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Reagan Threats Draw Protests

Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada on Alert as Evidence Piles Up of U.S. War Plans



Barricada
Militia Reserve Battalion 95-32 from Managua's San Judas neighborhood leaving to take up positions on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast, November 10.

Netherlands

***The Movement Against
NATO Missiles***

Canada

***New Constitution
Attacks Quebec***

Cuba, Nicaragua on full alert as U.S. military threat mounts

By Fred Murphy

Evidence continues to mount that the Reagan administration and its regional allies are preparing to take military action in Central America and the Caribbean.

The most ominous U.S. statements thus far came November 12, when Secretary of State Alexander Haig testified before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives.

"Can you provide this committee and this Congress with an assurance that the United States is not and will not participate or encourage in any way, direct or indirect, efforts to overthrow or destabilize the current government of Nicaragua?" Haig was asked.

"No, I would not give you such an assurance," Haig replied.

On November 15, Lt. Gen. Wallace Nutting, chief of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama, declared that the situation in El Salvador is "fragile" and that Washington had to make it clear to the rebel forces there — with military force if necessary — that "you're not going to get El Salvador" and make them believe it."

"Something must be done to bring these bandits under control," Nutting said.

These and similar declarations serve to confirm warnings by the Cuban and Nicaraguan governments that imperialist military actions against their countries or in El Salvador are now being prepared.

Armies on alert

The Cuban armed forces have been on full alert since October 31. In Nicaragua, the Sandinista People's Army and the popular militias have been in a similar state of readiness since November 8. The island of Grenada in the eastern Caribbean — whose revolutionary government has also been the target of U.S. threats and pressures — is on military alert as well.

Appeals have come from all three countries for solidarity actions to get out the truth about Washington's moves.

In Cuba, according to a dispatch from Havana published in the November 6 *Le Monde*, "every day the newspapers publish interviews with workers who affirm their determination to fight 'to the end' against the U.S. threats. . . .

"Trade-union locals from all branches of the economy appeal for mass demonstrations. Rallies are organized inside the factories. On Sunday, groups of several hundred schoolchildren marched through the streets of Havana. On Monday, it was the dockworkers who expressed their hostility to Mr. Reagan's 'arrogant' policy."

The Soviet Union has warned Washington

of the grave results an attack on Cuba could have. "Recently, the campaign of malicious attacks against the republic of Cuba has intensified notably in the United States," Soviet Defense Minister Dimitri Ustinov said in a November 7 speech in Moscow. "The government of the United States should ponder the consequences that could derive from such actions."

Blockade of Nicaragua?

But there has been no indication that the U.S. rulers are backing off from their military preparations. Haig's congressional testimony came less than a week after he personally confirmed that such plans were being made.

The day before Haig refused to preclude U.S. action against Nicaragua, Salvadoran Defense Minister José Guillermo García was quoted in an exclusive interview with the *Washington Post* as calling for a blockade of Nicaragua.

García was asked, the *Post* said, "whether his military problems would be solved by a blockade that would prevent Cuba and other possible suppliers from shipping arms into Nicaragua so they can be smuggled to the guerrillas in El Salvador. He answered: 'yes.'"

García, considered by many to be the most powerful figure in the Salvadoran government, was in Washington as a keynote speaker at a closed-door conference of Latin American army chiefs. That gathering reportedly "focused specifically on El Salvador and U.S. charges of Nicaraguan and Cuban involvement there" (*Washington Post*, November 6).

State Department ducks Castro's challenge

The main weapon in the propaganda arsenal against Nicaragua and Cuba is the claim that they are providing arms to the popular forces fighting the U.S.-backed junta in El Salvador. That charge remains unsubstantiated, despite repeated challenges to Washington by both governments to come up with even a shred of hard evidence.

Fidel Castro even took the unusual step for a head of state of dispatching letters to the editors of the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*. The letter published in the *Post* November 11 reiterated earlier calls from Havana for proof of "Cuba's alleged participation in recent arms shipments to the Salvadoran revolutionary forces and the sending of Cuban military advisers to cooperate with them."

A State Department representative asserted the next day that "the charges to which [Castro] refers were made in the press, not by the State Department. Thus we see no reason to respond to his letter. . . ." This conveniently left out the fact that the original source of the

charges "in the press" was none other than the U.S. government.

U.S. policy not working

Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega has offered a concise explanation for the U.S. slanders. "Washington has recognized that its policy [in El Salvador] of elections with repression is not working," Ortega told correspondent Alan Riding of the *New York Times* "So it is left with an intervention. But it needs a pretext and that has to be Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviet Union. So it invents arms shipments, 500 Cubans and 1,000 planes from Vietnam to create a whole climate to justify an intervention in the region" (*Times*, November 10).

At a November 10 news conference, President Reagan reaffirmed what he called "our interest in preserving the Americas from this kind of exported revolution, the — this expansionist policy that is coming by way of, I think, the Soviet[s] and the Cubans."

The U.S. press seized on Reagan's assertion that "we have no plans for putting Americans in combat any place in the world," but took scant notice of his refusal to disavow the reports that other kinds of U.S. military moves are in preparation.

As Daniel Ortega pointed out, Washington faces a deteriorating situation in El Salvador. Reagan acknowledged that "there may be something of a stalemate in the inability to bring about a quick military solution" in El Salvador. Reports from the scene indicate that things are far worse than that for the imperialists and their junta.

Salvadoran junta in desperate straits

"The Salvadoran Army has lost control of approximately one-fourth of El Salvador's territory to guerrilla forces," *Washington Post* correspondent Alma Guillermoprieto reported in a dispatch printed November 10.

Although the State Department has voiced increasing concern over the development of a military "stalemate" between the guerrillas and the government, tours outside the capital into the countryside indicate that the stalemate was broken some time ago and that the guerrilla Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) is now gaining ground faster than government troops can hold it.

Aware that the Salvadoran armed forces alone cannot defeat the FMLN militarily, Washington has been readying plans for intervention by foreign troops. Argentine military leaders have publicly offered to send forces to El Salvador, and on November 8 a top-level U.S. military delegation headed by Vice-admiral Thomas Bigley arrived in Argentina. The visit coincided with a report in the Buenos Aires daily *La Nación* that "the idea that has begun to appeal to the U.S. leaders is that of forming a battalion of Latin American troops which, after attaining a consensus of the different armies, could be given legitimacy through the Organization of American States."

Such an OAS "peacekeeping force" provided the cover for the U.S. invasion of the

Dominican Republic in 1965. But a 1979 attempt by the Carter administration to carry out such an intervention against the Sandinista rebels in Nicaragua failed to gain the support of Latin American regimes in the OAS.

'Nicaragua is a lost cause'

One aim of the current verbal escalation against Nicaragua may be to lay the basis for a fresh counterrevolutionary initiative through the OAS.

Haig's November 12 testimony before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives launched the harshest official attacks on Nicaragua yet. The secretary of state accused Nicaragua of "moving toward totalitarian government" and building up an army that "can only be a force for aggression and the expansion of Marxist-Leninist policy in the hemisphere."

"The situation in Nicaragua is very, very disturbing," Haig said. "I think we can't delude ourselves as Americans about that and then wonder perhaps six months or a year from now what happened that we have another Cuba in this hemisphere."

When the U.S. rulers say "another Cuba," what they mean is extension of the socialist revolution. They cannot tolerate other countries following Cuba's example of abolishing capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination and putting the nation's affairs into the hands of working people.

The imperialists have now concluded that working-class power in Nicaragua has been consolidated. "Barring a miracle, Nicaragua is a lost cause," a U.S. official in Latin America told *Newsweek* magazine, "and Ronald Reagan is going to make sure it doesn't take anybody else in the region with it."

This means punishing Nicaragua and crushing the revolution in El Salvador. "We've taken off the kid gloves" in dealing with Nicaragua, a U.S. official in Managua told *Newsweek*.

The big-business news media in the United States have fallen into line with the open anti-Nicaragua stance now proclaimed by Washington. An editorial in the November 9 *Washington Post* asserted that by arresting several leading capitalists, the Sandinistas had taken "yet another long step . . . toward Cuban-style totalitarianism in Nicaragua."

But what really upsets the U.S. imperialists and their media mouthpieces is the fact that Nicaragua is the freest country in all Central America, and that the Sandinistas are taking the steps necessary to insure that it stays that way.

The Nicaraguan toilers and their allies in Cuba, El Salvador, and Grenada need to know that they are not alone in their fight. "We must alert world opinion and American opinion," Cuban Minister of Culture Armando Hart told the Paris daily *Le Monde* during a visit to that capital that began November 6. According to *Le Monde*, Hart "says he is persuaded that a new U.S. action of the Vietnam type would call forth a new rise of public protest in the

United States itself. In any case, he is counting on U.S. public opinion and on the action of North American intellectuals who are opposed to any intervention."

Such opinion certainly exists. It is one of the factors the warmakers must take into account as they lay their plans. But to be effective in halting intervention, such opinion must be mobilized. Supporters of the Cuban revolution and other solidarity and peace organizations are organizing picket lines and demonstrations in a number of U.S. cities for November 21.

Eight U.S. Representatives, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, sent a letter to Secretary Haig on November 10 demanding evidence of the U.S. charges against Cuba. "The implication of any military action is extremely dangerous and a direct threat to world peace," the Black members of Congress warned.

Elsewhere, some actions have already taken place. Thousands have marched in Peru and Ecuador. In Panama, forty Catholic priests have issued an urgent appeal to Pope John Paul II "to intervene with the United States to avoid an imminent catastrophe" of intervention in Central America.

Efforts to get out the truth about Washington's plans are especially important in light of the continuing cover-up in the capitalist news media. News of the military preparations is being dribbled out in bits and pieces under a barrage of slanders against Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Salvadoran rebels.

All those who stand on the side of human progress must continue to mobilize and demand —

U.S. hands off Cuba!

No U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean! □

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Revolution braces to meet attack

Sandinista People's Army on alert

By Matilde Zimmermann

MANAGUA — "We are more than just worried," a representative of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) told *Intercontinental Press* November 12. The same day, U.S. Congressman Michael Barnes said in Washington that if he were in Nicaragua he would be building a bomb shelter.

The general feeling here in Nicaragua is that the danger of some type of foreign attack is now real and immediate, and that the U.S. government has made a firm decision to take whatever measures it can to overturn the Sandinista revolution.

The Sandinista People's Army has been placed on a state of alert, and all leaves and vacations have been suspended. On November 8, military preparedness exercises were carried out in installations around the country.

Recruitment to the People's Militias and to the militia reserve battalions has also been stepped up. The neighborhood Sandinista Defense Committees have had special meetings in some places to explain the seriousness of the situation. At one such meeting in a neighborhood in the town of León, for example, twenty new people, most of them women, signed up for the militia.

'Revolutionary vigilance'

There has also been increased participation in what is known here as "revolutionary vigilance." This consists of volunteer civilian guard duty and nighttime patrols of factories, workplaces, and communities, and is organized by the Sandinista Defense Committees.

The evening of November 11 there was a protest demonstration by armed members of the militia from the central neighborhoods of Managua, and in a number of places there have been bonfires and other traditional Nicaraguan street protests.

A direct intervention or blockade involving U.S. troops is not the only type of military action the Nicaraguans fear. Encouraged by war threats from Reagan and Haig, former members of the overthrown dictator Somoza's National Guard are stepping up their activity in Honduras and Costa Rica.

In mid-October, a group of Somozaists hijacked a plane in Costa Rica, obtained the release of other ex-National Guardsmen who were in prison for bombing a progressive radio station, and took off for El Salvador.

Nicaraguan Commander Luis Carrión charged November 4 that groups of ex-National Guardsmen in Honduras were planning to disguise themselves as members of the Sandinista army and carry out attacks on Honduran



Latin American army chiefs met in Washington November 3-5. Nicaragua was not invited.

peasants. He warned both the Nicaraguan and Honduran people to be on guard against such a provocation.

A few days later, a coalition of thirty labor, political, and religious groups in Honduras charged that ex-National Guardsmen were actively preparing incidents designed to provoke a war between Honduras and Nicaragua. The coalition listed the estates of wealthy ranchers where these preparations were under way. These groups also warned that the terrorists had obtained Sandinista army uniforms.

U.S. propaganda campaign

Secretary of State Haig has threatened to strangle the Nicaraguan revolution, and the U.S. destabilization plan has been moving ahead on a number of fronts. Nicaraguan Agrarian Reform Minister Jaime Wheelock charged November 5, on his way to attend a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization meeting in Rome, that the U.S. government was threatening to cut off meat imports from Nicaragua.

U.S. pressure has already led to the suspension of a \$30 million Inter-American Development Bank Loan that was to be used to rebuild Nicaragua's devastated fishing fleet. According to junta member Sergio Ramírez, suspension of this loan will seriously aggravate an already critical economic situation.

The increasingly menacing propaganda campaign against Nicaragua in the U.S. press can only be designed to prepare the American people to accept some new military intervention in Central America.

An important part of this propaganda campaign is the charge that Nicaragua is "totalitarian," that democratic rights are being violated. To fuel this campaign, a delegation from the

Inter-American Press Association, an organization of newspaper owners, arrived in Nicaragua November 11 to investigate allegations that the right-wing daily *La Prensa* is being persecuted. The association's concept of freedom of the press is that whoever owns the presses gets the freedom.

The head of the delegation is Charles Scripps, president of the giant Scripps-Howard newspaper chain in the United States. One member of the delegation is a publisher from Argentina, where journalists have been tortured and murdered. So there would be something laughable about this gang's concern for freedom of the press here if their visit was not part of the concerted and powerful campaign to discredit and destabilize Nicaragua.

CIA agents named

The U.S. government has also lashed out at Nicaragua because of the publication here of a German reporter's charge that thirteen members of the U.S. embassy in Managua work for the CIA. This news was reported in the November 6 issue of the independent daily *El Nuevo Diario*.

Father Miguel D'Escoto, the foreign minister of Nicaragua, answered these complaints at a November 9 news conference.

"There is freedom of the press in Nicaragua. The government of the United States has no business protesting to the Nicaraguan government about the publication of this information. Did they by any chance bother to consult with us before firing the air controllers in the United States, and then outlawing the trade union these workers belong to?"

"The whole world knows who is provoking this crisis and who is responsible for expanding the Salvadoran conflict to the rest of the re-

gion. They have not learned, and they do not seem capable of understanding, that we are the ones who are going to have to solve our own problems. And I'll give them a piece of advice, which is that they solve *their* own problems. They certainly have plenty. They should put their own house in order, and maybe in that way they could set an example for others."

Presidents can lie

Nicaraguans have not let down their guard as a result of Reagan's November 10 assurance that he had no plans to send U.S. troops into combat in the Caribbean or anywhere else in the world.

"We should remember what President Kennedy did," said *Barricada's* lead story November 11. "He assured the world that he did not intend to send his soldiers against Cuba, and in fact he didn't. But mercenaries that had been armed, trained, and financed by Washington were landed at the Bay of Pigs."

That same day, *Barricada* ran a photo of U.S. combat troops landing in Egypt for anti-Libyan maneuvers.

In spite of the state of preparedness required by the mounting international crisis, life in Nicaragua goes on very much as normal. There are more soldiers around town, but by and large the atmosphere is calm, as people go to work, organize to bring in the coffee harvest, and carry out ongoing health and education campaigns.

Ironically, just when Haig started talking about "military options" against Nicaragua, the whole country was on a mobilization footing, not for defense but for a massive antimalaria campaign.

On November 4, 5, and 6, some 85,000 young brigade members and almost 200,000 helpers were mobilized to administer three days of medication to every person over twelve months of age in the entire country. No other country in the world has ever attempted to eradicate malaria through this type of simultaneous treatment of the whole population.

'A book and a rifle'

Two days later the country wound up a special month-long campaign to build new libraries. "We have to transform Nicaragua into one giant library," said Commander Tomás Borge at the opening of a new children's library November 8. "But at the same time we have to transform Nicaragua into one big battle trench."

"Every Nicaraguan," Borge said, "should have a book in his or her hand. A book and a rifle. This is going to be a revolution of books, rifles, and guitars."

Commander Dora María Téllez sounded the same theme the next day in a speech to a group of workers who will be trained to operate and maintain 600 new tractors from the Soviet Union.

"Our business is construction," she said. "What we want to do is build our country. But we have to be soldiers too, if we don't want our enemies to come and tear down what we

build up."

One thing is certain: any attempt by U.S. or other forces to intervene in Nicaragua will be met by a fighting people. The FSLN takes its name from Augusto César Sandino, who led a guerrilla war against an invasion of Nicaragua by the U.S. Marines in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

International solidarity

All demonstrations of international solidarity and every repudiation of Reagan's war drive is reported and welcomed here in Nicaragua. Several thousand people demonstrated in Lima, Peru, November 8, and 15,000 marched through the streets of Quito, Ecuador, just before U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Enders arrived November 10.

Foreign Minister D'Escoto recently returned from a trip to South America, where he received assurances from the presidents of Brazil, Ecuador, and Panama, and from the foreign minister of Peru, that their countries would not take part in any invasion of Nicaragua.

But Nicaraguans give special weight to ex-

pressions of solidarity and antiwar sentiment on the part of the people of the United States. Every picket line, demonstration, or challenge to Reagan's saber-rattling is reported in the revolutionary press here.

On November 10, *Barricada* published a photograph of an antiwar picket in New Orleans. An accompanying editorial column explained that the Nicaraguans' opposition to recent U.S. government moves was in no way directed against the American people.

"Last week," the column said, "we pointed out that the actions of the North American people themselves form one of the crucial pillars for holding back the hands of the imperialists who want to strangle us. And here we should repeat once again that our anti-imperialist position is precisely that, anti-imperialist."

"Our position has much in common with the democratic ideals and the desire for peace and friendship on the part of working people and intellectuals in the United States and with those political figures who do not want to see their country plunged into a new quagmire like Vietnam." □

'Barricada' on the crisis

'A blow against Cuba would only be a first step'

By Leonel Urbano

[The following article appeared in the November 6 issue of the Nicaraguan daily *Barricada*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

We do not have to dwell much longer on the profuse information regarding the intrigues within Washington, and between the Yankee officers and others from the hemisphere regarding war plans. What we should reflect upon without delay is the answer to two questions: Is Cuba alone threatened? What will the peoples, governments and forces in the world who want to live in peace do, and what will we do?

We can answer "no" to the first question. Cuba is the pretext, just like the tired old story of "international communism" and the "Soviet threat." Commander Daniel Ortega clearly pointed this out at the United Nations in regard to the history of imperialist aggressions that took place before either the USSR or later the Cuban revolution existed.

When the Cuban people made their socialist revolution and confronted the blockade and aggression, they received solidarity. But no one made their revolution for them.

The Yankees talked at that time about the "Sovietization" of Cuba. Now, for the same reason, following the victory of the Sandinista revolution they speak of the "Cubanization" of Nicaragua, and already, at almost the same time, they have invented the "Sandinization" of the Salvadoran revolution. And it will go on

like that until someone in the world — or in their own country — calls them to their senses.

But it would seem at bit childish to speak of "senses": this involves not a moral question, but powerful economic and political interests with their logical military offshoots that cause insecurity for humanity.

They must be opposed and stopped. Within the United States there are forces that are capable of finding a way to solve their own crisis, without opting for warlike solutions. These are important interests and they will undoubtedly also have the support of millions of United States citizens. *At this time, we once again extend our hand to them.*

The peoples of the world? In the first place we should be informing ourselves, politicizing ourselves in order to prepare ourselves without delay. A new threat hangs over the workers of the world and especially those in our America.

A blow against the Cuban revolution would only be a first step. Other blows would fall on all of us. We must not allow ourselves to be fragmented, we must strengthen unity through international solidarity.

There are many democratic governments on the continent whose stability, interests, and security would turn out to be more than precarious. They have sufficient voice, strength, and support to respond, to act in a preventive manner without committing the mistake of thinking that "no one is going to move against me."

Let's unite all our determination. Seize the initiative before we are taken by surprise. Prevent the aggression with action, so we don't have to end up condemning it later on. □

Cuba tells Reagan: 'Our people will know how to defend their revolution'

[The following editorial appeared in the November 9 issue of the Cuban daily *Granma*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

With total disregard for the truth and without the slightest respect for U.S. and international public opinion, the Yankee imperialists continue their frenetic, irresponsible and provocative campaign of lies and threats against Cuba and the peoples of Central America. We have completely exposed their lies and we have repeatedly called on them to present the supposed evidence they claim to have substantiating their false accusations.

As was to be expected, the imperialists have been unable to answer the Cuban challenge. They were unable to do so because no one is capable of proving lies. They have not been able to present a single piece of evidence. They have been incapable of proving a single one of their accusations. They have not responded to even one of the concrete, simple, direct questions we have been putting to them for more than two months.

'Obstinate and unscrupulous lies'

It has been totally proven — beyond the shadow of a doubt — that the Yankee imperialists are obstinate and unscrupulous liars, that they totally lack the slightest sense of honor, honesty, or even self-respect.

Any normal liar would, upon being exposed, at least have the sensitivity to keep quiet. But not the imperialists, because they do not even have respect for themselves.

In recent days the Yankee officials have continued to repeat their lies, and their irresponsible and provocative language has reached absolutely intolerable limits.

On November 5, the *New York Times* published a front-page article written by a journalist who is a former Washington government official. In it he reveals that the State Department, the Pentagon, and the CIA are currently studying measures that are being proposed to step up the imperialist intervention in El Salvador as well as aggressive actions that would be carried out against Nicaragua and against Cuba.

The article leads one to believe that the Yankee administration has come to the conclusion that the genocidal clique that kills dozens of Salvadorans every day is on the verge of collapse, and that there is nothing left for its imperialist masters to do but openly intervene in that country to try to keep it going.

While their own criminal and absurd policy is now coming down on their heads, the imperialists are at the same time considering ag-

gressive actions including "to blockade Nicaragua" and various measures against Cuba up to "a general blockade as part of an act of war, and an invasion by American and possibly Latin American forces."

Confirmation by Haig

The gravity of the report in the *New York Times* is obvious. But even more serious was a report published in the same newspaper the following day, November 6. On that occasion that *New York* daily interviewed U.S. Secretary of State Haig, the same Mr. Haig who has never stopped lying since he assumed his pres-

ent position, the very same Mr. Haig who has not been able to answer Cuba's challenges. What did Mr. Haig say now?

According to the *New York Times*, Mr. Haig "confirmed" what had been published the day before in that same newspaper. When he was asked if the article published the previous day overdramatized the situation, Mr. Haig responded, "hesitantly" according to the reporter: "Well, I think, you know, no." And after a pause he added that "I wouldn't want to characterize it except to say that it's not very reassuring when leaks occur of any kind."

It would be difficult to find a cruder or more

Castro's letter to 'Washington Post'

[In an effort to break through the blackout in the major U.S. news media about Cuba's response to Washington's threats and slanders, Cuban leader Fidel Castro sent the following letter to the *Washington Post*. It was published in the November 11 issue of the *Post*. The next day, the *New York Times* carried a brief article acknowledging that it had received a similar letter. "The letter to The Times was received yesterday," reporter Joseph B. Treaster claimed. The *Times* failed to publish the letter itself.

[The U.S. State Department "refused to comment" on Fidel's letter, the *Washington Post* reported.]

* * *

The *Post* recently published an article by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak ("Bridge over the River Lempa," op-ed, Oct. 19) dealing with Central America, El Salvador and Cuba. The article was widely publicized.

It claimed that during the second half of September, Cuba had sent 500 to 600 elite troops with the purpose of becoming directly involved in the developments in El Salvador. It even sought to link up the guerrilla action that destroyed the Puente del Oro [Golden Bridge] in that country with the alleged contingent of Cuban troops. When asked by different press organs, the State Department refused to confirm or disprove the news.

Thus an attempt was made to add another element to the campaign already under way for several weeks, concerning the situation in Central America and, particularly, in El

Salvador, with regard to Cuba's alleged participation in recent arms shipments to the Salvadoran revolutionary forces and the sending of Cuban military advisers to cooperate with them. These totally false reports were officially issued by the U.S. State Department and by Secretary of State Haig himself in the months of July and August. On Sept. 3, in a press release, the Cuban revolutionary government publicly challenged both Mr. Haig and the government of the United States to offer one shred of evidence to back their slanderous assertions. Neither Mr. Haig nor the U.S. government has answered this denouncement.

The objective of the truculent and absolutely false article by Mr. Evans and Mr. Novak was to reenact and extend the campaign launched several weeks ago, which led to Cuba's refutation. There is an event, however, that adds more serious and dangerous elements to this campaign of falsehoods and lies. The U.S. government has informed third countries that it has detected the sending of 500 Cuban troops to Nicaragua and that it possesses the corresponding evidence, all the while wielding the usual threats against Cuba. These falsehoods and lies constitute one more step aimed at setting the stage to justify further actions that, as have been publicly reported, are being prepared by the U.S. government against our country.

We have challenged Mr. Haig and the U.S. government for the second time to give an answer about those totally false statements. We are still awaiting a reply.

Fidel Castro Ruz

shameless expression of cynicism. Mr. Haig acknowledged that what was published on November 5 was correct, that at that point the State Department, the CIA, and the Pentagon were preparing new misdeeds against El Salvador, against Nicaragua, and against Cuba. He did not take the trouble to deny it.

The only thing that seemed to bother him was that someone had said it, that the information had been leaked to the press.

1,000 planes and helicopters?

At the same time, according to the EFE newswire from Washington, on the night of November 5 the ABC television network reported that according to Yankee military sources "the Cuban troops in Nicaragua total 3,000 men and not 500 or 600 as had been indicated up to now."

And as if that lie was not enough, the same sources asserted "that Vietnam is sending to Nicaragua 1,000 planes and helicopters, by boat and in parts." One has to be utterly crazy to assert such a thing.

It does not surprise us that the Yankee officers have the effrontery to repeat the bald-faced lie about "the Cuban troops in Nicaragua" and even to multiply their number six times. But it would be worth asking the empire's sagacious warmakers: Have you calculated what 1,000 combat planes and helicopters mean? How many pilots, specialists, and technicians are required to operate them?

To get an approximate idea of how absurd and baseless these reports are, we would like to highlight the following facts, based on international norms for military aviation:

For 1,000 planes and helicopters you would need a minimum of 1,500 pilots and approximately 7,000 to 10,000 support personnel.

To prepare such a mass of pilots, specialists, and technicians would require an enormous effort and colossal investments. The best academy for training pilots, navigators, and technicians in the capitalist countries (located in the United States) graduates 800 men in the three categories each year, after a four-year long course.

An aviation academy that was well endowed with the necessary installations and facilities would be able to simultaneously train, in approximate numbers, about 100 pilots.

Nicaragua a new superpower?

To train 1,500 pilots you would need about fifteen academies with a capacity for 100 students each, working simultaneously with hundreds of professors and instructors for four years at a minimum.

You would need gigantic installations, with a total area ten times larger than the Homestead Air Force Base in Florida in the U.S., in which 100 planes are based in an area of 14.2 square kilometers.

If you add to this the construction of runways and other technical elements, you would

Grenada, Cuba, Nicaragua: 'three prongs of the same fork'

There is ominous new evidence of military activity in the immediate vicinity of the small Caribbean island of Grenada, according to Don Rojas, editor of the *Free West Indian*.

"We consider the situation to be extremely dangerous," Rojas told the *Militant*, a U.S. socialist weekly, in a telephone interview November 13.

We are taking all necessary steps to insure that our country and our revolution is adequately defended," Rojas added. Grenadian armed forces have been on a state of alert, he said.

"We have information that within the last forty-eight hours there have been a lot of troop movements in the vicinity of Barbados — a lot of naval activity and a number of military aircraft have landed in Barbados," Rojas said. "Barbados is only a hundred and twenty miles from Grenada."

Asked about reaction to Reagan's menacing new threats against Cuba, Rojas said: "There has been discussion and condemnation across the board, throughout all sectors of our society, of what people see to be a system of lies and slander directed at the Cuban revolution. Inventions and pretexts are being cooked up by Haig and Reagan and the other cowboys in Washington."

"We don't accept any of that. We think they are simply smokescreens for a planned military intervention by Washington."

Grenadians have good reason to know about such threats. In August, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop warned of invasion preparations by Washington aimed at Grenada.

On August 11, the Associated Press reported that U.S. military units on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques were practicing an invasion of "a mythical small island nation called 'Amber,' which in certain ways bears a striking resemblance to Cuba's close Caribbean ally Grenada.

"Amber has an army of 2,000 and holds sovereignty over several out-islands called 'Amberines' . . .

"Grenada, with an army estimated by U.S. diplomats to number 2,000 holds sovereignty over a chain of out-islands called the Grenadines."

U.S. Rear Admiral Robert P. McKenzie was quoted as describing Nicaragua, Cuba, and Grenada as "practically one country" presenting a "political-military problem" to Washington.

Grenada is viewed as a threat because it "is the first in the English-speaking Caribbean to have had a revolution," Prime Minister Bishop said. "Grenada is primarily a Black country, a country with people of African descent. And this of course has tremendous appeal to Blacks and other national minorities and ethnic minorities in the United States."

Rojas told the *Militant*, "We certainly appreciate any manifestation of support and solidarity with our revolution — and with the revolutions of Cuba and Nicaragua as well. We consider ourselves to be three prongs of the same fork in a sense. We would welcome anything — large, small, medium-size — that is a protest or condemnation of imperialist aggression against our region."

—Nelson Blackstock

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get an idea of the scope.

According to well-known data, 1,000 planes and helicopters would mean that Nicaragua would have an air force totalling half the planes of all the Arab countries combined (excepting Egypt). It would be larger than the air forces of France and Canada combined, double that of West Germany, and much larger than the British air force.

To transport 1,000 planes and helicopters from Vietnam to Nicaragua would require fifty-five trips by ships of 15,000 tons each.

It would be worth noting that to service an air force that is about half that size, France needs more than 100,000 men, as does West Germany, and the figure is nearly as high for Great Britain.

To attain this degree of prowess, a country as small and poor as Nicaragua would require no less than forty years and tens of billions of dollars.

Do they really imagine that anyone is going to believe such a cock-and-bull story? Do they really suppose anyone is so naive as to believe that the Yankees have "discovered" such a monumental volume of maritime traffic mov-

ing from one corner of the planet to the other?

The Nicaraguans testify that this report is a complete and total lie. They state that not a single one of those supposed planes and helicopters is in that country, not a single vessel is in transit with any of them.

According to a report from the AFP [Agence France-Presse] wire, the dignified and prestigious member of the Government Junta of Nicaragua, Sergio Ramirez, called the charge "absurd" and said its "aim is to prepare the ground for a future military intervention in Nicaragua."

'Goebbels has become a small-fry'

The Yankee Big Lie, which is an expression of an aggressive, warlike, and interventionist policy condemned by history and rejected by the peoples, is lurching toward delirium and hallucination.

Reading the recent statements by the representatives of Yankee imperialism one gets a sense of, among other things, the deep transformation that has taken place in U.S. society. U.S. children are traditionally taught in school that George Washington never told a

lie. Future generations in that country will have to recall that the present Yankee leaders, although they probably made their appearance in a classroom at one time, never stopped lying. With each lie that is exposed, they respond with ever greater lies. Goebbels has become a small-fry.

Regarding Cuba, we tell them once more, clearly so there won't be any mistakes, so that no one will be confused: We are not afraid of you, you do not scare us. Our people do not tremble before the threats, arrogance and power of the imperialists. Our people, up to the last man and up to the last woman, will know how to defend their revolution, their independence, and their dignity. Our people are not made of the feeble and rotten material of those who make lies, exploitation, and crime their mode of existence.

Our fighting and working people were forged with the steel of a more than century-long struggle and they will know how to resist and fight with determination and courage.

Make no mistake. Any new imperialist blow will be shattered when it comes up against this steel. □

Iran

Release Dr. Reza Baraheni!

Letter from Sanaz Baraheni to prosecutor

[The following letter was sent on October 26 to Hojatolislam Mousavi-Tabrizi, chief prosecutor of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by Sanaz Baraheni, wife of Dr. Reza Baraheni. The letter has been translated from the October 28 issue of the Tehran socialist weekly *Kargar*.]

* * *

It is respectfully brought to your attention that: on Monday, October 12, 1981, my husband, Dr. Reza Baraheni, left home at 7:30 a.m. to go to the University of Tehran. According to the available evidence and to the professors in the English Department, he was on campus until 12:00 noon, when he decided to leave with another colleague.

At the campus gate, a blue or dark blue Paykan stopped in front of him, and he was asked to "get in." He asked the other passengers the reason why he should get in and they apparently showed him their identification cards. Then my husband got in and they left.

Since that date until now (October 26), my husband has not returned home. And in spite of all my efforts and those of his other relatives, we have not been able to get any information as to my husband's place of detention, the reason for his arrest, or the charges against him.

As a university professor, scholar, and militant poet against the Pahlavi autocracy, my

husband is a well-known figure both in Iran and among the international supporters of the Islamic revolution in Iran.

All the people who have read his writings and those more closely familiar with him know well that my husband not only served the University of Tehran for the past seventeen years, but is a scholar and writer who, because of his unremitting struggle against the wretched Pahlavi regime and because at no time did he approve of the deposed shah and his criminal regime, was imprisoned for three months and twenty days in SAVAK's torture chambers in 1973 and underwent the worst kind of torture and insults.

But all the torture, mistreatments, intimidations, suspension of his salary, and other types of harassment never made my husband bow to the Pahlavi dictatorship. After his release from prison, which came about owing to a broad international defense campaign organized by the international opponents of the terrorist and oppressive Pahlavi regime, my husband was forced into exile.

In exile, my husband used his every means to expose the autocratic royal regime. His struggle brought the call of Iranian political prisoners for justice to the ears of millions of Americans and Europeans who respected liberties and caused them to oppose the deposed shah's regime. The documents of his struggle

in defense of militant prisoners such as Ayatollah Taleghani, Dr. Ali Shariati, Ayatollah Montazeri, Vida Hadjebi Tabrizi, Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, and hundreds of other political prisoners are all available and will be furnished to the honorable authorities if necessary.

His political activities in exile and his efforts in defense of the political prisoners reached such heights that the deposed shah himself, in one of his press conferences, took the occasion to attack and slander my husband directly.

When SAVAK was shedding the blood of Muslim fighters with impunity and the repression had engulfed all of our society, my husband spoke out against the shah's regime and in defense of Iranian political prisoners and militants in his famous and historic testimony in the United States Congress. His testimony was published in many of the most prestigious newspapers of Europe and America.

All the books that he published, both in English and in Farsi, during the five years in exile are all documents of his relentless struggle against the Pahlavi dictatorship.

With the victory of the Iranian Islamic revolution under the leadership of Imam Khomeini, my husband's fondest wish was fulfilled and we all happily returned home from exile. At the beginning of our stay in Iran my husband wrote numerous articles in the press. These ar-

ticles are all available and will be furnished if necessary. These articles all speak of my husband's staunch belief in the Islamic revolution and his readiness to defend this great revolution against all plots and intrigues of U.S. imperialism, the great Satan.

Articles such as "Open the Iranian Airports," which was written prior to the Imam's return to Iran, and "The Iranian Revolution Will Strengthen Other Revolutions in the World" demonstrate that my husband has totally dedicated himself to the defense of this great revolution and to the defeat of imperialism, this sworn enemy of our revolution.

During the past year, when the universities were closed, my husband was translating an English book into Farsi under the guidance of the Center for Cultural Revolution. Just a few days before his disappearance he had completed the translation of part of the book and handed it in to the university.

As the wife of Dr. Reza Baraheni, I have shared the past ten years with him, witnessed his imprisonment by SAVAK, witnessed his torture by SAVAK, witnessed his great activities against the Pahlavi regime, seen the disclosure of repression and the freedom of militants from the shah's jails.

I saw him return to Iran with joy and hope three days after the flight of the deposed shah from the country, and saw how he defended and sided with the Islamic Iranian revolution (as can be seen in his writings).

I bear witness that he has put his capable pen to work only in the defense of the revolution. I have seen that he had no affiliation except to the University of Tehran. Hence I declare that my husband is innocent.

And a time when our country is engaged in expelling Saddam and the American aggressors from our soil, this innocent militant must not be locked up behind prison bars.

Honorable Hojatolislam Mousavi-Tabrizi: according to Article 22 of the Islamic Constitution, the charges in the arrest must be an-

Protests urgently needed

Dr. Reza Baraheni, a prominent Iranian intellectual who played an important role in exposing the crimes of the shah's regime and denouncing U.S. imperialist domination of Iran, was arrested in Tehran on October 12. As of November 10 the government had made no acknowledgement that he was being held, despite repeated inquiries by his family and friends.

Baraheni is well known internationally for the role he played in defending political activists, writers, and others imprisoned under the shah. He himself was jailed and tortured by the shah's secret police, SAVAK, in 1973. An international defense campaign won his release at that time.

During his exile in the United States from 1973 to 1978, Baraheni served as honorary chairperson of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI). A collection of his writings, entitled *The Crowned Cannibals*, was an important resource used by CAIFI and other groups in exposing the crimes of the Iranian monarchy.

Since the fall of the shah, Baraheni has been a firm supporter of the Iranian revolution against the attacks and destabilization attempts mounted by Washington.

A defense campaign has been launched in Iran to gain the release of Reza Baraheni. Supporters of the Iranian revolution are urgently requested to send telegrams such as the following to President Hojatolislam Ali Khamenei, Tehran, Iran; or to Prime Minister Hossein Mossavi, Majlis Building, Tehran, Iran.

* * *

As a supporter of the Iranian revolution, I call on you to release the anti-imperialist, antishah intellectual Dr. Reza Baraheni.

Dr. Baraheni was arrested October 12 near Tehran University. He has been a staunch defender of all the fighters imprisoned by the shah and tortured by SAVAK, and is a firm supporter of the Iranian revolution against U.S. imperialism's attacks.

Copies should be sent to *Jomhuri-e-Eslami*, Tehran, Iran.

nounced and made clear to the defendant within twenty-four hours after the arrest. Fourteen days have passed since his detention and yet he is in prison illegally, without any charges.

I ask that from your honorable judiciary office you make known the place of my husband's detention. On what charges is he in prison? And who is responsible for his illegal arrest?

Considering the existing confused and tense atmosphere caused by the terrorist activities of the great Satan in our country, I am deeply concerned for the life of my husband. I ask your honorable authority to make possible the

immediate release of my husband.

During this present sensitive situation in our Islamic revolution, in which imperialism is continuing its poisonous propaganda campaign against the Islamic Republic, the arrest of Dr. Reza Baraheni — this sincere supporter of the Islamic revolution who is internationally known as a writer and a poet opposed to the Pahlavi autocracy, and as a staunch anti-imperialist militant — will only aid this imperialist propaganda campaign and harm the struggle of the oppressed people of Iran against the great Satan.

Sanaz Baraheni



Baraheni speaking at a 1975 meeting in defense of Iranian political prisoners.

The Militant

New constitution an attack on Quebec

Ruling class seeks to counter national liberation movement

By Jacquie Henderson

On November 5, Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau signed an agreement with the premiers of Canada's nine predominantly English-speaking provinces on a new constitution and so-called charter of rights to replace the British North America (BNA) Act of 1867. The BNA Act created the Confederation of Canada.

Until the November 5 agreement, seven of the English-speaking provincial governments had opposed the Trudeau plan along with French-speaking Quebec.

René Lévesque, premier of Quebec, responded sharply to this betrayal: "I sincerely regret that Quebec finds itself today in a position which has become one of the fundamental traditions of the Canadian federal regime: Quebec finds itself alone. . . .

"Once again Quebec is the odd man out. . . . There is no possibility for a self-respecting Quebec government to accept such a development."

An attack on Quebec

The agreement represents a direct attack on Quebec. More than a quarter of Canada's 24.5 million people live in Quebec, and 80 percent of the Québécois speak French. Their ancestors were conquered by the British in 1759-60, but continued to express their desire for independence.

Under the terms of the BNA Act, Quebec retained exclusive jurisdiction over its educational system. Quebec has also exercised in practice the right to veto constitutional amendments ever since the Confederation of Canada was formed.

The November 5 agreement, if adopted by the Canadian House of Commons and Senate and then ratified by the British Parliament, would change all this. It attacks Quebec's right to protect the French language, particularly in the school system, and threatens Quebec with economic blackmail if it refuses to participate in federal programs. It also includes a "mobility of labor" clause that would penalize Quebec for giving preference to Québécois workers in employment.

Trudeau, who has been pushing for the agreement for two years, was jubilant. "It is a noble day for Canada," he declared.

New rise of national liberation struggle

Behind Trudeau's stubborn campaign for a revised constitutional arrangement is the need of the Canadian ruling class to confront and drive back a new upsurge in the struggle of the Québécois people for their rights. The advance

of nationalist sentiment in Quebec was dramatically shown in 1976 when the Parti Québécois (PQ) was swept to power.

Unlike the New Democratic Party in English Canada, the PQ is not affiliated to the labor movement, and its opposition to labor struggles has led it into conflict with the labor movement at times. But it has gained increasing support for its nationalist stand.

The PQ government held a referendum on sovereignty for Quebec in 1980. Despite threats from the federal government and from corporations that threatened to pull out of Quebec, and despite a hysterical campaign in the mass media, more than 40 percent of the population — and more than half of the French-speaking population — voted in favor of sovereignty.

The PQ has also acted to expose some of the illegal police schemes carried out by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the federal government against the nationalist movement — including the PQ itself — over the years.

From the point of view of the Canadian ruling class, the challenge posed by the movement for national liberation in Quebec is especially acute because it coincides with the capitalist economic crisis that has driven unemployment up to an officially admitted 8.3 percent and has resulted in rapid inflation.

Fighting against their national oppression makes Québécois workers less ready to accept their exploitation as wage laborers, and more in tune with the struggles of the workers and the oppressed internationally. In attacking the national liberation movement in Quebec, the rulers are also attacking the vanguard of the Canadian working class as a whole. A fighting nationalist movement in Quebec is a barrier to the ruling class austerity drive.

'Business speaks English'

Even without this latest attack, the language and culture of the Québécois people are threatened because of systematic economic and social discrimination.

In the 1960s the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism demonstrated that unilingual English speakers had the highest average incomes in Quebec. Studies in the early 1970s showed that two-thirds of the jobs in Montreal, the major city in Quebec, required "knowledge of English." That meant that hundreds of thousands of French-speaking Québécois had to learn English — a foreign language to them — in order to work.

In 1978 the average income for French-speaking Québécois was \$11,804. The average for others — including immigrants — was

\$14,014.

As a result of this disparity, parents would send their children to English schools to have them benefit from the privileges of the English-speaking minority.

Behind this discrimination is the fact that English Canadian and other foreign-owned firms (mainly American) employ 78 percent of the workers in manufacturing in Quebec. Quebec's immense natural resource industries are almost entirely foreign-owned.

The Québécois have an expression for this: "Le capital parle anglais" (Business speaks English).

Law 101

While Canada as a whole is often called a bilingual country by government spokespersons, the fact is that bilingualism has only been attempted in Quebec. And there it has meant increased efforts to eliminate the French language and culture.

The new constitution and charter are designed to reinforce this kind of "bilingualism." As Trudeau put it in his summation before the provincial premiers:

"... it is clear that, as a Canadian Government, we cannot take a position in the constitution where we protect French minorities but not the English minority in Quebec. . . .

"I hope that . . . we will still be able to persuade our colleagues from Quebec to do in the constitution what in fact historically has always been done in Quebec since the beginning of Confederation, to treat their Anglophone minorities in the school system equitably."

What Trudeau is calling for is the overthrow of Quebec Law 101, the language act that the Parti Québécois government passed in 1977. Law 101 declares French the sole official language of Quebec.

Law 101 does not eliminate the separate English-language school system in Quebec, but it does limit access to it. It is now open only to children with at least one parent educated in Quebec's English school system. By limiting access to the English school system, Law 101 has slowed down the process of Anglicization through the schools.

The law also requires that all medium- and large-sized companies begin a series of measures to make French the language of work. Companies are also required to advertise in French.

These measures have earned Law 101 the hatred of the employers and the federal government, and at the same time the overwhelming support of the Québécois.

Quebec nationalism is not a new phenomenon. Ever since the French inhabitants of the area were conquered by the British, they have been straining for independence. In 1837-38 they organized the Patriotes rebellion under the leadership of Louis Papineau.

Quebec has continued to struggle against what Lévesque has called the "straitjacket" of confederation. In 1917 a motion to separate from Canada was even debated in Quebec's le-

gisature. During both world wars there was a conscription crisis in Quebec as the French population as a whole refused to fight for the British Empire.

But the independence movement of today is a new phenomenon. Since World War II, Quebec has been transformed into a highly industrialized province, second only to Ontario. Its large working class is intensely nationalist.

The danger to the rulers of an explosive,

proud group of workers, all the more sensitive to their exploitation as workers because of their oppression as Québécois, was foreseen over a century ago by Lord Durham.

Durham, one of the engineers of confederation, was sent to the North American colony following the 1837 rebellion. He recommended English migration to Quebec and dispersal of the French-speaking inhabitants.

"If they prefer remaining stationary," Dur-

'The Quebec people will not accept this'

[The following editorial is scheduled for publication in the November 16 issue of *Socialist Voice*, the fortnightly newspaper that reflects the views of the Revolutionary Workers League, the Canadian section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The November 5 agreement on the constitution by the Trudeau government and the premiers of the nine English-speaking provinces does not resolve the constitutional crisis. But it does reveal what the whole exercise has been all about.

Fundamentally, the accord is an attack on the rights of the Quebec people. It removes powers granted Quebec under the British North America Act. That has been the purpose behind Trudeau's constitutional "obsession" from the beginning: to find a way to put Quebec in a straitjacket.

The Quebec people will not accept this. They will fight it. Premier René Lévesque promised to fight the accord with "all the means left at our disposal." The socialist biweekly *Lutte Ouvrière* argued that "the only way of blocking the Trudeau project is for the Québécois to organize a referendum to clearly express their rejection of the agreement."

The constitutional attack on Quebec is three-pronged:

- It removes Quebec's veto over changes in the Constitution which are not in its interest. This is a right Quebec has held since Confederation.

Quebec can now opt out of provisions it doesn't like, but without financial compensation. The Québécois could now face double taxation on social programs which they wish to administer themselves. It's a form of *blackmail* against Quebec.

- Quebec has passed special legislation — Law 101 — in defense of the province's francophone majority. The new constitutional provisions would allow the federal government to gut this legislation as it applies to the school system. The door is opened for the federal government and the English-speaking majority in Canada to impose their linguistic preferences on the pro-

vince.

As Lévesque points out, if Quebec loses its right to make cultural and educational policy decisions in the interests of the francophone majority, the very survival of French Quebec is put in question.

- "Mobility" provisions of the constitution limit the ability of the Quebec government to adopt labor and economic policies to protect Quebec workers.

The Québécois were not the only losers when the Prime Minister and the English-Canadian premiers left the table.

Native leaders are up in arms over the absence of any protection of their rights in the Charter.

"As far as the B.C. Indians are concerned," said Grand Chief George Manuel, "we are now at a state of war with the Canadian Government and the nine premiers."

"Pierre Trudeau assured himself a place in history," Manuel continued. "He will be known as the man who tried to wipe out the Canadian Indians. He traded us away to those premiers who hunger for our land and resources."

George Erasmus, president of the Dene Nation, denounced the decision as "racist." "What Trudeau, Chretien, and the rest of that gang of thugs really did was to bargain away the rights of aboriginal peoples and the Québécois for the support of a bunch of rednecked premiers."

Manuel, Erasmus and other Native leaders promised to fight the agreement to the end.

As for francophones outside Quebec — whose rights Trudeau claims to be defending in his language rights section of the charter — opposition is unanimous. Jean-Bernard Lafontaine, ex-director of the Fédération des francophones hors Québec, [Federation of Francophones Outside of Quebec] called it a "scandalous trade-off." "It doesn't guarantee French schools outside Quebec, nor school boards for the existing French schools."

How can a majority of Parliament impose language and education policies on the provinces? asked Saskatchewan Premier Allan Blakeney at the NDP [New Demo-

cratic Party] Federal Convention in July. "We leave the French majority in Quebec completely at the mercy of the English majority in Parliament." The NDP's support of Trudeau's constitutional package, Blakeney continued, "denies the tradition that Canada is a country of two languages."

Less than five months later, Blakeney and NDP Leader Ed Broadbent — who supported the package all along — played a key role in bringing together the Ottawa Liberals with the Tory and Social Credit premiers in the English Canadian provinces. Meeting secretly — behind the backs of Natives and the Quebec premier — the NDP helped the Liberals and Tories hammer out their dirty deal.

What is now left of Trudeau's famous Charter of Rights, the one Broadbent hailed as "the best in the world"? What happened to the two NDP amendments on Natives' and women's rights? There's nothing left!

The vast majority of Native people denounced as insufficient or meaningless the NDP's original amendment concerning their rights. Now even that has been dropped!

As for sexual equality and other democratic freedoms, they were gutted to appease Manitoba Conservative Premier Sterling Lyon. Lyon, a right-wing, anti-labor premier and an avowed opponent of any entrenched charter of rights, was satisfied by the addition of the "notwithstanding" or opting out clause in the Charter.

"An entrenched charter is not an entrenched charter if parliament can get at it in the legislatures," observed Lyon. "And that's what our guarantee is." So much for sexual equality and other democratic rights being guaranteed in the Constitution!

Due to strong opposition in Quebec and among the Natives, the federal government has been forced to delay ramming their measure through Parliament. Now's the time for unionists concerned about trade union unity, for francophones outside as well as inside Quebec, for women and Natives, for NDPers concerned about the principles and future of their party, to put maximum pressure to bear oppose this rotten deal.

ham wrote of the Québécois, "the greater part of them must be labourers in the employ of English capitalists. . . . The evils of poverty and dependence would merely be aggravated in a ten-fold degree, by a spirit of jealous and resentful nationality, which would separate the working classes of the community from the possessors of wealth and employers of labour."

The last twenty years have seen repeated labor upsurges in Quebec. Strikes, demonstrations, and even general strikes have all protested the double oppression of Quebec workers. In 1972, the three Quebec labor federations joined together in an alliance based on their common national demands and on their need to oppose the rising attack on labor.

And while Ottawa's strategy has always been to divide English Canadian and Quebec

workers, they have not had complete success with this plan. Reality works against the rulers. Workers across Canada tend to see the federal government in Ottawa, not Quebec, as a source of their problems.

On October 14, 1976, one million workers from English Canada and Quebec conducted a joint one-day work stoppage and held demonstrations in Ottawa and other cities against the federal government's attempt to freeze wages.

Trudeau's constitution is also an attack on Canada's native peoples. It would strip them of rights and gains that have been won through previous struggles.

Virtually all the organizations of native peoples in Canada have condemned the constitutional proposal. Grand Chief George Manuel read a statement to the press on behalf of the 50,000-member Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs November 6.

"As far as B.C. Indians are concerned we are now at a state of war with the Canadian Government and the nine premiers," he said. ". . . after all these years as a country, when the chips are down it is the Indian people and the Quebecers who are brutally ripped off by the majority."

René Lévesque, in his speech to the constitutional conference November 5 declared:

"We will never accept a reduction of our powers, the taking away of our traditional and fundamental powers — without our consent. And, I repeat, we will take all the means left at our disposal to prevent this from happening."

While Trudeau claimed that the constitutional question was "over" with the agreement November 5, the strong opposition has forced him to delay trying to ram it through parliament. The struggle against it has only just begun. □

Poland

'Our movement flows from the ranks'

Interview with head of workers committee at Lenin steelworks

[One of the major topics of discussion at the recent national congress of Poland's Solidarity union movement was the union's proposals for social and economic reform. As part of that discussion, the Network of Solidarity Organizations in Leading Factories (known as the Siec) submitted detailed proposals on the establishment of genuine workers control of industry as a prerequisite for such reform. The Siec — which represents Solidarity branches in seventeen of the largest enterprises in the country — is one of the major currents of this movement, known in Poland as the movement for workers self-management.

[One of the coauthors of the Siec proposals was Edward Nowak, a machine technician at the Lenin steelworks in Krakow, the largest enterprise in Poland, with a workforce of 40,000. Nowak is the chairman of the Workers' Self-management Founding Committee at the steelworks and was a delegate to the Solidarity congress.

[The following interview with Nowak was conducted for *Intercontinental Press* by Gary Fields during the second phase of the Solidarity congress, held in Gdansk September 26-October 7.]

* * *

Question. The summary of the Siec's proposals for economic reform states that the existing system of economic administration has plunged the country into chaos. Can you give some examples of this based upon your own experience in the Lenin steelworks?

Answer. I am actually tempted to say that

the entire operation at the mill is chaotic. In general, the system of centralized directives has caused incredible bottlenecks in the economy as a whole. In the mill there are constant shortages of raw materials and sources of energy. This has resulted in extremely wasteful disruptions in production.

Perhaps even more important, however, is



Sign says, "Give us food!" Economic crisis in Poland should be solved through extension of workers control.

the fact that we have to consistently improvise the product we are making just to fulfill the plan. Never mind if what we are making is not useful.

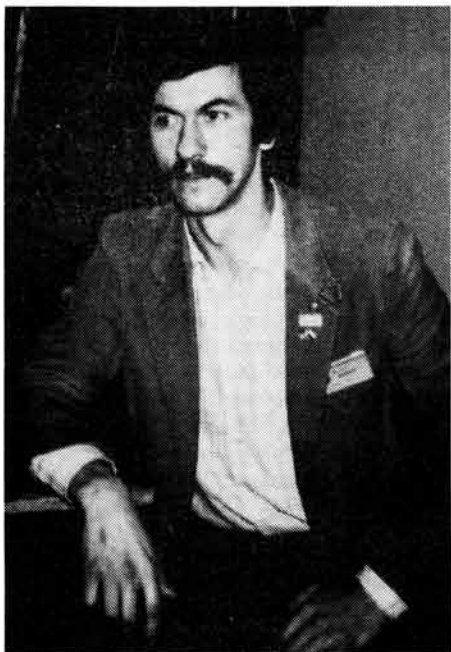
And now let me give you a concrete example. The Lenin works recently received an order for steel tubing — a relatively large order. Normally this would have required an increase in employment at the mill. However, we lacked deliveries of coal and iron ore to fulfill the order. So the director decided to produce a different type of tubing — different thickness — that actually did not correspond to the type of tubing required. It did not seem to matter that this tubing could not be used for its original purpose.

We were told that this would fulfill the plan. And that is all that mattered.

I can give you another example from a shoe factory in Nowy Targ near the Lenin steelworks. Recently they received an order to produce 3,000 pairs of shoes. But again due to mismanagement of the economy the plant did not have the materials to produce them. However, they managed to overcome the problem by producing 3,000 pairs of sandals at the beginning of winter, when of course they are not needed. But the plan was fulfilled. [Laughs.]

Q. In the Siec's proposal the key to economic reform is the creation of what is called "social" enterprises. Can you outline what this means and how the creation of social enterprises differs from the present system?

A. The system that exists now can be prop-



NOWAK

Gary Fields/IP

goal behind the creation of social enterprises?

A. I do not think I would formulate it quite like that. Self-management and the creation of social enterprises together form the basis for control over the economy by society itself.

Q. Can I ask you to back up just a bit and explain how the self-management committees existing in numerous enterprises came into being? I am especially interested in your own enterprise, the Lenin steelworks.

A. The idea of forming committees for self-management was being discussed by Solidarity activists in January. Of course, the idea itself is not new. We have had a tradition of struggles for genuine workers self-management; 1948-49, 1956, 1970, 1976.

In the Lenin steelworks I actually started the idea of forming a committee in April, at a regular meeting of Solidarity. It was actually quite easy for me, because I was on the executive commission of the union for the mill. I was thus charged with the task of forming such a committee. I proposed that every department send a representative to an initial meeting.

At this initial planning meeting we formed numerous subcommittees to deal with specific tasks. The most important committee was the program and organization committee, whose function was to draw up the programmatic tasks for the self-management body as a whole.

Another important committee was the education committee, which is responsible for gathering information about the operations of the enterprise. This is important, because without such information, workers cannot really undertake the task of self-management.

'Socialist to the bone'

"We want economic power to be exercised by thousands of self-management committees rather than fifteen members of the Political Bureau" of the Communist Party, according to Jerzy Milewski, the central leader of the Solidarity-affiliated Siec, in an interview in the September 25-26 issue of the *Congress Post*, the union's English-language congress news bulletin.

"Milewski," the *Congress Post* reported, "claims that while the Siec scheme [for the establishment of Workers Councils] has nothing to do with a power takeover by Solidarity, it definitely means rejection of party control of all key posts . . . and seizure of power by Polish society."

Milewski dismissed the government's so-called self-management proposals as "decidedly anti-social and anti-socialist. What the Siec proposes and what the Union strives to attain is socialist to the bone. The position on which the Party stands is, putting it mildly, a defence of a distorted form of socialism."

erly described as a system of state ownership of the means of production. The basis for such a system is the control over the productive system by the oligarchy of party officials in the state planning commission. It is also maintained by the system of *nomenklatura*, whereby party officials, regardless of their qualifications, are given positions as directors of enterprises.

Our intention is to have what we call *social control* over our enterprises. This translates into the idea of the *self-management* of the enterprise by the workers themselves. The main point is that workers will be able to make decisions concerning the operations of the plant.

And I do not restrict this function of self-management merely to production quotas, etc. I see workers self-management as the major vehicle for improving the quality of working life itself, a means for allowing workers to become more than cogs in a machine. Of course, the workers should also be responsible for selecting the director of their enterprise.

When we talk about differences between state ownership and social control we must look into the history of Poland since the war and the role of the party.

In Poland the process of *socializing* the means of production was stopped after the first of two necessary phases. The first phase in this process necessarily involved the transformation of private ownership of productive property into *state* ownership. However, the next step in this process — the transition to social control over the means of production — was arrested by the state authorities, who were able to enrich themselves through their bureaucratic control over the system.

Q. Is workers self-management then the

Q. Is the committee composed exclusively of Solidarity members?

A. No. Members of the old government-controlled branch unions also participate. However, the numerical composition of the self-management committee reflects the real proportions within the plant.

Out of a workforce of about 40,000, only about 1,000 are members of the branch unions. About 38,000 are members of Solidarity. Thus the overwhelming majority of workers on the committee are also members of Solidarity. The committee actually coordinates the activities and ideas of the smaller self-management units that exist in all departments of the plant.

Q. Recently the workers committee at the Katowice steelworks held a referendum in which they voted to remove their director. Has there been any similar type of action at the Lenin steelworks?

A. No, not yet. We are reasonably satisfied with our director, at least for the moment. At the Katowice steelworks there was enormous conflict and antagonism between the director and the workers. In that situation a referendum was necessary.

Our tasks are slightly different. After our committee was set up, we felt that we still had to consult the workforce as a whole on the question of self-management.

We also had a plantwide referendum where we asked two simple questions. The first question was whether the workers approved of the concept of social control over the enterprise. We then asked whether the self-management body should be responsible for hiring and recalling the director of the steelworks. The response for both questions was 90 percent affirmative.

Q. I have one final question. Do you think the initiatives for self-management here in Poland that are being discussed at the Solidarity congress represent something historically new? Are there any models that you have used in formulating some of the ideas in the Siec's proposal?

A. As I mentioned earlier, the revolts of 1956, 1970, and 1976 raised demands for workers councils and self-management. This was especially true in Poznan. Yet after each of these uprisings, the government was able to derail the efforts of Polish workers to establish workers control over their enterprises.

In formulating our proposal for self-management, we actually borrowed some ideas from the Yugoslavian experience. But there is one difference between our proposal and the Yugoslavian model that is absolutely crucial to understand. In Yugoslavia, workers self-management is imposed from the top down by the party. Our movement flows from the rank-and-file in the plants.

For this reason our proposals for workers self-management represent a new and different way of organizing society. □

The campaign against NATO missiles

Trade unionists urged to back November 21 protest

By Robert Went

AMSTERDAM — On November 21, Amsterdam will be the site of a huge demonstration against plans by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to deploy 572 U.S. nuclear missiles in Western Europe. At least 150,000 participants are expected.

There have been earlier mass demonstrations here against the missiles and the neutron bomb and political opinion polls indicate that 69 percent of the Dutch population opposes the NATO missiles. But the November 21 action will be the first demonstration that reflects the impact the antimissiles campaign is having in the trade unions and factories. As a result, the demonstration is expected to greatly enhance the movement's political weight.

Campaign began in 1977

In September 1977, the Interchurch Peace Council (IKV) initiated an on-going peace campaign under the slogan "All nuclear weapons out of the world, beginning in the Netherlands." Today the IKV, which remains the most important organization in the campaign, has local groups in some 300 cities and towns. While most of the activists are church members, there are also people from the social-democratic Labor Party (PvdA), the centrist Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP), and the Communist Party.

The IKV organizes around three axes: for unilateral disarmament in stages; for an independent policy by the "small countries" of the world, in conjunction with the nonaligned countries; for building the movement's power through campaigns and action.

Other organizations work with the IKV, in-

cluding the Catholic Pax Christi group and, most important, the Stop the Neutron Bomb Committee. This committee was launched in August 1977 by the Dutch Communist Party. The following year it organized demonstrations bringing together more than 30,000 participants in all.

In addition, the Stop the Neutron Bomb Committee organized a people's petition against the neutron bomb that was signed by more than 1 million of Holland's 14 million people. It has also organized many other actions.

The committee generally follows the political orientation of the Communist Party, calling for negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and raising the demand for a nuclear-free Europe "from Poland to Portugal." The committee does not question Dutch membership in NATO.

The IKV and the Stop the Neutron Bomb Committee work together, along with many other organizations, in a coordinating committee against nuclear weapons. Among the other participants are the PvdA, the Christian Democratic Party, and the left-liberal Democrats '66 group, all three of which are now in the governing coalition. In addition, the Communist Party, the PSP, the Christian Radical Political Party (PPR), and the 7,000-member soldiers union (VVDM) also participate in the committee.

Although the 1 million-member Confederation of the Netherlands Trade Union Movement (FNV) is not a member of the coordinating committee, it has observer status.

This unusual committee has organized some large actions in the past. For example in No-

vember and December 1979, when the NATO vote on the missile plan was approaching, more than 60,000 people demonstrated around the country. In Utrecht there was a national demonstration of 25,000; in The Hague there was a women's demonstration of 7,000; in Amsterdam 7,000 participated. Marches also occurred in small towns like Apeldoorn, where 1,000 people turned out; Leiden, with 1,500; Zwolle, with 1,000; and Steenwijk, with 4,500.

These demonstrations showed that opposition to the missiles existed throughout the Netherlands, not just in the big cities of the western part of the country. As a result of the pressure from these demonstrations, in December 1979 the then-ruling coalition of the Christian Democrats and the right-wing People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) lost a nonbinding vote in parliament over acceptance of the NATO plan. Several days later, under intense pressure from the U.S. government, the Dutch delegation voted to approve the general NATO missile plan, with the proviso that there would be no concrete decision until December 1981 on whether to accept the forty-eight Cruise missiles earmarked for deployment on Dutch soil.

With the decision on the placement of missiles in Holland due to come up again this year, the antimissiles campaign revived, following a yearlong lull.

Since the original vote by NATO was taken, there has been a change in government in the Netherlands, with the Christian Democrats forced to rule in a coalition with the Labor Party and Democrats '66.

Because the Labor Party is opposed to the missiles, the coalition agreement stipulated that this government will not take the missiles, thus putting off the decision once again. Despite this paper assurance, which no one trusts, the movement has continued to grow. Among the groups recently formed are the Soldiers Committee Against the Missiles, Women Against Nuclear Weapons, Women for Peace, and in some areas Youth Against the Missiles groups organized by the revolutionary youth organization Rebel.

Trade unions

Up to now the major weakness of the whole campaign against the missiles and the neutron bomb has been the weak representation from the trade unions and factories. The working class has the power to force the government not to deploy the missiles.

The bourgeoisie is also aware that the movement's potential power lies in the factories. In



in August 24 article about the antimissiles movement in Germany, the U.S. newsweekly *Time*, which has never been accused of having a Marxist bent, wrote:

Says Klaus Gerritzen, who runs a newspaper and liquor stand not far from the gate of a big Krupp plant in Essen: "A year ago, if some students came down to talk about the missiles, people would just walk right by them. Lately, more workers have been willing to stop and talk with them."

That could be a warning sign. Pacifists, neutralists, leftwingers and disaffected youth make an impact on public opinion, but they do not represent the rational center of gravity the way workers do. Labor unions are braced to fight for jobs, pay and social benefits. If they turn against the government's NATO commitment, then [Chancellor Helmut] Schmidt will have lost the consensus on which he has staked his political survival.

If the movement in the Netherlands is to gain strength, it must be taken into the factories and unions. That is now beginning to happen and is having a big impact.

Since the movement has already been going on for several years, the heads of the FNV had to take a position on the missiles question. After a very long discussion in the leadership of the federation, they issued a document entitled "For Peace and Disarmament" for discussion in the factories and local branches.

Despite the document's title, it contains very little discussion of disarmament. The rationale given is the argument that the disarmament issue is a political rather than a trade-union question.

Discussion in factories

Although the document itself was very disappointing, it provoked good discussion in the union locals. As a result, the local of the Industrial Union in The Hague decided to mobilize in support of the November 21 demonstration. The Amsterdam local of the 135,000-member Industrial Union came out for unilateral disarmament, demanding that the money spent on weapons be used for social services and for aid to underdeveloped countries, and it called on the national leadership of the Industrial Union to organize a big turnout from the factory branches for November 21.

In addition, one factory branch called for the Netherlands to withdraw from NATO, and some entire unions — like the 43,000-member teachers union and the 60,000-member food workers — officially supported the November 21 action.

The antimissiles demonstrations in other countries, and the resolutions for unilateral disarmament passed by the national congress of the Trades Union Congress in Britain also had a big impact in Holland. Their impact, combined with the discussions that took place in the trade-union branches, forced the top union leaders to change their line.

While the leadership of the federation decided not to formally endorse the November 21 demonstration, it committed itself to encouraging the membership to join the campaign as individuals and take part in the demonstration.



Cees Commandeur, who wrote the FNV's "For Peace and Disarmament" document, noted in the October 22 issue of the federation's newspaper that "a relatively large number of people participated in the meetings and the general tendency was for the FNV to do more for disarmament. Most members spoke out against nuclear weapons."

This, of course, does not mean that big contingents from factories will automatically participate in the demonstration. That is something that the campaign will have to organize itself to insure.

But the discussions in the union branches, the change in the line of the leaders of the largest union federation, and the experiences of the International Communist League (IKB — the Dutch section of the Fourth International) in the factories show that it is now possible to get large groups of workers actively involved in the antimissiles and anti-neutron-bomb movement.

Not a spontaneous process

One of the obstacles to involving workers in the campaign against these weapons is the way the movement itself is organized. The campaign nationally is organized through a big coalition of all the groups mentioned previously. But the national coalition itself does not take any position on what are the most important groups to target in order to build the campaign.

When comrades from the IKB propose that the movement go to the factories, unions, and the youth, there is general understanding of the need for that, but there is no mechanism to turn the whole coalition in that direction. The attitude is that while this is a good idea, it is up to those who proposed it to carry it out themselves.

The problem is especially serious in orienting the campaign toward the youth. All the youth political and mass organizations are shrinking or are in a big crisis. Most do not have members they can assign to antimissiles work and they often do not feel that that area should be a priority.

The only youth organization trying to win

the youth to the campaign is the revolutionary youth organization Rebel, which does not exist in all the cities and has itself only been in existence for a year. Support from the IKB, itself not very large, is not enough to overcome this problem.

As a result, although there are increasing possibilities to win workers and youth to active participation in the campaign, only a very small segment of the movement is involved in trying to mobilize them.

CP opposes withdrawal from NATO

This weakness reflects the perspective of the main organizations in the campaign. While the Communist Party supports unilateral disarmament, it views this as a step toward détente and toward an agreement between NATO and the Soviet bureaucracy.

When the national coordinating committee changed its main slogan from "No Nuclear Weapons in Western Europe" to "No Nuclear Weapons in Europe," the Dutch CP was one of the main backers of the change. In fact, the second slogan has been the slogan of the CP-initiated Stop the Neutron Bomb Committee for two years.

The CP also opposes raising the demand for Dutch withdrawal from NATO on the grounds that this would make the antimissiles movement smaller. They propose instead that the "small countries" — including imperialist ones such as the Netherlands — get together with the nonaligned countries to demand that the two "superpowers" hold new arms limitation talks and agree to mutual arms reductions.

This view disorients the antimissiles movement. By making equal demands on the United States and Soviet Union, it covers over the fact that it is NATO that is driving toward war and that the NATO missile plan is simply one aspect of Washington's drive to regain its first-strike nuclear capability against the Soviet Union in order to increase its maneuvering room in such areas as the Middle East and Caribbean. Without a break from NATO, there can be no real Dutch break from Reagan's war drive.

In addition, remaining in NATO means that

our taxes will be used to build and maintain the bases that the U.S. uses to deploy the missiles and store the neutron bombs.

The Interchurch Peace Council (IKV) holds a similar view to the CP on aiming demands at both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. But in some areas the IKV's positions are better than those of the CP. For example, the IKV held a big conference on the relationship between the antimissiles campaign and solidarity with the struggle in El Salvador.

Because the IKV primarily orients toward the churches, it views the unions and youth as just two of the many segments of society to try to reach.

The CP recognizes the importance of the working class, but it does not really try to mobilize the workers in the factories because it does not want to jeopardize the posts CP members have in the unions. In addition, they fear that such a mobilization could cut across their orientation toward the Labor Party and toward building "left unity" with Democrats '66 and some segments of the Christian Democratic Party.

CP stresses Dutch nationalism

In an attempt to make itself more respectable for its potential coalition partners, the CP stresses Dutch nationalism in the antimissiles movement. For example, Joop Wolff, one of the three CP members of parliament, wrote in the October issue of the CP magazine *Politics and Culture* that the Dutch peace movement is a specifically "national peace movement." He adds that "a national peace movement never can and never will be internationalized by any side."

This kind of national chauvinism from a representative of the party with the most influence in the peace movement shows the importance of participation by revolutionists in the campaign in the Netherlands, particularly in a period when there is greater and greater potential for politically strengthening the movement.

The IKB, the Dutch section of the Fourth International, campaigns against the missiles around three slogans: "Holland out of NATO, down with NATO"; "For unilateral nuclear disarmament, no trust in negotiations"; and "Jobs not bombs."

The IKB is trying to bring as many people as possible to the Amsterdam march on November 21 by participating in the mobilization committees, by selling its newspaper and special *Jobs not Bombs* pamphlet, by bringing the campaign into the factories where IKB members work or into factories that can be reached through other channels, and by building youth against missiles groups as well as groups aimed at women and other sectors of the population.

The development of the antimissiles movement will have many consequences, not only on the ability of the imperialists to wage war, but also on the self-confidence and willingness of the workers and youth to struggle around other demands as well.

October 28, 1981

Western Europe

Rise of the antiwar movement

Stop imperialism's escalation of arms race!

[The following editorial appeared in the November 9 issue of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

In recent weeks one million people demonstrated against remilitarization in Bonn, London, Brussels, Paris, Madrid, and Barcelona. This is the broadest struggle currently taking place in capitalist Europe. Since it coincides with an economic crisis causing pronounced unemployment among young people, this movement has an even greater radicalizing potential for youth than the mobilizations against the Vietnam War, which led to [the revolutionary upheaval in France in] May 1968.

The immediate objective of the struggle is to stop imperialism's new escalation of the arms race. That is why revolutionary Marxists fight to get the movement against remilitarization to unite around specific objectives: "No Neutron Bombs! No Pershing Missiles! No to NATO! Immediate and Substantial Reductions in Military Budgets!" and "Reduction of Military Service Time" — for example to six months as called for by our French comrades of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) and Revolutionary Communist Youth (JCR).

The Soviet bureaucracy's criminal policies (Afghanistan, Poland) objectively help to cover over the fact that imperialism bears the main responsibility for the escalation of rearmament. That is one more reason why revolutionary Marxists must stress this fact.

The explosion of anger by the youth in Britain against unemployment, the dismantling of social services, the growing social inequality, and the racist police significantly increases the impact of connecting the struggle against remilitarization with the struggle against the economic crisis and austerity through slogans such as "Jobs not bombs!" put forward by our British comrades of the International Marxist Group (IMG) and our German comrades of the GIM (International Marxist Group).

Beyond its immediate objectives, the wave of antiwar struggles is a new factor in the politics of Europe and reshuffles the cards of international diplomacy, but not necessarily or automatically in a way that furthers the interests of the proletariat or effective struggle against the war threats.

That is why it is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to carry out more general anti-imperialist and anticapitalist propaganda, telling the masses the whole truth and keeping alive their vigilance against the war threats.

The new arms race is imperialism's answer to the international spread of the revolution and to the long-term worsening of the econom-

ic depression. But this is only a new stage in an arms race that has already lasted for decades. There is no area in which "lesser evil" politics is more absurd than in the field of nuclear weapons. Only an imbecile could maintain that it is preferable for humanity to be destroyed three times over by atomic blasts than five times over.

The present stockpiles of nuclear weapons would already suffice to destroy the human race several times over. This danger will remain, even if the neutron bomb and the Pershing II, Cruise, and MX missiles are never deployed.

In fact, the nuclear threat has weighed on all the continents for a long time. It is totally illusory to believe that Europe could be spared atomic annihilation simply by refusing to allow the new missiles to be deployed on that continent.

The Soviet bureaucracy and the political forces subservient to it see the present antimilitary mobilizations as a way to force changes in Ronald Reagan's policies within the context of a continued imperialist alliance and "peaceful coexistence" with a "controlled" arms race.

But under the present conditions of the increasing crisis of capitalism and imperialism, a "controlled" arms race actually *increases* the threat of war.

Revolutionary Marxists must make the masses conscious of this basic truth. The struggle against the neutron bomb and against Cruise, Pershing II, and MX missiles is only the first step. Winning an initial victory is important and necessary. But it will not halt the threat of nuclear death unless it leads to general nuclear disarmament, unless it leads to completely disarming the international bourgeoisie.

As long as capitalism, private property, and competition remain, the arms industry and the *preparations for war* will be inevitable. Our planet will not know durable peace unless the rule of capital is overthrown. Only the mobilization of the workers and socialism will be able to assure world peace. □

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Reagan promises U.S. aid to Morocco

Polisario fighters gain in struggle for independence

By Will Reissner

Faced with a deteriorating military situation in the Western Sahara, where Moroccan troops have been trying since 1975 to defeat proindependence guerrillas, Morocco's King Hassan II has asked the Reagan administration for more military aid.

On October 13, guerrillas from the Polisario Front drove the Moroccan army out of the town of Guelta Zemmur, downing at least five Moroccan aircraft in the battle.

Although the Moroccan army eventually reoccupied the town, the battle shows that Polisario is able to launch large-scale attacks in the occupied territory.

'Count on us'

Hassan has been seeking increased U.S. help ever since the electoral defeat of French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing last May. Giscard has been the Moroccan monarch's closest ally.

The Reagan administration has been quick to offer Hassan aid. According to the November 10 *Washington Post*, in early November the new U.S. ambassador, Joseph Reed, assured the Moroccan despot that "the United States will do its best to be helpful in every area that may arise. Count on us. We are with you."

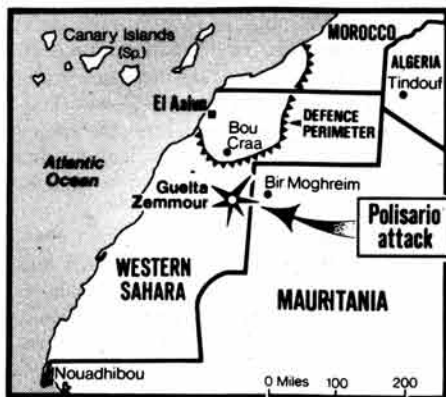
Reed is a longtime friend of Hassan, and served for years as David Rockefeller's chief of staff at the Chase Manhattan Bank. It was David Rockefeller who prevailed upon King Hassan, and later President Carter, to bring the exiled shah of Iran into Morocco and then into the United States.

On November 4, a large Pentagon and State Department team flew to Morocco to discuss increased U.S. military aid. The delegation was headed by Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Francis West.

West, who made a helicopter tour of the war zone, stated that Washington will try to provide more military equipment and is prepared to train Moroccan troops in search-and-destroy tactics.

The November 10 *Washington Post* also reported that West told Morocco's air force chief that Moroccan troops should shift to more aggressive and mobile tactics. According to the article, "as an example of what should be done, West cited an Egyptian behind-the-lines raid in which commandos destroyed a Libyan air base during the brief Egyptian-Libyan border war of 1977."

In fact, King Hassan's troops have had to withdraw from most of the Western Sahara.



The bulk of the Moroccan army is now dug behind a 250-mile-long, nine-foot-high sand dune bulldozed through the desert. This wall surrounds what King Hassan II now calls the "useful Sahara."

Hassan's wall of sand

Inside the wall, punctuated every few miles with forts, lie the Western Sahara's main city El Aaiun and the giant phosphate deposits at Bu Craa.

Polisario forces operate relatively freely in most of the Western Sahara, which lies outside the wall.

Hassan blames the Moroccan defeat at Guelta Zemmur, which is outside the wall, on "non-African" (whom he strongly implied were Cuban) technicians operating anti-aircraft missiles and on Libyan shipments of tanks and other heavy weapons to the Polisario guerrillas.

Although these charges are useful to the Reagan administration in its campaigns against Cuba and Libya, reporters who made it to Guelta Zemmur dismissed Hassan's claim.

A correspondent for the British business weekly *The Economist* was taken to the town by the Moroccan army. In the October 24 issue he wrote: "Presumably the purpose of the visit was to offer confirmation of the Moroccan version of events. Instead, it raised doubts."

Damaged tanks removed?

The Economist's correspondent added that "the reporters saw no wrecked Sam-6 missiles or Russian-built tanks, although Polisario tanks had allegedly been destroyed in large quantities." The Moroccan commander on the scene claimed that Polisario forces had dragged away all damaged tanks and missiles together with their dead and wounded.

The reporter notes that this would have been "an incredible feat." He adds that "the only evidence displayed of the 'massive' arsenal said to have been deployed by Polisario was some

spent American-made shell-cases."

Prensa Latina correspondent Julio Hernández visited the battle area with Polisario forces after the fighting. He reported in the November 8 issue of the weekly English-language *Granma Weekly Review* that "the matériel captured from the [Moroccan army] was strewn all over the area," and included heavy trucks, artillery, Land Rovers, and the mobile command post for the Moroccan garrison.

The Cuban journalist spoke with some of the 234 Moroccan troops captured in the battle. According to Hernández "they all said the same thing: that the Saharan army had used only the usual weapons for this type of operation, but the morale of Moroccan troops was so low that resistance crumbled from the very start."

Brahim Ghali, the Polisario Front's defense minister, told Hernández that "in his propaganda campaign Hassan has tried to involve non-African forces in an attempt to justify his appeal to other countries to get involved in this colonialist war — a war he knows he's lost — and also to justify his defeat in the eyes of Moroccan and world public opinion."

Problems in Morocco too

With his army bogged down in a no-win situation in the Western Sahara, Hassan also faces growing problems within Morocco itself. A general strike in Casablanca in June resulted in several days of bloody street fighting in which the regime's troops killed as many as 600 people.

The World Bank reports that more than 40 percent of all Moroccans live on less than \$250 per year. The three-quarters of the population living in rural areas is further suffering from the impact of what is described as "the most devastating" drought in the country's history.

The monarchy has responded to the growing opposition with a crackdown. Leading political figures have been arrested and opposition newspapers closed.

According to a report by Edward Cody in the November 12 *Washington Post*, one opposition activist warned that "what happened [in Casablanca on June] 20th could happen again, and it could flare up in a spontaneous, uncontrolled way. Instead of solving these problems they increased the repression. It's bound to explode." □

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People's Power elections

Six million voters give the lie to George Bush

By Arnold Weissberg

HAVANA — Among the stock charges in the U.S. government's propaganda arsenal against the Cuban revolution is the claim that Cuba is a one-man dictatorship where no elections have been held for more than twenty years.

This claim is repeated so frequently and shamelessly that many people in the United States do not think twice about statements like that made by Vice-president George Bush October 11, that "The day Fidel Castro holds free elections, that's the day I'll say something good about him."

Ironically, the very same day Bush made that statement some six million Cubans were

streaming to the polls to vote in the general elections held here every two-and-one-half years. Cubans were electing delegates to the municipal assemblies of People's Power (*Pod-er Popular*), the foundation of the effort started in the mid-1970s to increase the participation of the Cuban people in governing their country.

The 169 municipal assemblies are Cuba's local governments. These assemblies in turn elect delegates to provincial assemblies and to the National Assembly of People's Power, which is the highest body in Cuba's government. All government ministers and members of the Council of State, which runs Cuba's government on a day-to-day basis, are elected

by and responsible to the National Assembly, including Fidel Castro, who is president of the Council of State and Council of Ministers.

Here in Havana and other cities across Cuba, lines of voters began to form as early as 4 a.m. as people took to heart the call to vote early. By noon, some 90 percent of the eligible voters had already cast their ballots.

Eight-year-old guards

The polling places were scattered throughout the city. In one working-class neighborhood I visited, there was one about every two blocks.

Before the revolution, sixty-seven-year-old Guillermo told me, the polls were guarded by armed men in full battle dress. Today, however, they were guarded by Pioneers, members of the children's organization. Many of the "guards" were all of eight years old, and I spotted two being walked to their posts by an older brother.

In Cuba, there is no campaigning by candidates, and all organizations — including the Communist Party — refrain from making endorsements or from running slates. Since the district represented by a delegate is small — between a few hundred and 3,000 people — and since candidates are nominated by community meetings open to all residents of a precinct, the views and record of a candidate are usually known to the voters and people make their choice on this basis. In addition, candidates' biographies and pictures are posted on community bulletin boards and store windows.

The candidates reflect a cross section of Cuban society. They are young and old, workers, administrators, teachers, doctors, students, members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, and housewives. They tend to be outstanding activists, and while a large number are members of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) and Union of Young Communists (UJC), many are not, and there is no formal or informal requirement that candidates be in PCC or UJC to run or to be elected.

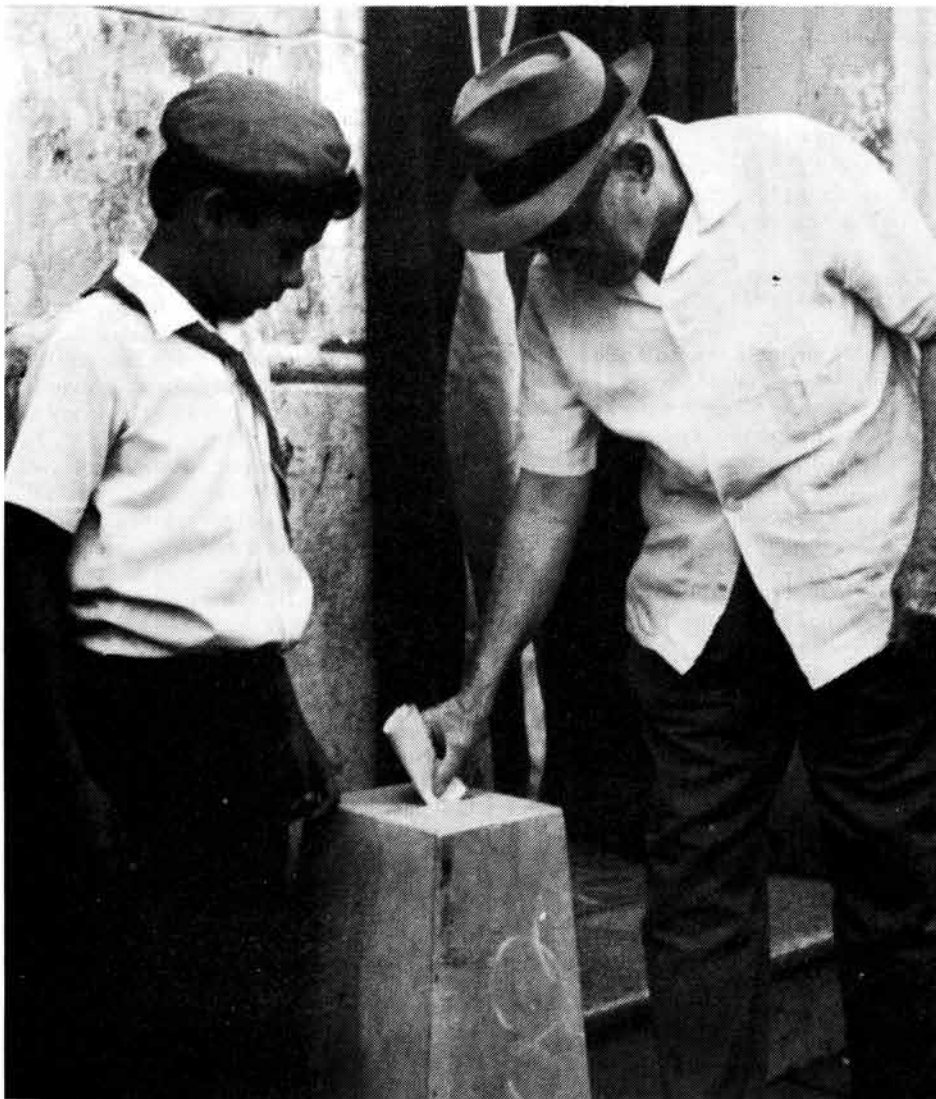
High rate of participation

A total of 6,097,639 people voted in the first round of the elections, which represents 97.2 percent of those eligible, the highest rate of participation in Cuba's history.

On October 18, runoff elections were held in close to 1,000 districts where no candidate had managed to get a majority of the votes. By law, all races for delegates to the municipal assembly of People's Power must be contested by at least two nominees, but often there are as many as eight candidates.

Nearly 8 percent of those elected were women, a slight increase from the previous election in 1979. In the past, top government leaders have repeatedly singled out the low percentage of women elected as a problem.

Of those elected, 22.6 percent are "obremos," i.e., manual workers in industry and transportation, roughly corresponding to the American term "blue-collar workers."



Polling places in Cuba are guarded by children.

'Who says that the imperialist formula is the one we must apply in our country?'

[The following remarks on the People's Power (Poder Popular) election are excerpted from a speech given by Cuban President Fidel Castro in Havana on October 24, at the second congress of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution.

[The text is taken from the November 1 issue of the English-language weekly *Granma*.]

* * *

It's really noteworthy how, after five years of experience, over 97 percent of the electorate voted in the second general elections to renew all the organs of People's Power [Applause], even though there's no law that makes voting compulsory nor has the Revolution ever taken the slightest measure against any citizen who doesn't vote. I believe that participation in the election of delegates from each district is a truly popular, democratic form of election on which the power of our state is founded, because these delegates, in turn, elect the delegates to practically all the other organs of People's Power, including the National Assembly, in which over 50 percent of the members are delegates from the grass roots, in keeping with a norm set by the Revolution; they are nominated and elected by the free vote of the population, as you know, without the Party intervening at all or making recommendations of any kind so as not to employ its tremendous force in favor of any candidate. . . .

What happens in those "elections" that

take place in some countries on this side of the world? In many cases not even as much as 30 percent of the population goes to the polls — and they call that democracy.

That gentleman that Tomás [Borge, Nicaragua's minister of the interior] mentioned, [U.S. Vice-president] George Bush, made a tour of several countries in Latin America recently which I'm sure he imagined was a triumphant tour, and he went around saying that there had been no elections in Cuba for the last 22 years.

That gentleman doesn't know about the whole process through which the Constitution was established in our country. He knows nothing about People's Power, set up five years ago through this democratic system, and he doesn't know about the elections that just took place. Either those weren't elections to him or he didn't find out about them, and it's quite possible that he doesn't know about them because they're so ignorant that they don't find out about anything or almost nothing [Applause]. One is really amazed at the candid way in which they utter a lie of this kind or, to be benevolent, a stupid remark of this kind.

It so happens that in the presidential elections held recently in the United States only 52 percent of the electorate voted. Only 52 percent! Not 60, 70, 80, 90, 95 or 97 percent. And our figure of 97 percent is debatable, because, for example, at my polling station there were four voters missing, but two of them were in military service and voted in their own military district. Another

one was abroad, and the fourth was on the list but he did not belong to that district and therefore voted in some other place. . . . Actually, 100 percent of the people with a right to vote voted, even those people who were in the hospital [Applause].

Mr. Reagan was elected by 26 percent of the electorate in the United States. In other words, 26 percent of the electorate made it possible for that fascist group to govern the United States, to create the situation it's creating in the world and perhaps lead the world to nuclear catastrophe. And they call that democracy, while expressing the most absolute, arrogant, limitless scorn for the popular democratic forms that our people have adopted in their own right.

Who says that the bourgeois, imperialist, inefficient and hypocritical formula is the one we must apply in our country?

The political level, civic consciousness, understanding and cooperation shown by our people in the last elections are truly worthy of praise and are a source of satisfaction.

We're not going to copy what others have done — although I believe that it's always advisable to take into account the positive experiences of all revolutionary countries — nor do we intend to present our recipe, formula or system as the one to be applied in other countries. I do not know how the Nicaraguans will handle this problem. It's their affair and they have enough intelligence, imagination and originality to find the correct formula, the one that is most suited to their country [Applause]. □

The figure represents an increase from the 18.3 percent achieved in 1979. In recent years Cuban leaders have increasingly stressed that the task of governing the country should not be left exclusively to the layer of full-time functionaries and administrators, and highlighted the special importance of involving growing numbers of industrial workers in government assemblies.

Responsible for services

The more than 10,000 local delegates will constitute 169 municipal assemblies with broad powers over local industries, distribution of goods and services, health care, and education. People's Power is responsible for organizing and delivering these goods and services within the general policy framework set out by the central government.

People's Power was designed to replace a highly centralized system that required even the smallest decisions to be made in Havana at

the ministry level.

This overcentralization led to much bureaucratic inefficiency and footdragging in the 1960s and early 1970s.

With responsibility in the hands of local people, the system works more efficiently and responsively. In one example cited in Chilean journalist Marta Harnecker's book *Cuba: Dictatorship or Democracy?*, the work originally done by fifty-four officials of the Ministry of Interior Commerce was taken over by five people working for People's Power.

Not only does bringing government closer to the people help control bureaucratic delays, it is more democratic. The People's Power delegates are subject to recall elections if 20 percent of their constituents sign a petition asking for one. The right to recall has been exercised scores of times since People's Power was set up.

Elected local delegates continue at their regular jobs: □

Unions protest in Argentina

More than 10,000 people turned out for a November 7 mass in Buenos Aires, Argentina, that quickly became a protest of the policies of that country's ruling military junta.

The protest, held at San Cayetano Catholic Church on the outskirts of the capital city, was led by the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), Argentina's outlawed labor federation. The CGT included nearly all Argentine unions before it was banned by the junta.

CGT leaders said the November 7 action was the largest by unionists since the military seized power in March 1976. It occurred despite threats by the Interior Ministry against anyone who attended the San Cayetano mass for other than "spiritual reasons."

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The struggle against colonial oppression

Islands exploited by France, Australia, and New Zealand

[The following is a slightly abridged interview with Russell Johnson that was published in the October 16 issue of the New Zealand fortnightly *Socialist Action*. Johnson, national secretary of the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand section of the Fourth International, visited Fiji in September.]

* * *

Question. What was your overall impression of Fiji?

Answer. Fiji is a large group of islands with more than 600,000 people — native Fijians and Indians, mostly, but also indigenous Polynesians (Rotumans), Chinese, Europeans, and thousands of migrants from other island groups.

Viti Levu, the biggest island, has undergone considerable economic development, which includes the 100-year-old sugar industry, and more recently, forestry. And of course, there's tourism. Fiji is the tourist centre of the South Pacific.

Suva is the commercial centre of the South Pacific. It is a bustling metropolis of more than 100,000 with a busy port and a significant amount of industry. Goods are shipped there from Australia and New Zealand, perhaps to be further processed in Fiji, and then are shipped out to other islands.

However, Suva and the industrial development of Viti Levu is not typical of the South Pacific. Most of the islands remain very poor with little modern economic development.

Most of the companies that dominate economic life in the South Pacific base themselves in Fiji, many of them being owned in Australia or New Zealand. In fact, New Zealand and Australia are very much the colonial masters in this part of the world.

Economic, political, and military domination

Q. What do you mean by "colonial masters"?

A. That despite the "independence" or "self-government" of the island nations associated with the British Commonwealth, they are still very much under the domination of New Zealand and Australia — economically, politically and militarily.

The banking, insurance, trading and shipping companies that control economic life are largely Australian or New Zealand owned.

Now, with the increased industrial and urban development of recent times new companies are moving in.

Another way this colonial domination

comes out is the presence of Australian and New Zealand army and navy personnel. The New Zealand army set up, trained, and still provides the commanding officers of the Fijian army. "Goodwill" visits by the warships of these countries are a regular occurrence.

For instance, while I was in one of Suva's nightclubs, I ran into sailors off two Australian gunboats and Kiwi [New Zealand] soldiers there on training exercises.

There was also a big debate going on in Parliament and in the churches, while I was there, over the government's agreement to send soldiers to the Middle East, under New Zealand and American pressure.

A large proportion of top civil servants, judges, company management and the skilled workforce are expatriate New Zealanders and Australians working on contracts.

'Savage sentences'

The foreign judges and magistrates particularly struck me for the savage sentences they hand out. While I was there a teenager was jailed for four years for allegedly stealing \$60, and another got nine months for a \$6 theft. I'm told the prisons are overflowing!

The New Zealand and Australian govern-

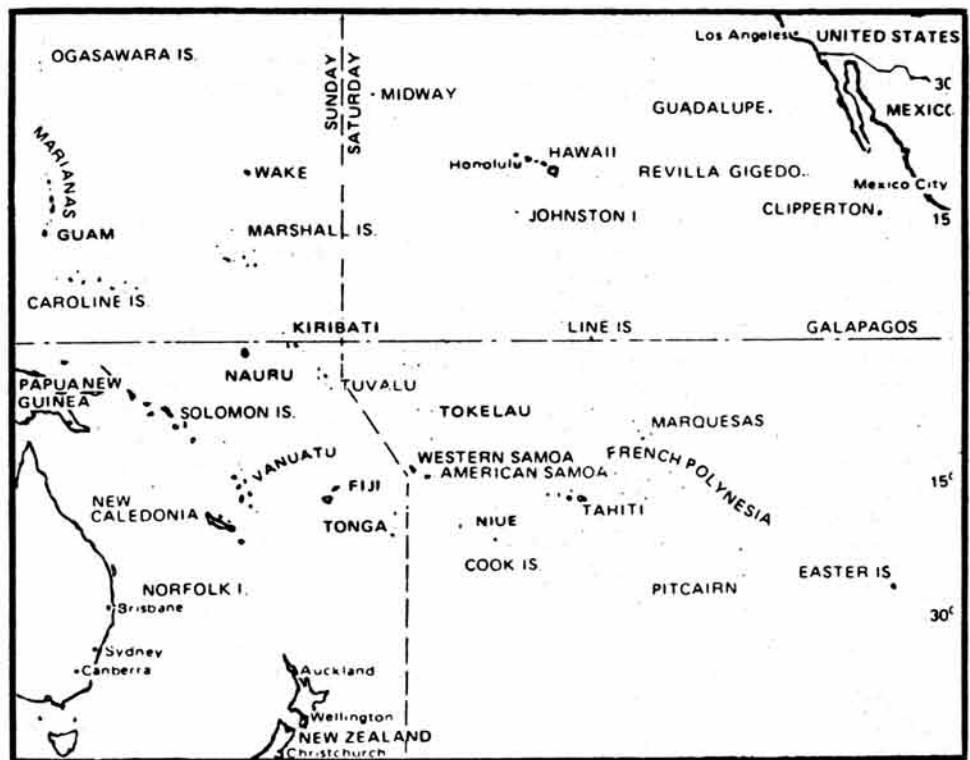
ments also lean on Fiji and other island governments through organisations like the South Pacific Forum. At the August forum meeting, for example, (New Zealand Prime Minister Robert) Muldoon stopped the Vanuatu government pushing through a strong motion in favour of New Caledonian independence.* And he's not at all above pointing out their dependence on New Zealand loans and aid to meet their trade deficits.

But all this is not to say that there is no indigenous wealthy class in Fiji. In fact, the capitalist class is more developed there than in any other of the South Pacific nations.

It is made up primarily of established white families (plantation owners and others), and well-to-do Indians from the state of Gujurat who followed the indentured Indian labourers to Fiji and set up shop there. The wealthiest of these layers, together with the hereditary Fijian chiefs, control the political system through the Fijian Alliance Party.

Many of these capitalists have strong links with New Zealand and Australian big business.

*Vanuatu, the former joint British-French colony of New Hebrides, won its independence in 1980.



Q. We often hear of conflict between the Fijian and Indian populations in Fiji. How true is this? And what impact does it have on the political life in the country, and on the labour movement?

A. There are now more Indians than Fijians in Fiji. The distinctions between the Fijians and the Indians are quite noticeable, especially in the urban areas. A layer of Indians control commerce in the Fiji Islands — smaller shops, hotels, bus and taxi companies — and they also predominate in the professions.

But the bulk of the Indians remain in agriculture, especially in the central sugar industry. They grow almost all the sugar cane as small tenant farmers, and make up a majority of the workforce in the sugar mills. Many of the rural Indians are very poor and there are a few Indian beggars.

By way of contrast with the more individualistic culture of the Indians, the culture of the Fijians is communal. Most continue to live an unchanged village life, surviving in a more or less subsistence economy. However, growing numbers are employed on the ships and waterfront, and in construction, industry and tourism.

While the Fijians formally own about 87 percent of the land, I was told that most of the best farming land was owned or leased by Europeans and Indians, and that this is a source of conflict.

In fact, this situation is tailor-made for encouraging resentments and divisions, which is what the colonial administrations did their best to do.

There are two political parties. The ruling Alliance Party is based on the Fijians, together with the wealthy whites, Chinese and Indians. The opposition National Federation Party is based on the Indian population, especially in rural areas. Unions are linked in to both parties but workers have no independent voice in the political system.

Workers unionised

The labour movement though is much stronger than I expected. Two-thirds of the 75,000 wage and salary workers are unionised. But there are two rival union federations, the Trade Union Congress and the Council of Trade Unions, at least partially reflecting the tensions between the Indian and Fijian communities. However, unionists told me that there are Fijians and Indians in both federations.

There has been considerable growth of trade unionism in the South Pacific in recent years, reflecting both an increased economic development and the popularity of union organisation with the strongly communal Island peoples.

The workers in Fiji certainly stand up for themselves. While I was there, there were strikes by council workers, student nurses, and sugar workers. But the biggest strike was a struggle between the Building Workers Union and the Australian joint venture, Hornbrook-

Thies-Leighton, who are building a hydroelectric dam near Nadi. The workers were being paid \$1.45 per hour [NZ\$1 = US\$0.84]. They were demanding \$2.25, but the company told them it was "unrealistic" in Fijian conditions.

The government openly intervened against the union. They were especially worried because a rank-and-file revolt in the union had earlier thrown out the union secretary for being a company man, and elected a more militant leadership. The former secretary is government MP [member of Parliament] and, according to the union, recently turned up as a company consultant for the Australian construction outfit they were striking against.

Q. What has been the impact of tourism?

A. Tourism is often put forward as the road to economic development and the raising of the living standards of the Island peoples. Well, if this was to be true anywhere it should be true in Fiji, the tourist capital of the South Pacific. In fact, there appears to be really very little net benefit to the people of Fiji.

The tourists are flown to Fiji on Air New Zealand or other international airlines, on package tours organised by New Zealand, Australian or Japanese tour operators, and they stay at internationally-owned hotels.

Tourism has not even led to a good roading

Independence fight in New Caledonia

[The following is based on two articles by Cheryl Harris published in the October 2 issue of the New Zealand fortnightly *Socialist Action*.]

* * *

The 128th anniversary of French occupation of New Caledonia was marked on September 24 by the funeral of Pierre Declercq, an independence leader assassinated the week before.

Leaders of the Independence Front, the coalition for independence for the native Kanak people, declared the anniversary a national day of shame and mourning.

About 5,000 mourners, mainly Kanak, attended Declercq's funeral, in a militant protest against French domination.

A spokesperson for the Union Caledonienne (the party to which Declercq belonged) said that it was holding the French government responsible for his murder.

Declercq's murder touched off widespread strikes and demonstrations against French rule.

For several days, Kanak independence supporters maintained roadblocks which virtually cut off the capital of Noumea from the surrounding countryside. These were only removed after the French government representative in Noumea agreed to meet with all parties on the independence question.

The Independence Front has announced that it will send a delegation to French President François Mitterrand.

It will present two main demands — the recognition of the Front by the French government, and the preparation of a program for independence by September 24, 1982.

Mitterrand has so far refused to make any commitment in favor of independence for the "French" territories in the Pacific. New Caledonia is one of five such territories, and is the center of operations for France's imperial interests in the area.

A military occupation in 1853 estab-

lished New Caledonia as a penal colony. Vast reserves of nickel were discovered there in 1882, and today nickel remains a primary reason for France's continued presence. This is because France has one of the world's largest steel industries and nickel is used in its manufacture.

Nickel mining has led to widespread erosion of the land, and pollution of the rivers and pastures, including the lagoon around the island. Yet virtually none of the benefits of the giant nickel industry go to the Kanak people.

Although they comprise more than 40 percent of the population, the native Kanak people own only 10 percent of the country's land, mostly in infertile mountain regions. Similarly, unemployment hits the Kanak people hardest, as most of the mining jobs go to Europeans and Tahitians.

The Kanak have a long history of struggle against French oppression. They fought back in two uprisings — in 1878 and 1917 — but the rebellious tribes were put down bloodily and the Kanaks were confined to reserves to die. They were not permitted to leave these reserves without police permission until 1946.

In the last fifteen years there has been a resurgence in the independence movement.

The French administration has attempted over the years to stamp out such emerging independence movements. But the movement for self-determination has continued to grow. And recent events in the Pacific have fueled the Kanak independence movement.

In particular, the government of the newly-independent state of Vanuatu (formerly the New Hebrides) has been especially outspoken in giving support to other Pacific struggles. Prime Minister Father Walter Lini made his position clear in his inaugural address to the General Assembly of the United Nations in September, 1981. He called for "prompt, free and unfettered determination" for all Pacific people still under colonial rule. □

system. The swanky coastal hotels remain connected by what is in parts little more than a dirt road. And around the corner from the hotel remains the Fijian village, or the house of a rural Indian family, which show no signs of the "economic benefits" supposedly brought by tourism.

The type of employment created by tourism — serving in hotels and restaurants or as guides, making and selling handicrafts — makes very little contribution to the development of an economy that can meet the long-term needs of the Fiji peoples.

Perhaps the biggest contribution is the bringing of more people into a money economy, especially as wage workers, and the breaking down of the Islands' isolation from the rich industrial countries of the world. This at least helps to deepen the resentment and rebelliousness of the people about their own relative poverty and lack of economic opportunities.

Q. What effect have events like the [thirteen-week Western Samoa Public Service Association (WSPSA)] strike and Vanuatu independence had in Fiji?

A. The Western Samoa strike sent ripples right across the Pacific, encouraging workers everywhere. There is a lot of contact between the islands, through seamen, migrant workers, visitors and students, and Fiji is the centre of this.

Fiji unions prevented an attempt to use Fijian telecommunications workers to break the Samoan strike. And students at the Suva and Apia campuses of the University of the South Pacific were supporting the strike, particularly the Apia campus. Many of the Samoan students were themselves members of the PSA on study leave, I was told.

Since then there have also been strikes of public employees in Vanuatu, Belau and Kiribati. I believe the government managed to break the Kiribati strike.

Vanuatu independence

Vanuatu independence has also had a big impact, especially in the other Melanesian islands like the Solomons, New Caledonia and, of course, Fiji. The Vanuaku Pati [Party] government of Walter Lini is widely regarded as being different from the governments that emerged in other island nations that have gained political independence, and is being watched closely by Pacific activists.

For a start the Vanuaku Pati won independence from Britain and France only after a prolonged struggle (including an armed revolt by pro-French forces), during which it collaborated with labour and progressive forces in Australia, New Zealand and other Island nations. And its leaders have developed a real respect for the revolutionary government of Cuba, because of its consistent stand for Vanuatu independence in the United Nations.

The Lini government is the most outspoken critic among the Pacific nations of French colonialism, and is regarded by the Kanak people



WALTER LINI

of New Caledonia as an ally and inspiration to their independence struggle. The Vanuatu unions are integrated into the Vanuaku Pati and a recent government-supported conference of trade unions from 13 Pacific countries in Port Vila established a Pacific Trade Union Forum.

Walter Lini has pledged to develop Vanuatu to suit the needs of his communal, village-based people.

Q. What are the big political issues in the South Pacific?

A. Basically questions which sharply reflect the imperialist domination of the region by Australia, New Zealand, France and the United States — opposition to French colonialism, for a nuclear-free zone, and against economic dependence and underdevelopment.

The French are really disliked. This is because of the colonial arrogance and brutality they have shown in relation to "their" Pacific territories — their refusal to even discuss the question of independence, the brutal treatment and even murder of independence activists in New Caledonia and Tahiti, and of course the nuclear testing at Mururoa. There is a lot of disappointment that so far the newly-elected Socialist Party President of France, Mitterrand, has not changed this course.

The New Zealand and Australian governments encourage this anti-French sentiment, at least to a certain degree, as a way to increase their own influence with the Pacific nations.

The anti-nuclear concern of the Pacific nations goes beyond French nuclear testing though, and here they part company with Muldoon and [Australian Prime Minister] Malcolm Fraser. They want to stop Japan's plans to dump nuclear waste in the Pacific Ocean which threatens marine life, and they want to get the American nuclear war machine out of their waters and establish a "zone of peace" as they call it.

This has not pleased the imperial powers. France, for example, has withheld \$4 million in promised aid to Vanuatu because of its support to New Caledonian independence.

But the Island nations are also pointing out that the much trumpeted economic aid from Australia and New Zealand is designed to tie the islands even more strongly to trade with their wealthier southern neighbours. It promotes the profits of Australian and New Zealand companies operating in the Pacific.

Q. What parallels do you see between Fiji and other South Pacific island groups, with the islands of the Caribbean (West Indies)?

A. Both regions have suffered the plundering of European colonial powers, which turned the islands into sources of food crops and raw materials like sugar and copra. But the impact on the Caribbean was probably much more severe. After all, the native populations of the Caribbean were exterminated and then plantations were established with African slave labour.

While there was no shortage of violence on the part of the colonists in the South Pacific, it was generally not on the same scale as in the Caribbean. I think that only in New Zealand and New Caledonia were the native populations crushed by colonial armies and virtually all their land stolen. But everywhere the colonising powers and the missionaries provoked inter-tribal wars and introduced new diseases that took a big toll on lives.

The local peoples generally refused to work for the plantation owners, so imported, indentured labour would be brought in or kidnapped from other islands, or from China or India, in conditions often approximating slavery.

Grenadian revolution

My impression is that today, the peoples of the South Pacific are not as desperately poor as many of the former Black slaves of the Caribbean. They have retained their traditional culture and communal way of life.

But the winds of change are blowing through both regions. They've blown the furthest in the Caribbean with the revolutionary working-class governments of Cuba and Grenada.

Grenada in particular is going to attract interest from the Pacific as it begins the socialist climb out of poverty and economic backwardness. This is because of its comparable population (120,000) and economy (export crops and subsistence farming) to many Pacific Island groups, because, like them, it is a part of the British Commonwealth.

Q. Finally, what can the labour movement of New Zealand do to assist the peoples of the South Pacific?

A. I think the place to begin is the Muldoon government. It is important to realise that this government not only pushes around New Zealand workers but its policies, and the big-business interests it represents, are a big part of the

problem for the oppressed peoples of the South Pacific as well. The labour movement mobilising to dump Muldoon in November and putting a Labour government into power would be a significant first step.

Secondly, it is important to build solidarity with the struggles of Pacific workers, like that which began to develop around the Western Samoa strike [when New Zealand unions raised thousands of dollars for the strikers]. And it is important to champion independence struggles like that of the Kanak people in New Caledonia, and oppose military interference in the region — be it French, American, Australian or New Zealand.

Aid for Pacific needed

The labour movement could also put more effort into publicising and supporting Corso's aid projects in the region. These were aimed at making modest but real improvements in local

conditions, and promoting understanding between the Pacific peoples and working people in this country.

A Labour government must be encouraged to give generous aid to the economic development of the Islands and vigorously pursue its campaign for a nuclear-free Pacific.

But perhaps above all else that symbol of racial arrogance and ignorance, the restrictive immigration laws, must go. Only an open door policy to Pacific immigration can build a united labour movement here. Already the considerable Pacific immigration into New Zealand has helped strengthen New Zealand workers' awareness of our government's reactionary role abroad, and of the need to stand united with working people everywhere.

The fight against these immigration laws can help build a new solidarity across the Pacific, that lays the basis for a new, just, international order of things in the South Pacific.

Chile

U.S. rights policy in action

Senate lifts ban on aid to Pinochet

By Will Reissner

The U.S. State Department says it is going to begin talking about human rights once again. According to an October 27 State Department memo approved by Secretary of State Alexander Haig, the Reagan administration will follow a two-track policy on human rights violations abroad: blast your enemies and keep still about your friends.

White House chief of staff James Baker put it almost that crudely. According to the November 9 *New York Times*, Baker stated that "the President's position is, we will speak out where it is necessary in order to emphasize his concern and commitment to human rights, and where that's not necessary, he will deal with it through the quiet diplomacy approach he spoke of during the campaign and when he first came into office."

'Neutrality abroad'

The State Department memo put forward its reason for renewed emphasis on human rights violations in the Soviet bloc. "Neutrality abroad and a sagging domestic spirit," according to the memo, are partly based on the notion that "the two superpowers are morally equal."

In keeping with his decision to revive the human rights ploy, Reagan nominated Elliot Abrams to fill the post of assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, which has remained vacant since Reagan took office.

The administration's previous nominee for the position, Ernest Lefever, was turned down by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on June 5. Lefever's blatant opposition to any

criticism whatsoever of human rights violations by U.S. allies around the world had aroused a storm of protest.

In his Senate confirmation hearings, Lefever said he would not mention U.S. allies who violated human rights because "I don't normally name countries. . . . It is not in good taste for me to identify friendly and allied nations. . . ."

Relations with Chile

So how will the policy enunciated in the State Department memorandum change things? Recent U.S. moves regarding the bloody Chilean military dictatorship provide a concrete example of what the policy means in practice.

When the Chilean military, acting in cooperation with the Nixon administration, overthrew the elected government of President Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973, it unleashed a reign of terror. Tens of thousands of trade unionists and left-wing activists were seized and held in soccer stadiums because the jails were filled to overflowing. Thousands were tortured and murdered, and thousands more exiled. Allende himself was killed in the coup.

Since then, Chilean strongman Gen. Augusto Pinochet has ruled with an iron hand. On September 11, 1981, the eighth anniversary of the coup that placed him in power, Pinochet declared that under his rule Chile had been turned "into a stronghold of liberty."

But he added that the eight-year ban on all political activity in the country would continue into the future. "The political recess," as he so

delicately described it, "is a necessary measure that must be maintained."

Amnesty International notes that torture of prisoners is still commonplace in Pinochet's "stronghold of liberty."

U.S. aid to the Chilean junta was finally suspended in November 1979 after the Chilean military organized the assassination of exiled Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier and an associate in downtown Washington, D.C., and then refused to extradite the high-ranking officers involved in the killing.

But the Reagan administration has decided to let bygones be bygones. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick was dispatched to the Chilean capital of Santiago in August to give Pinochet the good news in person.

While in Chile, Kirkpatrick stated that the United States government wanted "to fully normalize our relations with Chile," and she described her private talks with the junta leader as "most pleasant."

Letelier lawyer deported

Within forty-eight hours of Kirkpatrick's endorsement of the junta, Chilean plainclothes police raided the homes of four prominent political opponents of the regime. One of the four, Jaime Castillo, a member of the Christian Democratic Party (DC) and former minister of justice, headed Chile's Human Rights Commission. He and the other opposition figures were summarily driven to the Argentine border and dumped into exile.

Significantly, at the time of his deportation Castillo was also serving as the lawyer for Orlando Letelier's widow in legal proceedings in Chile aimed at seeking legal redress for Letelier's murder. With Castillo forced into exile, that case was thrown out of court on September 18.

Finally, on October 22, at the Reagan administration's urging, the Senate voted 86 to 0 to repeal the ban on military assistance to Pinochet. Last May the House of Representatives overturned a similar ban on military aid to the military junta ruling Argentina.

Aid to dictators unpopular

In coming months we are likely to hear more verbiage from Washington about real and supposed human rights violations by governments on the White House hit-list. The aim will be to provide a veneer of moral justification to Reagan's support for some of the most vicious regimes in the world.

That support is not popular in the United States. A poll taken for *Time* magazine last May showed that fully two-thirds of the American population opposes "economic and military aid for anti-Communist allies like South Korea if they violate human rights." □

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Reagan's anti-Qaddafi campaign

Destabilization plans take step forward in Chad

By Ernest Harsch

The threatening ring that the Reagan administration has been throwing up around Libya is being drawn ever tighter.

In one of the more provocative moves so far, the White House has openly announced its support for an Egyptian invasion of Libya. Citing administration sources, the November 8 *Washington Post* reported that the White House "has given Egypt assurances of a U.S. military umbrella against the Soviet Union in case of an Egyptian attack on Libya."

To emphasize the seriousness of this threat, thousands of American troops began arriving in Egypt the following day, at the start of the largest overseas military exercise ever carried out by Washington's Rapid Deployment Force.

The White House sources cited by the *Post* claimed that there were no immediate plans for an invasion of Libya. But according to the Egyptian minister of defense, Gen. Abu Ghazala, "We will not rest until the day we have a friendly regime on our western borders."

U.S. moves in Chad

While the U.S. military maneuvers were still underway in Egypt, the Reagan administration announced November 11 that it would provide U.S. planes and military personnel to help transport a 5,000-member inter-African military force into Chad in the wake of the Libyan troop withdrawal from that Central African country, which lies directly south of Libya. The imperialist government of France (Chad's former colonial ruler) will also provide major logistical support for the "peacekeeping" force.

The very next day, the Exxon Corporation, the largest American oil firm, announced that it was withdrawing from all of its oil and gas production operations in Libya.

Exxon's move comes in response to efforts by the White House to initiate economic sanctions against Libya. Foreign oil companies, many of them American, have already been drastically reducing their orders for Libyan oil, forcing the Libyans to cut production from 2 million barrels a day to 700,000 barrels a day within the last six months. This has meant a sharp drop in that country's oil revenues, upon which many of its social and economic programs depend.

Destabilization campaign

All of these moves are part of a concerted drive against the government of Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi that has been building up over the past half year.

Several months after Reagan came into office, the White House adopted a secret plan to

overthrow the Libyan regime, details of which were later leaked to the press. It included a propaganda campaign in the mass media to portray Qaddafi as a supporter of "international terrorism," the revival of a Libyan "government in exile" based in Egypt, and the escalation of sabotage and other terrorist actions within Libya by opponents of the government.

In August, U.S. Navy jet fighters shot down two Libyan planes over the Gulf of Sidra, during naval maneuvers in the gulf that were intended as a direct provocation against Libya.

U.S. military aid to the Sudanese regime — which is bitterly hostile to Qaddafi — has been tripled.

Following the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat in early October (which Washington briefly tried to blame on the Libyans), two American AWACS radar planes were sent to patrol the Egyptian-Libyan border.

Former U.S. President Richard Nixon, who had gone to Cairo for Sadat's funeral, subsequently visited Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Morocco for discussions with Saudi Prince Fahd, Tunisia President Habib Bourguiba, and Moroccan King Hassan II. According to a report in the November 9 issue of the Paris fortnightly *Afrique-Asie*, Nixon was seeking to enlist greater support from them in the anti-Libya crusade.

This intense U.S. opposition to Qaddafi has been aroused by his regime's policy of giving political — and in some cases material — support to numerous anti-imperialist struggles.

One move that particularly irked the imperialists was the Libyan decision to send several thousand troops into Chad in late 1980, at the request of Chadian President Goukouni Oueddei, to help put down rebel forces backed by the French, Egyptian, and Sudanese governments.

U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig termed that French setback a "grave turn of events."

Mitterrand lends a hand

It was in Chad that the new French government of François Mitterrand was able to give some assistance to Reagan's anti-Libya campaign.

In a shift from the policy of the previous government of Giscard d'Estaing, Mitterrand sought to safeguard French imperialist interests in Chad not by overthrowing the Goukouni regime, but by winning it over to a policy of closer collaboration. He did this by offering Goukouni inducements of large-scale economic and military aid. At the same time, Mitterrand made clear that if Goukouni failed to cooperate, Paris would continue support for the

rebel forces of Hissène Habré, who were based in the Sudan and who launched periodic attacks into eastern Chad.

This carrot-and-stick approach paid off. In September, Goukouni flew to Paris for direct talks with Mitterrand. An "unconditional" French economic aid package was announced (reported to total some \$500 million). In October, this was followed up by the dispatch of tons of ammunition and arms to Goukouni from the French military base in the neighboring Central African Republic, with the promise of more to come.

Goukouni, who in the past had been a sharp critic of French imperialism, now began directing his criticisms against the Libyan troops in Chad — whom he himself had invited in. On October 29, he demanded a complete Libyan military withdrawal by the end of the year.

At the same time, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), at the insistence of Paris and Washington, began to hammer together a "peacekeeping" force for Chad (to be composed of troops from Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Benin, Zaïre, Guinea, and Gabon).

Qaddafi moves fast

The French imperialists were clearly hoping to provoke a confrontation with the Libyan troops in Chad. French government sources circulated rumors that Qaddafi was fomenting a coup against Goukouni. French Mirage jets were flown to the base in the Central African Republic, and the 1,700 French troops stationed there were put on alert. The October 31 London *Economist* reported that the French government had pledged that "if the Libyans oppose the OAU force in Chad, the French Foreign Legion will intervene."

Under these circumstances, Qaddafi, on November 3, ordered the withdrawal of Libyan troops from Chad — not by the end of the year, as Goukouni had requested, but immediately. The speed of the withdrawal took Paris and Washington off guard, and confounded their attempts to provoke a direct confrontation.

The developments in Chad have nevertheless marked a setback for the Libyan regime and have strengthened Washington's drive to overthrow it.

While the weak Chadian government may itself pose no real threat to Libya, the dispatching to Chad of an OAU force — with American and French logistical support — means that the hostile encirclement of Libya has been tightened even further.

The danger to Libya is clear. An editorial in the October 24 *Economist* proposed two possible courses of action: either a direct Egyptian-Sudanese attack or the ouster of Qaddafi by proimperialist Libyan groups.

Whatever the case, the British business journal emphasized, "Colonel Qaddafi has to be stopped." □

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