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Central America

Haig Urges 'Collective' Military Intervention



Salvadoran troops have proved unable to drive back rebel forces. Washington is trying to get Latin American governments to take action in support of junta to provide cover for direct use of U.S. forces.

Netherlands

**400,000 Protest
NATO Missile Plans**

Grenada

**Delegates from 40 Countries at
International Solidarity Meeting**

Reagan has not changed his mind about Central America

By David Frankel

One month ago *Intercontinental Press* warned, "There is growing evidence that U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is imminent."

Since then, we have witnessed a relentless campaign of threats, lying accusations, military moves, and diplomatic maneuvers by the Reagan administration. The purpose — to prepare the ground for military operations that have already been mapped out.

But we have also seen a political campaign, initiated and led by the Cuban government, which has begun to alert working people around the world to the war danger.

The Cubans publicly challenged Washington to present proof of its claims, such as the charge that 500-600 Cuban troops had been sent into El Salvador by way of Nicaragua. Cuban President Fidel Castro took the extraordinary step for a head of state of writing letters to the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* in an attempt to appeal directly to the American people.

As Castro explained in a November 15 interview, this bold political campaign paid off. Washington did not have a shred of proof for its charges of Cuban military involvement in El Salvador. It was simply unable to answer the Cuban challenge.

Speaking of the Reagan gang in Washington, Fidel pointed out, "I can say right now that we have torpedoed their maneuver. . . . And we have placed them in an embarrassing situation, and they still haven't answered our challenge."

But he also emphasized that "we have to be alert to what new ruse they will come up with, what new lies they are working on. . . ."

Haig's new frame-up

We did not have long to wait. On December 4, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig spoke before the Organization of American States (OAS) meeting in St. Lucia. Haig, the representative of a government that has carried out more than 100 military interventions in Latin America over the past century, spoke in the name of "nonintervention."

Ignoring the real causes of revolution in Central America and elsewhere in Latin America — the grinding poverty of the masses amid superprofits for the imperialist corporations and their local agents; the lack of education, health care, housing, and other basic needs; and the brutal repression by regimes dedicated to preserving this state of affairs — Haig tried to pin the blame on Cuba.

"Havana," Haig charged, "calls the leaders of violent opposition groups together, forges unity pacts among them, trains their men, pro-

vides their arms and sends them back to mount a violent challenge to legitimate governments."

Among the "legitimate governments" Haig cited was the Salvadoran junta, responsible for the slaughter of 11,000 civilians this year alone. Also cited as a "legitimate government" by Haig was the Guatemalan dictatorship, installed in a CIA-backed invasion in 1954. According to church figures there, the number of victims of the Guatemalan military matched the deaths in El Salvador in 1981.

Threats against Nicaragua

As for Nicaragua, Haig claimed the revolutionary government there is "working to establish the largest force in Central American history."

"Nicaragua's arsenal," he complained, "already includes tanks and other heavy offensive weapons never deployed before in Central America. Pilots are being trained and facilities readied for modern jet fighters."

Addressing the closing session of Nicaragua's Council of State on December 5, Commander Daniel Ortega answered Haig's charges.

"We are calmly asked why are we arming ourselves, why are we expending such efforts to acquire guns, ammunition, and equipment. . . . If a power such as the United States, which has already invaded us [in 1912 and 1926], threatens to invade or set up a naval blockade, wouldn't it be irresponsible to act in any other way?"

Haig also charged in his speech that "the principle of nonintervention is being violated as arms, ammunition and other military supplies flow from Nicaragua to the Salvadoran insurgents."

Both the Cubans and the Nicaraguans have repeatedly defended the just struggle in El Salvador. Castro has also stressed the right and obligation of revolutionaries to aid that struggle in any way possible.

At the same time, both the Cubans and Nicaraguans have denounced the U.S. charges as false, maintaining that they are not currently providing arms to the Salvadoran rebels. Nor has Washington been able to come up with any proof of its charges.

Meanwhile, the Salvadoran junta is expecting some \$250 million in U.S. aid in the coming year, and some U.S. officials are talking about increasing the amount to \$400 million or even \$700 million, according to a report in the December 6 *New York Times* by Raymond Bonner.

Getting down to the real point of his speech, Haig declared, "The United States is prepared to join others in doing whatever is prudent and

necessary to prevent any country in Central America from becoming a platform of terror and war in the region." In other words, Washington is prepared to go to war to prevent the extension of the socialist revolution in Central America, which is the prospect that it now confronts in El Salvador and Guatemala.

A second try

U.S. officials have tried to make their view of the matter quite clear. In the days leading up to the OAS meeting, Washington leaked news of a new administration report, titled "Cuba's Covert Activities in Latin America," which is a more elaborate presentation of the thesis offered by Haig in his speech to the OAS.

"This is not bluster," said one top White House official quoted in the December 7 issue of *Newsweek*. "We want to make it clear that this can't go on."

A similar note was struck by the December 7 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*. "Alarm is swelling over the rise of Cuban-inspired revolutionary ferment in Central America," the magazine declared.

"Nicaraguans," it continued, "help pour Cuban-supplied aid into *El Salvador*, enabling leftist rebels to turn tide of battle against the U.S.-backed Duarte regime."

"There's growing feeling that only massive doses of U.S. aid, perhaps only some form of *military intervention*, can keep Duarte's embattled junta in power."

More specific information was provided in a December 6 article by *New York Times* correspondent Bernard Gwertzman. According to Gwertzman, on December 5 he was told by "a senior State Department official, who asked not to be named," that "the next several weeks would be crucial."

Gwertzman reported that "the Administration hopes to formulate some kind of collective approach to deal with the situation. . . ."

"One possibility would be military cooperation between El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Guatemala, the countries perceived to be most threatened by Nicaragua, with aid and advice provided by the United States, Argentina and other major powers."

What is involved here is the "new ruse" that Castro warned of in his November 15 interview. Far from having backed off from its plans for military action against the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean, the Reagan gang is moving ahead under the fig leaf of a "collective approach."

A political struggle

But the very revolutionary upheavals that are forcing Reagan's hand are also part of the political context that raises the stakes in any U.S. military move, and that makes the price Washington will have to pay for a failure that much greater.

In 1965 Lyndon Johnson was able to order U.S. Marines into the Dominican Republic and then convene a meeting of the OAS for a rubber-stamp approval of this naked aggression.

Today, however, Gwertzman explains in regard to Reagan's military plans, "There is no expectation of an initiative by the Organization of American States as such, but rather the bringing together of those nations most willing to act in unison to formulate common positions."

In other words, U.S. officials do not believe that they can win a vote in the OAS supporting intervention against the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutions — at least not without so damaging a debate that any political advantage would be dissipated.

The capitalist regimes in Latin America are under severe pressure due to the massive opposition there to any U.S. intervention, and to the broad popular support for the revolutions in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Haig was reminded of the problems facing Washington by St. Lucia's Foreign Minister Peter Josie, who told the delegates at the OAS meeting December 2: "Let us not have traded our independence for any aspect of neocolonialism. We do not wish to be reminded of any input into our area in terms of what we are expected to pay for it."

The night before, Josie told reporters that the revolutionary government in Grenada is "more democratic than many other nations in the Caribbean," and he called for an end to U.S. threats against it.

Pressure from Mexico

At the same time that it is preparing the ground for military action against the revolutions in Central America, the Reagan administration is keeping up the diplomatic pressure on Nicaragua. "They have a list of proposals we have made," Haig declared December 2 following a meeting with Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann.

One of the channels that Washington is seeking to use to pressure Nicaragua is the Mexican government.

Mexican President José López Portillo has spoken out against reported plans for U.S. intervention in Central America, warning Reagan that such a move would be a "gigantic historical error."

But the Mexican capitalist class is caught in a tightening vice between the rise in the anti-imperialist struggle throughout Central America, on the one side, and on the other, fears that the "dominoes" could topple right across the Guatemalan border into Mexico itself.

The Mexican rulers fear that U.S. military intervention would result in spreading the revolutionary upheaval. That does not hinder them, however, from using the threat of such intervention to argue for a more "moderate" course in Nicaragua, and in El Salvador as well. They desperately want to slow down the struggle, and restore some kind of stability in the area.

Thus, while the Mexican government acts on the international arena as a friend of Nicaragua — even providing some important aid — and has recognized the rebels in El Salvador as a "representative political force," it has

slammed the door hard on the guerrillas fighting in neighboring Guatemala.

As the Guatemalan civil war has intensified in recent months, the Mexican regime has stepped up its roundups and deportations of Guatemalan refugees. Buses from Guatemala are stopped and searched at the border. In one incident earlier this year, 400 Guatemalans living in Campeche were deported aboard buses that were commandeered by the Guatemalan army as they crossed the border.

Following a visit by Haig to Mexico in late November, Mexico agreed to act as "communicator" between Washington and Managua.

As *New York Times* correspondent Alan Riding put it in a story from Mexico City, "Mexico's own growing alarm at Cuban influence in Nicaragua and increasing violence in Guatemala has earned it greater credibility as a 'communicator' in Washington's eyes."

Clearly, the Reagan administration hopes that the Mexican regime will intercede to encourage those who would like to see the Nicaraguan revolution bend under the pressure of threats from Washington.

However, as Gwertzman noted in his December 6 article, "There is not much optimism within the State Department that the Sandi-

nists, who see themselves as liberators in the area, will be turned from their course."

That, of course, is why the imperialists are moving toward military action against the Central American revolutions.

This brings us back to our original point. As *Intercontinental Press* warned previously, "There is growing evidence that U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is imminent."

Although we have no way of knowing the exact timing and form of such a military move, the evidence continues to pile up. At the same time, we have seen the importance of carrying out a political campaign to put maximum pressure on the imperialists and their allies.

Nothing in politics is decided without a struggle. While there can no longer be any doubt that a confrontation between American imperialism and the rising revolutionary struggles in Central America and the Caribbean is imminent, what remains to be determined is whether such a U.S. intervention can be successful.

That is why the international campaign to expose and condemn U.S. lies and preparations for war in the region is so critical.

Getting out the truth about what is happening remains our central obligation. □

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International solidarity with revolution

Delegations from 40 countries attend conference

By Pat Kane

ST. GEORGE'S — "This conference has injected our people with a new confidence, a new sense of courage, a much deeper understanding of what our own revolution is all about. It has shown us why we are united in this anti-imperialist struggle, why we are united to end poverty, oppression, and exploitation."

This is how Maurice Bishop, revolutionary Grenada's prime minister, described the impact here of the first International Conference in Solidarity With Grenada, held November 23-25. The conference was a huge success, with eighty-five delegations in attendance representing forty countries.

The conference was called to answer the massive U.S. propaganda campaign aimed at isolating the Grenada revolution. It was an opportunity to show delegates the achievements of this revolution.

U.S. lies

The U.S. slander machine has regularly attacked Grenada. The latest lie comes from the Council for Inter-American Security, a right-wing think tank with close ties to the Reagan administration. The November issue of its journal, *West Watch*, claimed that "the Grenadian government is holding 7,000 political prisoners in work farms, similar to the ones in Cuba."

Grenada's population is only 110,000; one would think someone here would miss 7,000 people and complain! Delegates to the solidarity conference were shown all over Grenada. But they could not tour the "work farms," because they do not exist.

Last month, newspapers throughout the region carried identical editorials attacking the revolutionary government. The White House has sponsored counterrevolutionary conferences for the region's politicians, editors, and generals.

The large solidarity conference was a fitting reply to the imperialist campaign.

The delegates' list read like a roll of honor of the world's most determined fighters against imperialism. Cuba, Nicaragua, Angola, Namibia, and Vietnam were all represented. Political parties and trade unions from throughout the East Caribbean, Europe, and Latin America attended. Black organizations of all descriptions were here from the United States. Two delegates even traveled all the way from Mongolia.

'Grenada is not alone'

Commenting on the international character of the conference, Bishop stated in his opening

speech: "We have always scrupulously avoided viewing our struggle, our revolutionary process, from a narrow nationalist perspective. We have long understood that the world revolutionary process, the struggle of oppressed mankind everywhere, is one and indivisible. Thus, this International Solidarity Conference holds grave importance as it bears testimony to our commitment to the noble concept of internationalism."

"This conference derives additional importance from the fact that your presence here will indicate to imperialism in a clear and forceful way that Grenada is not alone. It will tell the imperialists in the boldest terms that their schemes, their machinations, their maneuvers to isolate the Grenada Revolution have all failed miserably — as the Grenada Revolution enjoys broad popular support not only at the national level but also internationally."

Delegates heard reports from the various ministries of the revolutionary government. Selwyn Strachan, minister of national mobilisation, whose staff had organized the conference, outlined the revolutionary democracy in Grenada. Strachan pointed out that Grenada is the only government in the Eastern Caribbean with a ministry such as the one he heads.

'Angola Day' and 'Militia Day'

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada — November has been an important month for the people of Grenada, as they continue to defend their revolution and develop their mass organizations.

November 11 was Angola Day, when 3,000 people rallied in the northern town of Sauteurs to celebrate the sixth anniversary of Angolan independence. Speakers from Angola, Namibia, and Grenada's People's Revolutionary Government stressed the close ties between the African liberation struggles and the Grenadian revolution.

Angola is suffering from imperialist attacks, and similar threats now hang over Grenada. Tension is mounting throughout the region. The latest addition to the U.S. military presence in the area was the arrival of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Eisenhower* in Barbados.

The Grenadian people are ready to meet any military moves against their revolution. Every Wednesday is "Militia Day." Thousands of youth and workers have already joined the militia, and Radio Free Grenada is campaigning for still more volunteers.

Strachan said that Grenada is engaged in "a war against corruption, against arrogance, against the exploitation of our people, against the old colonial and neocolonial bureaucratic ugliness, a war against patronage and mismanagement, against fraud and authoritarianism, a war to blast all these old deformities that our people have inherited into the debris of history, in order to win the victory of completing a democratic transformation of all the processes of our country in their totality. And for this, comrades, we are mobilizing our people for revolutionary democracy. This is our war, and this is why as a people, as a nation, we must mobilize and democratize *all* our institutions, as well as create new organs through which our new, effervescent, democratic blood can freely flow."

Mass organizations

These new organizations include Parish Councils, where local people attend to hear about and decide on all aspects of the revolution. They include new trade unions, like the agricultural union that has recruited more than 2,000 members since the revolution.

Youth and women have been organized. Both the National Women's Organisation (NWO) and the National Youth Organisation (NYO) have had a spectacular growth over the last year. The NWO aimed for 5,000 members by December. They have recruited 6,467. The NYO's target was 7,000 by their first congress in December, and they have already reached 7,288.

Commenting on the importance of actively involving women in the Grenada revolution, Bishop stated, "There can be no talk of real democracy if *half* of a nation's population is either disqualified from participating or can only participate in a very limited sense. . . . Our sisters cannot participate fully unless the society encourages their participation. And in Grenada in barely two and a half years of revolution, we have a proud record of measures taken to bring the women of our country fully into the development process."

Everywhere, young and old alike are joining the militia to defend the revolution against possible imperialist invasion.

All these organizations are mass organizations. They are vehicles through which the people exercise control over their leaders and the institutions of the state. They represent a militant, conscious, and organized people.

Selwyn Strachan challenged critics of the revolution who demand that "elections" be held in Grenada. He said they should come to Grenada, where they would quickly see that there are more elections here in a week than in

any five years in the United States or Britain.

Every ministry pointed out the achievements of this revolution. They explained how the U.S. government has tried to sabotage financing for their new international airport. They proved that in two years the revolution had done more to improve the economy and infrastructure of the island than had been done in 400 years of colonialism. It took the revolution to put a halt to the importation from Canada of the bulk of fish eaten here — in an island surrounded by fish.

Everywhere the workers, farmers, youth, and women are striding forward to create a new and truly democratic society.

The conference was a festival of internationalism. The affairs of the conference were followed by the mass of the people. At a huge rally on November 22 to commemorate Grenada's Bloody Sunday, when six members of the present government were badly beaten in 1973, the delegates were introduced to the island's militant and fighting people.

The loudest cheers were for revolutionary Cuba, Nicaragua, and Vietnam, and for the freedom fighters of Africa. Any attacks on those countries would be viewed by the people

of Grenada as attacks on themselves. In a country struggling against poverty, they have managed to donate £30,000 to the South West African People's Organisation of Namibia.

Solidarity needed

Aid for Grenada is vital. From Britain, the Labour Party, the engineering union, sheetmetal workers unions, and the journalists union all sent telegrams of support.

Members of the San Francisco U.S.-Grenada Friendship Society brought to Grenada a complete office system, including a duplicator, an electrostencil machine, and a month's supply of paper and ink, as well as fifty nurses' uniforms. They managed to get it all on the plane as part of their luggage. The San Francisco society has donated thousands of dollars to Grenada, as well as two minicomputer systems.

Such practical solidarity is what the people of Grenada need. Everything from school supplies to photographic equipment is needed. Just about everything one could imagine is in short supply. As the revolution marches forward, imperialism will seek to apply economic pressure by stopping supplies to the island.

Everything from support demonstrations in defense of Grenada, Cuba, and Nicaragua to shipments of money and equipment, is welcomed.

Maurice Bishop closed the conference by saying that "the people of North America and of Europe are not our enemies, the majority of those people are our friends. Our enemies are the fascists, our enemy is imperialism. . . ."

"You have reminded us that our struggle is by no means unique in the history of mankind. Our path is one that many have walked before."

The Grenada revolution is indeed striding forward. Only a direct military intervention by imperialism can stop it.

On the militia marches and popular demonstrations the Grenadians sing:

"Oh when they come, oh when they come,
"Oh when those Yankee soldiers come,
"We're going to bury them in the sea!"

The Grenadian people will do their part if they are attacked by Yankee soldiers. Working people elsewhere — especially in Europe and North America — need to do our part through solidarity with the Grenada revolution. □

'Our banner of direct democracy'

Speech by Selwyn Strachan

[The following are excerpts from a speech given by Grenadian Minister of National Mobilisation Selwyn Strachan at the International Conference in Solidarity With Grenada, held in St. George's November 23-25.]

* * *

Comrades, we were born into, and lived through a situation which manifested not only the absence of democracy, but which in its every second, hour, and day showed itself clearly to be the very antithesis of democracy. The [Eric] Gairy dictatorship was a despotic force.

The dictator's hands held fast the levers of the official structures, and stretched out also towards the trade union leadership, either by direct control, as in the case of his own one-man-show — the Grenada Manual and Mental Workers Union — or in the case of his control over the timid and feeble leadership of some of the other unions, which conciliated to the dictator and tried to suppress the anger and militancy of their own rank and file workers.

The pattern was the same: rule from the top, in ignorance and defiance of the wishes and well-being of the masses.

And when there was opposition, it was crushed mercilessly, brutally, murderously, in an atmosphere of fear and terror. Repression was total: criticism was answered by threats and blows, active opposition by hounding and death.

We had seen those years of sordidness given

outward respectability by a parliamentary cloak which hid from the world the suppurating sores of Gairyism. We were told the system we inherited was "truly democratic" as we saw our comrades bludgeoned and murdered — yes, they said, it had to be democratic, because Westminster had deemed it so. There was a parliament, a senate, a speaker, elections every five years, an official opposition — this was democracy, they told us.

The parliamentary paraphernalia which British colonialism left with us to mystify us

like a blindfold, and which was meant to be the model, the badge and guarantee of our democratic advancement, was nothing but a grotesque charade played out in a fifteen-member chamber of horrors.

Comrades, when we formed the New Jewel Movement in 1973, and for the years before when we had been active in other opposition and resistance movements, we swore an end to this. We knew that our people would only awaken from this nightmare if resistance and democracy were one. We had to provide a ge-



Lou Howort/Militant

Selwyn Strachan speaking at New York meeting in solidarity with Grenadian revolution.

ne democratic alternative.

It was an unquestionable truth for us, we had to create organs of a new democratic power that would fully realize all the hidden, submerged strengths and beauty of our people, that would grow, prosper, and finally explode in the face of the dictatorship, as it did on March 13, 1979.

Democratic organization was inevitable for us, it was a necessity and a guarantee that we were serious, that we truly loved and respected our people and wanted to draw out all their strengths and hugeness.

It was also a surety against our own internal stagnation. When we conceived our slogan, "Not just another society but a just society," we were saying that our aim was not to replace Gairyism by another smothering neocolonial deformity, but we were unfurling our banner of direct democracy, revolutionary people's democracy, whereby we were not seeking to act on the people's behalf or as their self-appointed representatives, but our aim was essentially to engage our people in a process of building their own liberation, and in doing so they would transform themselves, and free their country of the quivering grip of the dictator.

Mass participation a principle

We have always placed maximum concentration upon the building of new structures. But we have found additionally, that our democratic structures have often grown their own organic independence, as a result of the health and true vitality of their organisms. When we established, for example, Parish Councils, we were surprised ourselves at their astonishingly swift rate of growth. It was as if we planted a seed, which germinated, and soon its spreading shoots and branches were sprouting out in all directions towards the 125 villages of our country.

The National Women's Organisation has seen perhaps the most remarkable growth of all. It is moving with real force and speed towards its target of 8,000 members before the end of the year — having already attained its primary target of 5,000 members two months before its deadline.

The same is true of our youth. They too have taken massive strides forward through the National Youth Organisation.

Mass participation, comrades, is an integral principle of our revolution. This has been shown perhaps in the most stunning perspective in the transformation of our most militant and democratic trade unions.

The old, deadening, conciliatory leadership, the disciples of passivity, are making way for new *elected* militants whose mission is to unionize all the work forces; democratize the unions they lead with regular meetings, new internal committees and structures; educate their members through trade-union seminars and Workers Education Classes; and mobilize them to play their full part in the tasks of building a new society, alongside party structures and other mass organizations.

We have seen not only huge increases in the membership of some of our long-established unions like the Commercial and Industrial Workers Union and the Technical and Allied Workers Union, but new unions growing into formidable organizations in just a few months. The Bank and General Workers Union, whose epic struggle with Barclays Bank helped to lay the popular base for our revolution, has risen from a hundred members to 3,000 in thirty months. The new Agricultural and General Workers Union has gone from nil to 2,300 members in just over two years.

But perhaps our most profoundly original mass democratic development has been the growth of our Parish Councils and Workers Parish Councils. These institutions, genuine innovations, which have been sprouting so profusely all over our nation, are proud and totally characteristic creations of our revolution. Our people attend them in their masses, in a spirit of eager anticipation, and they are themselves a clear symptom of their huge democratic appetite.

The atmosphere of these events has a little touch of theater, something of a rally, and sometimes the suspense of a court, but the central ingredient is democratic seriousness, for here is the regular reality of democratic accountability at work, which the people must have over their leaders and administrators.

Police accountable to the people

At these functions, that accountability is fully executed. Members of the People's Revolutionary Government, plus civil servants of high responsibility, are made accountable, and must answer directly to the people, as well as report to them on the progress of their enterprises.

The example of the session with the Commissioner of Police was particularly remarkable. The council, to begin with, took place at Calliste, in the South East Zone of St. George's. The area had been somewhat notorious under the dictatorship, as it housed the barracks of some of Gairy's worst police thugs. Now the new, transformed revolutionary leadership of the police had to face the people. The roles had been reversed.

Can you imagine that in Brooklyn, comrades? Can you imagine that in Chicago, in Detroit, Oakland or Watts? Can you imagine that in Alabama or Louisiana? Can you imagine that in Brixton or Southall or Liverpool? Yet it is happening here, day by day, in revolutionary, free Grenada.

Directly out of the Parish Councils and Workers Parish Councils have come ideas from the workers themselves which are turning into realities: a Rent Restriction Law, a Workers Compensation Act, a new public transport system.

Comrades, these needs and insights are coming from the lips of our people through their democratic structures, through the mouthpieces of the revolution, to be taken up and implemented by the revolutionary leadership. That is why the Parish Councils are so vi-

brant. They are active and pulsating agents of social change.

We hold fast to the truth that mass education and mass mobilization are vital components of the same process. Democracy and illiteracy, or democracy and ignorance, cannot live together. In addition to our Campaign for Popular Education, we have our Workers Education classes, which are now held in forty-five workplaces and twenty-four communities throughout the country, on a weekly basis.

People's Revolutionary Militia

We should perhaps finally end with what is our most formidable democratic achievement, our People's Revolutionary Militia. For here our people have answered the provocations of imperialism and organized themselves with the utmost seriousness and resolution for the most important task of all in our present phase — national defense.

You will find unemployed youths and grandmothers, small farmers and bank workers, school students and teachers — all ready, all vigilant, all organized, all training side by side to defend their homeland.

This voluntary People's Militia, where our people are picking up guns every week to prepare to defend the benefits brought to them by people's revolutionary democracy, shows their ultimate commitment towards our process.

For this same democracy, comrades, such as we are at the genesis of creating here in Grenada, is the greatest threat to the bogus, artificial, and hypocritical lie of democracy that imperialism suspends over the world to cover up the repulsion and shame of its own bloodsoaked crimes. □

Socialist arrested in Santo Domingo

On November 30, Claudio Tavez, a leader of the Revolutionary Workers League (LRT) in the Dominican Republic, was arrested by the Department of Secret Services of the Dominican police force.

He was arrested when the police raided the house in Santo Domingo where Eduardo Aguilar, official representative of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador, lives. Money, records, tapes, posters, and literature were taken from Aguilar's room.

Aguilar has been harassed by Dominican authorities who have delayed normalizing his visa.

Tavez, who was on a personal visit to Aguilar's home, was arrested during the raid. Aguilar was not at home at the time.

Members of the LRT are urging that telegrams demanding Tavez's release and an end to the persecution of Aguilar be immediately sent to: General José Paulino Reyes de Leon, at the Cuartel General de la Policía Nacional. Copies of all telegrams should also be sent to Periodico Nuevo Diario, Calle José Contreras; or Periodico El Sol, Kilometro 6-1/2 Carretera Sanchez, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

The fight for peace today

Antinuclear protests and Central America

[The following editorial appeared in the December 11 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

In mid-November, thousands participated in U.S. campus teach-ins against the threat of nuclear war. Thousands more have demonstrated in this country against the MX missile, the neutron bomb, and the draft.

Encouraged by the massive marches in Europe against U.S. nuclear weapons, these protests in the United States signal deep concern with Washington's escalating militarization and the threat it poses to humanity.

Today, that threat is posed in an immediate way in Central America and the Caribbean. The U.S. government openly states it is preparing military moves to turn back the popular revolutions there. Alerting opponents of U.S. nuclear weapons to this danger can help mobilize new forces against U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Grenada, and Cuba.

On November 30, the United States and the Soviet Union began talks on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe. Two weeks earlier, President Reagan had given a speech posing as a man of peace. But Reagan had insisted that the Soviet Union *remove* its existing medium-range missiles from Europe in exchange for the United States *not expanding* its own missiles on the continent.

These events received extensive, front-page coverage in the capitalist media.

Steps toward war in Central America

By contrast, the very real steps toward a U.S. military move in Central America have been downplayed by the same media.

But there is no question that the plans are proceeding. On November 30, White House counsel Edwin Meese again confirmed that a blockade of Nicaragua or Cuba — an act of war — is one of several military options the United States is considering.

Reagan's nuclear saber-rattling in Europe, combined with his hypocritical talk of slowing down the arms race, is an integral part of the military preparations in Central America.

The expanding U.S. arms budget, talk of a "limited" nuclear war in Europe, and suggestions of dropping a "demonstration" bomb there are all aimed at getting ready to go to war. But the immediate threat is not a nuclear war with the Soviet Union, nor Washington being able to achieve "first strike" capacity in the near future. Reaching that capacity would require a massive diversion of resources with a

far greater impact on the U.S. economy than even the current military spending has produced.

Rather, Washington is attempting to put itself in a better position to wage war against the colonial revolution, which is making its greatest headway today in Central America and the Caribbean.

U.S. rulers preparing new colonial wars

Cuban leader Fidel Castro pointed to this in an October 24 speech: "Why do they want these arms, not just nuclear arms, but conventional ones as well?" Castro asked.

"The enormous cost of the arms race is not only the result of strategic nuclear weapons but also of a considerable increase in conventional weapons: bringing battleships back into active service, building more aircraft carriers, more landing craft.

"In short, the United States is preparing for a policy of interventionism throughout the world."

Yes, the U.S. rulers do intend to fight wars. And they are building up their armed might in Europe as further nuclear blackmail against the Soviet Union, in order to facilitate the use of the massive U.S. military forces against the colonial revolution.

Today, Washington needs to fight the same kind of wars it has fought ever since World War II — against workers and peasants around the world trying to throw off imperialist and capitalist domination.

In the last thirty-six years the United States has gone to war against Korea and Vietnam; it has sent troops to Lebanon, the Dominican Republic, and more recently, Iran; it has backed mercenary invasions of Guatemala and Cuba.

Today, Washington's sights are fixed on Central America and the Caribbean. But the rest of the world is not "at peace" either. Washington has stepped up its economic strangulation of Vietnam; its surveillance flights and provocations against North Korea; its threats against Libya and Iran; and its support to South Africa's murderous raids on Angola and Mozambique, and to Israel's terror against the Arab peoples.

Roots of war

The roots of war today and the path toward peace were laid out by Castro in his speech to the conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in September. Castro pointed to the gross disparity of living conditions between the industrialized capitalist nations and the colonial and semicolonial world. In the latter, he reported, there are 570 million undermoun-

ished; 800 million illiterate adults; 1.5 billion totally lacking medical care; 1.3 billion whose annual income is less than \$90; and 1.1 billion unemployed.

"On innumerable occasions we have insisted that what underlies the issue of peace — a cardinal concern of all peoples of the world — is the economic and social injustice prevailing on our planet," said Castro.

"There will be no solution to the tensions, contradictions, and political conflicts that threaten and perturb international relations, until a new economic order is established in the world to promote the peoples' all-round development and reduce inequality among nations.

"The current world economic situation is characterized by the notorious inequality existing between developed and underdeveloped countries. Hundreds of millions of human beings, in countries comprising more than three-fourths of the world population, live in poverty, go hungry and are the victims of illness and ignorance.

"As long as this dramatic situation suffered by the great majority of mankind is not solved through the implementation of new world economic relations based on equity and justice, little progress will be made towards effective and lasting peace."

Mobilize against immediate danger

Today, the workers and peasants of Central America and the Caribbean are on the front lines of that battle for "effective and lasting peace" — in their struggles to get the imperialist boot off their necks so they can achieve a social and economic order based on their own needs, not on private profit. The coming confrontation there with U.S. imperialism has enormous ramifications for the millions who have marched in Europe and the United States for peace and against the threat of nuclear war. They have a direct stake in mobilizing against the immediate danger of war that exists today: first and foremost, the preparations now underway for U.S. military aggression against Central America and the Caribbean.

The greatest responsibility falls on the U.S. working class. The revolutions in the colonial and semicolonial world, and the rising combativity of labor from Western Europe to Poland to Japan, are buying time for the U.S. working class to organize itself into a political power that can challenge the barbaric war makers on their home territory and end once and for all their threat to annihilate the world.

Ultimately, it is the U.S. workers who must disarm the Reagans, Haigs, and the capitalist class they serve by abolishing capitalist rule and establishing a workers government. There is no other road to world peace.

Crucial steps along that road can and must be taken today by sounding the alarm on U.S. military plans in Central America, explaining how these plans mesh with Washington's escalation of the arms race, and uniting all those who want peace in the biggest campaign possible against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. □

400,000 protest NATO missiles

Biggest demonstration in Dutch history

By Robert Went

AMSTERDAM — Saturday, November 21 saw the biggest demonstration ever held in the Netherlands. More than 400,000 people gathered in Amsterdam to protest the plan to station forty-eight U.S. Cruise missiles on Dutch soil. The turnout was especially significant considering that Holland's population is less than 14 million.

The newspapers and politicians had been predicting that between 100,000 and 200,000 would participate. But the local committees knew that the real figure would be much higher, based on their experiences in the weeks leading up to the demonstration.

In Nijmegen, a town of 130,000 people, the antimissiles coalition began by ordering forty buses, but ended up filling eighty-five buses and several special trains. The coalition in Leiden, with less than 100,000 inhabitants, started by reserving fifteen buses, a figure most activists felt was quite optimistic. But it turned out that Leiden sent fifty-one busloads of demonstrators to Amsterdam; and thousands more people went to the demonstration by train.

In small towns of less than 10,000, where five to ten people might normally go to a national demonstration, local committees filled two, three, or even five buses.

In fact, a few days before the demonstration every available bus in the entire country was rented, and organizers had to order more from neighboring Belgium.

Amsterdam packed with demonstrators

The demonstrators assembled in a big square in central Amsterdam. But long before the march was scheduled to start, the square was completely packed, as were all the streets leading into it. When it became clear how large the demonstration would be, the organizers tried to accommodate the throng by increasing the length of the march from six kilometers to nine, and by opening up a second route of march through the city.

As demonstrators were already marching out of the square, the radio reported that in Utrecht, in central Holland, 15,000 people were still waiting for trains to take them to the march.

Even with two march routes being used simultaneously, it was impossible for tens of thousands of people to move out of the square. The city proved too small to accommodate all the antimissiles demonstrators.

Everywhere one looked, streams of marchers were converging from side streets. It was a sea of banners of all sizes, shapes, and

colors.

A high point of the march was the spirited contingent of some 500 active-duty soldiers and reservists who marched in their uniforms to the cheers of the rest of the crowd. (See box.)

Union leader: 'Jobs, not bombs'

Another key component of the march was participation of trade unionists. Initially the 1-million-member Confederation of the Netherlands Trade Union Movement (FNV) had tried to avoid taking an official stand on the November 21 demonstration. But as a result of pressure from the ranks to come out against the new missiles, the union leaders shifted their position, calling on FNV members to demonstrate as individuals in Amsterdam. (See "The Campaign Against NATO Missiles," by Robert Went, *Intercontinental Press*, November 23, 1981.)

Because of pressure from the ranks, the FNV chairman, Wim Kok, who also heads the European Trade Union Confederation, decided to speak at the demonstration, although in an individual rather than official capacity.

In his address, Kok adopted the slogan "Jobs, not bombs," which was first put forward by the International Communist League (IKB — the Dutch section of the Fourth International) as a way to link the question of arms spending to rising unemployment and the austerity drive of the government and employers. The IKB had publicized the slogan by issuing a pamphlet by the same name and running a parliamentary campaign around that theme.

The fact that Kok adopted that slogan, although for his own reasons and giving it his own interpretation, will make it easier to develop a campaign around this theme inside the union movement.

Although the level of anti-imperialist consciousness among most of the demonstrators is still not high, the crowd meant business and let other speakers know when they were displeased. For example, Aad Nuis spoke for the left-liberal Democrats '66, which is one of the three parties in the government and is also the party of Defense Minister Hans van Mierlo. When Nuis told the crowd he had confidence in the government, he was shouted down and was barely able to finish his speech.

Wim Meyer, a parliamentary leader of the social-democratic Labor Party (PvdA), which is part of the government coalition, got the same reaction when he insisted that no government in which the PvdA participated would tolerate the new missiles on Dutch soil.

Just a few days before his speech, Meyer

had supported a motion in parliament in which the three government parties stated that it would not be helpful to NATO to rescind the December 12, 1979, decision to place the 572 U.S. missiles in Western Europe. In a cynical move to satisfy opponents of the missile plan, Meyer also placed a motion before parliament on the same day that expressed the opposite sentiment, a motion that was rejected.

For 'peace' or against NATO missiles?

Only hours after the demonstration ended, politicians of all stripes began claiming that the marchers actually supported their policies.

Even the Christian Democratic prime minister Andreas van Agt, whose party supports the missile deployment plan, declared that he was in solidarity with the demonstrators "and with the millions who also want peace but did not demonstrate." The foreign minister, who was impressed by Reagan's speech three days earlier, characterized the march as a big "demonstration for peace."

These politicians tried to cover over the fact that the march was *not* simply for peace in the abstract, but was aimed specifically against the NATO missile deployment plan.

The biggest bourgeois daily, *De Telegraaf*, which had been issuing warnings about the demonstration for weeks in advance, abruptly changed its tune and carried a headline "Impressive demonstration for peace." Another big right-wing paper, the *Algemeen Dagblad*, carried the headline "300,000 demonstrate against all nuclear weapons."

Radio and television commentaries also tried to stress that the demonstration was not simply against NATO, but against the Warsaw Pact as well.

Diversion of Geneva talks

Aside from the most right-wing parties, which simply took their distance from the whole demonstration, the other big political parties are all trying to divert and disorient the antimissiles movement into support for the arms negotiations between representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union that begin in Geneva on November 30.

By lining up behind Reagan's November 18 call for the Soviets to dismantle all their existing SS-20, SS-5, and SS-4 missiles in return for a U.S. agreement not to place 572 new missiles in Western Europe — a proposal they know Moscow cannot accept — these politicians hope to shift the onus of blame for the arms race to the Soviet Union and thereby defuse the anti-NATO-missiles movement.

They will have considerable difficulty, how-

ever, in carrying out this strategy. For example, many people in the Netherlands view U.S. intervention in El Salvador as the beginning of a new Vietnam. In addition, the warlike language of "peace negotiators" like Secretary of State Alexander Haig has not gone unnoticed.

Furthermore, although all the bourgeois and social-democratic politicians hailed Reagan's proposal as a great "breakthrough," the peace organizations and the smaller left-wing parties recognized and stated that it was a fraud.

In coming months we will see more and more attempts to turn the antimissiles movement away from its focus against the installation of 572 U.S. missiles in Western Europe and toward the slogan of "negotiations." But the size of the Amsterdam demonstration, coming only three days after Reagan's speech, shows that this will not be easily accomplished.

Where the movement goes from here

The International Communist League feels that the main thrust of the work of activists in the antiwar movement must be to stress demands for unilateral steps for disarmament. While a general anti-NATO struggle and anti-NATO propaganda remains important, the key task in the Netherlands must be to focus on forcing the Dutch government to unilaterally refuse to take the forty-eight Cruise missiles assigned to it by NATO.

This is the best way to prevent the movement from being channeled by the government into support for arms reduction negotiations, which NATO and the Reagan administration are using as a smokescreen to try to push through the 1979 deployment decision.

The biggest weakness of the movement at present is its political unclarity. Most demonstrators and most political organizations are demanding concrete steps toward disarmament, but they aim their demands at both Washington and Moscow.

This includes the Dutch Communist Party, which calls for the withdrawal of both the NATO missiles and the Soviet SS-20s, a position put forward at the Amsterdam demonstration by CP member of parliament Joop Wolff.

Most of the demonstrators do not yet see that the NATO missiles are only one part of a much bigger U.S. and NATO arms buildup that includes the creation of a first-strike nuclear attack capability against the Soviet Union and the development of a Rapid Deployment Force to intervene throughout the world to roll back revolutionary struggles and protect imperialist interests.

Revolutionary socialists must therefore carry out a broad educational campaign. These missiles fit into the overall world capitalist crisis, and into the attacks on the living standards of the working class and the imperialist militarization drive that flows from this crisis.

Turn to workers and youth

The Dutch movement against the missiles has another big weakness. Thus far the movement has not been built in a major way in the

unions and factories or among the youth.

While all commentators noted the high proportion of young people at the demonstration in Amsterdam, the bulk of the participants were in their twenties and early thirties. Fewer than 10 percent were in their teens. It is not

that teenagers are less interested in the missiles question, but rather that the campaign did not actively focus on the schools and other places where young people congregate or work.

Where concrete efforts were made to involve young people, the results were success-

Soldiers in uniform join march

The national Soldiers Against Nuclear Weapons committee called on active-duty troops to take part in the November 21 Amsterdam antimissiles march in their uniforms. In addition, a group called Mobilization '81 urged reservists to do the same.

These two appeals resulted in what was undoubtedly the most impressive contingent. Marching under the banner "NATO Soldiers Against Nuclear Weapons" were 120 active-duty troops and 380 reservists in uniform.

Demonstrating in uniform is especially dangerous for soldiers on active duty. A few days before the march, Defense Minister van Mierlo warned that any soldiers who marched in uniform would be punished.

In fact, four Dutch soldiers who participated in uniform in the big antimissiles march in Bonn, West Germany, on October 10 were penalized. One was sentenced to eight days in the stockade and the other three were given punitive transfers to places where they are totally isolated from other draftees.

The Dutch government tried in various ways to prevent soldiers from taking part in the demonstration. On the day of the Amsterdam march, many soldiers were restricted to barracks. Others were ordered to send their uniforms to the laundry.

An atmosphere of intense intimidation reigned. Military intelligence made it known that photographers would be sent to the demonstration to take pictures of all those in uniform.

Despite these measures, 120 soldiers were able to take part. Their contingent was marked by its enthusiasm and spirit. It was applauded by the other demonstrators and by those watching the march pass. Some of the draftees told the press that, as in Bonn, many onlookers had tears in their eyes when they saw the soldiers pass by with their slogans against war and nuclear weapons.

One of the important tasks of the peace movement will now be to defend these soldiers against any attempts to punish them for their participation in the antimissiles protest.

—R.W.



Sign on November 21 march says "NATO Soldiers Against Nuclear Weapons."

ful. For example, a chapter of Rebel, the revolutionary youth organization, organized a "Rock Against the Missiles" concert in a small town of 6,000. The concert was built by leafletting schools in all the neighboring villages and attracted almost 300 high school students.

In Nijmegen a special youth meeting featuring a movie, discussion, and party was organized by Youth Against the Missiles, a committee that Rebel helped to launch. That meeting drew 150 young people.

Many other opportunities exist for similar activities. The problem is to focus the attention of the antimissiles movement on specific activities aimed at involving young people and at building the campaign in the schools, factories, and unions.

In the coming period, it is essential that the campaign be maintained and extended. For that reason, the local committees that came together to build the November 21 demonstration should be kept functioning.

The best focuses for activity are the call by the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament for an international day of actions and the defense of soldiers who face victimization for demonstrating in uniform.

There will be resistance to both these proposals from some of the organizations involved in the campaign. Some worry that their organizational grip on the antimissiles campaign would be weakened by broadening it to new sectors of the population. Others do not see the

need for a new common focus so soon after the success of the Amsterdam demonstration.

The coming months will give a better idea of where the movement will go from here. But one thing is certain, it will continue. Even without the focus of an international day of protest or a national campaign to defend the soldiers, the discussions in unions, factories, and schools will go on.

While unemployment rises, while the austerity drive continues, while the U.S. intervenes in El Salvador and threatens Cuba and Nicaragua, while the threat of war exists in the Middle East, while the fraud of the "negotiations" on arms continues, it will be difficult for the bourgeoisie to destroy this mass antiwar movement. □

Iran

Open letter demands Baraheni's release

'He has placed his pen in service of the oppressed'

[Dr. Reza Baraheni, a celebrated Iranian writer, scholar, and poet, was arrested on October 12 in Tehran. The charges against him and the place of his detention remain as yet unknown.]

[The following open letter in defense of Baraheni was written by two well-known Iranian writers, Mahmoud Enayat and Shams Al-Ahmad. Al-Ahmad's brother was murdered by the shah's regime.]

[Both writers are supporters of the Iranian revolution, as is Baraheni, and their defense of Baraheni is a major step forward in the campaign to win his release.]

[Supporters of the Iranian revolution are being urged to send letters and telegrams of protest to President Ali Khamenei, Tehran, Iran; or to Prime Minister Hossein Mossavi, Majlis Building, Tehran, Iran.]

[Copies should be sent to the newspaper *Jomhuri-e-Eslami*, Tehran, Iran, and to *Kargar*, P.O. Box 43/174, Postal Area 14, Tehran, Iran.]

[The following is the text of the letter by Enayat and Al-Ahmad.]

* * *

In the name of the Most Merciful,

The Honorable Hojatolislam Mousavi-Tabrizi, chief prosecutor of the Islamic Revolutionary Courts:

As you know, for reasons the responsible authorities have yet to announce, Dr. Reza Baraheni, a writer, scholar, and assistant professor at the University of Tehran, has been under arrest since October 12, 1981.

For the sake of our profession and in accord with the duties bestowed upon every responsible human being in such instances, we feel

compelled to come forward and bring to your respected attention some issues in relation to this apprehension, based on our familiarity with his past struggles, as well as the evidence available from his political life and the facts we have at hand.

Dr. Reza Baraheni has taught at and served the University of Tehran for the past seventeen years. He has been one of the fiercest opponents of the Pahlavi dictatorship, and he enjoys a special international reputation in this regard.

In 1973 this militant author was arrested and tortured by SAVAK. His release came about

thanks to a broad international defense campaign that included many distinguished and democratic writers, and international opponents of the Pahlavi autocracy. After his release from prison he was forced to live in exile in the United States.

During the years 1973 to 1978, Dr. Baraheni was the chairperson of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran [CAIFI]. In that capacity he conducted an extensive struggle to expose the crimes of the Pahlavi regime and to enlist international support for the cause of the political prisoners of the deposed shah. His political activities in this period brought the just call of thousands of victims of SAVAK to the ears of millions of Americans and Europeans who respected freedom.

Following the overthrow of the degenerate monarchy, and ever since the nation of Iran — shoulder to shoulder with militant and revolutionary clergy — rose up to protect and defend independence and freedom, and found fulfillment of its anticolonial aspirations and yearnings in the establishment of the Islamic Republic under the leadership of Imam Khomeini, Dr. Baraheni has relentlessly defended the principles of the revolution against its enemies and ill-wishers as well as against all degenerate and aggressive foreign powers.

He has placed his pen, as always, in the service of the oppressed, in defense of the revolution, and in uncompromising opposition to world imperialism.

With such a history, his arrest naturally came as a sordid and unexpected surprise to those who expect the implementation of the principles of justice and integrity under the Islamic Republic, to those who have been longing for years for emancipation from autocratic regimes, and to those who have been yearning

Devlin McAliskey calls for Baraheni's release

[The following telegram was sent to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and Prime Minister Hossein Mossavi on November 30 by Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, an internationally known leader of the Irish freedom struggle.]

* * *

Dr. Reza Baraheni was arrested on October 12. I had the privilege of speaking with Dr. Baraheni in 1976 in the international campaign against SAVAK, the shah, and American imperialism in Iran. As a supporter of the revolution, I find it difficult to understand how such a man is now in prison and ask you to release him unharmed.

Each day of his imprisonment reflects not upon his integrity but on that of your government. What was truth yesterday cannot be subversion today.

for years for the disappearance of degenerate former regimes. This is particularly evident since the arrest of Dr. Baraheni has not been officially announced.

Even if we overlook the question of professional rights [of writers], what is imperatively posed is the question of the implementation of the law. And under the present circumstances, this is a goal that people from all groups, all walks of life, all schools of thought must take keen interest in achieving. This is particularly so since the current year has been proclaimed "the year of implementation of the law."

In regard to the protection of the integral rights of the people, nothing is more eloquent and perceptive than Articles 2, 22, 32, and 37 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic.

Article 2 of the constitution strictly emphasizes the "overall protection of the rights of all people, men or women, the provision of just judicial security for all, and the equality of all people before the law."

Article 22 states, the "integrity, life, property, and rights of people are assured, unless the law provides otherwise."

Article 32 of the constitution emphasizes that "the arrest of a person is not permitted unless in accordance with due process of law," and "in case of arrest, the arrested person must be notified immediately of the charges in writing, citing the reasons for the arrest."

Whereas the preservation of the law's honor and dignity is, in the first place, the result of the precise implementation of the law's stated principles and respect for its human and Islamic fundamentals;

Whereas the correct and precise application of the law not only encourages the ordinary citizen to respect that law, but also provides a worthy example of a genuine and democratic type of government to other nations throughout the world;

Whereas world imperialism and its allies masquerading under various types of regimes are preparing plans to enslave the oppressed nations and maintain them in misery; and with the help of their propaganda mouthpieces will use every excuse to attack Islam and revolutionary and anticolonial governments, and will use every violation of human principles as a pretext for further attacks and aggression upon the rights and freedoms of nations;

Whereas the carrying out of Imam Khomeini's order to nullify the propaganda campaign of the imperialists and Zionists depends to a considerable extent on the proper implementation of the constitution and respect for the honor and the life and properties of our citizens by responsible governmental authorities;

Whereas the arrest of Dr. Baraheni and similar persons who, according to available records and evidence, have been sincere supporters of the revolution and staunch opponents of imperialism will only feed the poisonous propaganda machines of the enemies of the revolution;

And finally whereas according to Article 37 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic, "before the law, everyone is innocent until

proven guilty in the court of law," certainly the continued imprisonment of a person who, according to the law, has not committed an unlawful act, will not be approved by those who believe in the law;

Therefore, for these reasons, we ask that the honorable authorities not accede to the con-

tinued imprisonment of Dr. Reza Baraheni, and we ask that within your legal and religious jurisdictions you make arrangements for his release.

Respectfully,
Mahmoud Enayat
Shams Al-Ahmad

Honduras

New government, old policies

Suazo pledges to strengthen ties with Washington

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA — Roberto Suazo Córdoba, presidential candidate of the Honduran Liberal Party, was the winner November 29 in the first national election in Honduras since a military coup in 1972.

The current regime of Gen. Policarpo Paz García is to step down January 27, 1982. Suazo received some 650,000 votes, about 54 percent of the total.

Neither Suazo nor his chief opponent, National Party candidate Ricardo Zúñiga, presented any programs for dealing with the country's serious social problems during the three-month campaign.

Honduras is the second-poorest country in the Americas, following Haiti. Some 70 percent of its 3.5 million inhabitants are peasants, and 65 percent of the population is illiterate.

There is an extreme imbalance in land-holdings, with 98 percent either part of very large properties (latifundia) or tiny individual plots (minifundia).

Some 10 percent of the economically active population is unemployed, and an estimated 45 percent are underemployed. The UN's Economic Commission for Latin America has estimated that 65 percent of Honduras's people live in conditions of extreme poverty.

Most of the country's departments (provinces) have no hospitals, only a handful of health centers.

The national economy is also in a severe crisis, with this year's budget deficit estimated at \$100 million, and the balance of payments deficit estimated at \$330 million. The entire 1982 budget is expected to be only about \$700 million.

Following the election Suazo pledged to maintain good relations with all neighboring countries. These include the bloody dictatorships in Guatemala and El Salvador, as well as the revolutionary government in Nicaragua.

However, Suazo had nothing to say about the murderous raids into Nicaragua that have been carried out by rightist exiles based in Honduras. Thousands of former members of overthrown Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza's National Guard operate out of Honduras.

The Honduran army has also participated in attacks against Nicaragua. Tens of thousands of people demonstrated last May Day in the Honduran capital against the army's provocations against Nicaragua.

While remaining silent on these issues, Suazo did pledge to strengthen the Honduran army and to prevent the "subversion" — that is, the revolutionary struggles — in Guatemala and El Salvador from reaching Honduras.

He also pledged to seek closer links with Washington, which he described as one of the defenders of world peace. Honduras has already received at least \$10 million in U.S. military aid this year, and U.S. military advisers are assigned to the Honduran army.

U.S. military personnel in Honduras have participated in joint actions with Salvadoran forces along the Salvadoran-Honduran border. Hundreds of Salvadoran refugees have been murdered in these military sweeps.

It is already clear that Suazo, while doing nothing to alleviate the poverty of the Honduran masses, will be continuing the repressive policies aimed at those who rebel against intolerable conditions. □

Send out grandpa?

A U.S. government study has come up with a way to limit long-term radiation casualties in the event of a nuclear war. According to the Department of Energy, survivors of a nuclear attack should send old people out for food and water.

The study maintains that "older people will come to the end of their natural life spans before reaching the end of the risk plateau. Thus the same [radiation] exposure may produce fewer total excess cancers in this group than within a younger segment of the population."

The Department of Energy, which oversees all production of nuclear weapons, contracted the study out to the Union Carbide Corporation. It was published in the September issue of *Health Physics*.

The study, however, does not address the question of what to do if grandpa refuses to go.

Mitterrand's first six months in power

Interview with Alain Krivine of the LCR

[The following is an interview with Alain Krivine, presidential candidate in the first round of the French elections last spring for the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International.

[In the final round of those elections on May 10, Socialist Party candidate François Mitterrand was elected to a seven-year term as president. In parliamentary elections in June, the Socialist Party won a majority of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

[Mitterrand named a cabinet with a majority of Socialist ministers, four ministers from the Communist Party, two from the bourgeois Left Radicals and one from the left Gaullists, also a bourgeois formation.

[The interview with Krivine was conducted November 14 in Paris. At that time, a wave of strikes and factory occupations had broken out throughout the country, involving workers at the Renault and Peugeot auto plants, the railroads, and many other industries.

[At the root of these struggles is the deepening economic crisis. The unemployment rate is 8.8 percent, and prices had risen 13.9 percent in the previous twelve months. There was also an outcry against the Mitterrand government's proposal to raise the social security tax on workers by 1 percent.

[The interview was conducted in French by Cindy Jaquith, coeditor of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. What is the significance of the Mitterrand victory?

Answer. The victory was not expected by the majority of workers. The May 10 election came in the midst of a period of deep division in the workers movement. There was a fantastic state of rivalry between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party on the political level, and in the factories, an unprecedented degree of division which had reached the level of open warfare between the two big trade union federations, the CGT and the CFDT.¹

Despite this, we saw the victory of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party on May 10. We think there were two basic factors behind this victory.

First, it shows that the desire for unity in the ranks of the workers was much stronger than the divisions among the party and union lead-

erships. There was massive voting by Communist voters for Socialist candidates and by Socialist voters for Communists.

The second factor behind the victory is the tremendous desire for change within the workers movement.

May 10 reflected disgust with the right-wing government of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. I think that the vote was not a vote for the SP's program. The majority of workers saw a vote for the SP as a "useful vote," as the only way to get rid of Giscard and the right.

This is very important, because certain people abroad viewed the vote for the SP as the beginning of a process of "social democratization" of the French working class, as exists in England and West Germany. We think this analysis is absolutely false.

We feel that in France in the years to come we will see a very important growth in struggles, which will probably lead to a decisive confrontation between the employers and the working class. Therefore, we feel that a revolutionary period could be opening up in France.

For at least some years to come it will not be possible to stabilize, to achieve a long-term status quo in the relationship of forces between the social classes.

There is no possibility for the right to return to power through a normal alternation of governments. An eventual victory for the right will have to take place through a decisive defeat of the working class.

Q. How does the LCR characterize the Mitterrand government?

A. The new government is basically a government of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party with the presence of a small bourgeois party, the Left Radicals. So in its composition it is a class-collaborationist government since there is a bourgeois wing, even if it is only a "shadow of the bourgeoisie," as Leon Trotsky said.

But in its essence it cannot be compared to the Popular Front government in 1936.² At that time the Radicals were a major force in the French bourgeoisie, while today they are totally insignificant.

2. The Popular Front government came to power in France in 1936 on the crest of a massive workers upsurge. In the spring 1936 elections, the Socialists, Communists, and bourgeois Radical Socialists together won a majority of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. With their majority, the three parties formed a class-collaborationist government with Socialist Léon Blum as premier.

No significant faction of the bourgeoisie supports the Mitterrand government. The inclusion of two Left Radicals and one left Gaullist in the cabinet is indicative of the desires of the CP and SP, not of the bourgeoisie.

It is also a class-collaborationist government in terms of its program as well as its composition.

Therefore the government is not easily able to grant the main demands of the workers. If we take all the actions carried out in the first months of the new government, we can say that in a number of areas — in general those that are least costly and that do not challenge the power of the employers — the government has taken some measures that are in fact positive and are seen as such by the workers.

These include the changes that have taken place in the television system, a series of laws increasing civil liberties in France with the dissolution of the state security court, the freeing of all political prisoners, and the end of the expulsion of immigrant workers.

On the other hand, with regard to the economic crisis, the workers feel that the government is trying to simultaneously please the employers and the working class.

The government today explains that given the economic crisis, it is necessary in France to establish a vast national front of solidarity, including the employers and the working class. The government tells the workers that this is their government but that they must be patient since everything cannot be done today, while it daily calls on the employers to participate in the economic revival.

The government tells the workers it will try to raise the lowest wages and create several tens of thousands of jobs at a time when unemployment is around 2 million in France. It tells the employers that they will get tax breaks, for example, to allow them to regain their confidence and carry out an investment policy that will create jobs.

The government's policy today is beginning to pose very serious problems for the working class. For example, the recent measures concerning social security are not much different from those attempted by the previous government. The financing of the deficit in the social security system is to be taken out of the wages of the workers. This is a very important question in France because ever since the social security system was set up, it has been considered the principal gain won by the working class. Every government that has tried to attack social security has been confronted by a general strike.

This government's attempt to attack social

1. The CGT (General Confederation of Labor) is the French union federation led by the Communist Party. The CFDT (French Democratic Federation of Labor) is led by the Socialist Party.

security has caused deep discontent within the working class. When you follow a policy of class collaboration that aims to satisfy everyone, in the last analysis only the bosses are satisfied.

Q. How has the French bourgeoisie responded to the new government?

A. Up to now the employers have not been hit too hard by the government. The five industrial groups nationalized, for example, were enormously compensated. The shareholders were given 35 billion francs.³

Despite this, the attitude of the bosses is increasingly violent, increasingly shrill. Not because they are worried about governmental measures, but because the employers have never had any faith in this government, since it is basically composed of workers parties. They are not worried about the policies of the government, but about the social dynamic that lies behind the government and the confidence that the victory gave the workers.

The employers are systematically boycotting and sabotaging the government's plans and are following the same policies in the factories as they did under the previous government — to maximize their profit by attacking working conditions.

There are various aspects of this outlook: the massive export of capital (according to official figures, more than 35 billion francs have left France since May 10); massive layoffs in the factories and continued plant closings; and an intransigent attitude on all levels in the factories.

The employers know that in the immediate future they cannot get rid of this government. But their policy is to exert constant pressure on the government to force it to capitulate. And the more concessions the government makes to the employers, the more the employers raise their demands.

Today there is no possibility of the right providing an alternative government because the political parties of the bourgeoisie are in the midst of a crisis.

The rightist parties in France were primarily based on their relationship to the state apparatus. Once they lost control of the state apparatus they reverted to what they are today, parties with a very weak social base. The result is that today these parties are deeply divided between Giscardists and Gaullists.

Because of the total crisis of the bourgeois political parties, the employers themselves have come to the fore. Their organization, the CNPF,⁴ today systematically intervenes through use of television and radio as the bourgeoisie's only political means of expression.

Therefore the workers today more and more directly have to confront the bosses and their organization, which is even reflected in the arena of slogans. The workers don't attack the

3. One franc = US\$0.18.

4. The CNPF is the National Council of French Employers.



Attack on social security has aroused protest.

bourgeois parties as such, but rather the CNPF, which they see as the basic opponent.

Q. What is the feeling of the workers toward the government now?

A. In the factories and in the working class there are still those who think that the government should have a "period of grace," in François Mitterrand's words, which is to be expected. After such a victory there is a climate of enthusiasm, a climate of expectation. Many workers think the government needs time to carry out their demands.

Before the workers go into struggle against the bosses, they want to wait and let "their" government do things.

This "period of grace" is now largely coming to an end for two reasons: first, because the attack by the bosses is very, very strong; and second, because the government policy is beginning to cause growing discontent among the workers.

Q. Can you describe the strikes and other protests breaking out now?

A. The present situation is rather complex. On the one hand we are beginning to see strikes and demonstrations throughout the country. But at the same time, the illusions in the government remain very strong. It would be absolutely wrong to say that the majority of workers no longer have confidence in the government.

But the May 10 electoral victory also encourages the workers' self-confidence against the bosses. The workers are starting to react to the offensive of the bosses, especially in the absence of any activity on their behalf by the government. All the struggles today are directed against the bosses. None are directed against the government.

The struggles now taking place are totally uncoordinated, uncentralized. They are around working conditions, the pace of work, jobs and layoffs, prices, the standard of living, and in-

creasingly around the demand for a reduction of hours as a way to lower unemployment.

Struggles broke out first in the best-organized sectors of the workers movement, such as the Renault factories and the railroads, both of which are nationalized. In recent weeks they have spread to the private sector.

We are also beginning to see forms of self-organization. Very often workers sweep over the trade-union leaders and take charge of the struggles themselves. This is quite new in France.

In several factories, once the strikes broke out, workshop delegates were elected or workshop councils established. These are workers who are directly tied to the rank and file or on the assembly line and are the direct representatives of the strikers. The ranks have sometimes been able to get these representatives into the negotiations alongside the regular union delegates.

About a month ago there was a strike by rail workers in Paris in which the workers blocked the trains. Tens of thousands of workers from the suburbs were stranded.

The strikers took over the station's public address system and directly explained the reasons for the strike to the stranded workers. Then the strikers explained they had decided to allow the trains to roll again, but with crews made up entirely of strikers, in order to get the stranded workers home.

Q. What changes have taken place in the Socialist Party and in the Communist Party?

A. The SP is having real trouble with its ranks. It has recruited 50,000 new members since May 10. With the exception of some government functionaries motivated by opportunism, the bulk of the new recruits are young people, white-collar workers, students, teachers, and a relatively few blue-collar workers.

These new members are very combative. They come to the Socialist Party not because they are social democrats, but because they feel that it is the only way to activate the change.

The Socialist Party, at its congress which just took place, saw a strong push to the left in its ranks. Within the Socialist Party we are seeing the beginnings of the embryo of a left opposition.

One point is important to stress. While the Socialist Party has become the number one party of the working class on the electoral level, the Communist Party continues to have a far larger working-class base and a much stronger organization.

If we neglect this distinction we would make a big mistake about the relationship of forces within the working class.

The Communist Party is going through a crisis as serious as any that it has seen since the signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact.

You can imagine the turmoil in the CP when it goes from a Union of the Left policy [i.e., electoral coalition] with the SP; switches overnight and denounces the SP; and then swings

back to a totally pro-SP policy.

The CP had to sign a terrible pact to enter the government, a solidarity pact that involves two things: total solidarity at the governmental level, and total solidarity at the factory level. In line with their commitment, the Communist ministers have made no public criticisms of the government. They make proposals within the government but publicly make no criticism.

But the CP as such is making some slight criticisms today. For example, the CP is against the law on social security. The CP ministers accept the law, but the CP members of parliament say they are against it.

This is a highly stylized operation that does not have any practical repercussions. They criticize some government measures, but this does not lead to any activities by the CP. They do not mobilize the workers.

The CP has even begun to attack some strikes as they did during the Popular Front and in the period right after liberation from the Nazis. Charles Fiterman, CP minister of transport, recently attacked some strikes that took place within his ministry as "ultraleft."

In the factories and unions, the CP is completely divided between workers who follow the party leaders and those who follow the more combative elements. In the unions we are seeing the development of a left opposition in both big federations, which is something new in France, and the appearance of the nucleus of a class-struggle tendency, at an early stage of course, but on a scale never before seen in France.

This opposition includes thousands and thousands of workers and trade-union cadres. While it does not have a national structure, it exists in all the industry federations of the unions today and includes Communist oppositionists, SP activists, members of the LCR, and many others who are in no organization.

We view the emergence of what might be called a class-struggle and united tendency in the unions as a decisive development.

Q. What is the political perspective of the LCR in this situation?

A. Politics in this period means taking the illusions of the workers into account and trying to dispel them. It does not mean viewing the government today as the adversary. We don't put forward the slogan of kicking out the government.

That would be totally absurd, irresponsible, and would not be understood. In the immediate future there is still no credible working-class alternative. Our general perspective of a workers government is correct, is a compass, but cannot yet be concretized for the great mass of the workers.

Our entire policy at this point is to concentrate our fire on the bosses and on class collaboration. We try to orient the workers as a whole against the employers, against the CNPF, within the framework of a united battle around specific demands that respond to the economic crisis.

We put forward this frontal policy against

the bosses in such a way as to encourage united struggle, and try to develop all the forms of workers self-organization. At the same time, while our main fire is aimed at the bosses, we criticize all the government's class-collaborationist measures.

The results of this policy are beginning to be seen in strikes where political parties like the CP and SP, which are part of the government, are paralyzed, while the policy we put forward is beginning to see some success.

I don't want to exaggerate the scope, but in many factories for the first time members of the LCR are recognized as leaders of the strikes. This was the case in the strike at Renault Sandouville, where LCR members in the CGT provided leadership, and in the Gare de l'est in the Paris railways, in textile, and in other struggles. LCR members have always played a part in the strikes, but what is new is that they are being recognized as people who have solutions for the workers.

Q. What is your view of Mitterrand's foreign policy?

A. Mitterrand's policy in Africa has been the area where there has been the least change from the previous government. The French bourgeoisie's economic interests in Africa are extremely large, and there are puppet governments that remain in power solely through the logistical support of the French army and the economic support of the French government, which pays the salaries of the civil servants.

Although on a purely military level the French intervention in Africa is more subtle than it was during the Giscard period, the new government is following a neocolonial policy of total support for the puppet bourgeoisies that exist in these countries.

There has been a greater change in policy toward Central America, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Cuba, with the famous Franco-Mexican declaration.⁵ The declaration was seen as a help by the comrades of the FDR in El Salvador because it involves de facto recognition of the FDR. We should not neglect that aspect.

But we should also not neglect the fact that there are certain maneuvers behind this declaration. In essence Mitterrand's policy in Central America is, I think, linked to the entire Socialist International, which thinks it can win some ground from the Castroist current. It also hopes to win some ground against U.S. imperialism's control of the region, while holding back the socialist radicalization of the revolutions. And it has hopes for building organizations linked to the Socialist International, especially in Central America and in the Caribbean.

From this I think flows a dual attitude toward American imperialism by the French government. In Central America the French

government has visibly taken its distance from the American policy, showing hostility toward it and supporting the struggles against dictatorship and imperialism.

But on the other hand, the international policy is aligned with U.S. imperialism's aims, especially in East-West relations and in the present imperialist armaments policy. France supports the NATO pact, even though it is not a member of the military command of NATO, and carries out an Atlantic alliance policy. Its one divergence from U.S. policy is Central America — Nicaragua and El Salvador — and Cuba.

For example, on November 28 there will be a big national march in Paris in support of the people of Central America and especially El Salvador. This march is officially supported by the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and all the French trade-union confederations. This is the first united initiative in the new period.

Today on the international plane the French government in fact supports imperialism's armaments plans. There was a declaration by the minister of foreign affairs saying that France was the backbone of NATO, which, however curious a statement, is indicative of the government's attitude. The French military budget is the highest in Western Europe. It is the one that has risen the most since Mitterrand came to power.

The development of the French atomic strike force and the decision to go ahead with the seventh nuclear submarine falls within this framework. So does the SP's denunciations of the massive antimissiles demonstrations that have developed in Western Europe. The SP explains that "neutrality" is the greatest danger. They say Western Europe confronts Soviet hegemony today and needs a clear anti-Soviet policy.

Q. What is the antimissiles movement like in France today?

A. The movement is much more developed in the rest of Europe than in France today. There are reasons specific to France for the fact that the October 25 antimissiles demonstration in Paris attracted only 30,000 people.

First of all, in France the Communist Party and Socialist Party, the two main workers parties, have been for a French nuclear force, leaving only the smaller groups like the ecologists and the far left to fight nuclear weapons. This is beginning to change within the ranks of these parties and some people are starting to challenge the leaderships on the question.

Second, France is not in the NATO military command, so there is not much of a sense of NATO in the country.

Third, no American Pershing or Cruise missiles are scheduled for placement in France, which also leads to smaller mobilization.

Finally, for a long time antiwar activity has been carried out only by the Communist Party. A lot of people do not want to participate because they feel it would just help the CP's policies.

But this movement is now beginning to raise

5. The governments of France and Mexico issued a joint declaration August 28 recognizing the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) as a "representative political force" in El Salvador.

its head. We participated in the October 25 demonstration of the CP and the Movement for Peace with our own contingent, and there were also some Socialists, and some Christians involved in it, although the Socialist Party condemned the demonstration.

I think the movement can bring in a lot of trade-union and political militants by tying the antimissiles campaign to the arms budget, especially with the beginnings of austerity. The axis of the LCR's campaign is, as our posters say, "CP-SP, you have the majority, you must make the bosses pay."

The government's plan to build a seventh nuclear submarine will cost something like 12 billion francs. We try to explain what could be done with 12 billion francs to answer the demands of the workers. We argue that that is what the government was elected to do — to break with the bourgeois austerity drive, to break with the war drive — and that is what it must do.

Q. What about the military draft?

A. A movement of young people has developed around the government's original promise to lower the time of military service from the present twelve months to six months. Now the government has refused to implement this measure. This is part of the war drive, but the government explains it as a measure against youth unemployment.

We try to tie this in with the real solution to unemployment — saying that the thirty-five hour week is better than the barracks as a way to create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Among the groups participating in the movement for a six-month draft are the youth groups of the International Communist Organization (OCI), the United Socialist Party (PSU), and us. A recent demonstration in Paris of 2,500 young people was organized by a coalition called the Coordinating Committee for the Six Months. It includes groups in the high schools, local groups, and groups in the military. A whole network of committees for the six months are being set up.

Q. Why are you for a six-month draft rather than an end to the draft?

A. The total elimination of conscription would mean a bourgeois professional army and we feel that is much more dangerous to the workers movement than an army in which you have young workers and former students, among whom we can do political work, mobilize, organize, and at a time of confrontation even try to undermine the bourgeois army from within.

It is much more difficult to undermine a professional army, like in England for example. The troops in a professional army are much more homogeneous, have far fewer ties to the working-class world, and are much more difficult to penetrate.

At a time when the army might intervene against the workers or in a colonial situation, we don't think that the military hierarchy



FRANCOIS MITTERRAND

should have a total monopoly in the army. That is why we are for a conscription army as now exists, and within that army for the right to organize soldiers committees, which still have to operate clandestinely. Today there are dozens and dozens of soldiers committees, which put out leaflets and publications and intervene in various ways among the soldiers.

These soldiers committees are sponsored by the civilian trade-union organizations. Their clandestine activity for democratic rights often gets support from the unions on the theme that the soldier is a young worker under his uniform. This makes it possible to build links between the workers movement and the soldiers movement.

Eventually it gives us the possibility of intervening within the army any time the army is sent to move against a strike or in a colonial adventure.

For some time we have been working in the army to build the soldiers committees and provide them with a perspective of building a union of soldiers. That is the context we work in.

Q. What are the general political positions toward the Mitterrand government of other groups on the left?

A. Since 1968 the far left has shaken out in France. Most of the centrist organizations have totally disappeared; the Maoists have virtually disappeared from circulation; and what remain are three important organizations that describe themselves as Trotskyist — Lutte Ouvrière (Workers Struggle), the OCI, and us.

Lutte Ouvrière unfortunately has a false sense of the situation. On the eve of the elections Lutte Ouvrière explained that the election of Mitterrand would not change anything, that the left and the right were the same, and it made no distinction between the workers parties and the bourgeois parties.

As a result, Lutte Ouvrière has no sense of the kind of demands that should be raised in this period.

Today Lutte Ouvrière maintains that this government is just like the previous one, and therefore centers its fire against the government and the CP and SP.

It is for abstract struggle — for struggles, struggles, and more struggles — without any strategy, any perspective, any political dimension or any sense of building a united front. We of course maintain a fraternal attitude toward these comrades in the factories where they have a presence.

The OCI's attitude has been marked by constant changes. During the presidential campaign it went from proposing to support my candidacy all the way to calling for a vote on the first round for the Socialist Party, which was the first time the OCI had called for that. Generally the OCI calls for a vote for any workers candidate in the first round, without singling out the Social Democrats against the Stalinists.

Today, if we just look at their writings and documents, they have basically the same attitude, the same approach, the same method regarding the government as we do.

But in practice, and this is a tradition of the OCI, they have a totally opportunist attitude toward the Socialist Party and the social democrats. The OCI gives leftist speeches about the need for socialism, the need to go beyond the antechambers of socialism, the need for workers councils, etc. But it has no practical application.

In contrast, in daily struggles, they show total opportunism regarding the Socialist Party. In the trade unions they are very supportive of the Socialist Party and very harsh toward the Communist Party.

The OCI maintains that the presence of the four Communist ministers in the government is the main obstacle to the development of the class struggle. The Communist ministers are put forward as much bigger agents of betrayal than the Socialists.

Our attitude toward the OCI and Lutte Ouvrière is clear. In the new period that has opened up in France, those who call themselves Trotskyists have a very great responsibility toward the workers. We are talking about thousands of members when all three groups are taken together. This is not a small thing in France.

Our general perspective is that we are for the unification of all those who call themselves Trotskyists. But in order for that unification to be solid, it must be tested.

Because the conditions do not exist today, we do not propose fusion with the other two organizations. Instead we try to propose united campaigns and unity in action; hopefully through the experiences gained in the united actions we could move in the direction of fusion. But both Lutte Ouvrière and the OCI have refused to get involved in joint activities. □

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Fidel Castro: the world capitalist crisis, the arms race, and the threat to Cuba

[Second of two parts]

[The following speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro was given at the Karl Marx Theater in Havana October 24 at the close of the Second Congress of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. The translation is from the November 1 issue of the English-language *Granma Weekly Review*, published in Havana.]

* * *

Current problems, which are already hair-raising, are getting worse all the time. Here are some figures which I mentioned at the Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union: number of undernourished, below the necessary calorie and protein intake levels, 570 million; illiterate adults, 800 million; those totally lacking medical care, 1,500 million; those with an annual income under 90 dollars, 1,300 million; those with a life expectancy of under 60 years, 1,700 million; those living in unfit housing, 1,030 million; children not attending school, 250 million; and so on. The number of unemployed in the world — because while unemployment statistics are kept in the developed capitalist countries, the unemployment situation is much more serious in the Third World countries — is more than 1,000 million. This is a truly critical situation about which we must be informed and to which we must pay attention.

Regarding the domestic picture, we must say that we will also have problems because we don't live on another planet and are in fact the

There are really very few in the world who dare tell imperialism everything it should be told . . .

neighbors of the worst there is on the planet, that is, the Yankee imperialist metropolis. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE)

We have to face dangers and the threat of attack and as a result, on the issue of peace, we not only face the dangers which affect world peace but the dangers which derive from the aggressive and threatening attitude of Yankee imperialism towards us, because they hate us in a way I really don't know how to describe. (LAUGHTER) We can say it is donkey-like hatred (LAUGHTER), a donkey-like hatred, (APPLAUSE) it is an obsessive hatred of Cuba. We are proud of that hatred.

The gentleman mentioned by Tomás [Borge, a leader of the Nicaraguan revolution], Mr. Bush [U.S. Vice-president] — this gentleman who has just appeared on the public scene and evidently thinks that he is quite a figure, no doubt about it — said in Santo Domingo, or perhaps it was somewhere else, that he had heard that I was very worried and irritated by his attacks on me. (LAUGHTER) If he wants to come to the conclusion that he is very important because he attacks me, that's his problem; maybe he thinks he is very important because he attacks me. I never felt so important as to think that those who attack me are important; but this man seems to think so. (LAUGHTER) He says I was very irritated.

The only thing I know about this gentleman who set off on a less than glorious tour of Latin America, where he was immediately confronted by the generalized protest against the new sugar tariffs imposed by the United States — in Brazil, Colombia and the Dominican Republic — the only thing I know about him is that he was once the director of the CIA. When you imagine the lack of scruples, moral standards and disgracefulness of that institution, then you know who this Mr. Bush is. It really doesn't worry me, (LAUGHTER) I don't know who has put the idea into his head that I don't sleep, or eat, or anything (LAUGHTER) because this man makes three or four hysterical remarks about Cuba and about me. I've really had more important enemies, (LAUGHTER) and

more worthy of consideration. But he thinks so and somebody has put that idea into his head. (SHOUTS OF "IT'S FEAR!") No, it's not fear, it's cretinism, (LAUGHTER) cretinism and hysteria. He made these comments, and if it were not for that, it would not be worth discussing him. All we need say is that he was director of the CIA, the institution of murders, sabotage, subversion, destabilization and all the rest. That's all we need say about Mr. Bush.

But we were talking about the imperialists' hatred for us. We know very well what this is due to, we know that it is due to Cuba's firm stand, our Revolution's principled position, the firmness of our people and their courage; they know we're not afraid of them. (APPLAUSE) They simply lose their cool, as people say, they've lost their cool, they are very irritated, they know we're not afraid, they can make all the threats they want or do whatever they want. But above all we know and the world knows that we don't have the slightest respect for them and we have no fear of them. (APPLAUSE) They know and the world knows that this is a serious matter. They are in the habit of intimidating and threatening because there are really very few in the world who dare tell imperialism everything it should be told, since it is such a strong country. It has resources, it controls the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, it is a market for a great many nations of the world. One country is waiting for a World Bank loan, the other for an International Monetary Fund loan, another is awaiting some food aid or other aid, another wants to trade and is afraid of losing that trade. But we aren't in the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, we're blockaded by Yankee imperialism and have no trade with them, so the imperialist gentlemen ought to know that we are the one country in the world that is freest to tell imperialism what it deserves to hear. (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF: "FIDEL, FOR SURE, HIT THE YANKEE HARD!") No other country in the world is in a better position to tell imperialism the truth and that hurts them a great deal, the firmness of the Revolution hurts them, and they know we will not back down or give in. (APPLAUSE)

They have stepped up their economic measures against us, they have intensified the blockade to obstruct our activities at all costs: our trade with other countries, our obtaining credits, in short, they have intensified their blockade and taken stronger economic measures against us.

As I was saying, we will also have problems. An important part, most of our trade is with the socialist camp and we have satisfactory conditions of exchange. We can say that over the years of the Revolution we have achieved satisfactory trade relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, (APPLAUSE) and this is precisely what we are demanding as a solution for the underdeveloped countries in general.

The price of the sugar we sell to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries doesn't depend on the ups and downs of the world market, it is established for five-year periods. If the price of goods from the socialist countries increases, if for example goods from the USSR increase in price, our sugar, nickel and other products also increase.

With the other socialist countries — conditions are not exactly the same with all, they are even better with the USSR, but they are good with the other socialist countries — prices are frozen, our sugar has a set price and their goods have a set price. We have good trade relations with them and if our imports become more expensive our products also go up in price. We have achieved good trade relations and this is very helpful, especially because we receive certain raw materials, machinery, equipment and other key products and certain key foodstuffs from those countries.

An important part of our economy still depends on trade with the capitalist world, with the Western world; that is, with the rest of the nonsocialist area ruled by the principles of the so-called world market. And al-



Harry Ring Militant

Drop in price of sugar on world market has hurt Cuba's economy.

though our trade with the Western world is not large it's still important because it often furnishes the complements we need to be able to use the raw materials we receive from the socialist countries. Let's say we receive 80 percent of the raw materials from the socialist countries; that would mean we'd have to purchase 20 percent — which does not exist in the socialist countries — from the West in order to go on with our production.

Every drop of one cent in the price of a pound of sugar means a loss of 70 million dollars in convertible currency for our economy . . .

There are certain kinds of cereal, for example, as well as raw materials, herbicides and pesticides, machinery, medicines, etc. that we must buy from the Western countries and our ability to purchase them depends on the price of our products. Therefore, we must have resources available in the form of convertible currency and that depends mainly on our sugar exports. We also export tobacco, lobster, shrimp, nickel and so forth and we're trying to increase and diversify our exports. But that's not easy, because when you start trying to export manufactured products you come up against the competition, credits, etc. from the highly industrialized countries. In other words, the road to the diversification of exports is not an easy one, because if we decide to export a certain number of refrigerators, radios, TV sets, etc., we must face the fierce competition of countries and much more industrial development than ours, countries in the best position to trade, countries which control the market and the financial resources, etc. Thus, diversifying exports is a difficult task and, besides, there are also the protectionist measures imposed by the developed capitalist countries and, in the Third World countries, the competition I mentioned before.

Every drop of one cent in the price of a pound of sugar means a loss of 70 million dollars in convertible currency for our economy — for every cent.

Last year the price of sugar was over 30 cents a pound, and we made a great effort in the last sugar harvest to take advantage of the high price.

Contrary to all the predictions, estimates and analyses made the world over, the price of sugar took a tremendous nosedive and yesterday it stood at 11.39 cents — in other words, about one-third of what it was a year ago.

To this we may add the incessant increase in the price of imported goods, as I mentioned before, and the fact that for the last 22 years our country — like every other developing country — has had to assume certain debts in convertible currency in order to compensate for those brutal drops in the price of sugar. Now we have to settle those debts and credits, but since interest rates have risen drastically — almost doubled — the interest we must pay on our foreign debt is much higher.

What I'm saying to you is very important, because the Yankees are aware of the difficulties we're having. What's behind this brutal drop in the price of sugar that defied all estimates? One of the reasons was the policy of the European Economic Community [EEC], which welcomed the benefits of the sugar agreement but not the obligations. Several years ago the sugar-producing countries signed an agreement to protect the price of sugar; they established export quotas and prices, in fact, even improved. But the EEC refused to enter into the agreement. Their sugar production is subsidized by the state — so you can see how egotistical and irresponsible their policy is — and they went on and increased their sugar exports from one million tons to four million. In other words, they refused to join that agreement, profited from its benefits and did not assume any responsibility. They upped production from one to four million tons, brutally pushing down the price and depriving dozens of sugar-producing, underdeveloped countries of thousands upon thousands of millions of dollars. We weren't the only ones affected by that measure. Dozens of other sugar-producing countries were also hurt.

Furthermore, recently the United States levied a tax of over two cents on every pound of sugar imported, and this had a serious effect on several countries that export sugar to the United States. That was one of the biggest complaints that the gentlemen we mentioned before had to listen to during his visit to Latin America. With that egotistical policy the United States, too, has deprived underdeveloped countries that export sugar to the United States of thousands of millions of dollars.

And there's still another factor: the world economic crisis. Many peoples, many countries are in need of sugar but they simply don't have the money to pay for it. Therefore, the crisis has an adverse effect on both

the sugar market and the sugar prices.

The Yankees know all about these details and are aware of all these difficulties. In fact, they delude themselves and pin their hopes on the difficulties we have and will have in the future.

Needless to say, all these factors force us to make sacrifices and impose restrictions. If I were asked how long the Third World countries, the developing countries — even in the case of a socialist country like Cuba — are going to be faced with difficulties, I wouldn't presume to venture a guess because these problems have an objective character and nobody knows when or how the world is going to emerge from the present crisis. Nobody knows, and as I said before, nobody has the answer to the problems which will face the world in the next ten or twenty years.

We'll go on struggling, we'll go on working and we'll go on developing — we'll go on developing even if only in a modest way — but it would be rash to suggest that the road ahead of us will be an easy one. And, as you all know, I have always told the CDRs and the people the truth in clear-cut terms. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

What kind of revolutionaries would we be if we upheld our principles because we were expecting others to defend us? . . .

There's a principle in our policy that I hope all the people will share with us, and this foremost principle is that no matter what the price of sugar may be, no matter how much sacrifice is involved, we must first of all fulfill our international commitments, (APPLAUSE) we must fulfill our financial commitments, because our country's credit is worth more than anything else. (APPLAUSE) And that's what we intend to do.

Now then, we're faced with these two problems: the latent and increasing threats, the dangers that affect peace; and the dangers that affect the economy. Peace is being threatened in two ways: by the danger of a world conflict and by the threats of a conventional attack on Cuba by the United States.

Some people wonder what's going to happen in the world. I, too, wonder what's going to happen in the world if they decide to launch a direct attack on Cuba. I say this because, first of all, what we must learn and observe as our philosophy is not to wait for anybody to defend us but to be ready to defend ourselves. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) What kind of revolutionaries would we be if we upheld our principles because we were expecting others to defend us? We defend our principles, first of all, with our own shield and we're prepared to answer for our principles and for our stand with our own lives! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) The imperialists wonder what the result of such a confrontation would be. I can tell them exactly what would happen: thousands upon thousands of imperialists would die in this country! I guarantee it! (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "VENCEREMOS!")

If we're unable to defend ourselves then we cannot expect solidarity from anybody. If we can defend ourselves, then we'll see what happens. What will happen? We'll leave that to history and to the way in which each one fulfills his duty of solidarity with the Cuban Revolution. (APPLAUSE)

The imperialists mention total blockade as a part of their arsenal of measures against Cuba. Very well, we'll have a new experience and so will they, (APPLAUSE) because one thing we're sure of is that our country can resist a total blockade as long as we have to. (APPLAUSE) We know exactly what to do in the case of a total blockade and we know exactly what to do in the case of direct aggression. But first of all, we want to tell the arrogant, overbearing imperialists that our first and foremost banner and watchword is "We are not the least bit afraid of you!" (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "FIDEL, FOR SURE, HIT THE YANKEES HARD!")

As you all know, when that fascistic administration assumed power in the United States we were not the first to use harsh words. In fact, we were careful, we were moderate — as some news agencies described us — on April 16 and April 19. We let them have their say. We left it to

them to decide how they wanted to deal with us, whether they wanted to dialogue, whether they wanted to talk or to threaten. It seems that they made a mistake. And we had no other choice but to tell them all they deserved to be told. They've been making all these threats and they're also threatening to intervene in Nicaragua, in El Salvador, in Central America.

This fascistic group is characterized by the use of fascist methods, first of all the lie, lies in the style of Goebbels. They have methods which if they have copied from anybody, if they have been taken from some book, it seems to me that it was from *Mein Kampf*, from which they have undoubtedly taken some theories and some methods: arrogance, conceit, threats and lies.

There has been a host of lies surrounding the events in El Salvador. We haven't answered every time they said something, we have remained silent with contempt for them because we don't have to answer to them for anything. At a given moment we decided it was time to set the record straight because they were getting wild, with one lie today and another tomorrow and still another the next day and we had to stop the imperialist spokesmen.

They claimed that arms which Cuba was receiving for its defense were being redistributed in Central America. We didn't say anything because the redistribution of something which is ours depends on whether or not we want to do so, we don't have to answer to imperialism for that. (APPLAUSE) We didn't want our denial to be taken as a moral renunciation, an implication that we think that what we were being accused of doing was immoral. Of course, by agreement we can't distribute arms received from the USSR and we fulfill our agreements.

That's why they spouted that lie, since they know that some ships arrived with weapons for the Territorial Troop Militia, (APPLAUSE) which is now fully equipped; then they developed the theory that we were getting many tons of weapons, etc., we won't say how many, but it's a lot, (LAUGHTER) the theory being that we were redistributing them in Central America. This is an out-and-out lie, because the weapons are received in our country for our defense alone; but they said this in order to justify their sending weapons and advisers to El Salvador, their intervention in Central America, to justify it to Congress, and they knew it was a lie.

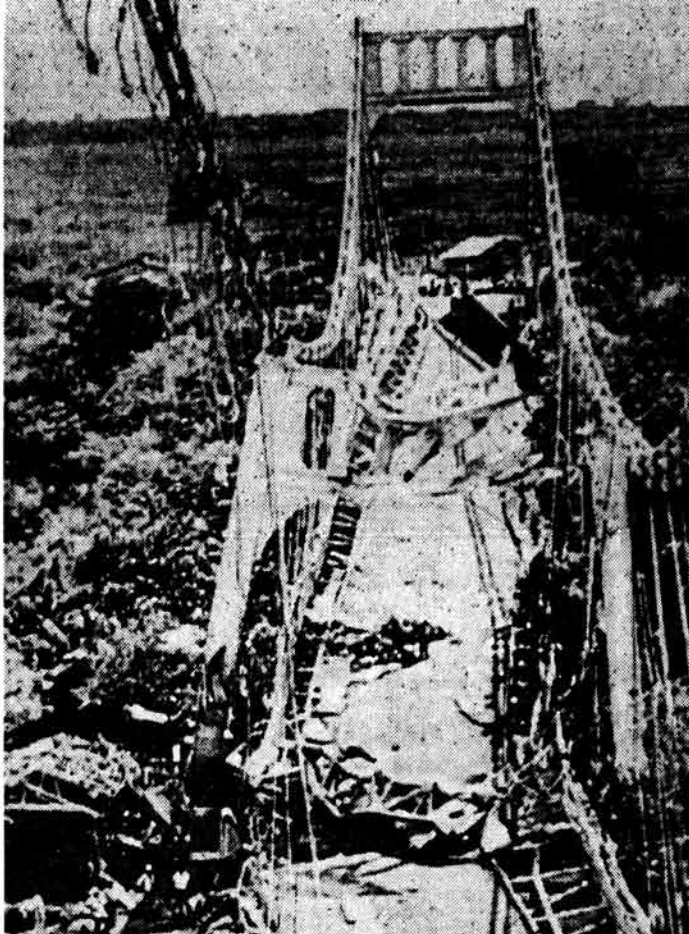
A few days later they went wild again claiming we had military advisers in El Salvador, another big lie. Of course, this followed the French-Mexican declaration and was an effort to complicate matters and embarrass those countries and others, so they said we were sending military advisers to El Salvador.

We defend our principles, first of all, with our own shield and we're prepared to answer for our principles and for our stand with our own lives! . . .

Then they started saying we were supplying weapons to the Salvadoran guerrillas. We answered all of this at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, when we said that for many months the Salvadoran patriots have been fighting with the weapons and ammunition they captured from the enemy, that it was not a moral question, because sending weapons to them is just and if we did not do so it was because we lacked the means. Morally we feel it is just to send weapons, but we told the truth: it was a lie that we were sending arms and ammunition to the Salvadoran patriots.

We made all three denials at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference: we are not sending weapons from the Soviet Union to Central America, we do not have advisers there and we are not sending weapons to El Salvador. We told them they were outright liars, we said so to the spokesmen of imperialism. They were forced to shut up.

They were silent for a while. One day it was the secretary of state, another day it was an adviser to the almighty who would issue statements of all kinds. For there are two things that characterize them: making many statements and telling many lies. And either they are deliberate liars or they are ignorant, but in either case they are cynical. (APPLAUSE)



Puente de Oro (Golden Bridge) after its destruction by Salvadoran freedom fighters. Washington has tried to pin the blame on Cuba.

Now they have changed their tactics. Now instead of using spokesmen they manipulate the news published in the press. Just another cock-and-bull story. (LAUGHTER) This is a dispatch dated the 19th [of October], three or four days ago, which says:

"Two U.S. columnists reported today that Cuba has sent 500 to 600 elite soldiers to Nicaragua with a view to taking over El Salvador and establishing a revolutionary government there.

"Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, whose articles are published daily by hundreds of newspapers. . . ."

You can see that these gentlemen's lies are published all over the world, the denials are not printed, no, the denials are not printed. In the style of Goebbels and Hitler, in this fascist style they fabricate lies in hundreds of newspapers and make the people of the United States believe them, they make people believe them! Then, millions of people read the news but not the denial, do you understand? The denials are read by some governments, some leading circles, certain readers. It's important to issue denials, but what they want is to fabricate lies.

The dispatch continues: ". . . whose articles are published daily by hundreds of newspapers, gave full details of the alleged 'open invasion' of El Salvador by Cuban troops, quoting unimpeachable Latin American sources," that's what it says, "unimpeachable sources."

"The two journalists claim Fidel Castro has introduced shock troops into Nicaragua for a back door attack on El Salvador against the government headed by President José Napoleón Duarte." As if this guy was a real Napoleon and there was really a back door attack and all that, (LAUGHTER) a sort of Waterloo.

"According to the journalists and their analysis the 'scheme may have classic simplicity.' It seeks to cut El Salvador in two by the Lempa River and organize a provisional revolutionary government in the eastern part of the country which would gradually obtain international backing for the Democratic Revolutionary Front.

"This scheme, which may have started with the destruction of De Oro Bridge last week, would be another Cuban intervention abroad.

"Rowland Evans and Robert Novak said the United States should adopt other basic measures to prevent it." This is a call for measures against us, such as attacks and a blockade against us.

"The article implicitly suggests increased military aid, including sending troops to the Salvadoran junta.

"The U.S. 'countermeasures' should go far beyond 'the dispatch of a mere 50 Army advisers,' they said."

It goes on, it's a long dispatch.

Here it says:

"The soldiers are members of the special rapid intervention forces" — they have even invented a rapid intervention force for us — "under the Cuban Ministry of the Interior. They were dressed in civilian clothes as if they were tourists, say the columnists.

"Their weapons, handled by experts, were concealed in what seemed to be travel bags and other normal baggage.

"The flights were on the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th of September. Also on the last flight was the Cuban ambassador to Nicaragua, Julián López, according to Evans and Novak.

"The column also reported that as soon as the soldiers set foot in Nicaragua they boarded waiting helicopters and 'disappeared over the Nicaraguan jungles.'

"Exactly 26 days later, on the morning of October 15, the most important bridge over the Lempa River, which divides El Salvador in two, was blown up."

Troops with weapons in their baggage were sent, they got into helicopters and disappeared into the jungle and the bridge was blown up exactly 26 days later.

It's not accidental that on that same day another newspaper, the *Wall Street Journal*, published an editorial.

"Thanks to a disturbingly effective left-wing propaganda campaign, the Reagan administration has been largely stalled in its efforts to gather public support for a U.S. counterattack against the Soviet-Cuban conquest of Central America," the *Wall Street Journal* said today.

"In an editorial the financial daily added, 'But it is far too early to give up the fight.'"

Then it says, "The big prize" in this supposed Soviet-Cuban campaign, "if they succeed, will be the Panama Canal."

This is the way they fabricate and spread lies in hundreds of newspapers and through the international news agencies.

As was explained here when the meeting of intellectuals and artists was held, the Yankee information monopolies control 70 percent of the world's information network. Obviously, spreading this kind of slander is not without its purpose.

The spokesmen do not need to speak themselves, they manipulate a few journalists to write their articles, evidently for a purpose: to justify intervention in El Salvador, to justify their threats and aggressive moves against Cuba.

But yet again we can have the pleasure of telling them: Messrs. Imperialists, you are lying. Lying. (APPLAUSE)

They fabricate and spread lies in hundreds of newspapers and through the international news agencies . . .

The only thing to do is to expose the lie, for Cuba has not sent a single soldier from any special forces or any other kind of force to Nicaragua. Cuba has never sent any troops to Nicaragua! This is a blatant lie, and we have both the right and the duty to disprove it; it is a lie from top to bottom, from head to foot.

Well, what use are these lies?

There's also the famous Mr. Bush; Tomás told you what he said on his tour of Latin America about the 5,000 Cuban advisers in Nicaragua. Five thousand advisers they talked about. Well, what are advisers? Another lie. If only we did have 5,000 Cubans in Nicaragua — not advisers but doctors, teachers; but in fact we haven't even got 3,000. And the vast majority of those we do have are the 2,100 teachers plus over 200 doctors, several intermediate health technicians, construction

workers, agricultural experts; those are the great majority of the Cuban personnel who are working as internationalists in Nicaragua. (APPLAUSE) But Mr. Bush calls them 5,000 advisers, Mr. Bush calmly talks of 5,000 Cuban advisers in Nicaragua.

I believe, sincerely, that one of the finest passages in international solidarity is being written by our teachers and doctors in Nicaragua . . .

It's just the same with a lady called Kirkpatrick or something like that; I believe she's the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Her style seems to be to make hysterical statements — hysteria is very common among these fascist types — and she said that we had any number of soldiers in Afghanistan. What next? They even say we have soldiers in Afghanistan.

Well, those are the things they say and sometimes I wonder, are they ignorant, are they stupid, are they idiots, are they cynical, or who knows maybe all four? (LAUGHTER) They utter these lies without blinking an eye and this woman says we have troops in Afghanistan.

Bush talked about 5,000 advisers in Nicaragua, and so on. But obviously, these things do have a purpose, and it's to encourage the counterrevolution in Nicaragua; they have the same objective as the CIA, and that's to encourage actions against Cuba's internationalist workers. The purpose of this policy is to encourage killings as horrible and as cowardly as the murder of the two Cuban teachers only a few days ago in Nicaragua.

I believe, sincerely, that one of the finest passages in the history of international solidarity is being written by our teachers and doctors in Nicaragua. (APPLAUSE) And we are proud to have men and women capable of such solidarity.

I personally saw off many of the comrades who are teaching in Nicaragua now and I know very well the kind of work they're doing and the conditions they're doing it in; as Comrade Borge explained, they're living in the most remote places, in the most difficult conditions, in places that it can take three days on foot or two days on a mule to reach. The merit of those comrades, of those teachers working in the most remote places in Nicaragua is incalculable! And what's extraordinary is that most of them, or at least 50 percent of them are women. (APPLAUSE) Many of them are mothers who have left their children, their husbands and the rest of their relatives behind for a long time to go to teach in Nicaragua. I believe that their merit is truly extraordinary. (APPLAUSE)

Naturally, the imperialists will never mention these murders, nor will they condemn them. When our country is providing an example by complying with what should be the duty of every country — that is, to help one another in the struggle against disease, against illiteracy and for the well-being of humanity — when we're offering completely unselfish cooperation, that is when these men and women become the target of imperialist slander. These teachers do not go there to teach Marxism-Leninism, and the Nicaraguans know this very well. They are there exclusively to fulfill the programs and teach the subjects outlined by the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua. That is their only task, and it is seldom that such a noble page has been written in the history of humanity.

No, the imperialists won't write any editorials or make any kind of outcry condemning those outrageous crimes. What is it that the imperialists protest about? Well, the imperialists protest because the Sandinistas arrested a number of bourgeois elements for breaking Nicaragua's laws. Oh yes, this brings forth a storm of protest and any number of news dispatches. Whenever it's a case of an imperialist pharisee or a traitor to the cause of revolution being arrested, a storm of protest by the imperialists breaks out. But when two modest teachers engaged in the extraordinary and lofty task of teaching Nicaraguan children are murdered, there's not a single word of protest or condemnation. That's the imperialist attitude! And here we can say that 100,000 Nicaraguan children are getting an education from those Cuban teachers, that Cuban teachers are teaching 100,000 children in Nicaragua! (APPLAUSE)

(A DELEGATE'S VOICE IS HEARD: "Commander in Chief, the delegates to this Congress are ready to go to Nicaragua and take the place of our fallen comrades!" APPLAUSE)

To murder a teacher is one of the most horrible, most heinous crimes that can be committed in today's world. But that's not new to us. We remember Conrado Benítez, Delfín Sen and Manuel Ascunce. We remember when at the time of the Literacy Campaign the counterrevolutionaries hanged peasants and teachers. We're familiar with all those things through our own experience, and we know the extent of the imperialists' hatred, the absolute lack of scruples of the CIA and the criminal nature of counterrevolutionaries and reactionaries. That is why we're prepared to assimilate those bitter experiences.

We have trust in the Sandinista Revolution and its ability and we know that, as in Cuba, those guilty of these crimes will be punished. We also know that the Sandinistas are taking every precaution to protect our teachers. (APPLAUSE)

But the imperialists will never intimidate the people of Nicaragua or the people of Cuba with such crimes. The same day that we learned of the murder of those teachers, the number of students that enrolled in the teachers' detachment tripled and thousands of teachers have volunteered to replace the two who were murdered. (APPLAUSE) Their names are now on the list of our martyrs, because their death was that of a soldier killed in action, in the fight against illiteracy, in the fight against ignorance, in a combat fought with pencils, notebooks and textbooks instead of weapons. Only cowards and individuals devoid of all human feeling can commit such crimes! (APPLAUSE)

That's what those imperialist campaigns are good for. All that's missing now is for the U.S. papers to report that two members of the special forces were killed; that these two comrades were not teachers but special soldiers, members of the troops that they said landed recently.

These things illustrate the absolute lack of scruples of the enemy we face, of the struggle that must be waged by our people, the Cuban people, the Nicaraguan people and the peoples that have won their liberation, like the people of Angola, forced to defend themselves, after years of struggle for independence, against the South African racists in collusion with U.S. imperialism. These are the difficulties that pave the road of freedom, a long road indeed, and the road of dignity, of justice and of revolution.

We are prepared to meet these threats, these military dangers. Gigantic efforts have been made to organize the Territorial Troop Militia and to strengthen our Revolutionary Armed Forces, and we never stop working, even for a minute, even for a second, to further strengthen, to im-



Cuban troops in Angola.

prove our defenses. It's a big effort and the cost is high; but I'm sure that we'd never forgive ourselves, in the event of an imperialist attack, for having neglected our defense. Therefore, our country's defense is a priority at all times. But we must also prepare ourselves to tackle our economic problems — and that's exactly what we're doing.

First of all, we have to reform the existing retail prices. This is independent of the general economic situation I referred to before, because it's closely related to the wage reform. As a result of the wage reform a total of 2,400,000 workers have received a wage increase. The total amount involved this year was 440 million pesos. This figure will rise to 540 million in 1982 and 2,700 million over the next five years. This includes income after the wage reform as well as bonuses.

When the matter of wage reform was discussed it was explained that a price reform would also be necessary. The reason for this is that in five years the amount of money in circulation due to the wage increase alone would run to 2,700 million pesos. The retail price reform was necessary for two reasons: first, to compensate for the effects of the wage reform, and second, to rationalize prices.

As you all remember, when the wage reform was announced it was

The blockade has been hurting us for 22 years but no, it has not blocked our achievements, it has not prevented us from accomplishing unprecedented feats . . .

also explained that some retail prices would undergo a reform. The explanation that appeared in *Granma* on March 25, 1980, read as follows:

"Despite inflation the world over in recent years, and which has a particularly negative effect on such an open economy as Cuba's, retail prices of basic items have remained frozen at the level of the early years of the Revolution. The objective was not to hit the household economy, but this has meant large state subsidies that go against the necessary equilibrium of internal financing.

"As the wage reform is put into effect so will this situation be studied with a view to applying certain retail price increases. These, of course, will in all cases be less than the wage increases."

We also mentioned this in our report to the 2nd Congress of the Party as follows:

"Although, as a whole, the price reform represents an increase in expenditure by the population, this will be substantially lower than the increase in income derived from the wage reform and the payment of bonuses to the workers which are already being applied."

The problem is that we have delayed the application of the price reform. The wage reform was put into effect before the necessary modifications were made in retail prices. We're several months behind and this situation cannot be allowed to continue. Otherwise, we'll be running the risk of being swamped with money and that would have serious consequences for both labor discipline and the economy. We must try to maintain what is known as financial balance. If we neglect that, the consequences will be negative.

In view of our economic situation, we must not delay any longer in taking this step, and we should make these retail price reforms — which, as explained here, will be substantially lower than the income derived from the wage reform — before the end of this year. Of course, retired people, those who receive a pension and those who are given social security assistance and who draw no benefit from the wage reform will be taken into account so that their financial status will not be affected by the situation. The price reform does not involve a large sum, but we must carry it out, and at any rate it's implicit in the wage reform. Therefore, some prices will be changed, but we hope they will remain within reach of our resources. (APPLAUSE)

Part of the 2,700 million pesos that will be spent on the wage reform will be compensated by the price reform, and another part with the goods and services that the population will receive. We hope that savings will also compensate in part.

As I was telling you, this goes together with the restrictive measures we will have to take and we will have to sacrifice some programs and

plans, some investments and possibly standards of living; but in any case we must cope with this situation, which results from the various factors I already explained, basically the drop in the price of sugar. We must be ready for this, we must be ready to make sacrifices and be true to our inviolable principle, our sacred principle of fulfilling our international commitments first of all. (APPLAUSE)

Well then, this means we must make a special effort. As I was saying, last year we made a big effort in the sugar harvest and it was undoubtedly the most efficient harvest in the history of the country. The whole country made the effort. These problems have come at a time when in our country we are doing the best job in the history of the Revolution; when our workers are more efficient, more enthusiastic, more disciplined; when the enterprises, the sectors of the economy, industry, agriculture, the harvests and construction are more efficient than ever; when we have made considerable progress in the economic management and planning system; when we are beginning to gather the first fruits of the measures taken in this field; when our people are really doing the best job and the most efficient job ever, at just this time we are faced with these external problems.

We have had to tell the planning agencies: these are the available resources, according to the estimates and the estimates must be very conservative, because the current price of sugar is 11.39 cents, but nobody can assert that three months from now it will not be eight cents, it can go further down and the situation become worse still. We have urged the planning and economic agencies to adjust their plans and activities to this situation.

We are going to lack some raw materials and resources. This should come as no surprise, this will affect different kinds of products, but we must cope with this situation.

This obliges us to keep working for efficiency and continue, regardless of how difficult the conditions, implementing the economic management and planning system. We must be more efficient and thrifter than ever: we must use a drop of oil, a gram of fertilizer, steel or cloth, of all raw materials, more efficiently than ever. We must make our agriculture more efficient or make it as efficient as possible; we must continue the successes and achievements we have registered in sugarcane and cattle-breeding, in agriculture in general, and, in short, faced with a situation of this kind, we must make an all-out effort in services, education, medical care, in all fields, to show that our people can cope with any situation regardless of how difficult.

As I was saying, the imperialists know we will have these problems and they are confident and hopeful, thinking: at last the 22-year-old blockade will yield some results. The blockade has been hurting us for

We will see who can resist the most, we will see who is morally and politically stronger, they or we . . .

22 years but no, it has not blocked our achievements, it has not prevented us from accomplishing unprecedented feats. The feat of providing employment for practically all our people, ending the dead season; doing away with vice, gambling, drugs, prostitution; ending illiteracy, with everyone reaching at least a 6th grade education and striving for the 9th grade; having virtually the best level of public health care of any underdeveloped country — all of these gains which we have made and will continue to make and continue to promote have not been prevented by the blockade. Problems can't keep us from advancing.

But the important thing is to have the understanding and full support of the people. (APPLAUSE) That is the most important thing.

The imperialists have illusions and they have stepped up their economic blockade against Cuba, obstructing our economic activity and credits. They have stepped up their espionage activity in our country and elsewhere, their contacts and efforts to bring about the desertion of diplomatic personnel and technicians; in short, they have stepped up their activity, their subversive activity.

We are absolutely certain that they will return to their conspiratorial methods, their plans for economic sabotage and assassination of leaders



U.S. Marines arrive at Guantánamo Naval Base during October 1962 crisis. Washington is again threatening a naval blockade of Cuba such as the one it carried out at that time.

of the Revolution.

We have repeatedly challenged the almighty and one and only to say whether or not the CIA will again be given permission to plot the assassination of leaders of the Revolution, and they have remained silent, they haven't said a word. Maybe they think we are frightened and are quaking in fear because they want to kill us, the leaders, maybe that's what they think.

But we have learned how to defend ourselves, our security forces have learned how to work well, very well! (APPLAUSE) It isn't so easy and it doesn't scare us at all. When we challenge them to say whether or not they will use these methods we are trying to make them face their moral responsibility, to make them speak, so they won't remain silent, because the whole world knows about their crimes and their history, and we demand that they speak and explain, but we have no fear even if they organize 100,000 plans. We know how to defend ourselves and we aren't worried about that.

It is very likely that the imperialists will resort to the dirtiest methods of sabotage, as they did in the past and as they are now doing. We must continue to be careful and adopt special measures against biological warfare and be ready to take all necessary measures and follow all instructions in a disciplined manner. In short, we must even be ready for atomic war, even atomic war! What can we do? Well, dying with dignity is a good way to behave and to make revolution! (APPLAUSE)

We do not have atomic weapons but we are not afraid of atomic weapons, Messrs. Imperialists!

The imperialists will multiply their subversive activities and in recent days with the greatest possible gall and cynicism they announced they are going to establish an official radio station of the United States Government directed against the Cuban Revolution. You have to be quite

cynical and immoral and shameless to speak of establishing a radio station on U.S. soil to campaign against the Revolution, to try to destabilize and subvert the Revolution. You must be cynical, very cynical! There is no more vulgar and brutal form of intervention in the internal affairs of a country. They say it is so our people will be informed, while our country is involved in the drive to have everybody have at least a 9th

The imperialists are fooling themselves if they think our people will weaken! . . .

grade education, and our people can read, write and think. Just compare the information available to our people when we were illiterate or semi-literate and under the control of the Yankee imperialists to the information and understanding we have now. Our people now read much more than the people of the United States.

Of course there will be a response to this measure. (APPLAUSE) To top it off, they have baptized the station Radio José Martí, an offense and an insult to our people. Apparently they don't know, and if the poor things don't know, how can we be critical of them? How can we ask them to have read Martí if they haven't even read the Constitution of their country or Washington, Lincoln or Jefferson or anybody? How can we expect Reagan, Bush, Haig or any of them to read Martí, any of Reagan's advisers? How can they know that Martí said he knew the monster because he lived inside it? (APPLAUSE) How can they know that just a few days before he died Martí said that everything he had done and would do was to prevent the United States from pouncing on the lands of the peoples of Our America? (APPLAUSE) How can these shameless

individuals use the name of Martí in such a cynical and flagrant manner? Well, that's their problem.

We will reclaim the names of the genuine patriots of the United States, (APPLAUSE) because not only Martí is ours. Martí is ours, Martí belongs to Cuban revolutionaries, but so do Washington, Abraham Lincoln and all the other great men of the United States. (APPLAUSE) We do have the moral right to speak not only of Martí but also of Lincoln and Washington, because they were liberators of peoples and the present leaders are oppressors of peoples, warmongers, reactionaries.

Martí's name will remain unstained, it is so great that it can't be stained, not even by the mouths of the Yankee fascists. (APPLAUSE) We will continue to honor Martí and be worthy followers of his, worthy disciples of Martí, (APPLAUSE) revolutionaries like him who are willing to die for their country. (APPLAUSE)

This is another mistake of the Yankees which they will in time realize. Besides, people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, especially if the glass is quite fragile. We have had and will continue to have problems but the people of the United States, especially the poorest sectors, are facing growing difficulties and will have serious economic and social problems. It is no accident that the black population in the United States is especially hard hit by unemployment, the youth in particular. It is an imperialist country which won't solve any social problems because after nine months the administration of Mr. Reagan which was expecting a marvelous economic upsurge has been hit by a recession and the economic indicators have declined and they have had to admit it. They haven't curbed inflation, unemployment keeps rising, and now they find themselves in a recession. They have decided to unleash this struggle against us, but they should keep in mind that we are not in Europe or Asia, that we are very close to the coasts of the United States and our radio waves can also reach over there. (APPLAUSE)

We will see who can resist the most, we will see who is morally and politically stronger, they or we. (SHOUTS OF "WE ARE!")

The imperialists shouldn't confuse our people with the scum which we gladly allowed to leave our country! We not only have veteran and militant adults, there is a new generation whose spirit of revolutionary determination was displayed in the victorious people's marches. There is a new generation of Cubans of which the two murdered teachers are fine examples, as well as the more than 2,000 teachers and more than 200 doctors working in Nicaragua, the many thousands of internationalist workers serving in more than thirty countries and the more than 100,000 fighters who have fulfilled internationalist missions. (AP-

PLAUSE) Those are our people! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) Once again the imperialists are mistaken and they will make a mistake with our people! We will of course fulfill our internationalist duties, we will fulfill them! (APPLAUSE) We will fulfill our responsibilities to the socialist community and the underdeveloped countries, to the countries of the Third World! We will continue to battle and tell the truth, denouncing suffering and exploitation of our peoples, denouncing the threats to world peace that result from the new arms race and from poverty and underdevelopment! We will not renounce our ideas of international cooperation! We will not renounce our views on the need for all countries to work together regardless of social system if we really want to safeguard peace and preserve humanity! We will fulfill our duties as a civilized country, as a civilized people, and we are willing to do so.

We do not want conflict for conflict's sake, we do not want struggle for struggle's sake, confrontation for confrontation's sake, but the other side of the coin is our revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist conduct, the firmness of the Revolution, the determination to defend our ideas, our Revolution, our socialist system, our right to uphold noble and just principles regardless of the price and circumstances. (APPLAUSE)

The Cuban people will live with their Revolution or every last man and woman will die along with it! . . .

The imperialists are fooling themselves if they think our people will weaken! (APPLAUSE) If we must make the sacrifices of the first years of the Revolution we will do the same and more! (APPLAUSE) If we must make the sacrifices of the war of liberation we will do the same and more! (APPLAUSE) If we must make the sacrifices of our *mambi* fighters we will do the same and more! (APPLAUSE)

Our history, our independence, our Revolution, our socialism and our progress came about through heroism and struggle! (APPLAUSE) And we are willing to follow in this path as long as necessary, even if it takes the efforts of one, two, three or four generations of Cubans. (APPLAUSE)

We serve notice on the imperialists that the Cuban people will live with their Revolution or every last man and woman will die along with it!

Patria o muerte!
Venceremos!
(OVATION)

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Workers protest food shortages

Inspired by Polish example

By Ernest Harsch

Hit by the worst food shortages since the end of the Second World War, working people in Romania have begun to show symptoms of the "Polish fever."

Since mid-October, according to information released by the Paris-based League for the Defense of the Rights of Man in Romania, there have been a series of strikes and protest actions in various parts of the country.

This ferment has come in response to government decrees restricting access to food stores and introducing bread rationing. For a people with one of the lowest average living standards in Eastern Europe, this was too much.

On October 16, demonstrations broke out in several villages in the region of Motru, in southwestern Romania. The next day the unrest spread to the nearby Jiu Valley, the heart of Romania's coal mining region, where the Levrda, Lupoaia, and Horasti mines were shut down by strikes.

On October 19, the thermal power center in Rogojelu was also hit by a strike, while sporadic demonstrations broke out in Motru itself, where the headquarters of the Communist Party was occupied. Forces of the political police, known as the Securitate, were quickly rushed into Motru to put down the demonstrations.

In an effort to mollify the angry population, President Nicolae Ceausescu made a series of appearances around the country in early November to try to explain his recent measures. But when he got to Motru on November 8, a crowd of workers began throwing stones and he quickly departed in his helicopter.

Later that month, in a November 25 speech to a plenum of the party's Central Committee, Ceausescu sought to pin the blame for Romania's economic difficulties on other officials, including members of the State Planning office and the Council of Ministers. In a transparent bid to placate the workers with a few scapegoats, three top officials were deposed, among them the party first secretary in the district of Gorj, which includes Motru and the upper Jiu Valley.

Economic crisis and bureaucratic privilege

Although the economic problems in Romania have not yet reached the catastrophic proportions of those in Poland, they are nevertheless quite serious.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Romania was able to boast of one of the highest economic growth rates in Eastern Europe. But this was accomplished at the expense of living standards.

Investments in heavy industry, such as petrochemicals, were favored over agriculture

and consumer goods. As a result, farming, which is almost entirely in state hands, remains extremely inefficient. Social services were neglected and there is a serious housing shortage.

As in Poland, many of Ceausescu's industrial expansion projects were financed through large loans from imperialist banks and financial institutions. Romania's foreign debt now stands at around \$10 billion.

Because of poor planning and bureaucratic mismanagement, the government is finding it increasingly difficult to repay the loans. In turn, Western banks are becoming more reluctant to extend new loans, leading to serious economic dislocations. There are some 12,000 investment projects that remain uncompleted.

The long-term neglect of agriculture and a poor distribution system have now combined with a bad harvest to produce serious shortages of certain basic food items. The lines at food stores are becoming longer. Often it is impossible to find fresh meat, eggs, milk, or sugar.

Popular discontent over such conditions has been heightened by the fact that the bureaucrats who rule Romania enjoy substantial material privileges that are denied to the rest of the population. Party officials have access to special food outlets. They enjoy superior housing, goods, and services. They ride in limousines.

To protect their privileges, these bureaucrats maintain an undemocratic and authoritarian system of political control over the country's 22 million people. Dissent and criticisms are answered with firings, imprisonment, and persecution.

Workers fight back

But Ceausescu's powerful Securitate has not been able to keep workers from protesting the government's policies or fighting to improve their conditions, particularly in recent years.

In August 1977, some 35,000 coal miners in the Jiu Valley went on strike over a variety of grievances, including a new pension law, poor housing, and inadequate food. They demanded that Ceausescu talk to them in person. When he arrived, he was greeted with shouts of, "Down with the proletarian bourgeoisie."

Although Ceausescu made some immediate concessions and promised that no retaliatory measures would be taken against the strikers, about 4,000 miners and their families were expelled from the area after the strike was over. Leaders of the strike were arrested and later kept under police surveillance. Two were killed in suspicious "accidents."

Less than two years later, in February 1979, a group of intellectuals and workers formed the Free Trade Union of the Working People of

Romania (SLOMR), which pledged to fight for democratic rights and in defense of the workers' interests. It was independent of the party-controlled unions.

The SLOMR soon grew to several thousand members and merged with another union called the Unofficial Trade Union of Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers of Mures District. It found a particularly receptive audience among Romania's oppressed Hungarian minority.

'We are suffering'

These union activists openly criticized the social inequalities that exist in Romania and attacked the rampant privileges enjoyed by the bureaucracy. "We who are many throughout the country," stated the document of the Mures union, "are suffering, live badly and in need, while the few live well, have everything, go in want of nothing. . . . We are always promised, from one five-year plan to the next, that we shall live better; but in fact we live worse and worse."

The government quickly cracked down. All the leaders were arrested, placed under strict police surveillance, or forced to flee abroad.

In July and August 1980, just as the massive strike wave in Poland was unfolding, there were reports of strikes at the Galati steel combine, the August 23 factory in the capital city of Bucharest, and again in the Jiu Valley coal mines. Several thousand workers were reported to have protested meat shortages in Tirgoviste.

Reflecting the inspiration of the Polish workers revolution, leaflets appeared in Romania in February 1981 calling for the formation of independent trade unions. That same month, workers protested at a steel mill and chemical factory in Bucharest and in petrochemical plants in Ploesti and Pitesti.

Although the most recent strikes and demonstrations are the most significant since the 1977 miners' revolt, the authorities have so far managed to keep them under control. But they are nervously looking over their shoulders at Poland. They have seen how rapidly scattered workers' protests can grow into a more general challenge to bureaucratic rule. That is why the main Communist Party daily, *Scinteia*, is becoming increasingly shrill in its denunciations of the Polish workers movement.

Ceausescu and his lieutenants know that the existence of Solidarity strengthens the hand of workers in Romania as well. □

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