine" in South Korea, according to a report by Henry Scott Stokes in the September 6 *New York Times* based on interviews with former political prisoners and their relatives.

According to the sources, the beatings began in November 1979 and then escalated after Lieut. Gen. Chun Doo Hwan took formal power as head of a junta in May 1980. The aim was to terrorize political dissidents.

Stokes cited three specific examples of mistreatment:

- Kwon Un San, a twenty-seven-year-old student was arrested on June 18, 1980, allegedly for discussing with other students throwing a bomb on the stage where the Miss Universe contest was being held that month. "They were just chatting," his mother said. "They were indignant that a Miss Universe

competition was held here just after the Kwangju incident, with hundreds of people killed by the Government troops down there."

Kwon was beaten so badly that he had to use crutches at his trial. He was eventually sentenced to ten years in prison.

- Lee Kwan Po, an intellectual, was arrested June 9 in Chonju, where we was attending a lecture by Ham Sok Hon, a Quaker activist, at which students handed out leaflets demanding that President Chun resign.

"Without asking questions they started to beat me," Lee said. "Finally about 2 A.M. they interrogated me, claiming that I had agitated the students, which I had not." Lee was released after two days, without charge.

- Han Soo San, a writer, was detained in May for publishing a novel that included scenes from the life of workers and unfavorable indirect portrayals of General Chun.

Han was tortured with electric shocks. Following an international campaign in his defense, he was released in July.

Black unionists detained in South Africa

In the widest police action against Black unionists in recent years in South Africa, 205 persons from three different unions were detained near East London on September 6.

The unionists were members of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU), the General Workers Union, and the African Food and Canning Workers Union, all of which have been carrying out militant organizing drives in the East London area in recent months.

The unionists were on the way back to their homes in Mdantsane after a meeting in East London. Their buses were stopped and diverted to a police station.

Mdantsane is part of the Ciskei Bantustan, one of South Africa's ten African reserves, which is supposed to get its "independence" in December. The Ciskei police work directly with the South African authorities.

According to Ciskei Police Chief Charles Sebe, the unionists were being charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act, which allows for three months' detention without trial. Sebe told one reporter that the workers were detained after they had been "singing freedom songs, denouncing the present system of government, upholding a Mandela-type government and waving black power salutes."

Nelson Mandela, who is currently serving a life sentence in the notorious Robben Island prison, is a central leader of the outlawed African National Congress.

SAAWU President Thozamile Gqweta described the arrests as "outrageous." He declared, "There is nothing illegal about singing

freedom songs—this is clearly another crack-down on unionists."

This is the second major clampdown on trade unionists by the Ciskei police this year. In May, at least fifty-seven union leaders and organizers were detained for indefinite periods.

This repression comes at a time of increased Black union activity around the country. Despite government attempts to hamper Black workers with new antilabor legislation, membership in independent Black unions has been growing significantly. Workers, moreover, have been carrying out strikes and other labor actions in various cities. The unions in East London have been in the forefront of this fight.

In August, it was disclosed in the all-white Parliament that the security police had drawn up a plan for "breaking" the SAAWU. In confirming this, Police Minister Louis le Grange said that the document had been distributed to a number of company managers for their support.

Paris demonstration supports Irish hunger strikers

Nearly 10,000 people demonstrated on August 27 at the British embassy in Paris in support of the demand that the Thatcher government grant political status to republican prisoners held in the jails of Northern Ireland.

The demonstration was sponsored by the Paris-region of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the Committee to Defend Irish Political Prisoners, and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR).

On the same day, three dozen CGT members blocked a runway at the Rennes airport, delaying the departure of a London-bound flight for one hour. The action was to protest the "murder of young Irish patriots."

In addition, a delegation from the French Democratic Federation of Labor (CFDT) met with the British chargé d'affaires in Paris. The union representatives stressed the "pressing need for a negotiated political solution aimed at ending the dramatic situation in Northern Ireland."

The CGT, which is led by the Communist Party, and the CFDT, which is close to the Socialist Party, are the two largest union federations in France.

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'The hunger strike is the cutting edge'

Interview with Sinn Féin representative

[The following is an interview with Jim Gibney, a member of the James Connolly branch of Sinn Féin, the political party that shares the views of the outlawed Provisional Irish Republican Army.]

[The interview was obtained in Belfast on August 25 by Jamie Doughney, a frequent contributor to the Australian revolutionary socialist weekly *Direct Action*.]

* * *

Question. How does the republican movement view the stage the struggle in Ireland has reached today?

Answer. That's not an easy question to answer, because there are a number of factors which contribute to it. I think that what can be said is that the freedom struggle is probably at the strongest stage it's ever been at over the last ten or twelve years.

While the early 1970s saw an upsurge in armed struggle and mass struggle, what we're seeing today is an upsurge in mass struggle.

This isn't superseding armed struggle, but is actually complementing it.

This mass struggle is having a considerable

What we're seeing today is an upsurge in the mass struggle . . .

impact on the political establishment in the South of this country, the Northern political establishment on the nationalist side, namely the SDLP [Social Democratic and Labour Party], and, of course, the British Labour Party. Also some sections of the ruling class in Britain are beginning to rethink their attitude to their presence in this country.

The single most important factor causing the dramatic developments over the last number of months has been the hunger strike in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. To date we have had ten men die on hunger strike, and another six presently on hunger strike, with others to join them. And there is the possibility of further deaths.

Now, the hunger strike itself has crystallized for many people in this country and abroad just what the British are doing in Ireland. And it is exposing the contradictions which are inherent in Irish society, North and South, on the national question and on Partition.

It's those contradictions that are being exposed that we would say are the signposts of progress.

We would say that developments since

March 1 this year, when the hunger strike started, have been rapid and dramatic.

Since the Bobby Sands election in Fermanagh/South Tyrone, the hunger strike issue has changed one government in the South. Probably that is the first time that [something like that] has ever happened in the history of the twenty-six counties.

We have also had the so-called middle ground cut away from the Social Democratic forces in the North by the hunger strikers' deaths. And we have had the recent by-election success of Owen Carron, who stood on an H-Block ticket supporting the prisoners' five demands.*

In political terms, if you like, the veil of secrecy that the British government had built up around her presence in Ireland over the last five years has been torn apart. The dirty little war it has been engaged in here has been exposed to the world by the bravery and the heroism of the prisoners in the H-Blocks.

So, from that point of view, we would say that the struggle for an independent republic is progressing at a satisfactory rate.

But obviously the deaths of the prisoners on hunger strike, and the human misery for their relatives, is something which we don't need to develop the struggle.

The dynamism of the struggle at the moment is a spin-off of the prisoners' determination. But we would be quite happy if the British government would just resolve the issue, and resolve it in the morning. Because we don't need the deaths of prisoners on hunger strike to advance our cause for freedom. We'd much prefer that we were doing it with our own resources on the outside, and not cause the type of human misery that the hunger strike has.

Q. What has been the effect on the community of the prisoners' deaths? Is that starting to take its toll?

A. I think that one has to be perfectly honest and say that the deaths of the prisoners has had a depressing effect on the nationalist community in the North. And the reason why is that the nationalist community has a close affinity with the prisoners. They feel for the prisoners as if one of their family has died, and died an agonizing death.

So, it does sap their will, if you like. This is

*The five demands of the hunger strike are: that the prisoners not be required to wear prison uniforms, that they not be required to do prison work, that they be allowed to associate with other republican prisoners in jail, that they have increased mail and visitation rights, and that they get the same time off their sentences as other prisoners.

what the British government is banking on.

But something the British overlook is that while it saps the will temporarily, it ultimately hardens people's determination to continue to support the struggle for freedom in the country. It convinces them of the republican logic that peace in Ireland will only come about when the British are removed and Partition is dismantled.

I would say, and there's no doubt about it, that the deaths of the prisoners are depressing the nationalist community in the North in one

The hunger strike has crystallized what the British are doing in Ireland . . .

sense. But in another sense it's strengthening their resolve and commitment to continue the struggle for freedom and support the republican movement.

However, I wouldn't read too much into that [depressing] effect on people, because it hasn't lessened the number of people on the streets protesting. And the nationalist people, beleaguered as they may be due to military repression, are sophisticated enough politically to see that the hunger strike is the cutting edge in the situation and is having more of a political impact than one would have expected.

Q. What do you see is the next stage of the struggle, particularly in regard to elections in the South and future elections here?

A. Just to paraphrase the [Sinn Féin] vice-president, Gerry Adams, who was speaking the other night to a journalist for the *Irish Times*: he said we are overhauling our political organization North and South with a view to contesting elections.

We had been considering, over the last number of years, contesting elections at the local government level and national level. And the hunger strike itself—the electoral gains made through the hunger strike—have encouraged us to look at this much more seriously and see if we can speed up the internal reorganization required to win when we do go to elections.

I think that what you can take for granted, very definitely, is that election strategy will become as important to the republican movement in the coming months and years as the armed struggle has been over the last ten years.

Q. Does this foreshadow a much more aggressive political campaign in the South to



"International solidarity is crucial to the success of this struggle." Rally in support of Irish hunger strikers outside British High Commission in Sydney, Australia, August 9.

take on the traditional parties there?

A. Yes. What can be accepted from what we are discussing at the moment is that we will challenge the partitionist parties that have grown up in the twenty-six counties. The political establishment in the South is ripe for change and we believe that there is enough political disenchantment among the working class and the small-farming community for us to make significant inroads.

Q. The press seemed to indicate, from my reading of it, that Owen Carron left open the possibility that if the hunger strike issue was resolved he would actually take his seat in Westminster. Is that accurate?

A. That is totally inaccurate. Owen Carron is a member of Sinn Féin. While he didn't stand on a Sinn Féin ticket, he did state clearly that he would be an abstentionist MP.

But, I make the point that he is an active abstentionist. This means that he will carry out the functions that are required of him as an MP for the people of his area. He will defend their interests, whether it be in social, economic, or political terms wherever he can.

He will not be going to Westminster because

the Westminster Parliament is an alien parliament—it's a foreign parliament. We do not accept that the British government has any jurisdiction in this country whatsoever. Therefore we will not go near Westminster, either now or at any stage in the future.

Q. How does the Republican movement see its relationship to other struggles going on in the world? For example, the Middle East, the Central American struggles?

A. As a revolutionary organization our objective is to establish a socialist republic in Ire-

We are overhauling our political organization with a view to contesting elections . . .

land. To that end we have an affinity with, and are in solidarity with, any revolutionary organizations that are struggling to overthrow oppression in any country of the world where the mass of people are oppressed.

On the struggles you referred to: in the Middle East we identify with the Palestinian strug-

gle against Zionism in Israel; we identify with the struggles that are taking place in Latin America against the numerous dictators that are backed up there by American imperialism.

We are at one with those people because we understand the suffering that they're going through and because, perhaps at a lower level, we're suffering similar to them. We are at one with them and their struggles for freedom.

Q. You mentioned that the movement is struggling for a socialist republic. How do you see that side of the struggle, the socialist aspect, as emerging in the future?

A. This is an ongoing process that we've been involved in for some years.

Our various opponents have attempted to label us with different tags: in the late 1969-early 1970s period we were dubbed as a fascist organization, "green nationalists"; in the middle of the 1970s we were dubbed as communists; later on we were again dubbed as fascists.

But, we see ourselves as socialists in the tra-

We have an affinity with any revolutionary organizations that are struggling to overthrow oppression in any country of the world . . .

dition of the republican socialist mentor, if you like, James Connolly.

We, very definitely, are interested in the socialist reconstruction of this country. We are very definitely interested in establishing a society which caters for the needs of the working class and the small-farming community. And we are diametrically opposed to capitalism and the type of society capitalism has built up over the last 200 years.

So, in that sense, we are very definitely out for revolutionary change in society and we see this as an ongoing thing.

We don't fall into any of the political categories: namely, we don't claim ourselves to be Marxist.

However, it would be very stupid and naïve to say that Marxism hasn't had an influence on the thinking of contemporary republicans, who have been to prison, who have read Marx.

Obviously he has had an influence. In fact he has had an influence on every revolutionary organization in the twentieth century. So it would be absurd for us to say he hasn't influenced our organization.

But I do make the point that we are a socialist organization in the tradition of James Connolly. We intend continuing the struggle to see the socialist republic that we're after established.

Q. How important do you see the international movement of solidarity with the Irish struggle?

A. International solidarity is crucial to the

success of this struggle. Because, if anything has shown the need for international support, it has been the hunger strike over the last number of months.

Now we have seen that the British government is frantically trying to reverse the gains that have been made internationally. They're sending out one diplomatic mission after another to try to counter the international offensive of solidarity groups in support of the Irish struggle.

So we consider international solidarity a very, very high priority.

We welcome the solidarity we have received in Australia, and in America and Europe. Those are the three principal areas—and, of course, in Britain where solidarity has been growing as parts of the political establishment become disenchanted with their war in Ireland.

Q. Earlier you mentioned developments in the British Labour Party. How important do you see developments there?

A. Well, we're very encouraged by the advent of Tony Benn, who we see as a very important figure to educate sections of the political establishment in Britain who are disenchanted with the British war in Ireland.

We are encouraged—and again this is another side effect of the hunger strike—by the fact that there are something like fifty or sixty motions [on Ireland] to the annual conference of the Labour Party.

We are convinced that the only way progress will be made in Britain is through an understanding among the rank and file of the British Labour Party about what their British rulers are doing in this country in their name.

Therefore we see them as an important element to aim our publicity and our program at.

We have been consistently doing that over the last number of years, by sending delegations to meet influential members of the British Labour Party on a local, constituency level. Because we think that while we may make progress occasionally with people like Tony Benn, it is essential that the British Labour Party grass roots at the constituency level understand what's going on. And we are encouraged that things will begin to move there.

I think that as the capitalist recession deepens under this crazy woman Thatcher, it becomes all the easier for us. Because the British Labour Party then becomes more radical in its approach to its own political problems in Britain. It is easier, therefore, to encourage it to look at Ireland again. □

H-Block activists discuss campaign

National conference registers growth of movement

By Gerry Foley

DUBLIN—The second national conference of the H-Block campaign was held in Dundalk on September 6. It has clarified the present situation in the movement supporting the demands of the nationalist hunger strikers in the British jails of Northern Ireland following the death of ten of their number.

The gathering indicated that the movement remains determined and on the course it set for itself more than a year ago. But it is also suffering from a loss of momentum.

This is indicated by the fact that several prisoners have abandoned their hunger strikes and others have been taken off by relatives who, faced with the British government's intransigence, are no longer prepared to accept the deaths of their loved ones.

On September 4, for example, relatives of Matt Devlin instructed doctors to save his life on the fifty-second day of his fast. And on the day of the Dundalk conference itself, Irish Republican Army (IRA) hunger striker Lawrence McKewn was taken off his fast by relatives after he slipped into a coma. McKewn had gone seventy days without food.

In addition, at the Dundalk conference it was announced that the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) was scaling down its participation in the fasts. INLA members have been taking part in the hunger strike alongside members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army.

Sean Flynn, a leader of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), which shares the views of the outlawed INLA, told conference participants that the INLA would no longer maintain the ratio of one INLA hunger striker for every three from the IRA. It was suggested that a ratio of one-to-ten would more accurately reflect the number of prisoners from each organiza-

tion within the H-Blocks of Long Kesh.

If the one-to-three ration were maintained, Flynn explained, all twenty-eight INLA prisoners in the H-Blocks would be dead within six months.

Growth of movement

Despite the problems facing the H-Block campaign, the Dundalk conference also registered its growth into a mass movement. Over 400 local action groups were represented, as against 20 at the first conference a year ago and 250 at the end of the first hunger strike last December.

The growing weight of the movement was indicated by the presence of Paddy Duffy, the bellwether leader of Northern Ireland's moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). Up to now Duffy has been hesitant to attend H-Block functions.

The conference also reflected a gain in experience. Ultraleftist calls for "immediate general strike" and other dramatic proposals for leaping over the current level of the movement fell on deaf ears in Dundalk.

Coverage of the conference in *An Phoblacht*, the newspaper of the Provisionals reasserted the republican movement's commitment to a broad and representative campaign.

The *An Phoblacht* article noted approvingly that "motions passed at the conference reaffirmed the previous direction of the campaign: building a mass, peaceful protest movement aiming at awakening the national conscience to the plight of the prisoners and pressurizing the 'power plants' in this country such as the Free State parties (particularly the [ruling government] coalition), the SDLP, and the Catholic hierarchy into backing the prisoners five demands."

The newspaper of the Provisionals also saluted the "praise-worthy attempt to remedy an

obvious deficiency, that is, the campaign's failure to make an impact on the trade union movement. . . ."

An Phoblacht also quoted Bernadette Devlin McAliskey's report from the National H-Block Committee.

McAliskey stated that "the National Committee has always asserted that the five demands will be conceded when the political consequences of refusing to concede outweigh those of conceding. That strategy," she asserted, "has been correct and, despite its reluctance to admit to reality, Britain has moved from her original positions."

She added that "if we did not believe that the prisoners' demands could be won, then we would not be here. Our task here is to decide what we must do to win the demands and organize to do it. The death of ten prisoners and the refusal of the Southern government to act, the refusal of most Northern councillors to quit their council perches,* all interrelate to daunt the confidence of the committed supporter and the commitment of the less active or inactive sympathizer.

"Our central error here," McAliskey continued, "has been that we have not politically convinced the campaign militants why and how we should make demands on such groups as the SDLP, the GAA [Gaelic Athletic Association], etc., pressurizing them and widening the support beyond the committed anti-imperialist."

Serious differences surfaced at the Dundalk

*Supporters of the H-Block campaign have called on elected nationalist members of local councils in Northern Ireland to refuse to take part in the work of those bodies until the demands of the hunger strikers have been granted. Although many councillors have withdrawn from the councils, others, including SDLP members, have not.

meeting regarding the movement's policy toward elections. The issue of whether to abstain from or participate in parliaments has been the most divisive question in the Irish anti-imperialist movement at least since the 1921-22 civil war. The issue was given immediacy by the election of Owen Carron to fill Bobby Sands's seat in the British Parliament.

Carron, a member of Sinn Féin, is following that organization's policy of refusing to go to Westminster to participate in Parliament. Bernadette Devlin McAliskey and other independents, as well as the IRSP, argued that Carron should go to Westminster to constantly raise the issue of the hunger strike and call attention to the demands of the prisoners.

The present generation of republican leaders, however, has by and large seen nonparticipation in elected bodies as an inviolable principle. While there have been signs of movement away from this position on the part of a layer of the Provisionals, the traditionalists are all the more determined to defend abstention as a principle.

But there has been increasing movement interest in using electoral posts to advance the protest movement. It is a fact that major successes of the present hunger-strike campaign have been registered in the electoral arena—the election of Bobby Sands and Owen Carron to the British Parliament, the election of two prisoners, including one hunger striker, to the Irish parliament, and victories by H-Block campaign supporters in local elections in Northern Ireland.

The fact that the IRSP has moved away from the positions of abstentionism in recent months made the discussion of electoral strategy especially heated. In fact, *An Phoblacht* reproached some of the Provisional supporters who gave vent to sectarian outbursts in the debate over the campaign's orientation to elections. "This debate on electoral policy," the paper noted, "unfortunately gave rise to an unhealthy tendency evident among some speakers who engaged in pure demagoguery, and foot stompers whose undemocratic antics had absolutely nothing in common with the democratic traditions and principles of Republicanism."

An Phoblacht suggested a formula for keeping the issue of elections from dividing the campaign. It argued that "as the committee's practice is merely to endorse candidates rather than to stand them, the sharp debate was somewhat off target and it was made clear anyway that the Republican movement would continue to support the committee and build the campaign no matter what electoral policy was adopted by the conference."

Several resolutions that were only narrowly defeated would have had the effect of outlawing participation in the committee by organized political groups. *An Phoblacht* later argued against this approach, noting that "there was also some unnecessary confusion about the fact that while the movement is obviously not party political, it is most certainly political. It is, in fact, the most highly political and pertinent campaign in the country. . . ."

"This confusion appears to have led some to believe that political groups should not be allowed their own individual profile within the campaign, such as giving out their own leaflets, selling newspapers, etc.—a basic misunderstanding of the campaign and the limited nature of the alliance (the National Committee and the local action groups) which projects the prisoners' cause."

Pressure of time

The pressure of time is perhaps the most serious problem facing the H-Block support movement. Desperate prisoners are starving to death at a rapid rate. The mounting toll lessens the public impact of each new death.

But at the same time, the determination of the movement was shown when the morale of the conference participants was not dampened by the fact that some prisoners were taken off

the strike just before and during the conference. In addition, new prisoners continue to join the protest.

Moreover, while the movement has been marking time in Ireland, it has been expanding internationally. For example, the week before the Dundalk conference, about 10,000 people, a phenomenal number for August, marched in Paris in support of the hunger strikers. About 5,000 also marched on Washington on August 23 to support freedom for Northern Ireland.

Despite the disappointment in Ireland over the decreasing reaction to each successive death, the cumulative effect of ten men starving themselves to death, one after another, in defense of human dignity is extremely powerful. It has focused world attention on the policies of the British government and the continued British occupation of the six counties of Northern Ireland. □

El Salvador

Junta finds some friends

The August 28 statement by the French and Mexican governments recognizing the Salvadoran revolutionary organizations as a "representative political force" has brought into sharper focus the international diplomatic lineup on the civil war in El Salvador.

The statement, issued in the names of the French and Mexican foreign ministers, declared that the two governments "recognize that the alliance of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front [FMLN] and the Revolutionary Democratic Front [FDR] constitutes a representative political force, ready to assume its obligations and exercise the rights that derive from them."

The immediate response of the U.S.-armed military-Christian Democratic junta of El Salvador was to issue formal protests to diplomatic representatives of France and Mexico in the Salvadoran capital.

Salvadoran President Napoleón Duarte called the statement "a work of Castro," and the Christian Democrats' general secretary, Julio Rey Prendes, accused the French government of letting itself be guided by Régis Debray. (Debray, who was jailed in Bolivia in the late 1960s for collaborating with Che Guevara's guerrilla front there and who has written extensively on revolutionary movements in Latin America, is a foreign policy adviser of French President François Mitterrand.)

On September 2, nine Latin American regimes issued a declaration accusing France and Mexico of trying to "interfere in the internal affairs of El Salvador" and of "tending to favor one of the subversive extremes" in that country.

The signers of this statement included the military dictatorships of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, as well as such

proimperialist "democracies" as Colombia, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic.

In subsequent days the French-Mexican position was also disavowed by the Brazilian military dictatorship and by the rulers of Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Peru.

Panamanian President Aristides Royo, however, declared September 5 that "it was neither just nor correct to term the French-Mexican statement interventionism." If there is intervention in El Salvador, Royo said, it is on the part of those who "furnish arms, training, technical and logistic assistance, and war matériel" to the junta.

On September 7, President López Portillo of Mexico defended his government's move. "How could we not recognize the existence of a representative political force in El Salvador now that that country is the theater of a cruel civil war?" López Portillo asked. "That force is of such a nature and is so important that the government junta of San Salvador has had to resort to the most extreme measures in order to combat it—calling on a foreign country and authorizing intervention on its own territory."

Thus far, the position of France and Mexico has received support from the governments of Norway, Nicaragua, and Cuba. In an interview published August 30 in the Managua daily *Barricada*, Cuban leader Fidel Castro termed the French-Mexican statement "very good, just, and positive."

Guillermo Ungo, president of the Salvadoran FDR, has said that the revolutionary forces are "hopeful" as a result of the French-Mexico initiative. "But we don't want to be overly optimistic," Ungo told the U.S. weekly *Guardian*. "There is much hard work to be done." □

Labor challenges Reagan's war budget

Significance of September 19 march on Washington

By **Stu Singer**
and **Fred Feldman**

[The following article appeared in the September 11 issue of the U.S. socialist news-weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

The September 19 Solidarity Day March on Washington called by the AFL-CIO is directed against the Reagan budget cuts, the tax giveaways for the rich, and the slashing and destruction of laws and regulations protecting workers rights and safety.

Civil rights and women's equality are focuses of the demonstration.

It promises to be one of the most powerful political demonstrations ever called by the labor movement in the United States.

Antiwar rally

September 19 will also be a huge antiwar demonstration. It will be a rally of working people who believe human needs should come before spending on new weapons of mass death. It will mobilize tens of thousands of opponents of the draft and new Vietnams.

The huge increase in the military budget is the other side of the coin of cuts in Social Security and other social services. Workers know it. Resistance on the part of working people to sacrificing for the arms buildup helped spur the AFL-CIO to call Solidarity Day.

The support for September 19 shows that Reagan has no mandate for his program of austerity for the workers. It will send the administration a message that there is no mandate for the draft or for military intervention in El Salvador or other countries.

Some supporters of Solidarity Day, like the International Association of Machinists, are helping to make these sentiments highly visible September 19. They are reaching out to antidraft groups, opponents of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and organizations opposed to U.S. intervention in El Salvador to come to Washington with banners and slogans expressing their views.

It is a big development that the AFL-CIO has initiated and organized a demonstration that will deal a blow to the rulers' drive toward militarization and war.

Support foreign policy

Most of the top leaders of the AFL-CIO, represented by President Lane Kirkland, have supported the foreign policy of the U.S. government from Korea to Vietnam to El Salvador. The AFL-CIO Executive Council is on record for draft registration and a bigger arms budget, although opposition to prowar policies

is growing in the unions.

Because of this policy, none of the statements issued by the AFL-CIO on Solidarity Day have mentioned the war issue as a focus of the demonstration nor have any slogans against the draft or the swollen military budget been suggested.

Big business is worried about the shifts in the union movement that Solidarity Day symbolizes. On August 6 the *Wall Street Journal* addressed an editorial to top AFL-CIO leaders, reminding them of what is at stake in the Reagan program.

The *Journal* was responding to AFL-CIO statements in support of the air controllers, but they obviously had Solidarity Day in mind, too:

"Lane Kirkland and other cool heads at the AFL-CIO should first give some thought to what the administration has at stake. Mr. Reagan has tried to restore public confidence in presidential policy and repair the erosion that occurred during the zigzags of the Carter administration.

"Central to this effort are clarity . . . on a whole range of issues with global implications: They include, for example, commitments to rebuild military strength, to restore the dollar to soundness, to cut taxes and regulation, to resist Soviet imperialism, to curb the wild ascent of federal spending."

The *Wall Street Journal* is telling Kirkland that he can't challenge the budget cuts or union-busting and not undermine the foreign policy that he supports. You can't be against budget cuts in social services and for the massive military budget, the *Journal* explains.

Guns and butter?

According to the *AFL-CIO News*, the union federation's Executive Council meeting in Chicago in early August discussed the military budget. Some of their report on this is worth quoting:

"The AFL-CIO's traditional and steadfast support for a strong national defense should not be construed as 'a blank check for the Pentagon,' the Executive Council declared.

"The council warned in a statement that the Reagan Administration's policies are threatening to shatter the national consensus for a stronger defense effort.

"By increasing defense spending at the expense of vital social programs, the Administration risks the creation of new anti-defense constituencies among workers, the poor, minorities and the elderly," the council said, adding:

"Popular support for a strong defense and foreign policy cannot be sustained by unjust social and economic policies which generate

social tension, class conflict and political polarization. Nor will such policies produce the economic strength required for military strength."

Kirkland and Co. make a valid point when they say that support for the arms budget is being undermined by increasing military spending at the expense of vital social programs. But they are kidding themselves when they say that you can have the social programs working people need and a vast military budget.

During most of the Vietnam war the capitalist system was in better economic shape than it is today. During the first years of that war, social programs were actually expanded, especially under the pressure of the civil rights movement and the Black revolts in the cities.

Real wages generally held their own against inflation, or even improved a little.

Capitalism had enough fat on its bones to avoid the kind of severe cuts in living standards that are being imposed now to pay for the new war drive.

The bosses had a "guns and butter" line during the Vietnam war. And this helped buy support from at least one constituency, the top union officials.

For them, this was just an extension of their longstanding policy of going along with big business, the Democratic and Republican politicians, and the capitalist government. In exchange, they counted on getting enough concessions in terms of wages and fringes to keep dissatisfaction from getting out of hand.

When the AFL-CIO Executive Council asks today for a "guns and butter" policy, they are appealing for a return to those "good old days."

Among workers, however, there came to be overwhelming opposition to the Vietnam war. The drafting of youth and the brutal waste of the lives of more than 50,000 Americans fueled this sentiment. And the near destruction of Indochina increasingly repelled working people.

Today, the U.S. economy is in a different period. A long-term decline has set in. Profits are being squeezed. Competition among the capitalist countries is increasing. Inflation eats away at currencies and world trade. Unemployment is on the rise.

War drive

Moves toward war are built into this crisis. Everywhere the U.S. rulers are trying to improve their profit position. That means cutting the benefits won by workers here over the last half century. And it means cracking down hard on struggles for social change in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. What Reagan is doing in

El Salvador and southern Africa are examples. "Guns, not butter" is the order of the day as far as big business and its government are concerned.

Reagan doesn't follow Kirkland's advice to combine massive military spending with maintenance of basic social programs because he can't. The rulers haven't gotten any meaner. They just have fewer options.

The new drive toward militarization and war is not just aimed at other countries, but at American workers. This time workers are expected not only to sacrifice their lives or the lives of their children, but their wages, health care, and pension checks.

The military staged a practice invasion intended to threaten the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada a few weeks ago—but it staged a real invasion of air control towers here when PATCO went on strike. In a recent television interview, Lane Kirkland warned that the use of military personnel as scabs in the strike would undermine support for the arms budget.

And so it will. Events like this, together with Washington's moves to draft young people and get us into new wars, show that Washington's military machine helps only the rich and is directed against working people everywhere.

Workers are learning that fighting the gov-

ernment's reactionary domestic policy means fighting its reactionary foreign policy, too.

The September 19 demonstration will express the opposition of American workers to sacrificing for the Pentagon budget.

It points to the kind of foreign policy the union movement needs if it is going to fight the Reagan program effectively—a foreign policy opposed to the draft, the military buildup, nuclear arms, and U.S. intervention in other countries. A foreign policy that identifies with the struggles of our brothers and sisters in El Salvador, South Africa, and around the world. □

Reagan hit by huge labor protests

Workers denounce budget cuts, back air controllers

By David Frankel

One hundred thousand working people took to the streets of New York City September 7 in the biggest demonstration organized by the U.S. trade-union movement in decades.

The Labor Day march—the first in New York since 1968—represented an outpouring of solidarity with the embattled air traffic controllers and of hatred for the antiunion, anti-people policies of the Reagan administration.

The contingent of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) filled several blocks. Thousands of striking controllers marched with their families, chanting with clenched fists held high, "Strike! Strike! Strike!" and "PATCO! PATCO! PATCO!"

Steven Wallaert, a PATCO leader from Virginia who had been put in chains and thrown in jail, was at the front of the contingent, marching with chains around his neck.

Union members in many contingents carried banners and placards expressing support for PATCO, and the air controllers met with frequent applause from onlookers.

Solidarity was the theme of the day, captured in the frequently sung "Solidarity Forever." Contingents of Black, Hispanic, and women trade unionists were among the first in the march, and many demonstrators carried signs supporting the Equal Rights Amendment that would make equal rights for women part of the U.S. Constitution.

Several thousand workers from New York's huge garment industry formed a contingent. They were mainly Hispanic, Chinese, and Black women, and many of them carried placards supporting the rights of immigrant workers. One big banner said: "Amnesty for Undocumented Workers, Political Asylum for Haitian Boat People."

Slogans like "Jobs, not Jelly Beans," made clear the crowd's contempt for Reagan. A group of projectionists from New York's large entertainment industry carried signs saying, "Reagan, save people not buildings; stop the neutron bomb."

Reagan came to New York on the day of the demonstration, but was unable to get himself

invited. Just a few days earlier Reagan's Agriculture Department had announced its proposal to reduce federal subsidies to school lunches.

Under the proposed plan, a portion of six French fries would count as one vegetable in a government-approved lunch program. Ketchup on the potatoes would count as a second vegetable!

Kindergarten children would be allotted four ounces of milk, one ounce of meat, one half cup of fruit or vegetable, and one half slice of bread per day.

Even the editors of the *Washington Post* complained that Reagan was going too far. "We know that balancing the budget won't be easy," they said September 11, "but surely the nation—awash in government-supported surpluses of grain and dairy products—can afford a full glass of milk and a whole piece of bread for every child."

Not content with taking food out of the mouths of children, Reagan is planning further cuts in government retirement and medical programs.

While in New York on the day of the labor



Garment workers contingent in New York Labor Day march.

Lou Howort/Militant

protest Reagan promised "jobs, jobs, and more jobs." But the day before it was announced that overall unemployment had risen again, and Black youth unemployment was up to 50 percent.

An indication of the mood in the ranks of labor was the declaration by Lane Kirkland that "struggle is the historic role of the labor movement." Kirkland, the president of the AFL-CIO (the U.S. labor federation) declared that there's "no support for labor in this administration," and expressed the AFL-CIO's backing for PATCO.

The turnout in New York and the response in other parts of the country indicate that the

September 19 march on Washington called by the AFL-CIO to protest the Reagan budget may well be the largest demonstration the United States has ever seen.

Thousands of buses and entire trains have been reserved to bring people to the Washington, D.C. rally.

A labor train from Chicago is already sold out, as is a train organized by the United Auto Workers in Indiana. Unionists in Boston have chartered close to 100 buses and a train. More than 350 buses have been rented in the northern New Jersey area and more than 500 are expected to come from New York.

In Philadelphia, steelworkers, auto workers,

teachers, rail workers, and others have reserved some 225 buses.

Also taking part in the action are Black organizations such as the NAACP, Hispanic groups, and the National Organization for Women.

The ferocity of the employer and government attacks is giving rise to a new sense of solidarity among American working people. As PATCO President Robert Poli noted, the Labor Day turnout in New York and the support of the marchers for the air controllers sent "a message to everyone in this country, including the administration, of our resolve and solidarity." □

Australia

Workers fight Fraser's austerity

Gains in campaign for 35-hour workweek

[The following interview with Jamie Doughney, a member of the Australian Socialist Workers Party, was conducted in New York on August 17. Doughney is a frequent contributor to the Australian socialist newsweekly *Direct Action*.]

* * *

Question. What is the political situation like in Australia today?

Answer. Since the end of 1975, Australia has been ruled by a Liberal/National Country Party government led by Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser. Fraser has implemented the same sort of policies that have since been put into effect by Britain's Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the United States.

Fraser's policies include heavy reliance on monetarist programs, across-the-board cutbacks in social services, welfare, housing, health care, and the like. At the same time, the government has stepped up a whole range of attacks on the labor movement, particularly the trade unions.

The character of Fraser's government was, in a sense, preordained by the extraordinary manner in which he took power. From 1972 to November 11, 1975, Australia had a Labor Party government. It was a mildly reformist government that carried out some progressive policies such as the introduction of Medibank, a national health program.

But beginning in 1974 unemployment began to rise and profits fell as a consequence of the worldwide capitalist economic recession. The Australian capitalist class began to mount increasing attacks against the labor movement. But it found that the Labor Party government was unable to carry out the policies the capitalists wanted—attacking wages, working conditions, employment, and the like.

Toward the end of 1975 the employers mounted a broad campaign against the Labor Party, trying to force it out of office despite its majority in the lower house of parliament. The campaign mobilized the Liberal Party, the press, and the whole media.

This came to a head in November 1975, when the National Country Party-controlled Senate, one of the two houses of Parliament, voted to withhold all funds from the government, a power that has been used by the Senate only a few times in Australian history.

This caused a governmental crisis. The governor-general, whose position stems directly from the days of the British empire, used his power to throw out the Labor government and called on Malcolm Fraser to form an interim government until elections were held.

When the new elections took place, the Labor Party did not put up much of a fight. It discouraged the very large demonstrations and strikes by workers that had taken place immediately after the government was disbanded, and the Labor Party campaign lost all its momentum. As a result, the Liberal Party was returned to office.

Since then a whole range of cutbacks and monetarist policies have been implemented. Unemployment has increased sharply, to about half a million in a work force of 6.5 million. Wage increases have been held below the inflation rate, leading to a constant decline in real wages. Social programs have been sharply cut back.

Q. Did the Liberal Party get rid of Medibank?

A. Yes, although they had campaigned on the promise to maintain the program. But over a number of years it was progressively gutted, and now the system no longer exists at all.

In fact, not only did the Liberal government cut back programs that the Labor Party had introduced, but it also gutted programs that had been part of Australian social welfare for decades.

There were limitations on how far and fast Fraser could go, but step by step over a period of years there has been a stunning change in the sort of social services that are provided. This has led to a cut in the standard of living across the board.

Q. Are people conscious of this development?

A. Yes, and at this moment there has been an outpouring of opposition to the cuts. Student groups have been fighting the cuts in the education budget. Workers in the health care field are holding street demonstrations against the government cuts in health programs.

But the protests have not all been focused on the Fraser government because of the unique relationship between the federal government and the states in Australia.

The federal government distributes a large portion of its tax revenues to the state governments to spend on hospitals, education, etc. So most of the cutbacks have been carried out by the state governments, including those controlled by the Labor Party.

Q. Have the cutbacks also involved cuts in handouts to big business?

A. Quite the opposite. There have been massive handouts to big business. They get export subsidies, cheap electricity, tax incentives, and the like.

When Malcolm Fraser came into office he brazenly and openly stated that he would carry out the greatest redistribution of wealth that Australia had ever seen. And he has been very

serious about doing that. There has been an enormous shift in the portion of the gross national product that goes to corporations compared to the share going to wages.

Q. Does Fraser have much support from the voters?

A. There was a lot of confusion in 1975 and during subsequent elections. The majority of people do not support what Fraser is doing. But the Labor Party has not presented a credible alternative to Fraser's policies. In the elections it runs on a program of being as good a manager of the economy as the Liberals, or as being a better economic manager. But it does not present distinct economic policies that could mobilize people and make them see that there is a real difference between the parties in terms of economic programs.

That is beginning to change. Although the leadership of the Labor Party would like to continue on as in the past, there are a lot of people in the party ranks and in the union movement who say they want to present an alternative. As a result, for example, the Labor Party has pledged that if elected it will immediately reimplement Medibank.

Q. Does the Labor Party have much of an internal political life?

A. There has always been a traditional left wing within the Labor Party and there has always been some conflict. In some areas there is now a debate taking place over the Labor Party's socialist objectives.

These objectives were written into the party's platform in 1921 and modified some years later.

The 1921 program called for the "socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange." For a long time this has been simply a paper commitment. But there is now a debate over this clause, over whether Labor should be a socialist party. Many people in the Labor Party, as reflected by the journals that circulate in the party, say that it should get back to its original socialist objectives.

Q. Are a lot of people active in the local Labor Party groups?

A. Yes, the Labor Party does have a real internal life. Since Australia is divided into states, the Labor Party is also divided into states, and the process of involvement differs from state to state. But I don't think that the scope of the debate within the Labor Party in any state is anywhere near the level that now exists in Britain.

One problem is that the traditional left inside the party does not provide real solutions. It does not pose things enough in terms of policies and tends to get caught up in fighting for posts without mobilizing people around programs.

Q. What has been the response in the unions and among the general population to these cuts? Is there a strategy to fight back?



Mass meeting of metalworkers for 35-hour workweek.

Martin Mulligan/Direct Action

A. Over the past five years the real issue has been unemployment, which had been virtually eliminated in the 1950s and 1960s but shot up again in the 1970s and has become a major issue for the unions.

Initially the unions did not know how to respond to the growth in unemployment. The large number of people without jobs exerted enormous pressure on wages, working conditions, and the like. The fact that the employers were able to get away with their attacks on wages and social conditions was partially a result of the high levels of unemployment.

To a degree the union bureaucracy had grown comfortable during the several decades when unemployment was not a major concern. But now they had to face the problem.

The first response of many unions was to launch a "Buy Australian" campaign. This was especially the case in the manufacturing industry, which is highly protected and very inefficient by international standards.

The traditionally more left-wing unions adopted a more sophisticated version of the same policy. They put forward a People's Economic Program that aimed to establish an alliance between the unions and the employers in the manufacturing industry who were being hit by the growing unemployment. The aim was to erect higher levels of tariff protection, establish an atmosphere of cooperation between the unions and employers, and allow higher wages through cooperation and the protection of local industry.

This program had no chance of success. It went totally against what the employers were aiming for. They wanted higher unemployment and increased productivity in the manufacturing industry. They wanted to cut back on

jobs and wages and introduce new technology that would further eliminate jobs.

The campaign around the People's Economic Program diverted the movement for a number of years from the real solution to unemployment—cutting the workweek.

But since 1979 there has been a growing campaign in favor of the thirty-five-hour workweek as a means of fighting unemployment.

Although the call for the thirty-five-hour week has been in the program of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the country's labor federation, since the 1950s, campaigns around it never got underway.

In the early 1970s workers in the oil industry did win the thirty-five-hour week, and this led to campaigns in other high technology industries, especially the petrochemical industry, for the same demand.

The current campaign began in earnest with a struggle at the huge petrochemical complex in Altona, a suburb of Melbourne. That complex contains factories owned by many of the largest multinational corporations—Union Carbide, B.F. Goodrich, BASF, and others.

In 1978 workers at that complex decided to launch a serious campaign for the shorter workweek, and they viewed themselves as a vanguard in this campaign. The campaign arose largely through the shop committees, the rank-and-file unionists and shop stewards.

In late 1978 there was a fifty-two day strike and occupation of the Union Carbide plant around the demand for thirty-five hours. And the union was victorious.

That struggle won enormous support throughout the labor movement, and it raised the idea of similar campaigns in other industries.

In the beginning of 1979 the 500,000-

member Metal Trades Federation of Unions organized mass meetings of metalworkers across Australia to launch the struggle.

They began a campaign of taking off one afternoon each month in protest against the longer workweek. This got a lot of publicity and there was some extremely effective literature issued around the theme that a thirty-five-hour week meant more jobs and more leisure for the workers.

This theme began to sink into the consciousness of workers throughout the country, and the demand was raised by many other unions, unions in the aluminum industry, the glass industry, the breweries, and other industries. And victories began to be won.

In fact, at least one hundred factories in the metal industry have won a shorter workweek, as have the brewery workers. In the Altona petrochemical complex, following the workers victory at Union Carbide, there was an eighteen-week strike at the B.F. Goodrich plant. Although the Fraser government pressured the employers to resist, the workers at B.F. Goodrich and all the other plants in the complex have won a shorter workweek.

Fraser had threatened to retaliate against any companies that yielded on the issue, but the pressure of the workers forced the companies to call the government's bluff, and Fraser had to back down.

At this point the struggle for the thirty-five-hour week is continually picking up steam, as more and more workers in more and more industries, and government workers as well, carry out struggles around it and win new victories.

Q. Why do you think the thirty-five-hour week campaign has picked up such strength at this point?

A. One very important stimulus is the fact that since 1980 Australia has been in the midst of a very significant investment boom. There has been an unprecedented level of foreign investment, economic growth rates are among the highest in the capitalist world, inflation has declined.

This boom was sparked by the world capitalist attempt to secure stable sources of raw materials. This has led to a lot of investment in mining and other raw materials in Australia.

The Fraser government claims that it has performed an economic miracle, creating a real boom in Australia. But at the same time the government moves ahead with its cutbacks. And unemployment has not declined very much despite the economic growth.

The government must continue to drive through its austerity policies in order to allow the capitalists to significantly increase their profit rates. And a lot of the investment is based on huge government handouts and subsidies to industry.

In the face of all the talk about the boom, workers are saying that they want their own boom too! This has really encouraged the fightback campaign and the campaign around

the thirty-five-hour week.

Another important aspect of the fightback campaign has been that the workers have smashed the government's wage freeze guidelines. Each time the government issued ceilings on permissible wage increases, the unions have been able to organize struggles that have eventually destroyed those ceilings, forcing the companies to yield raises that were higher than the government allowed.

And although the Fraser government has passed a whole series of antilabor laws, it was never able to use them fully. The government was never willing to face the kind of confrontation that would result from an attempt to implement the antilabor laws.

For example, if the Australian government applied its antilabor laws to break a strike in the way that Reagan is now trying to do with the air traffic controllers in the United States, it is very likely that there would be massive sympathy strikes everywhere in Australia that would force the government to back down.

Q. Has the Fraser government coupled the cutbacks in social services with an increase in the military budget?

A. The arms budget has increased the whole time the cutbacks have been taking place. Obviously it is not on the scale of the United States, but it has been significant.

The Australian government sees a growing role for itself in the international arena. One example is its keenness to send troops to participate in the Sinai peace-keeping force.

Australia has always been a close ally of the United States. There have been U.S. bases in the country since the 1950s. The North West Cape communications base handles all communications with U.S. nuclear submarines in the Indian Ocean. There is also the Pine Gap satellite communications station, which is the key base, as well as several others.

Q. Are people aware of the role of these bases for the U.S. military?

A. There is increasing consciousness, which was heightened during the Australian participation with the U.S. in the Vietnam war. During that period a lot of the secrecy surrounding the bases began to break down and their role became more widely known.

During the 1973 Middle East war, Nixon put U.S. forces on a nuclear alert, and that alert was transmitted through the bases in Australia without the knowledge of the government.

A lot of the unions are on record against the bases, as are a number of Labor Party branches. But the leadership of the Labor Party has not yet opposed the bases.

Recently two leaders of the Labor Party were given a tour of some of the bases and received quite a snow job. Following the tour they said they did not think there was any problem with the bases. But later it emerged that they had been told some lies about the bases and they retracted some of their support for

them.

So far, however, the leaders of the Labor Party still do not question the alliance between Australia and the U.S. Whatever opposition they have to U.S. bases is limited to certain aspects, such as the secrecy and the lack of consultation with the Australian government.

Q. What impact do developments in the rest of the world have in Australia?

A. While Australia is very far from many of the world's hot spots, its population is overwhelmingly first, second, or third generation immigrants. This means that many issues in international politics have an impact in Australia through the large immigrant communities.

For example, there has been a very broad solidarity campaign with the Irish hunger strikers in Northern Ireland. There are H-Block support committees in virtually every major city.

There is also a significant Arab population, so developments in the Middle East have an immediate impact in Australia.

And since the 1973 coup in Chile a large number of refugees have come to Australia, along with other Latin American immigrants. That means that the revolutions in the Caribbean and Central America have a big impact in Australia.

Q. Are immigrant workers heavily concentrated in industry?

A. Yes. Australian industry is overwhelmingly made up of first or second generation immigrants. In some industries almost the entire workforce is immigrants. In fact, that is how the core of Australian industry was built up in the 1950s and 1960s.

Q. What is the focus of the Socialist Workers Party's work in Australia?

A. Our party is composed in its majority of industrial workers—metalworkers, railworkers, auto workers, and others.

Most of our attention has been focused on the fight against unemployment and on getting the labor movement involved in that fight, for example through building the thirty-five-hour struggle. We also try to get the unions to take more aggressive stands against the cutbacks and on international issues.

One area in which we have been quite active is the struggle for women to break into traditionally male industrial jobs. The central focus of this was a Jobs for Women campaign in the steel industry against Australia's biggest company, BHP.

There have been some victories in this fight and more are expected. The women have gotten a good response from male workers in industry and from the unions.

The SWP is also actively involved in building solidarity with the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean, which are very crucial political questions for us because we identify with those revolutions. And we try to take support for them into the unions. □

The congress of the Communist Party

Kania wing consolidates its position

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article appeared in the August 5 issue of the French-language *Inprecor*, published fortnightly in Paris. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The Ninth Congress of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), which met July 14-20, 1981, was certainly dramatic in some regards. It shows the depth of the political revolution that has begun in Poland and the scope of the politicization of the masses, which could not help but leave its mark on a mass party like the PUWP. Twenty-five percent of the delegates to the congress were Solidarity members. Under such conditions, the congress could not have been routine.

The most dramatic feature of the congress was its public character, with televised re-broadcast of the debates having been won through concerted action by 100 delegates. The congress was also more democratic than traditional congresses of bureaucratized Communist parties in power. The delegates did not limit themselves to making routine speeches approving the first secretary's report on the basis of their regional or sectoral data or results. Nor was the election of the Central Committee purely a sham, as is the case elsewhere, with the composition of the committee determined in advance by a commission of full-timers.

There were real, often stormy, discussions. The differences that surfaced were deepgoing. The Central Committee election, like the election of delegates, was a real one by secret ballot, with results no one could predict.

We all know the results: the immense majority of delegates to the congress and members of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau are new. The turnover rate was 80 percent for delegates, more than 90 percent for Central Committee members, and thirteen out of seventeen Political Bureau members.

Limits of democracy

This does not mean, however, that proletarian democracy—or democratic centralism as it functioned in the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International in Lenin's time—prevailed at the Ninth Congress of the PUWP.

Without the right to form tendencies, there is no real proletarian democracy. This golden rule of communist organizational principles was once again confirmed in Warsaw during the second week of July 1981.

Real freedom of speech, without clearly differing programs that propose alternative solutions to the great problems of the day, opens

the door to confusion and to the substitution of verbiage for political consistency, and even opens the door to pure and simple demagoguery.

Railing against the corruption of dignitaries who have been stripped of their posts, denouncing the regional inequalities in the way rationing is organized, proclaiming the need to use communist principles and morality to overcome the party's present discreditment—these are popular themes, fashionable subjects that evoke spontaneous applause. But they in no way clarify the question of how to remedy the economic situation, what methods and means to use. It does not tell us whether or not massive layoffs should be allowed, whether the unions should have veto power over the layoffs. It does not tell us who will guarantee maintenance of full employment on a national scale, despite these layoffs.

The election of the Central Committee by secret ballot—without the clarification of political tendencies, without the majority expressing a specific orientation, and without proportional representation of tendencies—opens the door to clique maneuvers that can prevent the election of "undesirables" by methodically establishing a bloc against one wing of candidates.

That is, in fact, what has happened. The most pronounced "liberal-technocratic" bureaucrats, like Mieczyslaw Rakovsky, were totally removed from the Political Bureau along with the best known "Stalinist conservatives" like Tadeusz Grabski (who was not even re-elected to the Central Committee).

The fact that the party first secretary had been directly elected by the delegates was celebrated in the bourgeois press as a triumph of democracy. But it is not a victory for democracy, far from it. This transforms the first secretary into a figure elected by plebescite, who is placed above the de facto tendencies, and is freed from any control or criticism by the Central Committee and Political Bureau.

Since the congress only takes place at long intervals, the fact that the first secretary is elected by the vote of the whole congress could make him virtually unremovable for years. Moreover, the first secretary has chosen the party Secretariat, which is the day-to-day leadership of the party.

The congress's undemocratic character was also expressed in a special area, that of international delegations. This is the first time in the history of "official" Communist parties that one of them held a congress without inviting the great majority of "fraternal parties." The only ones that were able to attend the Ninth Congress of the PUWP were those parties that are in power in the countries that belong to

COMECON, and some ruling parties in Africa.

The reason for this exclusion, this glaring denial of proletarian internationalism, is obvious. It was to prevent the delegates of the Italian, Spanish, and Swedish CPs and of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia from giving "revisionist" speeches from the PUWP's podium, from providing arguments in favor of self-management, or expressing words of support for Solidarity.

The undemocratic thrust of this prohibition is obvious. The full weight of pressure from the Kremlin and its allies was brought to bear on the delegates to the congress. There was the letter from the Central Committee of the Soviet CP to the PUWP Central Committee. And there were speeches by Soviet representative Viktor Grishin and the representatives from the Czechoslovakian and Hungarian CPs, who openly raised the threat of military intervention and extolled its virtues in advance.

But the counterpressure from the international workers movement that is highly favorable to Solidarity, which the Italian and Spanish CPs express to a certain degree in their own way, could not be felt. A neat way of loading the dice . . .

The Kania wing's victory

The chaotic mixture of freedom of speech, deformed and limited though it was, and demagoguery and manipulation that marked the Ninth Congress therefore led to an outcome that was undoubtedly the one most in the interests of the Polish bureaucracy. The "radicals" on both flanks were eliminated and the swamp of moderates was victorious. The renewal is quite limited. The ranks are disappointed.

It was a victory for the Kania-Jaruzelski wing, the faction of moderate reformers. These are bureaucrats who are trying to recon- solidate their power while avoiding, to the extent possible, a direct confrontation with either Solidarity or the Kremlin.

The aims of this wing of the bureaucracy could be summed up as trying to channel the desire for "renewal" in such a way as to regain control over the country. And we should not be deceived on this question: the desire to regain control, the sharp attacks on "anarchy" were as much present in the speeches of Rakovsky and Kania as in those of Olszowski and Grabski.

While there was certainly a lot of maneuvering, skillful maneuvers as well as poor ones, that by itself does not explain the outcome. The congress was, in fact, to a certain extent uncontrollable. The fact that the plan most in the interests of the bureaucracy finally won cannot simply be explained by their being able

to maneuver far more behind the scenes than was apparent in the plenary sessions. Their plan also triumphed because the very nature of the "renewal" strongly helped them in the task.

The [rank-and-file] "horizontal structures" had already been beaten and had practically dissolved before the congress took place. Their principal cadres had in fact withdrawn from work in the PUWP to go into the unions. Without clear political alternatives, without a program for the big problems of the day ("economic reform," political power of the working class, the relationship between economic self-management, socialist democracy, and workers power), and without the right to form tendencies, the oppositional elements were by and large marginal to the congress. Toward the end of it, they also could feel a cold wind announcing repression. By contrast, the "conservatives" have set up parallel structures that already weigh on the apparatus.

The affair of the political prisoners—some ultranationalist activists from the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) who are, as such, hard for Solidarity to defend—well illustrates both the degree to which the bureaucracy has reestablished control over the PUWP and the limitations it faces.

At Huta Warszawa, the big steel mill in the capital, the workers hung a banner proclaiming, "It is shameful for a people's republic to have political prisoners." The leaders of the local party section tried every means to have the banner removed because the steel mill was on the route that delegates from "fraternal parties," including the Soviet delegation, had to travel to the congress.

The leaders of Solidarity at Huta Warszawa are PUWP members. But along with the workers in the factory, they refused to take down the banner. The local party section even tried to threaten the workers' families, but to no avail.

Solidarity at Huta Warszawa remains determined to defend the principle that all Polish citizens have the right to express their political opinions.

Nothing has been decided

If the party apparatus emerged strengthened from the congress, it is premature to talk of a consolidation of the power of the bureaucracy as such. The congress at most created certain preconditions for the bureaucracy to consolidate its power. But the congress itself did not change the relationship of forces between the bureaucracy and the working masses, especially the industrial proletariat. Such a change in the relationship of forces is the prerequisite for regaining control.

General Jaruzelski, the prime minister, made the real closing speech at the congress. In that speech he repeated the same sharp attacks on Solidarity that he had made several months earlier. He accused the union of fomenting "anarchy" through "political strikes." He rejected the demands that were behind the strike threats by the dockworkers of the Baltic ports and the workers at LOT airline. He even



Ernest Harsch/IP
PUWP billboard outside congress hall reads: "The line of the party—the line of socialist renewal."

threatened the unions with open repression.

All this was along the lines of the Kremlin and its allies, which had expressed their wrath against the LOT workers' demand to have the right to choose the enterprise's director.

But things actually developed differently. With the end of the congress July 20, the government began negotiating with the unions that were preparing for the strikes. In twenty-four hours a provisional agreement was reached. While we do not know its precise contents, new concessions have undoubtedly been made to the workers.

In the Baltic ports, the dockworkers won their demands concerning safety and hygiene, as well as vacation time. At LOT, the director elected by the workers provisionally remains in office, paralleled by a vice-director named by the government who will be responsible for the military side of the company. They are waiting for the economic reform law to specify the way in which each will be designated and what their jurisdiction will be.

Certainly the workers did not win a total victory. There is no assurance that the agreement will actually be put into effect. In fact, the strike threat in the Baltic ports stemmed in large part from the nonenforcement of past agreements. The main agreements of early September 1980—in Gdansk, Szczecin, and Katowice—still have not been totally implemented by the leadership of the government and party. The right to strike still has not been officially legalized. Censorship still has not been eliminated.

All this allows the Kremlin and its direct

representatives in Poland, the supposed "conservatives" and even the "liberal" bureaucrats, to accuse Solidarity's leaders and members of "violating the law, opposing the state, and being anarchists" (forgetting quite quickly that by making these charges they themselves are violating solemnly signed accords).

Obviously nothing is settled by reference to "rights" or "law." Everything is determined by the relationship of forces and by necessities. And the relationship of forces does not allow the bureaucracy, at least yet, to directly attack Solidarity, which is supported by 9 million workers.

From the PUWP congress to Solidarity's congress

Under these conditions, the bureaucracy's tactic remains what it has been over the course of recent months. It retreats in order to gain time. It makes concessions, but without giving them a concrete character. It steps up its probes to see just how far the initial attacks against the workers and unions can go without provoking a united counterattack. It tries to provoke divisions between "hard-line" and "moderate" unionists, between different regions and enterprises. It counts on fatigue and demoralization to lead to an ebb in the mass movement and mass mobilizations. And once that ebb takes place, the repression will increase and become widespread.

The bureaucracy's strategy is aided, in the first place, by the increasingly grave economic crisis. Already during the congress the bureaucracy announced new price increases as well as a reduction in meat rations. But even these rations are not always available in many regions, prompting Lodz housewives to decide to stage a mass mobilization protesting this situation. A hunger strike has already been organized in Kutno.

The bureaucracy is trying to blame the economic crisis and disruption on the "anarchy" caused by the strikes and "political" activities of Solidarity, meaning it places the blame on the working class.

This is obviously a shameless lie. The economic crisis and the disorganization of food supplies began before the July-August 1980 strikes and the creation of Solidarity. In some ways the crisis was responsible for these developments. Furthermore, in the congress's call to the nation, it clearly states that the former leaders of the party and government are responsible for the crisis, and that they will be punished.

But the bureaucrats are not concerned with logic or consistency in their arguments. This is a merciless political struggle in which the bureaucracy makes use of every possible weapon, without worrying about falling into the most flagrant contradictions.

When their agitators murmur in the food lines in front of stores that things were much better before Solidarity was formed and before there were "endless strikes," they know perfectly well what they are doing.

That argument does not work on the most

politicized workers and those most loyal to their new organization. These layers generally respond, and not without truth, that if the situation has gotten worse, that is due to deliberate sabotage of supplies by the regime itself. They argue that the regime should therefore permit citizens to control stocks of essential products and their distribution and destination, pointing out that it would then be possible to rapidly determine the real situation.

But in less political circles, the insidious propaganda from the defenders of the bureaucratic order, aided by hunger and fatigue, finds a certain response. And if, as feared, the situation gets still worse in the months to come, the argument will get a further response. That is why Solidarity correctly opposes any law reducing meat rations that is not part of a total economic plan approved and controlled by the workers.

In this context it would be good to highlight the existence of a grave weakness in international working-class solidarity with the struggle of the Polish workers. A conference of capitalist bankers opened this week in Zurich to negotiate with the Polish bureaucracy over stretching out its own debt repayments. (The Polish state owes \$26 billion to capitalist countries. This year \$6-7 billion would fall due for repayment of interest and principal.) It is high time that the unions and mass workers parties of Western Europe and Japan, as well as the unions in the United States, put forward the demand: Immediate moratorium on the Polish debt service! Complete cancellation of that debt!

This demand is all the more pressing since the international banks, in return for stretching out debt repayments, are demanding that the Polish bureaucracy keep them regularly informed on the country's economic situation, that it submit its plans for "economic reform" to them, and that it deepen the austerity policy it is preparing to impose on the workers.

Support for Solidarity has its natural complement in the following demand: Capitalist bankers, Soviet and Polish bureaucrats, hands off the living standards and the newly won rights and freedoms of the Polish workers!

In fact, the austerity policy cannot be carried out without severely limiting or even eliminating the right to strike.

Together with the economic crisis, Solidarity's fuzzy orientation regarding economic policy is another factor that in the long run threatens to change the relationship of forces. The people are worn out by the wastage and the economic dislocation this creates. They want something else to replace an economic policy that has manifestly failed. The questions of self-management, of workers job security, of the overall economic strategy are at the center of everyone's concerns.

In a general way Solidarity's leaders recognize that they must rapidly present a full alternative. But there is still an obvious lack of clarity regarding the concrete content of that alternative and the political premises for its application. The preparations for and the holding of

the Solidarity congress will have to show to what extent the union is ready to fill in these blanks, and to what extent the bureaucracy will be able to use the absence of a counterplan and of a truly centralized workers counterpower.

The struggle for this counterplan and counterpower includes defense of the freedoms and rights won, defense of the movement's unity,

and a unanimous and conscious response to any attempt to divide and repress the movement. This is the absolute prerequisite for preventing the gains of August-September 1980 from being wiped out by the salami tactics so dear to the bureaucracy.

July 24, 1981

Haiti

U.S. cops assault refugees

Hunger strike at Florida prison camp

By Andrea Baron

[The following article appeared in the September 18 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

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MIAMI—Five hundred people rallied outside the Krome detention camp here September 6 to protest a brutal attack by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) guards Haitian refugees imprisoned at the camp.

The Haitians are among thousands who have fled to the United States seeking asylum from the brutal regime of President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier. The Reagan administration refuses to recognize the Haitians' request for asylum and is seeking to deport them back to Haiti.

More than twenty police cars barricaded each of two main streets leading to the camp, forcing demonstrators to proceed to the rally site on foot. At the main access road forty border patrol cops in full riot gear faced the crowd. Despite this provocation by the police a large, spirited rally was held.

The Haitians in the camp had begun a hunger strike on August 31 to protest terrible conditions, attacks by guards, and refusal of medical care.

They were also protesting the inadequate food, sanitation, and housing in the camp, which is located in the middle of a swamp in western Dade County.

The prisoners were angered by the federal government's new proposal to ship them to Glasgow Air Force Base, an abandoned camp in a remote area of northern Montana, where they would be denied access to relatives and lawyers, and where winter temperatures reach forty degrees below zero.

The hunger strike grew and on September 3 all the Haitians in the camp joined it, refusing food.

At that point INS guards began throwing tear gas. As the Haitians ran from the tear gas the guards chased them and beat them. They called in the county police and a special riot team of prison guards.

More than 100 Haitians were clubbed and beaten. As the crowd rushed the fence, about

one hundred escaped but were later tracked down by police and brought back.

That night fifty specially trained border patrol agents were flown into the camp from Texas.

The following morning 125 Haitians, whom INS identified as leaders of the protest, were taken from the camp and flown to the Federal prison at Otisville, New York.

Haitian groups and their supporters immediately called a press conference and a demonstration to protest the attacks. The demonstration was called by the Friends of Haitians, a support coalition, as well as the American Civil Liberties Union, Southern Christian Leadership Council, Haitian Refugee Center, Incorporated, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Citizens Coalition for Racial Justice, National Lawyers Guild, and Socialist Workers Party.

All visitors, including the news media, have been banned from the camp ever since September 3.

INS officials have refused to respond to repeated requests by the director of the South Florida ACLU to tour the camp and have refused to allow any other delegations to enter and inspect the camp. Supporters of the Haitians plan to continue activities to protest the inhuman conditions and brutality at the Krome camp. □

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In the grip of crisis

Nicaragua declares 'economic emergency'

By Matilde Zimmermann

MANAGUA—If you heard someone talking about the crisis in Central America, you would probably think of the military situation—the civil war in El Salvador and threats to peace in the rest of the region.

But there is also a deep economic crisis wracking the region. Over the last few weeks, this has forced several Central American countries, including Nicaragua, to take severe emergency measures.

Like most non-oil-producing underdeveloped countries, the nations of Central America have serious balance-of-payments deficits. The price of what they sell has always been less than the price of what they buy. This gap is growing. The prices of the agricultural products these countries export are unstable and in many cases have been falling. Meanwhile, the cost of imported oil and manufactured goods has been rising sharply.

In order to survive, these countries borrow money. The foreign debt of the Central American countries went up 63 percent from 1978 to 1980.

Many working-class and farming families in the United States know what a frightening experience it is to fall deeper and deeper into debt to the banks. What happens when a whole country finds itself in this situation? Costa Rica, for example, owes \$2.4 billion to 129 foreign banks.

On September 1, President Rodrigo Carazo announced a total moratorium on the payment of Costa Rica's foreign debt. Carazo admitted that even with \$300 million in loans coming from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the country simply could not make any payments on the principal of its staggering debt. He said \$60 million more was needed immediately for debt service and another \$60 million to bring in the coffee and rice crops.

Costa Rica was hard hit by last spring's dramatic drop in the price of coffee, the country's main cash crop and an important export of several other Central American nations as well.

The Costa Rican government at the same time sharply curtailed imports and imposed other austerity measures that will mean new sufferings for a working class already hit with growing unemployment, a wage freeze in face of galloping inflation, and a halt to all new housing construction.

At a meeting of Central American foreign ministry officials a week later, Carazo frankly summarized the IMF's recommendation for improving Costa Rica's economic standing: Hold off on building schools, roads, and hospitals. Tighten credit. And raise the level of unemployment.

The government of nearby Honduras sees no way out of its economic crisis except to beg desperately for IMF assistance. On September 8, Gen. Policarpo Paz García, the head of the Honduran military regime, announced a \$30 million cut in the public budget and warned that further cutbacks were coming.

The economic crisis in Honduras is aggravated by the fact that Texaco, which has a monopoly on oil refining, is refusing to deliver any gasoline until it gets millions of dollars of retroactive payment for price increases that the government has declared illegal.

Nicaragua faces many of the same structural economic problems as other Central American countries. If anything, it has historically been even more brutally underdeveloped and overexploited than its neighbors.

Nicaragua suffered a devastating earthquake in 1972 and severe economic damage during the war of 1978-79. Nicaragua alone of the Central American countries has experienced an abrupt cutoff of U.S. economic aid. A process of decapitalization by businessmen opposed to the revolution has further weakened the economy.

A significant number of professionals and technicians have moved to the United States. Minister of Planning Henry Ruiz told a group of union leaders September 10, for instance, that a total of 400 agricultural experts have left the country. Ruiz suggested that some of the technicians could not adjust to the fact that workers did not call them "sir" anymore and had the right to question their recommendations.

The Nicaraguan government has responded to the crisis quite differently from Costa Rica or Honduras—to say nothing of El Salvador or Guatemala. Working people and small farmers here have to some extent been cushioned from the full effect of the international economic crisis by the social benefits won since the revolution: a massive literacy campaign, new schools and clinics, significant rent cuts, food subsidies, loans for farmers, improved working conditions, better wages, and more job security.

But Nicaragua's poverty, lack of infrastructure, low level of industrialization, and economic dependency are not problems that can be solved easily or quickly. In early July, Commander of the Revolution Daniel Ortega told trade-union delegates that the country could fall \$100 million short of its 1981 foreign exchange projections.

On September 10, the Government of National Reconstruction invoked a "state of economic and social emergency," during which various activities are banned, such as price

speculation and hoarding, the publication of false information designed to generate economic panic, the sabotage of production, illegal strikes and factory takeovers, and land occupations outside the framework of the agrarian reform law.

A series of austerity measures were announced, including a 5 percent cut in the current budget, a freeze on hiring in the state agencies, and a 10 percent cut in certain government subsidies. Not affected are subsidies for milk (which costs thirty cents a liter), public transportation (ten cents a ride), or any of the basic foodstuffs sold below cost because of government price support. Nor will gas, water, or electric rates be allowed to rise.

Three new laws are designed to tighten control over the economy and save or generate foreign exchange. One imposes stiff penalties for various types of business fraud—tax evasion, double bookkeeping, corruption. The second raises import taxes on several categories of luxury goods manufactured outside Central America.

A third decree has temporarily closed the so-called parallel market, that is, the buying and selling of U.S. dollars on the street at more than the official rate of exchange. The parallel market will be allowed to reopen in a few weeks, but only in authorized offices and under tight control by the central banks. The uncontrolled parallel market has contributed to decapitalization, or capital flight, by giving the rich a way to obtain dollars they can stash in foreign bank accounts.

The approach of capitalist governments is always to try to make working people and the poor bear the brunt of an economic crisis. Such governments use violence and repression when necessary to keep workers from defending their standard of living. El Salvador is an extreme example of this, but the general approach is not peculiar to Central America.

Nicaragua is different. Workers here are not exempted from the emergency measures and will in some cases be asked to work harder and postpone wage increases or other improvements. But Nicaraguan workers and peasants have never known anything but austerity and sacrifice, and they will not find their lives greatly changed by the new laws.

The most striking thing about the emergency decrees just adopted here is that they represent a clear attempt to find measures that can actually ameliorate the critical economic situation without jeopardizing the standard of living of the poorer sectors of society. □

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