

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

combined
with **inprecor**

Vol. 19, No. 37

October 12, 1981

USA \$1.25 UK 40p

Left Wing Vows to Fight On **The British Labour Party Congress**



U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division paratroops undergo chemical warfare drill.

REAGAN'S MILITARIZATION DRIVE

- **The Pentagon's Smokescreen on Germ Warfare**
- **Washington Pushes Nuclear First-Strike Plans**
- **U.S. Arms, Advisers, Pour Into Middle East**

Reagan pledges to uphold monarchy in Saudi Arabia

By David Frankel

With his October 1 declaration that "Saudi Arabia we will not permit to be an Iran," President Reagan took another step down the road toward war in the Middle East.

By committing the U.S. government to defense of the Saudi royal family against its own people—what *New York Times* reporter Hedrick Smith called "internal as well as external threat"—Reagan lined up with one of the most corrupt, reactionary, and dictatorial regimes on the face of the earth.

In arguing that U.S. working people should be prepared to shed their blood in defense of the Saudi monarchy and its retinue of parasite princes, Reagan said:

"There is no way, as long as Saudi Arabia and the OPEC nations there in the East—and Saudi Arabia's the most important—provide the bulk of the energy that is needed to turn the wheels of industry in the Western world. There's no way that we could stand by and see that taken over by anyone that would shut off that oil."

The fact is that "the wheels of industry in the Western world" are already jammed, with millions of workers unemployed and with the main capitalist countries heading into a new recession. The problems facing working people cannot be solved by a war to keep Arabian oil safe for Exxon, Texaco, Mobil, and the other giant corporations that profit from their control of the energy industry.

What is at issue, furthermore, has never been the *availability* of oil. The oil-producing countries of the Middle East depend on selling oil for their economic survival, and that will remain true whether they are ruled by reactionary dictatorships or by revolutionary governments that have the support of their people.

But a revolution that takes the oil resources of Saudi Arabia out of the hands of U.S. corporations and puts it into the hands of the Arabian people—that is another matter. Billions of dollars in profits are at stake for the U.S. rulers. That is what is behind Reagan's declaration that "we will not permit [Saudi Arabia] to be an Iran."

Reagan names his real target

In stating his explicit support for the Saudi monarchy—that is, his opposition to a democratic regime being established there—and his determination to maintain U.S. control of Middle Eastern oil, Reagan was not setting any new policy objectives. But until now these objectives have usually been presented in terms of defending existing governments against the supposed threat of Soviet invasion, not against their own people.

Thus, in January 1980 President Carter

reacted to the Iranian revolution by vowing to prevent "any outside force" from gaining control of the Persian Gulf. To prevent any "outsiders" from horning in on its private preserves, Washington initiated its Rapid Deployment Force. Now Reagan has named the real enemy—the people of Iran, the people of Saudi Arabia, and any others in the region who rebel against repression, social inequality, and the looting of their country's wealth by foreign corporations.

It was no accident that Reagan's declaration of support for the royal parasites in Saudi Arabia came in the context of a defense of the proposed \$8.5 billion arms sale to the Saudi regime.

Arms for counterrevolution

Part of Washington's long-term strategy for defense of U.S. corporate profits in the Middle East has been the pulling together of a counter-revolutionary military alliance that could intervene against popular uprisings in the area.

Such an alliance, of course, necessitates arming the regimes involved. Washington has already negotiated \$34.4 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia, of which \$13 billion has been delivered. This does not include the \$8.5 billion aircraft sale involving five Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) radar planes, which is currently being debated in Congress.

As *Washington Post* correspondent Edward Cody noted October 2, a key role in propping up the Saudi regime is already being played by "U.S. military advisers, silent but present down to the squadron level in the Saudi Air

Force and the battalion level in the Saudi Army."

Also deeply involved in the military network being built up by Washington is Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat. Delivery of some \$3.5 billion in arms and equipment for Sadat's forces is already planned, and in April it was announced that the Pentagon is studying a five-year plan for upgrading the Egyptian military.

Sadat, who already has 40 F-16 jet fighters on order, has asked for an additional 100 to 150. He has provided arms for right-wing rebels in Afghanistan and has played an especially important role in Washington's campaign against the Libyan government of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi.

On October 1—the same day that Reagan issued his defense of the Saudi monarchy—Sadat sent his vice president to Washington to urge that U.S. arms be given to the Sudan. The pretext for Sadat's "urgent" request was the claim that the Sudan was threatened by Libyan forces in Chad.

Prior to his visit to Washington in August, Sadat declared: "When I see President Reagan I shall say to him that I will give the United States every facility so they can reach any Arab country on the [Persian] Gulf, so they can reach any Islamic country anywhere. . . ."

But while Sadat was offering Egypt as a jumping-off place for U.S. invasions of other countries in the region, his own regime did not appear so stable. Shortly after his return from Washington, Sadat felt it necessary to arrest some 1,500 opposition figures from every strata of Egyptian society.

'Strategic consensus' with Israel

Because of its military power and its role as an imperialist state in its own right, Israel remains the keystone in the Pentagon's plans for countering revolution in the Middle East. During the September 1970 civil war in Jordan, U.S. and Israeli forces were prepared to carry out a joint invasion if King Hussein's forces



U.S. helicopters on maneuvers in Egypt.

began to lose.

"It has . . . always been assumed in Washington that Israel would make its facilities available to American forces during a major crisis," *New York Times* reporter Bernard Gwertzman pointed out September 12.

During Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's trip to the United States in September, Secretary of State Alexander Haig took a big step toward formalizing this alliance. Haig announced Washington's hopes for a "strategic consensus" involving Israel, the United States, and the proimperialist Arab regimes.

In the meantime, Washington and Tel Aviv agreed to what the *Washington Post* called "unprecedented new areas of formal military cooperation, including possible joint exercises and the stockpiling of U.S. equipment in Israel."

According to *New York Times* columnist William Safire: "Drawing on a RAND study for the U.S. Defense Department, Israeli officials showed how effective the prepositioning of U.S. equipment in Israel could be: our armor, maintained by Israelis but manned by U.S. tank crews flown in during an emergency, would be able to reach Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, overland in three days. (Ignore all Haigspeak about warehouses full of band-aids—the discussion was about tanks, planes and close intelligence cooperation.)"

Washington faces big obstacles

What Washington would like to do is reflected in its military preparations and in statements such as those of Reagan on behalf of the Saudi regime. But there are big political obstacles facing the scheme for a unified counter-revolutionary alliance in the Middle East.

To begin with, the central component of any such alliance—the Zionist regime—is bitterly resented by the Arab masses for its history of oppression against the Palestinian people, and for the new outrages that it is continually perpetrating, such as the terror-bombing of Beirut.

Israeli aggression acts as a destabilizing element that constantly puts the Arab regimes on the spot and undermines their authority among their own people.

So far not a single Arab regime has felt secure enough to follow Sadat's example and enter into an agreement with Israel. Despite all the pressure from Washington, neither the Saudi nor the Jordanian monarchies have been willing to endorse the Camp David accords.

But Israel's role as the main defender of imperialist interests in the Middle East is a fact, not a policy that can be changed at will by one or another administration in Washington. This is reflected in the determination of every U.S. president to maintain Israel's military superiority over its Arab neighbors—what the State Department terms "maintaining the military balance" in the region.

At the same time, the more armaments Washington pours into countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the more expensive and difficult it becomes for it to maintain Israel's mil-

itary edge.

These contradictions for U.S. policy have come together in the proposed AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia. The Pentagon sees Saudi Arabia as a key military base—one that is not paid for out of the Pentagon budget. But the Israeli regime fears that the Saudi military build-up could limit its freedom of action in the region.

Meanwhile, various members of congress are asking what would happen to the AWACS planes in the event of a revolution in Saudi Arabia like the one in Iran—a question which Reagan tried to answer with his declaration that he would not allow Saudi Arabia "to be an Iran."

Reagan's proposal to sell AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia has only one purpose—to put the forces of reaction and exploitation in a stronger position against the workers and peasants of the Middle East. It should be opposed.

As for Reagan's vows of support to the Saudi royal family, those are the statements of a man who, if he had his way, would still have American troops fighting in Indochina. Going to war to defend the Saudi monarchy would not do very well if it were put to a vote among the people of the United States. And in the final analysis, it is the stand of the American working people that will determine what Reagan can and cannot do in the Middle East. □

IN THIS ISSUE

Closing News Date: October 5, 1981

FEATURES	994	Mycotoxins, anthrax and credibility gaps —by Will Reissner
BRITAIN	988	The fight at the Labour Party conference —by Brian Grogan
	989	British politics at the crossroads
IRAN	991	War victory boosts morale—by Fred Murphy
USA	992	Talking peace while preparing for war —by Will Reissner
HAITI	993	Reagan's war against refugees—by G.K. Newey
IRELAND	993	Fidel Castro urges support for hunger strike
NEW ZEALAND	996	"Springbok" tour a defeat for government —by Peter Rotherham
POLAND	999	Round two of Solidarity congress —by Ernest Harsch
	1000	The political revolution advances
NICARAGUA	1002	Gains and struggles of women workers —by Jim Eitel
HONDURAS	1003	60,000 protest repression
GRENADA	1007	New gains for working people —by Ernest Harsch
EL SALVADOR	1008	Duarte tour no help for junta —by Nelson González
SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT	1004	
NEWS ANALYSIS	986	Reagan pledges to uphold Saudi Arabian monarchy—by David Frankel

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

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

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

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

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it re-

fects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The fight at the Labour Party conference

'The forces of democracy and socialism cannot be stopped'

By Brian Grogan

BRIGHTON, England—Tony Benn, leader of the Labour Party's left wing, lost his bid for the post of deputy leader by a mere whisker September 27, during the opening day of the Labour Party conference here in Brighton.

The right wing then went on to try to consolidate their hold over the party. But the specter of Benn hung over the entire proceedings. Maneuvers by the right cannot exorcise the deep class polarization going on in Britain, which is the context of the fight within the Labour Party.

Under the old system whereby the election of the party leadership was solely in the hands of its parliamentary caucus, Benn would not have stood any chance for election at all. But in January, as part of the fight of the left wing to democratize the party structure, a new-style electoral college was adopted which reduced the vote of the parliamentary caucus in electing the party leaders to 30 percent (see *Intercontinental Press*, March 9, p. 207). The trade unions were given 40 percent of the vote, and the local party organizations were given 30 percent.

'This is only the beginning'

In the new-style electoral college Denis Healey, candidate of the right, took 50.426 percent of the vote as against 49.57 percent for Benn. But, as the London *Guardian* reported, "it was evident that next year's campaign had begun within a few seconds of the declaration."

Benn himself declared after the election that it is "quite clear that the forces of democracy and socialism cannot be stopped in Britain." He told a meeting of cheering campaign workers, "This is only the beginning, and not in any sense the end."

The maneuver which gave victory to Healey was the action of forty-nine "left" members of Parliament. These had voted for a third contender, John Silkin, in the first round and then abstained on the vital second round. If just four of these MPs had voted for Benn he would have won the deputy leadership position.

Benn's defeat and the subsequent vote reversing the left-wing majority on the Labour Party's National Executive Committee (NEC) has given a boost to Labour's right wing. They will now go on the offensive.

But when Benn announced his bid six months ago he was called a "no-hoper." The narrowness of his defeat shows the pressure of the radicalization of the working class—a radicalization that can only deepen in face of the catastrophe visited upon the workers by Mar-

garet Thatcher's Tory government. The right wing's room for maneuver is therefore fairly narrow.

Left policies reendorsed

Gains by the right wing at the Brighton conference did not break out of the framework of the constitutional changes and programmatic advances previously registered by the left. It is useful to recall that after their drubbing at last year's party conference the right wing established as its aim the total reversal of the left's gains (see *Intercontinental Press*, October 27, 1980, p. 1092). This is no longer even considered a practical proposal, let alone an immediate target.

Within this framework it would be a big mistake to discount the continuing power and influence of the right wing. The right has consolidated its positions, but the party itself remains committed to left-wing policies.

The party conference confirmed a whole series of left policies and recorded some advances:

- By almost a two-thirds majority, the Labour Party reaffirmed its commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament. It opposed Cruise missiles and Thatcher's plan to acquire Trident submarines, and called for the closing of all nuclear bases on British soil. On a show of hands, even the call to withdraw from NATO appeared to pass, but this was reversed in a card vote which records the weight of the unions. Still, 1,619,000 registered their opposition to NATO—about one-third of the vote.

- For the first time in recent years, conference came out again against any form of wage restraints. Yorkshire miners leader Arthur Scargill summed up this move when he declared in the debate, "Until we live in a socialist society there can be no question of an incomes policy."

- Conference agreed that the next Labour government should "bring into public ownership the commanding heights of the economy," but a more precise resolution calling for the nationalization of the banks, insurance companies, and finance houses as well as the big monopolies was lost on a card vote.

- Against the advice of the NEC, a resolution was passed calling for a campaign for a thirty-five-hour week, the lowering of retirement age, and a systematic ban on overtime, plus other measures to combat unemployment. The executive was instructed to ensure that all young people got the right to a real chance to work.

- The party was pledged to a massive campaign against the Tories' new 4 percent wage

limit in the public sector, the expected Tory antiunion legislation, and the attack on local council spending levels announced in the course of the conference.

This decision was especially significant, as it was passed over the objections of the presiding committee, with instructions to it to mobilize a mass fightback against these Draconian Tory measures. This was a stinging rebuff to the Parliamentary spokesperson, who had strongly disagreed with such "defiance of the law," which everyone agreed was involved.

- The conference was pledged to repeal of the Tory Nationality Act and other racist legislation, including the 1968 and 1971 immigration laws which Labour governments had previously implemented with gusto.

- On Ireland the conference ended bipartisanship with the Tories and came out for eventual unification of Ireland for the first time since the establishment of Northern Ireland. More significantly perhaps, it committed the next Labour government to repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Recently the overwhelming bulk of Labour MPs had backed the renewal of this police-state law in the House of Commons. Two left-wing resolutions calling for withdrawal of troops and calling for support for the demands of the Irish nationalist hunger strikers were defeated, although the weaker of the two received 702,000 votes.

NEC wins say over election manifesto

So the gains of the right at this conference represent more of an organizational coup than a right-wing political victory. This of course gives the right a much better platform to try and reverse the leftist advances of recent years. Very quickly they will go onto the attack and try to undermine support for left policies.

Militants need to be prepared to fight back against this. Insofar as the right wing denies in practice party policies it will help to advance the determination of the rank and file to assert its control.

But the left developments of recent years are only reflections of the growth of the radicalization of the class. Turning back the new generation of working-class militants as they probe into the Labour Party and seek ways to control their leaders will only be possible on the basis of a real defeat of the class. But all the signs for the winter point to the opposite: to the defeat of this Tory government in the new wages round, and to the conditions being laid to bring it down.

The real situation was graphically revealed in the voting to take the power of writing Labour's election manifesto out of the hands of

the parliamentary Shadow Cabinet and give the final say to the NEC. This proposal was the one outstanding constitutional reform sponsored by the left, which had up to now not been adopted. On October 1 this was passed by a card vote.

Despite the right-wing majority now in the NEC, this sent the right into consternation. A quick maneuver insured that in the subsequent vote to put this into the constitution, the shopworkers union (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers—USDAW) reversed its decision and the motion was therefore lost.

The left therefore comes away from this conference not defeated but in fact more clear about the need to organize to remove the bureaucratic leaders that still occupy the key positions in the unions and the Labour Party. Such a clarification was also made in relation to a number of left-wing leaders.

Union democracy is central

It is now clear that the central question for the Labour Party is the issue of union democracy.

It is not simply the ability of a union like the

shopworkers to cast completely contradictory votes within a few minutes. It is also a matter for some of the left-wing-dominated unions. The National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), for instance, which on paper endorses all the policies sponsored by Benn, cast its 600,000 votes for Healey in the deputy battle. This is because its "sounding" in the membership revealed majority support for Healey after the leadership had refused to make any recommendations on which way members should vote. Little wonder the nominee of the Tory press carried the day.

Equally, militants will be questioning the leaders of the left-wing-dominated Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU).

Although this union eventually cast its 1.25 million votes in favor of Benn, it played havoc with union democracy in the process. Again, the TGWU supports all the policies advocated by Benn, but despite this, a move at its national conference at the beginning of the summer to vote on which candidates to support, where Benn would have been endorsed, was bureaucratically quashed. Acting general secretary of the union Alex Kitson then went on a wild cru-

sade against Benn standing at all.

Little wonder that the "consultation exercise" produced a majority of branches in favor of Healey. (Although the actual numbers represented by the branches saved the point for a Benn majority.) In the event, the union delegation followed the recommendation of the executive to vote for Benn, but only after casting their votes in the first round for Silkin, who had not even received a mention from the membership.

So the conference ends, but the battle hots up. It is still open whether Benn will stand again next year, although it is exceedingly likely that he will.

If this conference has shown anything, it is that the battle cannot be won by the left solely within the framework of the Labour Party. Benn is backed by the overwhelming majority (that is, 83 percent) of the constituency parties. It is in the unions, and particularly in the big industrial unions, where the battle will be decided. And here, in the next twelve months, we will see the fight hot up, the polarization increase, and the whole issue go onto a higher political level. □

British politics at the crossroads

Class polarization sends major parties into crisis

[The following appeared as an editorial in the September 1981 issue of *International*, the theoretical journal of the International Marxist Group, the British section of the Fourth International.*]

* * *

This year's round of party conferences takes place against the background of major crisis in both the Labour and Conservative Parties. A recomposition is taking place in the bourgeois political arena in which all the old certainties—the steady alternation of Labour and Tory governments committed to much the same Keynesian, social welfare policies—are being thrown to the wind. When the Social Democratic Party (SDP) was founded, Roy Jenkins described it as the most important political event in Britain for fifty years. Roy Jenkins can be excused his exaggeration, but the formation of the SDP is part of a process which will change the face of British politics dramatically.

The change in the profiles of the major parties seems sudden—in a matter of a few years the Tory party seems to have slued to the right while Labour has radicalised to the left—leaving the unfilled centre gap for the SDP to step into. But in reality this sudden change is the rapid crystallisation of long-term processes whose basic character has been absolutely obvious at least since the accession to power of

the Wilson 1964 government. Wilson came to power after "thirteen years of Tory misrule" with a mandate to solve the crisis—the half-baked "white heat of the technical revolution." But no government, Tory or Labour, has been able to make the least dent on Britain's economic crisis, because the struggle between the classes has remained deadlocked.

The polarisation of the political parties therefore represents the failure of either major class to impose its own solution to the crisis. Social programmes are implemented in the political arena by governments. And the occasion for the rapid polarisation of the political parties was a political initiative taken by a section of the bourgeoisie, namely the Thatcherite experiment. Thatcherism represented the failure of two Labour governments and one Tory government to seriously alter the relation of class forces, to revive the declining fortunes of British capitalism. Trade union power, the central "problem" for British capitalism, remained largely undefeated—even after the slump of 1974-75 and the years of wretched Healy-Callaghan austerity which followed it.

The crisis of Thatcherism

But Thatcherism is now seen by all but the most shortsighted Tory fanatics to have failed. The medicine—deflation—has only marginally affected the disease while causing traumatic side effects which threaten to kill the patient anyway. The destruction of British manufacturing industry is becoming too high a price to pay for the defeat of the organised working

class, which is in any case far from being achieved. The Tories have thus gone into a nose-dive. All is despair in the Tory ranks, not just because they face the prospect of defeat, but because without a change of course they face the prospect of an *historic* defeat, which could make them the third party in parliament after the Liberal-SDP bloc and the Labour Party.

Moreover, the Tories now fear that a section of the ruling class bloc, particularly that associated with manufacturing as opposed to banking capital, could be lost to them for a generation. In the London clubs, all kinds of dark plots are being concocted to remove Thatcher. Even such a staunch cult of the personality as that enjoyed by Thatcher will not survive the Tories' own genteel brand of the "night of the long knives." Perhaps just as damaging to Tory morale has been this summer's series of riots. Despite their 'law and order' proclamations the knowledge that mass unemployment is tearing apart the seams of Britain's social fabric has deeply alarmed Thatcher's supporters.

The beneficiaries of the Tories' crisis will, in terms of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois support, be the SDP. The election result in Warrington, where Jenkins won 42 percent of the vote, amounted to something of a breakthrough for them—against all predictions that they would be slaughtered. It is significant that perhaps something like 80 percent of their votes came from former Tory and Liberal voters, with the Liberals standing down in their favour. The Tory vote collapsed into joke can-

* Subscription information can be obtained from *International*, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP.

didate proportions.

The rise of the SDP is in part a function of the fact that for the ruling class Labour is no longer a "safe" alternative government. For the bourgeoisie the question of whether Benn wins the leadership in the short term is not the determining one in deciding its attitude. It is clear that the wave of radicalisation which has swept the party over the past two or three years is the product of deep-rooted processes, which will continue irrespective of conjunctural victories or defeats for the left. The conclusion is inexorable: a new Labour government would be under the pressure of a radicalised base, both in the constituency parties and the unions, which would make such a government dangerous even with a right-wing leadership.

The leftward movement in the Labour Party, symbolised by the vicious fight for the deputy leadership, has forced party leaders to make increasingly radical statements. Denis Healey has discovered that he is an opponent of the Trident missile system, that he stands for an "alternative economic strategy," and that the neutron bomb is a disaster. Every bureaucratic trick in the book is being hauled out by the trade union and Labour leaders to attempt to halt the left's advance. But even people who have a lifetime's experience of solving problems by quick manoeuvres, sordid deals and betrayals can't stop a process which is now implanted in the consciousness of tens of thousands of militant workers. The historical fact of two right wing Labour governments which were dismal failures, well within the memory of most militant workers, cannot be so easily expunged.

At its conference Labour has to face many questions of policy. But for the Labour left there are two major questions of strategy we have to face.

The first is how the Labour right's use of the SDP challenge to derail the left's advance can be confronted. The right's lesson from Warrington is that by playing down policies decided by Labour conference victory over the SDP can be achieved. But the real lesson of Warrington is the opposite. Doug Hoyle, the Labour candidate *did* play down those policies, refused to comment on the issues at stake inside the Labour Party debates and conducted a generally low-key campaign.

As Hoyle noted, accurately but too late after the result was announced, the media had had a field day. *They* refused to play the game. *They* commented on the leadership question, *they* highlighted the differences between Parliamentary Labour Party policies and those of the Labour Party conference. *They* were given a free run. The solution is not to capitulate to the right to achieve unity in the party, but to achieve a fighting unity in the party through a fight to thoroughly defeat and rout the right, from top to bottom of the party.

Such a strategy has nothing to fear in terms of defection of working class support. Already a third of the working class vote Tory. The defection of this third to the SDP would not be a defeat for Labour, but part of the process of the



THATCHER

historic defeat of the Tory party. The prospect is therefore one of a leftward-moving Labour Party continuing to command majority support in the working class. The Labour left has nothing to fear by standing firm.

The Benn current

For revolutionary socialists this poses acute questions of politics and tactics. The first is an analysis of the Benn current. The movement for Benn is a movement for radical reform. Benn does not have a revolutionary base which he is heading off—on the contrary. The fight for revolutionary socialist policies therefore involves not only a united front, with the Benn current but also a sharp rupture with the politics of Bennism. It would be the height of foolishness to believe that "under the impact of events" Benn's base will evolve towards revolutionary socialist policies without the sharpest programmatic fight.

Many of the policies which Benn himself has been advancing within the deputy elections

can be the basis for working class action. The omissions of Benn's programme weaken it as a programme for a future socialist government. It is Benn's concentration on the issue of political democracy at the expense of measures to challenge bourgeois control of the economy which renders his programme utopian.

For within days of taking office the next Labour government, unless the left is utterly defeated beforehand, will be under the most ferocious attack from the bourgeoisie, just as Ken Livingstone and the "left" GLC [Greater London Council] have been subjected to a vicious press witchhunt. Without the most decisive measures of nationalisation to wrest control of the economy from the financial institutions, the big monopolies and banks, the government would be put under siege within weeks. A left Labour government elected and then thrown out of office amidst a collapsing economy, capital flight and strike, could amount to an historic defeat for the British workers. In this context, economic sabotage could be a more effective weapon for the ruling class than a military coup or a similar adventure.

This scenario points up a major weakness in the discussions of the Labour left. Endless debate and effort to secure a left victory in the party is quite inadequate unless there is a thorough debate on the conditions and possibilities of securing left advance through a socialist government. In the coming months revolutionaries in the Labour Party should be hammering home these conclusions in the ranks of the labour movement.

Over the past decade, revolutionaries have used the formula that the political crisis has lagged behind the economic crisis. The political logjam has however been broken up by Thatcherism and Bennism. In the previous period the foci of struggle in Britain around which the left organised were multiple and diffuse. But it was always inevitable that in a country with a single mass party of the working class, the focus for left politics would return to the development of left tendencies in that party. The fight for revolutionary socialism in the 1980s has become the fight for influence in the base of that party—the industrial unions, the constituencies and the other affiliated organisations. Socialists who don't put their efforts there will be by-passed and defeated. □

Intercontinental Press. Subscribe Today.

YES! I want to subscribe. Enclosed is \$35 for a one-year subscription; \$17.50 for six-months; \$8.75 for a three-month introductory subscription.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Postal Zone _____

Canadian Rates: Canadian \$41 for one year; \$21 for six months. Send for rates to other countries.

Intercontinental Press 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014

War victory boosts morale

Workers resist attacks on their gains

By Fred Murphy

The Iranian armed forces scored a major victory on September 27 against the year-long invasion and occupation of Iranian territory by the Iraqi dictatorship.

A combined operation by the army and the Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran) took the Iraqi forces by surprise and drove them out of the area east of the Karun River in the southern part of Khuzestan Province.

The Iranian offensive thus broke the Iraqi siege of the city of Abadan, a major oil-refining center that had been surrounded on three sides and continually bombarded since the early weeks of the war in September and October 1980.

According to reports from Tehran, the Iranians captured 3,000 Iraqi soldiers, captured or destroyed forty tanks, and shot down one MIG fighter plane and one helicopter.

Iraqi dictator Sadaam Hussein had sent his troops into Iran in September 1980 with the aim of driving back the revolution and bringing down the Iranian government. Hussein and the imperialists—who welcomed his move—had expected a quick victory. But by the war's first anniversary on September 22 the Iraqis were still bogged down outside of Abadan. They had failed to take control of Iran's oil fields or of any major city, with the exception of parts of Khorramshahr.

Now the September 27 victory has strengthened the Iranian revolution and further discredited Hussein.

Contrary to the bleak picture of the situation inside Iran painted by the imperialist news media, socialists in Tehran report that the big victory in the war had boosted morale among the masses. It has helped to stiffen the workers' resistance to efforts by the employers and the government to chip away at gains won since the shah's downfall.

In some cases the workers have forced the reinstatement of militants expelled from their jobs. One indication of the pressure on the regime was a recently televised debate in which two fired workers challenged the manager who had dismissed them. An official from the Ministry of Labor also took part, trying to come up with a compromise solution.

Leaders of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) report also that the case of five HKE members fired from their jobs at the Iran National automobile factory last January and March will be taken up by the Supreme Court within the next few weeks.

Pressure is mounting as well for implementation of Section C of the land-reform law, which provides for distribution of big holdings. This measure has been blocked by the Council of Guardians, a body of top religious

figures charged with enforcing the constitution. Peasants have demonstrated to demand land. Some actions of this kind have been organized by the Jihad for Reconstruction, a youth organization set up by the government to do construction work, teach literacy, and provide other forms of assistance in the countryside.

The pressure for action on the land question was reflected in statements made September 19 by the minister of agriculture, Mohammed Salamati. He cited large increases in grain production in areas of the country where some land distribution had been carried out, saying this "shows the eagerness of the peasants in enforcing land reform." Salamati claimed to support implementation of Section C without further delay. (*Tehran Times*, September 20.)

Another area where the regime is meeting with resistance is its policy of trying to halt terrorist attacks through summary executions. Socialists report that while there is little or no sympathy in the factories for the political views of the Mujahedeen—the group that is responsible for many of the attacks—workers nonetheless oppose the executions. Massive use of the death penalty is seen as inhumane and of little use in effectively defending the revolution.

This sentiment was also expressed in an editorial in the current issue of the monthly magazine *Jihad*, published by the Jihad for Reconstruction.

While continuing to carry out assassinations of government officials and Islamic clergymen, the Mujahedeen tried a new tactic in mid-September.

On several occasions, small groups of armed demonstrators gathered near Tehran University, fired into the air, and shouted anti-Khomeini and antigovernment slogans. Gun battles lasting several hours broke out between the Mujahedeen and Pasdaran units. Bystanders were often wounded or killed in these incidents.

In at least one of their actions the Mujahedeen used rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns. Buildings were set afire, including a gas station.

Commando squads have also halted municipal buses, forced the passengers off, and then overturned the vehicles and set them on fire.

Socialists in Tehran report that as a result of such tactics, support for the Mujahedeen is now dwindling even in the middle-class areas of North Tehran that had been the group's strongest base.

Despite their new tactics and the vow of demonstrators that "this is the month of the fall of Khomeini," the Mujahedeen failed in its plans to seriously disrupt the October 2 elec-

tions.

The elections were held to choose a successor to President Mohammed Ali Rajai, who perished along with Prime Minister Mohammad Javad Bahonar when a powerful incendiary bomb ripped through the prime minister's office on August 30.

According to the Iranian government, more than 15.5 million people cast ballots in the October 2 voting. Hojatolislam Ali Khamenei, who replaced Bahonar as chief of the ruling Islamic Republican Party (IRP), was credited with a landslide victory. Only token opposition candidates were allowed on the ballot, however, and all of these were IRP supporters.

The Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) had sought to present Babak Zahraie as a socialist candidate against Khamenei, but was unconstitutionally kept off the ballot by the Council of Guardians. The HKE protested this move in an open letter. Both the HKE and the Workers Unity Party (HVK)* tried to present candidates for parliamentary seats as well, but these were also denied ballot status.

The HKE also offered critical support to Hossein Kamali, a leader of the Tehran workers organization known as Kargar House. Kamali was a candidate for parliament on a coalition slate that was headed by the IRP.

The HVK did not support Kamali's candidacy on the grounds that it was not independent of the IRP. Instead it conducted a write-in campaign for HVK leader Mahmoud Sayrafizadeh for parliament.

The two main leftist groups that support the Islamic regime—the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and the majority faction of the People's Fedayeen—did not present any candidates of their own. Both called for a vote for Khamenei for president. □

*The HKE and HVK are two of the three organizations in Iran affiliated to the Fourth International. No information was available at press time on the position the third group, the Socialist Workers Party (HKS), had taken on the elections.

Your library should get *Intercontinental Press*.

Intercontinental Press is a unique source for political developments throughout the world. *IP* is the only English-language magazine with a full-time bureau in Managua, providing weekly reports on the development of the revolutionary upsurge in Central America. *IP* correspondents provide our readers with in-depth coverage of events such as the Iranian revolution, the freedom struggle in South Africa, and the workers struggle in Poland.

Many of the documents, speeches, and interviews we publish appear nowhere else in English. Why not ask your library to subscribe? Make sure others get a chance to read *IP* too.

Talking peace while preparing for war

Reagan adopts first-strike weapons plan

By Will Reissner

On September 24, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko announced that negotiations on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe will begin November 30 in Geneva.

Eight days later, on October 2, Ronald Reagan held a news conference to announce a \$180.3 billion package of new nuclear weapons systems.

Reagan's proposals include production of the MX land-based missile, the Trident II submarine missile, the new B-1 bomber, and improvements to communicate with U.S. nuclear forces around the world. Also included in the new arms package is development of the Stealth bomber, which is intended to evade Soviet radar systems.

Although the two announcements, coming barely a week apart, seem contradictory, a closer look shows that both are part of the latest U.S. escalation of the nuclear arms race.

European missile talks

Paradoxically, the Reagan administration's agreement to hold arms limitation talks on nuclear forces in Europe is aimed at insuring the deployment of 572 new missiles on that continent.

In 1979, Washington and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) voted to deploy 572 Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe targeted on the Soviet Union. From bases in West Germany, the Pershing II could hit Soviet targets in as little as four minutes, compared to nearly thirty minutes for U.S.-based missiles.

In an attempt to placate extensive opposition among working people in Europe to the new missiles, NATO described the missile decision as two-pronged: to go ahead with placement of the missiles (scheduled for 1983), while also initiating arms limitation talks with the Soviet Union.

Some NATO leaders even claimed the decision would lead to a *reduction* in arms! According to this convoluted rationalization, the increase in NATO missiles would make Moscow more eager to enter into an arms limitation agreement, which would then lead to a reduction in the overall number of missiles.

But since 1979 it has become increasingly clear that Washington is not interested in any real arms limitation talks, that it is engaged in a full-scale attempt to reestablish overwhelming nuclear superiority over the USSR.

The SALT II Treaty, which provided limits to the growth of nuclear forces, died in the U.S. Senate. Reagan, Haig, and Defense Sec-

retary Caspar Weinberger make no secret of their lack of interest in resuming SALT talks with the Soviets.

But to defuse the growing opposition to the missiles in Europe, European NATO leaders have been pressing Washington to begin talks with the Soviet Union.

As columnist Anthony Lewis noted in the October 1 *New York Times*, sentiment in favor of unilateral disarmament "is growing fast among our NATO allies: not only in Britain, but in Belgium, the Netherlands and, most significantly, West Germany. And a major factor in what is happening is uneasiness about the arms policies of the Reagan administration."

Lewis added that the Pentagon's arms policies could cause the fall of Helmut Schmidt's government in West Germany and could "turn the Social Democrats into an anti-nuclear and even an anti-American party. . . ."

Shirley Williams, a leading figure in the Social Democratic Party in Britain, which was recently formed from a rightist split in the Labour Party in part over its antinuclear stance, told Lewis:

"We will be able to hold many of our younger members only if they are convinced that the United States is sincerely trying to bring about a reduction of theater weapons in Europe, and ultimately general nuclear arms control."

When asked by Lewis, "Hold them for what?" Williams replied: "Hold them for the acceptance of full British membership [in] NATO."

Under such pressures, U.S. representatives have agreed to begin discussion with Moscow on November 30.

One of Alexander Haig's top advisors told *Newsweek* magazine that "we are doing this only to satisfy our European allies." A State Department official told *Time* magazine that "the Europeans would have screamed bloody murder" if no date for the talks had been set.

Washington's real plans

The Reagan administration is not interested in arms limitation talks because it is committed to developing a first-strike nuclear capability against the Soviet Union (under the guise of catching up with the Russians).

In this regard Reagan is building on the foundation left by Carter. It was the Carter administration that drew up plans for the 572 missiles in Europe, for the Trident II missile, the MX missile, and the improved Mk-12A warhead for existing Minuteman missiles.

The decision to go for overwhelming U.S. nuclear superiority was codified in Carter's Ju-

ly 1980 Presidential Directive No. 59 (P.D. 59), which instructed the Pentagon to develop strategies and weapons to fight and win prolonged but "limited" nuclear wars.

With P.D. 59, the White House openly acknowledged the shift that had already been taking place from targeting U.S. missiles against Soviet cities, to aiming at the Soviet missiles themselves in order to wipe them out in a preemptive first strike.

To bring this new strategy into reality, however, the Pentagon needed new weapons systems that were accurate enough to be able to wipe out small targets like Soviet missile silos and nuclear submarines.

The MX, the Mk-12A, and the Trident II all have that capability! In addition, placing U.S. missiles in Europe four minutes from Soviet targets will increase the Pentagon's ability to launch a surprise first-strike attack.

If the Reagan administration is able to carry out its arms plans, the gigantic nuclear buildup will bring the threat of "limited nuclear war" closer. But several obstacles stand in Reagan's way.

The strength of European mass opposition to NATO's missile plan, which has been heightened by Washington's recent decision to go ahead with production of the neutron bomb for use in Europe, makes it questionable whether NATO will be able to actually deploy those weapons, despite Haig's *pro forma* agreement to talk to the Soviets.

Reagan must also contend with strong anti-military sentiment within the United States itself. That sentiment was a big factor in forcing Reagan to abandon Carter's initial plan to shuttle 200 to 275 MX missiles through vast regions of Utah and Nevada.

In his October 2 press conference, Reagan outlined a much reduced MX plan, involving placement of 100 missiles in existing silos designed for Titan and Minuteman missiles.

Nevertheless, despite opposition in Europe and the United States, the U.S. rulers are continuing to push forward with their militarization drive. This was shown by Reagan's budget speech, where he outlined new cuts in social programs and vast increases in arms spending; the Justice Department taking the first steps toward prosecuting youth who failed to register for the draft; and by Reagan's \$180.3 billion nuclear arms program. □

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

Reagan's war against refugees

U.S. Coast Guard ordered to open fire on immigrants

By G.K. Newey

For centuries the Caribbean was the haunt of marauding pirates. Now it is about to witness a resurrection of piracy as a result of a September 29 executive order signed by President Reagan. That measure instructs U.S. Coast Guard vessels to roam international waters in the Caribbean, intercepting and boarding all vessels suspected of carrying Haitian immigrants to the United States.

A spokesman for the Justice Department told the September 30 *New York Times* that the new Coast Guard authorization includes permission to open fire if a vessel in international waters refuses to halt for inspection and boarding.

It is estimated that about 1,000 Haitians without visas arrive on U.S. shores each month. Since the Haitians are Black, this is especially upsetting to U.S. authorities.

Reagan's executive order instructs the Coast Guard, after it illegally boards boats, "To return the vessel and its passengers to the country from which it came, when there is reason to believe that an offense is being committed against the United States immigration laws. . . ."

Haitians have been leaving their impoverished island in droves to escape the grinding poverty of one of the world's poorest countries and to get away from the brutal dictatorship of Haitian President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier and his Tontons Macoutes strong-arm gangs.

The U.S. government steadfastly claims that virtually all refugees from Haiti are migrants seeking to improve their economic status rather than political refugees seeking genuine political asylum. Only about a dozen Haitians have been granted political asylum in the U.S. in recent years.

But the October 1 *New York Times* points out that "a Federal court has found, many of those fleeing Haiti are not merely fleeing poverty. They are fleeing for their lives, desperately afraid of beatings and imprisonment if they return."

Until the process was temporarily halted by a September 9 federal court order, Haitians in U.S. detention camps were being rushed through kangaroo court hearings that led to expulsion orders against them.

One lawyer defending Haitians held at a former missile base outside Miami described the conditions under which the hearings take place. "They scheduled us regularly to be in two or three courtrooms at the same time," Steve Forrester explained. "On August 4, I had 29 hearings going on in three courts. I had four people deported because I couldn't get there. I was literally running between courtrooms. I'd

ask for a continuance of 10 days and not get it. I'd ask for two hours. No. Ten minutes?" One judge did grant Forrester ten minutes, while the other two "gave me 'a brief moment.'"

University of Miami law professor Bruce Winick, who has sued the government over the illegality of the hearings, described the circumstances under which they were held. "I mean it was just lunacy," he recalled. Court translators were incompetent to communicate in Haitian French Creole. Instead of asking if the refugees wanted political asylum, for example, the "translators" asked if they wanted to apply for asylum, which in Creole is taken to mean "insane asylum." According to Winick, the Immigration and Naturalization Service "was quick to infer a waiver of their rights when in fact the refugees had no idea what was going on."

Under Reagan's racist executive order, the Haitians will now undergo this interrogation process on the high seas. A U.S. Coast Guard cutter stationed off the northwest coast of Haiti will bear down on them, put some sailors

aboard their vessel, and question the passengers.

A White House official assured the press that no refugees fleeing persecution would be turned back on the high seas. The Coast Guard is instructed to ask the Haitians if they feel they are political refugees, and to examine any documents they have that might support that claim. But the White House was unable to explain what such documents might be.

In order to insure that the refugees understand the questions put to them, a Haitian navy officer will serve aboard each U.S. Coast Guard ship! Any refugees who tell a Haitian naval officer that they are seeking political asylum, knowing full well that they are likely to be returned to Haiti anyway, really would be candidates for an insane asylum rather than political asylum.

According to Rev. Gerard Jean-Juste, director of the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami, Reagan's executive order shows that the administration "is cooperating with one of the most fascist, criminal governments in the third world." He adds that the order amounts to "modern piracy."

This view was echoed by Jean-Claude Bajeux, coordinator of the Inter-Regional Council for Haitian Refugees in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Bajeux blasted the Coast Guard authorization as "piracy" and "a violation of the freedom of traveling on international waters." □

'Irish patriots are writing one of the most heroic chapters in history'

[On September 15 Cuban President Fidel Castro gave the opening speech at the 68th conference of the Interparliamentary Union, which was held in Havana. The following are Castro's remarks on the hunger strike by Irish nationalist political prisoners in Northern Ireland. Rather than listen to the truth, the British delegation at the conference walked out, joining representatives of the U.S., Chinese, and Salvadoran governments.]

In speaking of international politics, we cannot ignore what is happening in Northern Ireland; I feel it is my duty to refer to this problem. In my opinion, Irish patriots are writing one of the most heroic chapters in human history. They have earned the respect and admiration of the world, and likewise they deserve its support. Ten of them have already died in the most moving gesture of sacrifice, selflessness, and courage one could ever imagine. Humanity should feel ashamed that this terrible crime is committed before its very eyes. These young fighters do not ask for independence nor make impossible demands to put an end to their strike; they ask only for something as simple as the recognition of what they actually are: political prisoners. The men for whom we ask solidarity in this Conference are neither Marxist-Leninists nor Communists; they are militant Catholics. How can such a cold and dramatic

holocaust be tolerated in the very heart of the West?

We can never get used to crime, be it in Ireland, El Salvador, Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Lebanon or elsewhere.

The stubbornness, intransigence, cruelty, and insensitivity of the British Government before the international community concerning the problem of the Irish patriots and their hunger strike till death remind us of Torquemada and the atrocities committed by the Inquisition during the apogee of the Middle Ages.

According to legend, in its early days, Rome was once besieged. Two young Roman soldiers had been taken prisoner. When, in an attempt at breaking them, the besiegers threatened to burn them alive, they spontaneously put their hands in the flames to show their contempt. It is said that their gestures impressed the enemy so much that the siege of Rome was lifted.

Let tyrants tremble before men who are capable of dying for their ideals, after 60 days of hunger strike! What were Christ's three days in the Calvary, an age-old symbol of human sacrifice, compared to that example?

It is high time for the world community to put an end to this repulsive atrocity through denunciation and pressure! □

Mycotoxins, anthrax, and credibility gaps

Washington's germ warfare charges come unstuck

By Will Reissner

British scientists have examined U.S. charges that the Soviet Union has used biological warfare weapons in Asia and found the evidence very unconvincing.

The germ warfare charge was made on September 13 by Secretary of State Alexander Haig in a West Berlin speech (see *Intercontinental Press*, September 28, 1981, p. 938). Haig maintained that there is evidence that "the Soviet Union and its allies have been using lethal chemical weapons in Laos, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan."

The following day the State Department held a Washington press conference to back up Haig's claim. Its evidence was limited to one single leaf-and-stem sample supposedly collected in an area of Kampuchea still controlled by troops loyal to the murderous Pol Pot regime that was overthrown in 1979.

At that press conference, State Department "experts," who refused to identify themselves, claimed the offending weapons were mycotoxins, which are natural poisons produced by fungi. These were allegedly dropped from airplanes to produce a deadly "yellow rain." The State Department's anonymous "experts" insisted that the mycotoxins had to have been introduced through weapons since they are not native to Southeast Asia.

Scientists doubt story

But the September 17, 1981 issue of the British weekly *New Scientist* notes that "British microbiologists and experts are sceptical about the claims."

The three mycotoxins pointed to by the State Department are produced by the *Fusarium* fungi. *New Scientist* asked *Fusarium* expert Professor John Smith of Strathclyde University about Washington's insistence that this fungus does not occur naturally in Southeast Asia. "I would be surprised if that statement were actually true," Smith responded. According to *New Scientist*, "He points out that most *Fusarium* fungi occur throughout the world and that little is known about their occurrence—or otherwise—in South-East Asia."

Responding to Washington's contention that Soviet scientists have done considerable research on this fungus, Smith acknowledged that this was true, given the high incidence of the fungus in the USSR, but added that the U.S. is the world leader in research on *Fusarium*.

Other British scientists doubted that mycotoxins could even be used as biological weapons. Julian Perry Robinson of Sussex University, author of a textbook on chemical and biological warfare, told *New Scientist* that mycotoxins "don't make much sense as a chemical

weapon." According to the journal, Robinson "says they are 'rather weak' poisons, need a day or so to take effect and are both difficult and expensive to make. All this adds up, in his opinion, to the 'general implausibility' of mycotoxins such as T2 as weapons."¹

'Very, very crude'

Another expert, Tony Rose of Bath University, put it even more bluntly. He stated that "mycotoxins would be the worst agents to choose" for chemical weapons, adding that they would make "very, very crude biological weapons" since they must be eaten to have any toxic effect.

Rose maintained that moderate doses of mycotoxins would have to be eaten regularly for days or weeks to do any damage.

Haig's public accusations against the Soviet Union simply do not stand up to scrutiny. But Haig is not after scientific truth. He is trying to drum up support for Washington's huge arms buildup—which includes big increases in chemical and biological warfare programs.

According to Richard Nations, writing from Washington in the September 18 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Haig's charge is also part of a two-pronged strategy to further isolate Vietnam in Southeast Asia and to deflect Western European public opinion away from Washington's decision to produce the neutron bomb.

Nations notes that "the implications of the American charge for the diplomacy of Southeast Asia could be far reaching. . . ." He points out that it "would undermine the tendency in Asean,² particularly among the Malaysians and Indonesians, to seek some accommodation with Vietnam over Cambodia [Kampuchea] in order to wean Hanoi away from Moscow, while reinforcing the line taken by Washington as well as Peking that Vietnam is only an instrument of the Soviet expansionism in Southeast Asia."

The U.S. government, which used massive quantities of chemical warfare agents in its unsuccessful attempt to crush the Vietnamese revolution, is now trying to make the victim into the criminal.

Anthrax in Sverdlovsk . . .

But this is not the first time Washington has launched a propaganda campaign charging that the Soviet Union was using chemical and biological warfare. For about six months in 1980,

1. The State Department claimed to have identified three mycotoxins produced by *Fusarium* fungi—Nivalenol, Deoxynivalenol, and T2 toxin.

2. ASEAN—the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—is composed of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

newspapers and magazines in the U.S. and Western Europe were filled with lurid accounts of a supposed Soviet germ warfare accident in Sverdlovsk that caused an outbreak of anthrax in that city.

That story made the headlines in newspapers throughout the world on March 19, 1980, the day after a U.S. State Department press conference. There, State Department spokesman David Passage reported that there were "disturbing indications" that a large number of people in Sverdlovsk might have been contaminated by a "lethal biological agent," and that this raised questions about whether the Soviet Union was violating the 1975 convention banning the development, production, or stockpiling of biological agents or toxins.

A *Washington Post* editorial on March 22, 1980 argued: "If they are true, the recent reports suggesting that the Soviet Union has violated the terms of an international agreement banning the production of biological weapons cast the future of all arms-control efforts in serious doubt." According to the *Post*, the State Department's story was "based on information from Soviet emigrants and other unspecified intelligence sources."

The March 19, 1980, *New York Daily News* reported grimly that "intelligence sources said that an estimated 500 Russians died after a research laboratory exploded, spewing bacteria into the air."

Four days later the *Daily News* provided more "details" on the incident, reporting that "for nearly a year, evidence has built up in the intelligence community that an accident occurred last April near the Soviet city of Sverdlovsk, an accident in which hundreds of people died, exhibiting symptoms of anthrax. It was an epidemic, U.S. officials say, for which natural explanations were ruled out."

These were pretty serious charges, then, based on "disturbing information," on evidence that "has built up in the intelligence community," on "unspecified intelligence sources." But there was hardly a word of truth in the whole affair.

Dr. Zhores Medvedev, a biochemist working at the National Institute for Medical Research in London, traced down the sources for the State Department's charges. His findings were published in an article in the July 31, 1980 issue of *New Scientist*.

Medvedev noted that when he traced back the sources for the U.S. government's charge he found it "was based, not on intelligence information, but on two articles, the first published in *Now!* magazine on 26 October 1979, and the second published in *Bild Zeitung* of Hamburg, a sensational tabloid, on 13 February 1980."

In fact, Medvedev added, "the US State Department statement contained no new information apart from what had been published in *Now!* and *Bild Zeitung*."

But although neither cited their source, both of these publications had actually taken their information from the very same place—"an obscure Russian-language emigré magazine *Possev* published in Frankfurt" by an anti-Soviet group founded in 1930.

Possev, in turn, printed three highly contradictory articles on this alleged germ warfare accident.

... or was it Novosibirsk?

In October 1979 *Possev* published a short unsigned article about an alleged biological accident in the city of Novosibirsk earlier that year. The story claimed that several thousand people had died of a mysterious disease, caused by the escape of bacteria from a secret research facility near a suburb identified as Uktus.

That article became the basis for a sensational story in the October 26, 1979 *Now!*, which added all sorts of "color" of its own. Akademgorodok, the science city near Novosibirsk, was described by *Now!* writer David Floyd as "a closed science town where much of the academy's most secret research work is done."

When the article appeared, Medvedev called the science correspondent of *Now!* to inform him that this information was wrong. "It is

well known," says Medvedev, "that Akademgorodok is not a 'closed town', but an open international research centre visited by many foreign scientists. Novosibirsk is also open to foreign tourists."

But that hardly mattered because the story was about to change. In January 1980 *Possev* published a second story, by "N. N.," on the alleged germ warfare incident. This time, however, the accident had taken place not in Novosibirsk, but in Sverdlovsk, nearly a thousand miles away. Moreover, the accident had taken place not in Uktus, but in "military settlement No. 19," southwest of Sverdlovsk. That kind of detail adds a nice ring of authority to an article.

This second story became the basis for a front page article in *Bild Zeitung* a few weeks later. The same story then appeared in *Nature* magazine, without any source. But all the details came from *Possev*'s version.

In April 1980, there was yet a third version of the same story in *Possev*. This time, however, the accident took place not in version No. 2's "military settlement No. 19," but in version No. 1's suburb called Uktus. But now Uktus was no longer version No. 1's suburb of Novosibirsk, but was version No. 2's suburb of Sverdlovsk.

In this third version, the bodies of the dead were no longer burned, as they had been in earlier versions, but were buried in a disinfectant liquid.

From the first, the Soviet government ac-

knowledged that there had indeed been an outbreak of anthrax in the Sverdlovsk area. Anthrax is still a common problem among farm animals in many parts of the Soviet Union, and can be transmitted to humans.

But Washington was not about to let a little thing like facts stand in its way. In July 1980 the Congressional Committee on Intelligence released a report, containing no new details whatsoever, but repeating the charges, all of which were taken from the reports that originally appeared in *Possev*.

Moreover, in the process of endlessly repeating the same bare-bones information, the reports got more and more lurid. Where *Possev* had described an epidemic lasting about a month, with about thirty to forty fatalities per day, the *Washington Post* stated that "information indicates that approximately 1000 people died within a matter of hours."

Medvedev points out that the local Sverdlovsk newspaper *Vecherny Sverdlovsk* carried three articles on anthrax in April 1979, which is consistent with the Soviet claim that there was a natural outbreak of the disease in the area. But Medvedev adds that "it is rather strange that even the original author [in *Possev*], N. N., did not mention these articles."

Medvedev concludes that "there has been no single fact published about the Sverdlovsk case which has indicated a possible stockpile of an actual anthrax weapon. If an outbreak of pulmonary anthrax (which is suspected by the CIA) is the result of the accidental explosion of an actual weapon (with a cloud of spores), then the stories that the epidemic continued for a whole month (with 30 or 40 casualties per day) could not have been the case."

The smoked pork bomb?

Another article in the September 4, 1980, issue of *New Scientist* by University of Bradford microbiologist Dr. Vivian Wyatt produced a detailed account leading to the magazine's conclusion that "stories that a biological warfare accident in the USSR led to an outbreak of anthrax [are] of doubtful credibility; the idea that the disease could be used as a weapon is scientifically suspect."

Dr. Wyatt specifically asks "was there an explosion" at Sverdlovsk? The answer "is yes; but the 'explosion' was not of the kind suggested in the Western press." Rather, Dr. Wyatt maintains, it was "an 'explosive' outbreak or epidemic."

In fact, says Dr. Wyatt, "the most likely source" of the outbreak was "smoked sausage from a pig," not any germ warfare weapon. Wyatt adds that "it is doubtful if anthrax has been seriously considered as a possible weapon since the late 1950s."

While the capitalist media around the world has been giving wide coverage to Haig's latest charges of germ warfare, just as it played up the phony anthrax bomb in Sverdlovsk/Novosibirsk, it has not seen fit to give equal attention to the facts. The "yellow rain" has been a product of the yellow press. □



Utah ranchers with some of 6,000 sheep killed in 1968 when nerve gas drifted off of a U.S. military testing ground.

'Springbok' tour a defeat for government

Apartheid rugby team faced massive protests

The South African "Springbok" rugby team toured New Zealand for eight weeks beginning in mid-July.

Even before the Springboks arrived, 75,000 people in twenty-seven cities mobilized against the tour May 1 in one of the largest demonstrations in New Zealand history (see *Intercontinental Press*, July 13, page 729).

For two months, every time the Springboks played they were met by mass demonstrations of anti-apartheid activists. The demonstrations were frequently attacked by riot cops.

One police operation, on August 15 in Christchurch, involved 2,000 cops—half the New Zealand police force—in addition to the army, which laid out barbed wire obstacles around the park where the match was played.

A march of 12,000 people protested the final game of the tour at Eden Park in Auckland September 12. The government of Prime Minister Robert Muldoon responded with riot police who carried out a systematic, brutal attack. Hundreds of demonstrators were injured including ninety who required hospital treatment, primarily for head wounds from police batons.

The next stop for the Springboks after New Zealand was the United States. Rea-

gan's State Department had granted them visas as a "private sports group" despite pleas from the mayor of Los Angeles—scheduled site of the 1984 Summer Olympics—that an apartheid sports tour could lead to an Olympic boycott by fifty or more countries.

The tour was arranged after a South African businessman had contributed \$25,000 to a U.S. rugby group. (Another \$50,000 was reported to have come directly from South Africa's rugby board.)

The South African desire to sneak through a successful U.S. rugby tour was not fulfilled however. Instead, opposition to the Springboks became headline news, and protests led to an increased public awareness of South African apartheid.

From their early morning arrival in Chicago September 14 there were demonstrations everywhere the Springboks went.

The first game, planned for Chicago September 19, was cancelled. A broad-based campaign against the Springboks pressured the City Council to condemn the planned game in a resolution citing apartheid as the "shame of the century."

The Springboks were unable to leave the Chicago sports club where they were staying without encountering protesters, and

were unable to find any location near Chicago that would allow a game.

The game was eventually played in secret in Racine, Wisconsin, seventy miles away, after the Springboks had sneaked out of Chicago in the predawn darkness. The playing field was in the middle of Racine's Black community, however, and a demonstration of local protesters was mustered even before a bus-load of activists arrived from Chicago.

The Springboks' next stop was Albany, New York, where they were greeted with more protests. The governor of New York had cancelled the match three days earlier, citing the "imminent danger of riot." However, a judge overruled the ban September 20, the day before the scheduled game, on the grounds that the game was not sport but politics, and was therefore protected as free speech.

A march of 1,500 anti-apartheid activists held before the game and a rally of 500 outside the stadium overshadowed the meager crowd inside.

As the Springboks were departing the U.S. it was claimed that a third game had been played at a deserted polo field near Albany, a game so secret that no one seemed to know when it had happened.

By Peter Rotherham

[The following article appeared in the September 18 issue of the New Zealand socialist fortnightly *Socialist Action*.]

* * *

With the events around the Springbok tour, the Muldoon government has suffered a big political defeat.

For a start, it allowed the tour to proceed—against the wishes of the majority of the population. Its claim to be "against" the tour was seen by increasing numbers of people as a downright lie.

Once the Springboks were here, the massive opposition to the tour meant it could only take place through brute force unleashed by the police. Employing unprecedented violence, they were used by the government to thwart the wishes of the people, and to make sure that the tour ran its course.

Despite the constant threat of cop violence, the demonstrations remained massive, involving a wide cross-section of New Zealand society. While the biggest demonstrations took

place in the large cities, hundreds took part in demonstrations in towns like Eltham, Taupo, Nelson and Whangarei.

The tens of thousands that participated in these marches knew they had widespread public sympathy behind them; they were not about to be intimidated.

In this atmosphere, the rulers of New Zealand—and the Muldoon government in particular—have paid a heavy political price:

- We saw the lengths to which they would go to defend a symbol of racism.

- The role of the cops in this society was laid bare for more people than ever before. They were seen as the stormtroopers of the capitalist state, free to bludgeon those who objected to its policies, and doing so under the cover of fine words about the "rule of law."

The government, and the police chiefs, have tried to picture the cops as "the meat in the sandwich" between pro-tour and anti-tour forces. That is another lie, and a lot of people saw it as such. The pro-tour forces knew they had the cops on *their* side.

This was made crystal clear after the Auck-

land test, where the Springboks, police chiefs and members of a right-wing pro-tour group (masquerading under the name of Spir—the Society for the Protection of Individual Rights), got together to congratulate each other at the after-match function.

In light of all these events, many trade union leaders have pointed out that the use of riot police against anti-tour demonstrators signifies a more long-term preparation by the ruling class for greater repression, in particular against striking workers, and wherever working people stand up for their rights.

In the context of the increased discontent caused by the deep crisis facing New Zealand capitalism, the rulers are moving to adopt more violent means of maintaining their system of exploitation and oppression.

Red-baiting

- As the tour progressed, we saw Muldoon repeatedly attempting to discredit the anti-apartheid movement.

After the invasion of the park at Hamilton, he tried the law-and-order bandwagon, threat-

ening to call a snap election on that issue. Later he tried the time-worn tactic of red-baiting the anti-tour movement, using a report prepared by the snoops in the political police—the Security Intelligence Service.

These antics flopped. The movement had grown too big, and too many people quickly saw through Muldoon's manoeuvres. His actions, though, added fuel to the anger of those opposed to the tour.

• The whole process came to a head in Auckland, during the last game of the tour. Of course, the government, the cops and the news media are now wailing about what a terrible thing the battle around Eden Park was. But the cops had been dishing it out, with virtually no physical resistance from demonstrators, for weeks on end. This was especially the case with the riot squads, specially-trained thugs in uniform—or "Muldoon's dogs," as many demonstrators came to know them.

Cops escalate confrontations

The cops had repeatedly escalated the confrontations, beginning with the batoning of peaceful marchers in Wellington's Moleworth Street on July 29, through to the use of barbed wire and jumbo bins around the parks.

When they started batoning people at Eden Park, a significant section of the marchers said "enough," and defended themselves against police batons with whatever was at hand. If they had not, the cop violence against the protesters would have been even more savage.

In the aftermath, the ruling class's propaganda machine had gone to work. It aims, first of all, to restore some of the popular illusions about the cops. They are, we are told, just "fine fellows doing a hard job."

Secondly, though, the Muldoon government is desperately trying to place the blame on the anti-tour movement for the events which climaxed at Eden Park. In fact, it bears total responsibility.

All these developments were bad enough for the Muldoon government. But the turmoil around the tour was also fueled by the discontent and anger caused by rising unemployment, constant attacks on the unions, and the running down of social services like education.

The Muldoon government has presided over all these things. While the focal point of the anti-tour demonstrations was hatred of the apartheid system in South Africa, and of racism in general, all the other burning issues of the moment were entwined in the sentiments of the demonstrators. Perhaps this was best summed up by the sticker many marchers in Auckland wore on their helmets. It simply said: "Muldoon must go."

Likewise, these events have taken place in a period when the labour movement is on the move, with the growth of union militancy to combat the attacks of the employers and their government. This mood was reflected in the thousands of workers, especially young workers, who took part in the anti-tour demonstrations.

Clearly, this context makes the upheaval



around the tour even more of a problem for the ruling class and its government. For example:

Solidarity

• The anti-tour movement has been driving home to working people the meaning of *solidarity*—an essential idea all workers learn on the road to developing class consciousness.

The movement has sought to educate people about the nature of the apartheid system, and mobilise them in solidarity with the Black masses who are fighting for their liberation. It has played an important role in explaining that we have an interest in fighting oppression, wherever it exists.

• The Anti-apartheid movement has reached an enormous size in a country with its own racially-oppressed peoples—Maoris and Pacific Islanders.

For the tens of thousands of pakehas who have been participating in this movement, it takes only a small step in consciousness to begin understanding racism at home.

For Maoris and Pacific Islanders, it means gaining even more allies for the struggle against their oppression, and a political climate which gives them greater confidence to carry that struggle forward.

Bastion Point

This fact has already begun to have its impact with chants of "Remember Soweto, Remember Bastion Point"* and "Remember Raglan" on anti-tour marches. A protest was organised at Bastion Point, Auckland—just one day after the Springboks played their last game here.

The development of this consciousness

*See "The Maori Land Struggle in New Zealand," in *Intercontinental Press*, July 24, 1978, page 896.—JP

against racism makes it even harder for New Zealand's capitalist rulers to use racial prejudice as a tool for dividing workers. The *encouragement* of racism has always been a major part of their efforts to deepen the competition between workers, and thereby make it easier to exploit all of us.

• While the anti-tour activities included people of all age groups, those involved were mainly young people. Young workers, university students and high school students led the way.

A whole generation of youth has therefore been going through a deeply radicalising experience. This sort of thing has not been seen for a decade—when thousands of young people, mainly students, organised and led the mass demonstrations against the Vietnam war in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In itself, this development causes further problems for the ruling class. But these problems are deepened by the changed economic times, and the significant number of young workers who joined the anti-tour demonstrations.

Young Polynesians

In the forefront were young Maoris and Pacific Islanders. They played a vanguard role in many of the activities, being among the staunchest defenders of the marches in Auckland against the vicious attacks of the cops.

They reflect the deepening consciousness among thousands of Maoris and Pacific Islanders of the stakes involved for them in New Zealand's continued sporting ties with South Africa, and a growing identification with the Black liberation struggles in that part of the world. Chants in Maori, and the haka, became regular features of the anti-tour marches.

These young people also bear the brunt of unemployment and the racism of the cops on a

day-to-day basis. One of the few partly-truthful remarks made by the cops about the events around Eden Park on the day of the last test was that it often looked like a scene from the recent rebellions by Black and white youth in Britain.

Chills for Muldoon

• The involvement of young Maoris and Pacific Island workers in the anti-apartheid movement is clearly sending chills down the spine of Muldoon and his mates.

With Maoris and Pacific Island workers making up a big proportion of the industrial workers in New Zealand today, and with them often being among the strongest unionists, the rulers are not slow to see the danger in these young workers gaining new political experiences through the anti-tour movement. That sort of experience produces new leaders in the factories, young fighters who will come forward to articulate workers' economic and political grievances in a more uncompromising way than most of the current labor leaders, and will

South African racists lose too

South Africans, Black and white, are now doing their own post-mortem on the Springbok tour of New Zealand. What's emerging is that the New Zealand anti-apartheid movement has scored a major blow against the white minority regime.

Commenting on the turmoil around the tour, the South African *Sunday Times* noted: "It is a hard fact that this tour which was supposed to open international doors after years of sporting isolation has probably slammed them shut."

Ali Bacher, of the South African Cricket Union, told the *Auckland Star* that "the consequences of the tour have put South African sport back internationally in the long term."

And the president of the South African Council of Churches, explained to the *Star* how the tour was an "unmitigated disaster" for white South Africans who had hoped to win a propaganda victory from it. "I don't believe the propaganda victory has been won at all," he said, adding that the strong stand of the New Zealand anti-apartheid movement "gives great encouragement to people who oppose apartheid here."

These statements also reveal that the pro-tour politicians in New Zealand, who have claimed that a game of rugby is all that is involved in playing South Africa, are deceiving people.

White South Africa sees these tours as a way of breaking down its international isolation, and winning a propaganda victory for its racist system.

—Peter Rotherman

lead the militant struggles of the future.

Labour Party leadership defaults

The social and economic climate in the country, and the political issues brought to a head by the Springbok tour, should mean Labour is on the crest of a huge wave of support, culminating in it being swept to power in November.

Labour is, after all, strongly anti-apartheid and anti-tour. Thousands of party members took part in the demonstrations. Some Labour leaders, like Jim Anderton, addressed anti-tour marches and delivered hard-hitting attacks on the apartheid system and the Muldoon government's policies on the tour.

The grim reality is, however, that so far the party's position has been improving only slowly in the opinion polls. The responsibility for this must be put at the feet of the party leadership in Parliament.

Instead of pressing forward the attack against the government for allowing the Springboks to come here, denouncing it for the way it has unleashed the cops against demonstrators, and calling on Labour supporters to back the anti-tour movement, the public has seen [Labour Party leader] Bill Rowling trying to play it both ways.

More cops?

While still making comments against the tour, he has repeatedly criticised the demonstrators—and his strongest statements have been around the need to recruit more cops!

That is not a very exciting prospect for workers. Given the role of cops in this society, Rowling's proposal is simply a recipe for more repression against the very working people who put him and the other Labour MPs into Parliament.

Meanwhile, the theme of Bill Rowling's statements has been that the Springboks should not have come here because of the "divisions" and "conflicts" caused.

In this, he is not appealing to Labour's working-class supporters, attempting to inspire and lead them in the fight against racism. He is addressing, instead, that section of the ruling class which has been concerned that capitalist stability would be threatened by the effects of the turmoil around the tour. He has been trying to show these people that he is a more reliable defender of the capitalist order than Muldoon.

These actions demonstrate how working people need to re-capture control of their party, demanding that the Labour Party leaders represent workers' interests or stand aside for those that will.

With the elections coming up, the best way to do that is for the unions and working people generally to go out and campaign for a Labour government. By itself, the dumping of Muldoon's government will be a big victory for working people. It will also put them in a stronger position to begin to assert control over their party.

In general, the trade union leaders have also

defaulted on the tour question.

Discussions took place in some unions before the Springboks arrived. A number of them voted against the tour, and a very small number—like the seamen and some hotel workers—took industrial action against it. Where union members voted down anti-tour resolutions, the vote was almost always very close.

The fact remains, however, that a big discussion and education campaign still needs to be carried out in the factories. Workers were divided on the tour issue before the Springboks came, and still are. This simply shows that systematic education on the nature of apartheid, and why it is in workers' interests to express solidarity with the victims of that system, has yet to be carried out in most unions.

'Too backward'

Many union leaders have actually steered away from opening up a thorough discussion of the issue. They have been afraid of a heated debate and have claimed that the membership is "too backward" on the issue, especially in areas where rugby is still the most popular sport. This simply shows a serious lack of confidence in the intelligence of workers to distinguish between their love for rugby, and the issues at stake in New Zealand playing the Springboks.

Contrary to this attitude, workers in several workplaces in Wellington—like the New Zealand Motor Corporation plant and the Lower Hutt City Council Works Depot—took it upon themselves to organise their jobs behind the anti-tour protests. This set an example for workers across the country.

And the plain fact is that thousands of other workers, especially young workers, did participate in the anti-tour marches. They turned up individually, and with small groups of family and friends. There would have been many more present if union contingents had been organised everywhere.

Furthermore, there is no escaping the fact that from the moment the Muldoon government refused to call off the tour, the only other force in the country with the power to act decisively against it was the labour movement. Through industrial action, and through mobilising unionists to massively increase the size and power of the anti-tour demonstrations, the tour would have been impossible.

That is not what happened. What did happen, though, was still a valuable education for working people. As the events around the tour are digested by workers, the lessons drawn will inevitably strengthen their consciousness and fighting mood for the battles ahead. □

Don't you know someone who should be reading *Intercontinental Press*?

Why not ask a friend, family member, or co-worker to subscribe?

For rates, see inside cover.

Round two of Solidarity congress

Delegates repudiate 'propaganda of fear'

By Ernest Harsch

After a two-week break in their deliberations, the more than 800 delegates to Solidarity's first national congress reconvened in Gdansk September 26 for the second part of the congress proceedings.

They did so despite one of the most concerted campaigns of intimidation yet directed against the union by the Polish and Soviet authorities, who over the preceding days had sharply stepped up their accusations that Solidarity was following an "antisocialist" course. On the eve of the congress's reopening, military units were dispatched to patrol Gdansk and other major cities in a show of force designed to dampen the militancy of the gathering.

But the congress participants were not deterred. Nor were the thousands of people who rallied outside the Olivia Sports Hall to hear the debates relayed over loudspeakers.

In direct response to the government's slanders and threats, the delegates overwhelmingly approved a resolution that said, "On behalf of all Poles, we demand that the propaganda of fear be stopped." It accused the authorities of waging "psychological warfare against the nation."

The real antisocialists

The government's charges that Solidarity leaders were "antisocialist" were also answered by Edward Lipinski, one of Poland's most renowned economists.

"I consider myself a socialist," the ninety-three-year-old Lipinski told the delegates. "I have been a socialist since 1906. Socialism was to be the solving of problems of the working class, the liberation of the working class, the creation of conditions in which every man could be fully developed.

"But the socialism that was created was a socialism of mismanagement and inefficiency that brought about an economic catastrophe unequalled in 200 years. It is a socialism of prisons, censorship and police. This socialism has been destroying us for 30 odd years as it has been destroying others."

Then to thunderous applause from the congress participants, he declared, "It is this socialism that is antisocialist and antirevolutionary."

Socialism, Lipinski stressed, means "genuine control of the means of production by the workers themselves."

The main purpose of Lipinski's speech, however, was to announce the dissolution of the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR), of which he was a founder. Originally formed



LECH WALESA

Ernest Harsch/IPS

in the wake of the big 1976 strikes, the KOR's main purpose was to defend workers and political activists victimized by the regime. But with the emergence of a mass movement for democratic rights, Lipinski pointed out, the KOR had achieved its purpose and was no longer needed.

Moreover, many members of the KOR are now leading figures in the Solidarity movement: Jacek Kuron, Bogdan Borusewicz, Andrzej Celinski, and others.

Lively debates

As was the first phase of the Solidarity congress, the second was marked by sharp debates on various questions. This was a reflection not only of the inevitable differences of opinion in such a large organization, but also of the union's democratic decision-making process, in which members are able to freely express and argue their views.

One of the sharpest disputes centered on the adoption of a new Law on Workers' Self-management by the Sejm (parliament) a day before the congress reopened. The law, which gives both the authorities and democratically elected

Workers' Councils powers to choose factory managers, closely followed a compromise proposal that had been made by Lech Walesa and several other Solidarity leaders.

While some delegates opposed the measure entirely, others thought it was a necessary compromise. Walesa and other leaders nevertheless came in for stinging criticisms for deciding on the proposal at a meeting of only four of the ten members of the union's Presidium. Andrzej Gwiazda, a leader of Solidarity in Gdansk, called it a "deplorable political mistake."

Walesa, while admitting that the new law was not perfect, defended it on the basis that it would give the establishment of Workers' Councils a legal basis and aid in their development. Jacek Kuron, who also backed the compromise, pointed out that in adopting the law, the Sejm had resisted the efforts of the leadership of the Polish United Workers Party to push through a version of the bill more to the advantage of the authorities.

On September 29, the delegates, with only about half of them voting, adopted a resolution terming the way the compromise proposal was made as "a violation of the principle of union democracy." But on the same day they also voted to approve the actions of the Solidarity leadership over the past year.

Democratic elections

Another example of Solidarity's democracy came during the voting on who would chair the union over the next two years.

In all, four candidates ran for the post: Walesa, Gwiazda, Jan Rulewski, and Marian Jurczyk. Rulewski is a central leader in Bydgoszcz, and Jurczyk in Szczecin. Both Rulewski and Gwiazda have been particularly sharp in their criticisms of Walesa's leadership.

To dramatize the fact that the Solidarity elections are not rigged like those of many other organizations in Poland, the ballot boxes were first turned upside down in front of the delegates to show that they had not been stuffed. After they were filled, they were taken to the Lenin Shipyard, the site of the massive August 1980 occupation strike, for counting.

When the results came in, Walesa had clearly won reelection with 55% of the vote. Jurczyk came in second with 24%, and Gwiazda and Rulewski with 8.8% and 6.2% respectively.

Walesa thanked the delegates for electing him, "even if only just." Commenting on the fact that only a little more than half the delegates had voted for him, he stated, "As I get higher, my percentages get lower. I don't

know why. Maybe I lost contact with the grass roots." He promised that he would act more democratically and share decision-making more than in the past.

The congress also dealt with numerous other questions.

On September 28, the delegates listened to a representative from an independent policemen's union, which has been resisting the authorities' use of the police against workers. "We demand that the police not be used to stamp out the rightful protests of the working class," Zbigniew Zmudzkiak told the congress.

Several hundred policemen have been dismissed for their organizing efforts.

The most important task of the congress is the adoption of Solidarity's program, which is still under discussion as we go to press.

The new draft program, which delegates began discussing on September 30, contains the union's proposals for overcoming Poland's deep economic crisis. A central part of that is establishing genuine workers' control in the factories and the involvement of workers in economic decision-making. To achieve such involvement on the national level, Solidarity is

proposing the establishment of a second chamber of the Sejm to represent the Workers' Councils, trade unions, and other social organizations.

Among other things, the program also demands free elections, better environmental protection, and the union's right to set up its own television and radio stations.

The adoption of this program—following months of discussions by the union's ten-million members—will mark a major step forward in Solidarity's fight to build a society run by the workers themselves. □

The political revolution advances

Solidarity confronts bureaucratic regime

[The opening sessions of the first national congress of the Polish independent union federation Solidarity took place in Gdansk September 5-10. A second session of that congress began September 26.

[The following editorial, assessing the results of the first session, appeared in the September 28, 1981, issue of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Against the backdrop of a sharp economic crisis, the mass movement in Poland has radicalized and is forcefully and decisively confronting the bureaucratic regime. It is calling for the election of plant managers, is organizing a movement for self-management, and is challenging the right of parliament (the Sejm) to decide by itself the Law on Self-Management.¹

The First Congress of Solidarity marks a new stage in the activity and organization of the Polish workers. The Soviet and Polish bureaucrats are reviving their warnings. The Kremlin is openly threatening Solidarity. Major confrontations are in the offing.

The Political Bureau of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) published a front page statement on the congress in the September 16 *Trybuna Ludu* under the banner headline "Against the Political Adventurism and the Attempt to Destroy the Socialist State."

According to the PUWP statement, "The First Congress of Solidarity aroused a great deal of interest and hope in numerous layers of society. These hopes were totally dashed. The way the first part of the congress unfolded, and the resolutions adopted, saw what had seemed to be only the kernel of tendencies and pheno-

mena develop into the official program of the whole organization. As a result, the agreements reached in Gdansk, Szczecin, and Jastrzebie were unilaterally broken. They were replaced by a program of political opposition that attacks the fundamental interests of the Polish nation and state and moves in the direction of a confrontation that threatens to lead to bloodshed."

This statement clearly shows that the bureaucracy's attempts to integrate and divide the union, which went under the name of the policy of "renewal," have come to nought. The PUWP statement follows proposals by political bureau member Albin Siwak demanding that Solidarity be banned, and comes after a new ultimatum from the Kremlin.²

Deepening radicalization

The economic crisis has continued to worsen since the new party leaders took up their posts. An incredible number of basic necessities—meat, sugar, milk, butter, soap, and the like—are tightly rationed and some are becoming impossible to find. Even tea is beginning to be in short supply. The lines are getting longer and longer. To buy meat you must get in line at the butcher's shop the night before.

The Polish proletariat's response to the deterioration in living conditions and the dislocation of the economic system has been clear. In June in Gdansk there were massive demonstrations against pollution and against the authorities' negligent policies in this regard. In July, women in Lodz organized hunger marches, which spread to other towns in August. There was the central demonstration that Solidarity organized in Warsaw.

Demonstrations by the Consumers Federation have increased. During the summer numerous strikes from Radom to Olsztyn expressed the workers' refusal to continue to accept the terrible working conditions and the PUWP leadership's attacks against the workers in Solidarity. Several protests by journalists

and workers were staged against censorship by the authorities. And finally there was the fight waged by workers at the LOT airline and in Huta Katowice for the right to elect their company managers.

In the course of each of these situations the broad masses learned a little more about the bureaucracy's profoundly parasitic and reactionary nature, its desire to retain all the reins of power in its own hands in order to safeguard its privileges, and its inability to provide even the beginnings of a solution to the economic crisis.

Although enraged, up to now the bureaucracy has only called on the police and the army to contain the July street demonstration in Warsaw and has used the police only to harass and arrest a few Solidarity activists. But in mid-September for the second time it refused to free the political prisoners who are members of the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), even though a lower court had ordered their pretrial release. Finally, the authorities ended the inquiry into who bore responsibility for the police provocation by Bydgoszcz with the claim that it was "impossible to determine who was guilty."

Workers councils

Pushed forward by the deepening economic crisis, the movement for self-management is leading to the establishment of workers councils and is more radically threatening the bureaucratic regime. In fact, in recent weeks the establishment of workers councils in the factories—or organizing committees for self-management—has entered a new phase.

The number of councils has increased by a factor of ten. In the Lodz region, by mid-September councils had already been established in the majority of factories, although in June there had been only a few. In the region around Jastrzebie in Silesia, the mine workers are also in the process of setting up councils.

In addition, regional coordinating committees (Workers Self-Management Regional Organizing Committees) have been set up in a number of areas and have begun to discuss

1. "This is an ultimatum," said one of the members of the parliament's Economic Commission regarding the Solidarity congress's demand that parliament organize a referendum on self-management. "How, in such a situation, could I exercise my sovereign right to say what I think?" Another added, "it's as if someone put a gun to our heads."

2. Published eight days later, the Kremlin letter is dated September 10.

what should be done to get out of the economic crisis. For example, a call issued by well-known Solidarity members in Lodz on August 24 stated:

"Being cognizant of the negative results of the movement for self-management in 1956-57, and conscious of the strength represented by the united and mutually supportive activity of the workers, we feel that it is imperative to take steps leading to common discussion and work by the workers councils on a regional level throughout the entire country.

"We are convinced that joint work, reciprocal solidarity actions, coordination of activities, and joint representation of all working-class self-management bodies on a regional, and very soon national, scale is a natural stage in the development of the working-class self-management movement and is the potential source of its strength. Therefore we take the initiative to call for the establishment of a constituent regional committee of workers self-management for the Lodz region."

The relationship between the factory workers council and the self-management bodies at the regional and national level is still under discussion. It has not been resolved whether the regional coordinating committees should simply be places where views are exchanged or whether they should be decision-making bodies.

But the rapidity with which the self-management movement is growing reflects the workers' conviction that to get out of the present crisis they themselves must take things in hand, in the economic as well as the political arena. This too was one of the new and striking features of the First Congress of Solidarity.

Question of power

It appears that big developments are in the offing. The acceleration of the social and political process is such that, whatever form it takes, an overall confrontation between the mass movement and the bureaucracy now seems inevitable. The discussions at the congress showed that a large segment of the Solidarity membership is now aware of this.

The question of power, which is posed in practical terms by the movement for self-management, was expressed in the congress, not only through the motion that Solidarity itself should hold the referendum on the self-management law, but also in various proposals by delegates to elect a central apparatus of the self-management bodies, a second house of parliament for self-management.³

"Solidarity must not be afraid to get involved in making political decisions," one member from Krakow stated from the congress's speaker's platform. "We know what the population expects from us. To carry out a referendum on self-management does in fact go beyond the strictly trade-union framework

and poaches on the regime's game preserve. But we must be very conscious that there will be no other way to get out of the crisis if we refuse to take this step. And what is more, refusal would mean that our movement had bogged down and been consigned to a slow death."

Some delegates proposed that parliament not be approached at all: "Solidarity should organize the referendum itself. We know that the authorities are big on words. We should not expect anything from the regime. We know they will not do anything."

But delegates from Lodz and Wroclaw explained to the congress why it was necessary to call upon parliament and the regime on this question. "It is essential to convince the broad masses. . . . It is necessary that the population clearly see that parliament refuses to organize a referendum demanded by 10 million people. That is the precondition for getting the totality of workers in this country to involve themselves with us in this movement," Karol Modzelewski explained.

By basing themselves tactically on the constitution and by utilizing it as a tool (one used by the PUWP itself before 1948) to push forward the movement for self-management, the delegates of the self-management movement—the delegates defending the idea of a referendum and of backing the regime against the wall—showed deep political sense.

The delegates demanded that from the very first session the agenda should include discussion on the program itself. This shows they understood the need for the workers to provide their own answers to the crisis. "We must propose solutions to get out of the crisis and we must not leave here without at least having defined the broad lines of the program that will have to be adopted [at the second part of the congress] at the end of the month. The working commissions that will have to meet in the interval must know on what basis to work and we must be able to go back to our regions and verify that the path we propose accurately reflects the demands of the ranks."

The call that the congress addressed to the workers of the other "People's Democracies" illustrates the politicization of the masses and their desire to prepare themselves to have it out with the Soviet bureaucracy and its stooges. The enthusiasm that swept the hall when the appeal was read says a great deal about how far they have traveled in the past year.

The caste in power in the USSR, from its vantage point, has clearly understood this. It is gearing up. It is increasing all types of pressures, seeking initially to stop the momentum that the first part of the congress reflected and deepened. Among other things, the maneuvers aim to get the more moderate elements in Solidarity to exert pressure so that the second part of the congress mutes the movement's directly political demands.

Inescapable confrontation

The radicalization of the workers, on the one hand, and the hardening position of the bureaucracy, on the other, have again led every-

one to see that a head-on confrontation is possible. Each camp is preparing for it, including in hopes of avoiding it by forcing the other side to make decisive concessions.

It is illusory to think that on the basis of "national interest" or even a government of "national unity" it would be possible to reconcile bureaucratic power, which though declining still exists, with workers' power, which is spreading more and more but is not yet centralized. The two can coexist in the course of a rising revolution. But in the long run they are irreconcilable. One can only survive by eliminating the other.

The thrust toward centralizing the councils on a territorial basis, regionally and nationally, is epitomized today in the demand for the immediate election of a second chamber of parliament based on these councils. Along with becoming more specific about the nature of self-management—to be real it must be democratically planned and exclude any domination by market mechanisms—this demand responds to the growing desire of the masses to pose the question of political power, their class power, the power of the workers.

The new advances of the political revolution in Poland accentuate the need for the international workers movement to broaden its campaign in solidarity with the Polish workers:

Against the threats of repression by the Polish bureaucracy and Soviet bureaucracy!

Against the economic and financial pressure from imperialism, the international banks, and the International Monetary Fund!

For the cancellation of all of Poland's debts!

September 19, 1981



Ernest Harsch/IP

Regional conference on workers' self-management held in Warsaw July 20.

3. This proposal in effect goes against the slogan of free elections to parliament. It incorporates the initial but rapid development of the organs of workers power.

Gains and struggles of women workers

Revolution brings new rights, new consciousness

By Jim Eitel

MANAGUA—According to a 1980 survey, women make up 54 percent of the total workforce in this city, the capital of Nicaragua.

Approximately 20 percent of these women work in nationalized industries or for the government. Thirty-four percent work in private industry or services, and 34 percent are self-employed—the latter mainly as small merchants in public markets or as street vendors.

In my work as a pediatrician in Managua, I have been able to learn about the problems of working women through seeing the difficulties they have feeding and clothing their children.

Most women who sell food on the street or work in the markets earn between 30 and 50 córdobas a day (10 córdobas = US\$1). Domestic servants and women who take in washing and ironing earn more like 10 córdobas a day. But a can of powdered infant formula—which might last two days at the most—costs 25 to 30 córdobas.

In Managua, more than a third of all households are headed by single women; in working-class neighborhoods, this figure increases to 60 percent. According to the Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMNLAE), 60 percent of all mothers in Nicaragua do not live with the fathers of their children.

So it is clear that the incidence of malnutrition in children rests very much on the economic problems of women workers.

I recently had the opportunity to accompany a Ministry of Labor sociologist on a series of visits to factories that employ large numbers of women. The sociologist is involved with the problems of working women and health.

Textile mill

We visited a textile mill called Texnisa, a large plant once owned by the Somoza family and now operated by the state. Half of the 1,200 workers are women.

The most striking thing about the plant was the noise level, particularly in the area of the machine looms. It was impossible to talk, even face-to-face. The noise was like having the clicky-clak of a speeding train about two feet from one's ears.

Among the problems experienced by women at Texnisa are what is known here as "white abortions"—miscarriages induced by the stresses of work, particularly the high noise level. The women also suffer headaches and nervous problems, as well as varicose veins and back and foot problems from standing all day. A third set of problems involves pulmonary diseases from the cotton dust in the air.

While the work of tending the various looms

and spinning machines is divided equally between women and men, with equal pay, there are certain jobs requiring physical strength that are limited to men and carry higher wage scales. I observed similar situations at other factories. In general, women handle the more intensive, monotonous assembly-line work, often requiring marvelous dexterity and rapidity. The demand for equal access to better-paying jobs is just beginning to be raised by women within the trade unions here.

The union at Texnisa is affiliated to the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST). It has been fairly responsive to women's issues. With the support of the national CST and the Ministry of Labor, the union has responsibility for educating workers about occupational health and safety and making sure they use safety equipment such as goggles and masks.

The Ministry of Labor has unlimited access to state and private factories for inspections, and has significant legal powers. It can impose fines and even imprison factory owners.

In practice, because maintaining and even increasing production levels is critical for reactivating the economy, the emphasis has been placed on setting attainable goals with man-

agement and involving the unions in identifying and ameliorating dangerous conditions.

Right to organize

At Rolter's, a privately owned shoe factory, we talked to a woman with twenty years on the job. For her, the most sweeping change since the revolution has been the ability to organize and press for the right to better working conditions. Before, she said, people were fired for union activity, and the National Guard broke up strikes.

Twenty years ago this woman earned about 50 córdobas a week. Just before the Sandinista victory in 1979, she was getting 180. Now her wages are 280 córdobas a week.

At Rolter's, workers are interested in setting up a child-care center, because this service is still expensive and unreliable outside the plant.

Among the other benefits obtained by the CST union at Rolter's have been daily availability of medical consultations, free prescriptions, and interest-free loans to workers.

I watched one young woman at Rolter's work in front of a hood, spraying paint on shoes. Within a few minutes the odor of the solvent gave me a headache, but she denied having any problems. While some workers



Women workers at Quaker Oats factory in Managua.

Larry Boyd

were quick to point out specific problems and risks of their work, others tended to deny flatly any discomfort.

Match factory

Our visit to La Fosforera, the match factory, was like a trip to the England of Marx and Engels's time. The company, another former Somozaist enterprise, is housed in a dark, dilapidated building, its machinery old and primitive.

Eighty percent of the workers at the match factory are women. They operate machines that assemble small, wooden matchboxes, stuff them with matches by hand (up to 4,000 boxes a day), and sort and package the boxes.

The union at this factory is affiliated to the anticommunist and pro-boss Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers (CTN).

CTN workers have erected a shrine to Santo Domingo, the patron saint of Managua, in one corner of the plant. But from another wall a photograph of Fidel Castro smiled down on the women. Posters urging workers to join the militias were located in several places.

In the other factories we saw bulletin boards with posters in every work area. The boards were filled with news clippings about national events, solidarity with El Salvador and with the Irish hunger strikers, ideological debates, news of the murders of children in Atlanta, and so on.

At the request of the CTN, we visited another factory, Envase Oso. The union claimed that the women there were being allowed to do dangerous work that only men should do.

This factory produces one-gallon metal containers. Sheets of metal are cut into appropriate sizes and stamped into caps, lids, and bottoms. The cans are welded together and a metal handle is soldered to the tops.

The cutting and stamping stages take place in a separate building, where the workers operate heavy, pedal-activated machines. A few of the machines appeared hazardous because hands had to be held near the cutting parts.

Work is more intensive in the welding and assembly area, and the workers must rush to keep pace with the stream of components. The machinery is just as hazardous as that of the first section.

The real issue at Envase Oso turned out to be that the male workers and the conservative union leaders wanted to keep women out of the cutting and stamping areas, where the work was slower and less frantic. One of the union officials claimed that men are always better workers, but he admitted that several men had lost fingers when the machines started up by accident.

The soldering of handles onto the cans is performed exclusively by women. They use solder sticks containing 50 percent lead, with irons heated in a charcoal brazier. The women I talked to were unaware of the dangers of lead poisoning. Nor did they wear protective shoes in the soldering area. The union representative claimed they preferred not to wear them, but a

more likely reason is that the shoes are expensive.

Right to a job

At Fabritex, another large textile mill, the union is affiliated with the Confederation of Trade Union Action and Unification (CAUS), which is controlled by the Communist Party of Nicaragua (PCN).

The all-male union leadership at Fabritex had proposed a freeze on the hiring of women, citing hazards to women's health and absenteeism owing to their responsibilities as mothers. Vice-minister of Labor Edgar Macías issued a lengthy reply to the union, which was published in the daily *El Nuevo Diario*.

"You mention a series of problems experienced by women workers," Macías wrote. "It is these causes that must be combated, rather than denying work to women who frequently are single heads of households and the sole source of support for themselves and their children."

"Many women work in both the factory and the home, up to sixteen hours daily, while many men are watching television or listening to the radio."

Macías went on to underscore various aspects of the new labor laws designed to protect

the rights of women workers, attend to their special needs, and move toward equality of opportunity in the workplace. He urged the union officials to examine their own discriminatory attitudes toward women.

The Ministry of Labor recently listed some of its major accomplishments in improving the situation of working women: limitations on the use of pesticides such as DBCP, DDT, 2,4,5-T, and Aldrin, some of which cause sterility; four weeks' leave at full pay before childbirth and eight weeks afterwards; and the initiation of a special study of the health problems of female tobacco workers.

Nicaragua's difficult economic situation means that it will take time to change many of the adverse material conditions suffered by women workers. Some initial steps have been taken. As one female worker at Texnisa said when asked to compare her work now with the years before the revolution, "Not everything has changed. But there are more things that are different than there are things that are the same."

As important as the material improvements that have been made is the beginning of a new consciousness among women workers about their rights to equal treatment—in the union, in the factory, and in society as a whole. □

Honduras: 60,000 protest repression

Sixty thousand Hondurans marched through the streets of their country's capital, Tegucigalpa, on September 23 to protest a series of kidnappings and disappearances of leftist leaders and foreigners.

According to Marco Virgilio Carías, president of the Honduran Socialist Party (PASO), the Honduran army and police forces have been given the green light to mount death-squad-type operations against opponents of the regime and supporters of the revolutionary struggles in neighboring El Salvador and Guatemala.

Carías himself was a victim of such tactics. On September 12 he and his wife, Perla Carías, were detained by police for a traffic violation in the eastern town of El Paraíso. A fellow professor from the National Autonomous University of Honduras, Rogelio Martínez Reina, was with the Caríases at the time and was also detained.

Perla Carías was released immediately, but Marco Virgilio Carías and Reina were not. In subsequent days the police denied having jailed them, but their whereabouts remained unknown.

The PASO leader held a news conference after his release and said he had been subjected to torture for ten days and interrogated about his alleged ties to opposition forces in El Salvador and to the revolutionary government in Nicaragua.

An earlier series of kidnappings took place in August. Twelve Salvadoran refugees, one Ecuadoran citizen, and two Hondurans disap-

peared on August 5 and 10, apparently captured by Honduran security forces.

On September 17 the Central American division of Amnesty International announced it was petitioning the Honduran government to provide more information on the fate of those who disappeared in August. The regime denied any involvement.

In other developments, two U.S. military advisers stationed in Honduras were wounded on September 23 when their car was attacked by gunmen near the Tegucigalpa airport. The two sergeants, one from the air force and one from the army, are part of a group of U.S. advisers variously reported to number from four-teen to twenty-one.

According to a UPI dispatch printed in the September 24 *New York Times*, these advisers "have been training Honduran troops to monitor and intercept weapons said to be shipped from leftist-ruled Nicaragua to Salvadoran rebels."

Plans have been announced for joint U.S.-Honduran naval maneuvers in the Caribbean on October 7-9. According to UPI, these "will involve the use of three United States patrol boats, a Navy tugboat and two aircraft. The maneuvers have drawn criticism from Nicaragua, which suggested that the exercises could be practice for a blockade of Cuba or an intervention in Central America.

"The exercise will simulate an ocean search, according to a State Department statement." □

SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT



"Hemmat" (Determination), newspaper of the Iranian Workers Unity Party (HVK). Published in Tehran.

"With the beginning of terrorist activity in Iran after the removal of Bani-Sadr from the presidency," an editorial in the August 4 issue stated, "the imperialists and their indigenous counterrevolutionary agents have been trying to open an internal front against the revolution." Their aim is "to drive the toiling and oppressed masses to despair and cause them to lose hope in our revolution . . . thus laying the basis for breaking the revolution and establishing a capitalist puppet regime."

"Despite the political views and goals" of the Mujahedeen, *Hemmat* went on, their "terrorist activities are indistinguishable from the terrorist attacks by the monarchists and other counterrevolutionary forces tied to imperialism."

By turning to armed attacks on the regime, *Hemmat* said, the Mujahedeen have "freed the hand of the imperialists to carry out terrorism in Iran."

Even if the aims of the Mujahedeen were correct, the editorial noted, "terrorist activity would not help to achieve them. . . . Terrorist activity, even if used for correct ends, not only fails to inspire the masses to rise up in struggle for their rights but leaves them as astonished spectators, without faith in their own power. . . . The experience of the Iranian revolution and of all the world's great revolutions have shown the futility of terrorist policies. The victory of revolution always depends on the consciousness and organization of the destitute masses."

The *Hemmat* editorial expressed opposition to the executions of members of the Mujahedeen and similar groups, on the grounds that such a response "not only intensifies the current disturbances but also enables the imperialists to take advantage of such fratricide . . . whether in the form of propaganda or in carrying out their own terrorist attacks."

"The way to end the current turmoil," *Hemmat* said, "is to create democratic conditions that could ensure unity in anti-imperialist action and firm up the bastions of resistance to the counterrevolutionary Iraqi regime's invasion."

The editorial pointed out that "the capitalists and landlords . . . are the basis of the U.S. imperialist counterrevolution." Therefore, "what is needed is a sharply anti-imperialist and anticapitalist program to meet the demands of the toilers in the cities and in the countryside—removing the capitalists and landlords and bringing about a vast military-political mass mobilization to resist the invasion until final victory and carry the revolution through to a government of the workers and peasants."

An editorial in the September 8 *Hemmat* elaborated on this theme, pointing to the example set by the Cuban revolution.



"Kargar" (Worker), newspaper of the Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE). Published weekly in Tehran.

As the framework for its editorial on the bombing of the Prime Minister's office, the September 7 *Kargar* pointed out that although the masses had been able to overthrow the shah, they were not able to establish their own government. As a result, petty-bourgeois and bourgeois political forces gained political power.

The conflicts inside the regime have resulted from "the unravelling of the coalition of political forces that gained power around the Imam [Khomeini]," something that was "unavoidable with the deepening of the revolution."

Kargar pointed to a series of tasks that the revolution must take up if it is to advance further: "the problem of national independence, the need for a monopoly on foreign trade, industrialization and transportation, nationalization of banking, control by the workers [committees] over production, and economic planning. To solve the agrarian crisis, a real revolution on the land is necessary. . . ."

Kargar noted that "all revolutions against American imperialism in the present epoch have faced problems similar to those that confront the Iranian revolution. . . ."

"In Nicaragua, every worker and toiler has witnessed first-hand the imperialists' program of assassination and bomb-throwing and the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie's counterrevolutionary activity."

Whereas in Nicaragua the leadership of the revolution has mobilized the workers in order to advance the revolution, "in Iran . . . government leaders have avoided taking aim at the Iranian bourgeoisie, even though strong measures are required to advance the revolution against American imperialism and achieve victory against the Iraqi aggressor."

The editorial went on to assess the policies of the People's Mujahedeen Organization. That group, *Kargar* said, had evolved from "adventurist and ultraleft" positions during the struggle against the shah until it is now "attracted more and more to the counterrevolutionary policies of the imperialists."

"U.S. imperialism and Saddam Hussein want to physically overthrow the Islamic Republic, but their efforts have come to naught. Meanwhile, the Mujahedeen leadership, following insane ultraleftist policies, have chosen an approach of military struggle against the Is-

lamic Republic, capped by assassinations of the country's political personalities.

"Such unity in action between the imperialists and the Mujahedeen has brought together and has even united two different, antagonistic forces. For this to happen, an intermediary was necessary, and Bani-Sadr played that role. . . ."

"But the fact that the leadership of the Mujahedeen have converged with the imperialists' policies doesn't mean there has been any basic change . . . in the American imperialists' hatred toward the Iranian revolution."

An earlier editorial, in the August 10 issue of *Kargar*, explained that effectively confronting the counterrevolutionary terror campaign required placing "protection of the security of the masses in the hands of their own organizations. . . ."

"In this regard, it is necessary to strengthen mass organizations like the workers shoras, giving them the broadest possibilities to examine, discuss, and exchange views about the imperialists' attacks on the revolution. Such a policy would provide the opportunity to attract back to the revolution's path individuals who have fallen into the trap of imperialism."

"Resorting to executions of such people not only does not help to attract them but is another factor in increasing the turmoil. . . . Moreover, recent experience has shown how the imperialists use [the executions] to step up their poisonous international propaganda against our revolution."

klasse-kampen

"Class Struggle," published weekly in Copenhagen by the Socialist Workers Party (SAP), Danish section of the Fourth International.

An editorial in the September 3-9 issue entitled "Bombs and Executions" stated that "the background to the bloody conflict" in Iran is the attempt by the Islamic Republican Party (IRP) "to stabilize bourgeois rule. To achieve this, democratic rights must be attacked and members of left parties persecuted, jailed, and executed."

The response to this on the part of the Mujahedeen, *Klassekampen* said, has been "the establishment of an 'opposition front.' In reality, this is an alliance between a section of the organizations of the workers movement—such as the Mujahedeen, the Fedayeen (Minority), and Peykar—and a sector of the national bourgeoisie and its representatives like Bani-Sadr." By leaving Iran along with Bani-Sadr in July, Mujahedeen leader Massoud Rajavi "did not just flee from Iran but also from the effort to further independent working-class politics."

Klassekampen posed several questions for

those who support the positions of the Mujahedeen:

"How can Rajavi and the Mujahedeen demand that the workers, peasants, and students forget Bani-Sadr's call to hand the American hostages over to his government, when thousands of Tehran residents spent many freezing nights in front of the U.S. embassy to prevent just that?"

"How can the Mujahedeen leadership ask their own members to forget Bani-Sadr's active participation in the big attacks on the organizations of the workers movement in the spring of 1980. . . ?"

"How can the Mujahedeen leadership ask that Bani-Sadr's role in the suppression of the Kurdish people be forgotten?"

The policy of the Mujahedeen leadership, *Klassekampen* said, "forces working people to choose between two evils—bombings or executions; Bani-Sadr's bourgeois policies or the IRP's bourgeois policies."

If demands such as workers control, land reform, and rights for the national minorities are to be won, *Klassekampen* said, "mass action against the IRP government is called for along with rejection of Bani-Sadr's line."

"In Iran today supporters of the Fourth International and others have the duty to build a revolutionary socialist workers party that can lead a broad defense of the interests of the workers and peasants."

"In Denmark the workers movement can support such a defense with the demand that the IRP halt persecution of the workers organizations."

ROUGE

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

A column by Christian Picquet in the September 4-10 issue analyzes "The Crisis of the Iranian Regime."

The bombing of the Prime Minister's office on August 30 was a "symptom of the growing decomposition of the Iranian regime," Picquet said.

This situation "is above all the consequence of the Islamic leadership's inability to confront the formidable economic crisis that is shaking the country, the war with Iraq, or the demands of the workers, peasants, and nationalities. Far from responding to these problems in a way that corresponds to the interests of the Iranian masses, the regime has launched a harsh austerity offensive, has confronted the Kurdish people, and has restricted democratic freedoms more and more."

Thus, Picquet continued, "popular discontent" is growing, and "the Mujahedeen—an 'Islamic-progressive' formation—have partially capitalized on the disaffection toward those in power. But the reactionary and monarchist groups are also raising their heads . . . and

hoping to profit from the confusion to impose a coup and halt the Iranian revolution."

Picquet said that the situation in Iran is tending toward "an embryonic civil war." The Tehran government's policy of executions "is applied in the first place against the advanced sectors of the popular movement and constitutes an additional brake on the preparation of the masses for the approaching confrontations."

"In these conditions, the decisive problem of the phase that is opening up will be the reconstruction of an independent, united, and centralized workers movement whose existence alone can make it possible to overcome the current impasse and furnish new perspectives to the Iranian revolution."

"The Mujahedeen, despite their opposition to the regime and because of their alliance with bourgeois sectors, are not giving a correct response to this question."

la gauche

"The Left," French-language paper of the Revolutionary Workers League (LRT), Belgian section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Brussels.

An article by François Vercammen in the September 10 issue offered an analysis of the class interests defended by the various currents that have sought to control the Iranian government since the overthrow of the shah.

Vercammen first explained that the Iranian revolution is "a true worker-peasant revolution that is antidictatorial, anti-imperialist, antifeudal, and even (a little) anticapitalist, but whose leadership has been monopolized by Khomeini's political current." He characterized that current as a bourgeois-nationalist one.

Vercammen went on to explain that the first provisional government headed by Mehdi Bazargan had sought "to rapidly reconstruct a 'normal' state apparatus" and to carry out "a normalization [of relations] with American imperialism." In order to oust Bazargan, "Khomeini based himself directly on the masses."

It must be understood, Vercammen said, that the occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran was "a brilliant attempt" by Khomeini "to gain great 'anti-imperialist' prestige in order to politically defeat his 'rightist' (Bazargan) and 'leftist' (Mujahedeen) adversaries, without thereby breaking with imperialism."

Bani-Sadr's presidency represented a fresh attempt to bring capitalist stability, through improving the prestige of the army in the war with Iraq and carrying out "a rapid and radical reopening of the Iranian economy to the capitalist world market."

"Bani-Sadr is a thoroughgoing enemy of the revolution, of the workers and the poor peasants," Vercammen said. "He demonstrated this by participating alongside Khomeini (before becoming president) in all the antiworker campaigns in the factories as well as in the campaign to physically eliminate the Islamic left and the Kurdish people."

Thus, Vercammen concluded, "Neither Bazargan nor Khomeini nor Bani-Sadr expresses the interests of the workers. All three remain in the framework of capitalist property relations and of the world market dominated by imperialism. . . ."

"Revolutionaries must conclude from this that it is wrong to support these bourgeois forces, and that the popular masses must above all struggle in a totally independent way for their own interests. Bani-Sadr is worth no more than Khomeini!"

bresche

Twice-monthly German-language organ of the Socialist Workers Party (SAP) published in Zurich, Switzerland.

"Executions and assassinations have set a murderous spiral in motion" in Iran, said an article by J. Lang in the September 21 issue. This situation "threatens to drown the revolution in blood."

With the bombing of the prime minister's office, Lang said, "the opposition has proved that it can fight very effectively and command strong and reliable support within the state and IRP apparatus." However, "the Mujahedeen are under dangerous illusions if they believe that their guerrilla struggle will further the revolution."

Instead, such actions are paving the way for "a military dictatorship based on the bourgeoisie and the loyalty of imperialism." Such a regime "would restrict democratic rights with equal severity and be as unrelenting toward the Mujahedeen as the IRP is."

Lang recommended that the Mujahedeen conduct "their struggle against the IRP regime in a different, politically effective way: They can undermine the basis of the regime with a consistent anti-imperialist and anticapitalist line."

As for the current Iranian regime, Lang concluded, it "certainly will not succeed in destroying the guerrillas through mass executions. With the demoralization it provokes within the country and the international isolation it simply endangers the revolution."

"For socialists, the Iranian revolution confirms the old rule: capital punishment is always counterrevolutionary. Even if it is called into play in the struggle against counterrevolution, it is ultimately turned against the revolutionaries themselves."

Socialist Challenge

Newspaper sponsored by the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in London.

Under the headline, "White terror sweeps Iran," Paul Lawson wrote in the August 20 issue that "Iran today is in the grip of a savage

anti-left wing terror. . . ."

Lawson continued:

"The main targets for the attacks are the 'Islamic Marxist' Mojahadin, the largest left-wing organisation in the country. . . ."

"The intensity of the conflict between the IRP and the Mojahadin reflects the deepening crisis in Iran. Since the overthrow of the Shah, the economy has been savagely dislocated as the Iranian revolution has come into conflict with the major imperialist powers. Trade and domestic production have been disrupted.

"But the IRP lack any social programme for the reorganisation of the economy and society to replace the Shah's capitalist dictatorship. Unable to meet the most elementary needs of the masses, the regime is increasingly isolated, and support for the Mojahadin, according to local observers, is dramatically increasing.

"Such is the disorganisation of the government and its forces that the repression is frequently indiscriminate. Left wingers are arrested and shot at random. Hand-in-hand with the 'political' repression, the Islamic zealots are increasing their repression against those who break the Islamic social code. . . ."

"In retaliation for the government's repression, the Mojahadin have launched a campaign of assassination against leading mullahs and government officials. Already several provincial governors and hojatoleslams (senior mullahs) have been killed. Such is the crisis of the regime and its state apparatus, that all the political forces which oppose it are preparing to participate in its downfall.

"By no means are all these forces progressive. Former generals of the Shah were behind the successful hijacking of a French built missile-firing gunboat before delivery to the Iranians. Supporters of General Bahram Aryana—another of the Shah's generals—last week hijacked two Fokker military aircraft in Iran and flew them to Oman. It is by no means certain that the outcome of the present conflict will be left-wing victory. The tactics and policies of the Mojahadin, including its continued political alliance with former president Bani-Sadr, do not promote such an outcome. Nonetheless, the decisive task of the hour is to defend democratic rights in Iran."

THE MILITANT

A socialist weekly published in the interests of working people. Printed in New York City.

An editorial in the September 11 issue termed the August 30 bombing of the prime minister's office "a reactionary attack on the whole revolution."

Noting that "some two million people demonstrated in Tehran to protest the assassination," the editorial added, "there is no question that the U.S. government looks favorably" on the terror campaign against the Iranian government.

"Under the left cover provided by the Mujahadeen," the *Militant* said, "the field has been opened for destabilization operations by

every variety of counterrevolutionary, including those most closely allied with the U.S. government and CIA."

While the Iranian masses "have decisively repudiated the terror campaign," the *Militant* continued, "it is becoming clearer and clearer that [the Khomeini] government is unable to defend itself or the revolution.

"The government's only solution to the terrorism has been to carry out hundreds of executions. It has failed to mobilize the workers, peasants, and oppressed nationalities to defeat the invasion from Iraq. It has refused to take measures against the Iranian capitalists, whose hoarding and sabotage of production have wreaked havoc with the economy."

But contrary to the hopeful predictions of the bourgeois press in the United States, the editorial concluded, "the Iranian revolution is not over. . . ."

"Just as it was the working masses who barehandedly defeated the shah's army, it is they who have the power to decisively crush the counterrevolutionary threat and achieve the social and economic liberation they made their revolution for."

Bohemia

A weekly magazine published in Havana, Cuba.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685).

- Title of publication: Intercontinental Press.
- 1A. Publication No. 363930.
- Date of filing: September 28, 1981
- Frequency of issue: Weekly except 3rd & 4th week in August, 1st in January. A. No. of issues published annually: 49. B. Annual subscription price: \$35.00.
- Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
- Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
- Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor. Publisher: 408 Printing & Publishing Corp., 408 West St. New York, N.Y. 10014. Editor: Steve Clark, 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Managing Editor: David Frankel, 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
- Owner (if owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.): 408 Printing & Publishing Corp., 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Joel Britton, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Thomas Kerry, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Allen Hansen, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Elizabeth Stone, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Barbara Matson, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Gus Horowitz, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Caroline Lund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Jack Barnes, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Peter Camejo, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Doug Jenness, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Carol Reed, 3004 16th Street, San Francisco, CA 94116. Helena Hermes, 410 West St., New York,

Cuba's principal weekly magazine carried a news summary on the assassinations of President Rajai and Prime Minister Bahonar in its September 11 issue. *Bohemia* reported that "a multitudinous demonstration that proclaimed slogans of condemnation against U.S. imperialism" had highlighted the funerals of the two officials.

"Government authorities and the Iranian press," *Bohemia* went on, "characterized this attack and the one that took place last June 28 against the headquarters of the Islamic Republican Party . . . as an effort by the United States to force the Iranian nation to its knees."

Bohemia summarized the careers of Rajai and Bahonar as fighters against the shah since the early 1960s. It also reported on the individuals chosen to replace the assassinated leaders, and then concluded:

". . . while the young Islamic state was exerting itself to fill the power vacuum caused by the deaths of two of its highest governmental leaders, the Ministry of the Interior released a statement declaring that the main enemy of the Islamic Revolution 'is the United States of America, whose agents and followers were expelled from the country as a result of the heroic struggle of the Iranian people.' The same document noted that the principal task of the Iranian people is the struggle against imperialism and exhorted Iranians to redouble their vigilance and stay alert to the provocations of hostile forces."

N.Y. 10014. Cindy Jaquith, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Priscilla Ring, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Frank Lovell, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Devon Parry, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Susan Berman, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. 406 West St. Realty Corp., 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Joan Campana, 1317 Est Rue St. Catherine, Montreal, PQ, Canada H2L2H4

8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amounts of bonds, mortgages or other securities (if there are none, so state): None.

9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (Section 411.3 DMM only): Does not apply.

10. Extent and nature of circulation. Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months. A. Total no. copies printed (Net press run): 4,683. B. Paid Circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1,739. (2) Mail subscriptions: 2,233. C. Total paid circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 3,972. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies: 5. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 3,977. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 608 (2) Returns from news agents: 98. G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 4,683.

Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date. A. Total no. copies printed (Net press run): 4,200. B. Paid circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1,378. (2) Mail subscriptions: 2,055. C. Total paid circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 3,433. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies: 0. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 3,433. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 700. (2) Returns from news agents: 67. G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 4,200.

11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed)
Sandra M. Sherman
Business Manager

New gains for working people

Free schooling, aid to farmers

By Ernest Harsch

In face of constant economic pressures and military threats from Washington, the Grenada revolution has continued to register impressive gains for the workers and farmers of that small Caribbean island.

From the beginning of September, secondary education in Grenada has been free for all students. Until now, parents have had to pay school fees that—especially in a poor country like Grenada—have imposed a heavy burden on most of the population.

As a front-page article in the September 12 *Free West Indian*, a weekly newspaper published in St. George's, pointed out, "Education in Grenada after emancipation of the slaves in 1838, until up to 1979, was the privilege of a few rich persons who wanted to give their children a good start in life. . . . Illiteracy was rampant."

But in 1979 the revolutionary New Jewel Movement (NJM) led a popular insurrection that overthrew the hated regime of Sir Eric Gairy and installed the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) in power, a government that reflects the interests of the island's toiling population.

Within three months of the revolution, the PRG reduced secondary school fees from EC\$50 per term to EC\$37.50 (one East Caribbean dollar is equivalent to US\$0.38). By the beginning of the next school year they had been slashed further to EC\$12.50, and Prime Minister Maurice Bishop promised that they would be eliminated entirely by September 1981. That promise has now been fulfilled.

According to Dessa David, a student, "Free education is very good because it gives each child equal opportunities to be educated. It doesn't give one class privilege over another. It will benefit the rural people more because they are most times the poorer and most of the schools are situated in town, and after they pay school fees, there is little to pay bus fees."

Measures benefit rural population

There have been a number of other measures in recent months that have also benefited the rural population. In early July, the government announced the provision of an EC\$4.6 million aid package aimed at helping to improve the production and living standards of small and medium farmers.

Speaking at a rally of the Productive Farmers Union (PFU), Prime Minister Bishop explained that the money would be used to repair and construct feeder roads in the countryside and to buy cheaper fertilizer and farm equipment that could be made available to farmers at cost. One million dollars would be used for loans to farmers, and another EC\$20,000 for

working out educational and social programs for farmers.

The aid package is to be administered by the PFU itself, an organization that was launched in October 1980 and that now has a membership of 551 farmers.

Just a little more than a week earlier, workers employed on several government-owned farms became the first to participate in the PRG's profit-sharing program. For the first time in recent years, some of the government's thirty-three estates made a profit, and in keeping with the government's promise, one-third of the profits were shared among the workers.

Fitzroy Bain, the president-general of the Agricultural and General Workers Union, told workers at the profit-sharing ceremony that the union was seeking to extend the principle of profit-sharing to the privately owned estates as well. He noted, however, that "there are still people in Grenada who feel that workers do not have the right to a share in the profits created by their labour."

Rent control law

There are also people in Grenada who believe in charging their tenants exorbitant rents. To combat this problem, the government reported in August that it has drafted a new rent control law. It was announced before a rally of hundreds of workers in the capital, St. George's, by Minister of National Mobilization Selwyn Strachan.

Under the new draft law, the amount paid for rented apartments, homes, and other premises is to be fixed by a Rent Assessment Board appointed by the government. The board will have the right to reduce rents in areas where they are deemed to be too high. Landlords will be directly responsible for repairs and maintenance at no cost to the middle- and low-income tenant. Landlords found guilty of overcharging a tenant can be fined or imprisoned.

The government also announced in August that it was preparing for a second phase of the Milk Distribution Program, under which free milk is distributed to children. During the first phase of the program, which ended in April, 8,000 bags of fifty-five pounds each were distributed to Grenadians free of charge.

Despite attempts by the U.S. government to sabotage Grenada's efforts to secure financing for the construction of its new international airport, the project has been moving ahead. The government of French President François Mitterrand has promised to provide whatever aid is needed to complete the airport.

A new economic assistance agreement has been signed with the Canadian International Development Agency to help refurbish Grenada's cocoa industry, and the Grenadian government has received EC\$1 million from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for the purchase of twenty-six buses to upgrade Grenada's public transport system.

But as important as all of these material gains are, they cannot be safeguarded and extended without the active mobilization of the Grenadian working people. This is a task that the PRG is acutely aware of, and has taken continual measures to implement.

Ministry of National Mobilization

One of the most recent steps has been the formation of the new Ministry of National Mobilization, which was created during a cabinet reshuffle in July. Headed by Selwyn Strachan, the former minister of labor, works and communication, its aim is to ensure that the masses of Grenadians are able to influence decision-making and see to it that decisions are carried out.

"It's an action Ministry, designed to put pressure on the bureaucracy, to make sure it works and really gets things done," Strachan explained. Grenada, he pointed out, inherited a bureaucracy established in the days of British colonialism, a bureaucracy that was "never really designed to help the people."

To overcome this obstacle, the ministry will keep in continual contact with the trade unions, community groups, and mass organizations to solicit their ideas and active participation in carrying through programs.

This is in addition to other forms through which the population makes its views known. Besides the trade unions, which are generally based on occupation, workers also participate in workers councils that represent the workers in a given area. Workers can raise whatever questions or problems they want at them.

In addition, new "zone councils" have been created to help better represent the interests of people living in the island's smaller villages. The zones are new subdivisions of Grenada's parishes, the country's main administrative units.

According to an August 25 government news release, "Zone council meetings, usually held once a month, bring together villagers in parish zones to discuss their village problems, and to find ways and means of solving them."

"It also provides the opportunity for villagers to raise political, social, and economic questions, to make suggestions, and criticise the government, the zone committee, the public utilities and village organisation themselves."

The release noted that the council meetings are "an expression of the grass-roots democratic process now taking place in the country." □

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

Duarte tour no help for Salvadoran junta

Reagan keeps his distance in face of antiwar sentiment

By Nelson González

[The following article appeared in the October 9 issue of the U.S. socialist newsweekly *Militant*.

* * *

On September 20, at the express invitation of the Reagan administration, José Napoleón Duarte, president of the Salvador junta, arrived in Washington to begin a ten-day tour.

The stated focus of his tour was to present his political case to the American people.

The tour was far from the propaganda success that the White House had hoped for.

For an administration that just a short while ago proclaimed the struggle in El Salvador as its most heralded anticommunist cause, the reception given by Washington to its point man in El Salvador was decidedly low key.

A September 28 *New York Times* article entitled, "The Salvador Cauldron: Reagan keeps his distance," explains, "... the White House deliberately refrained from staging a warm official embrace. There were no formal dinners with toasts ringing, with political endorsements, no Honor Guard welcome ... no joint appearance of President Reagan and Mr. Duarte for informal pictures. ..."

Privately administration officials acknowledge that "the White House, confronted by a new surge of political troubles over the budget and arms sales to Saudi Arabia, wanted to keep a decent distance from Mr. Duarte in public. The President's inner circle uneasily recalled the uncomfortable echoes of Vietnam touched off last spring by the loudly proclaimed dispatch of a modest new group of American military instructors to help El Salvador combat the leftist guerrillas."

Duarte met with President Reagan, members of Congress and other top administration officials, among them Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and Secretary of State Alexander Haig. He spoke at the United Nations, at numerous press conferences, radio and television talk shows, and met with various right-wing Salvadoran émigré groups.

What was his message? It was nothing more than the already discredited State Department smear of the Salvadoran liberation struggle as being "a communist conspiracy."

"The Salvadoran rebels are terrorists," Duarte told reporters when he appeared on CBS television's "Face the Nation" on September 20. He accused the government of Nicaragua of serving as a conduit for arms. He presented the civil war in El Salvador as the staging ground for a communist takeover of all

South America.

Even the reporters questioning him began losing patience as Duarte began to sound more and more like a broken record put out by the State Department. At one point an irate reporter interrupted Duarte and instructed him to stop making speeches.

In view of the powerful resistance being put up by the Salvadoran people, as well as international antiwar sentiment, Reagan and Duarte have been forced to give more lip service to a "political solution" of the crisis.

This "political solution" consists of convincing the American people that the Salvadoran military junta, responsible for the deaths of 32,000 Salvadorans in the last twenty-three months, can guarantee democratic elections in El Salvador.

On "Face the Nation," Duarte reiterated the junta's call for elections and that the liberation forces lay down their arms as a precondition for their participation in the elections.

A *Washington Post* editorial on September 22 assessed the credibility of Duarte's performance in presenting his case. "On the crucial issue of checking the pervasive official violence sponsored by the junta's military and extremists, he gave the impression that it was pretty much beyond him. He could not say how the civilian opposition might be brought into elections conducted by a hostile army that is not under his command and that has for decades spoiled democracy: it annulled his election in 1972."

Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White summed it up, "The U.S. government knows perfectly well that if Guillermo Ungo (the Revolutionary Democratic Front leader) ran, he would be dead within a day."

The significance of Duarte's tour can be seen by the timing and context in which it is taking place.

It comes just weeks after rebel forces in El Salvador, led by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), launched a powerful offensive in which they attacked and held the town of Perquín and launched attacks on army posts and patrols in widely scattered parts of the country. The rebels had withstood several months of an army counteroffensive and showed they could strike at will against the government's forces.

It also follows just weeks after Mexico and France, in a major foreign policy break with the Reagan administration, issued a joint statement recognizing the FMLN and the Revolutionary Democratic Front as "a representative political force."

The tour represents an attempt by the Rea-

gan administration to salvage their tattered El Salvador policy at a time when the antiwar sentiment in the United States has been sharpened by the astronomical increase in military spending at the expense of vital social programs.

It was no accident that Duarte's visit also coincided with a Senate vote on a foreign appropriations bill which gives the Salvadoran junta \$114 million in combined military and economic aid.

Both Duarte and President Reagan strongly lobbied the Senate to remove amendments requiring the Reagan administration to report every six months on progress in ending human rights violations in El Salvador, implementing reforms, and political liberalization.

Touted as a courageous antiwar act by liberal senators, the amendments don't stop any aid from going to the junta. But the fact that the Senate voted in favor of maintaining the amendments was a slap in the face of both the Reagan administration and the Salvadoran junta. It reflects the pressure felt by the politicians from the deep antiwar sentiment that exists in this country.

During Duarte's stay in Washington an angry group of protesters demonstrated near the Capitol.

In San Francisco, 4,000 people turned out to denounce him and the junta as murderers and to protest U.S. military aid to the junta.

As he addressed the UN General Assembly on September 29, an all-day picket marched in front of the UN building.

When he met with Puerto Rican Congressman Roberto García in New York, García asked how the junta could figure out that Cuba was involved in the civil war in El Salvador, yet couldn't figure out who the murderers of the four nuns were. The meeting appeared as a major story in the largest Spanish-language daily in New York City, *El Diario*.

This is why, as the September 28 *New York Times* puts it, "... the President's political advisors still regard El Salvador as a domestic political liability." □

European Subscribers

Subscriptions to Europe are now being processed through New York. Please address all correspondence to:

Intercontinental Press
410 West Street
New York, New York 10014