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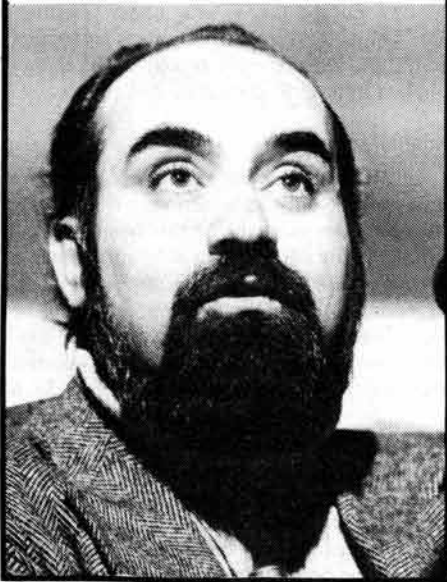
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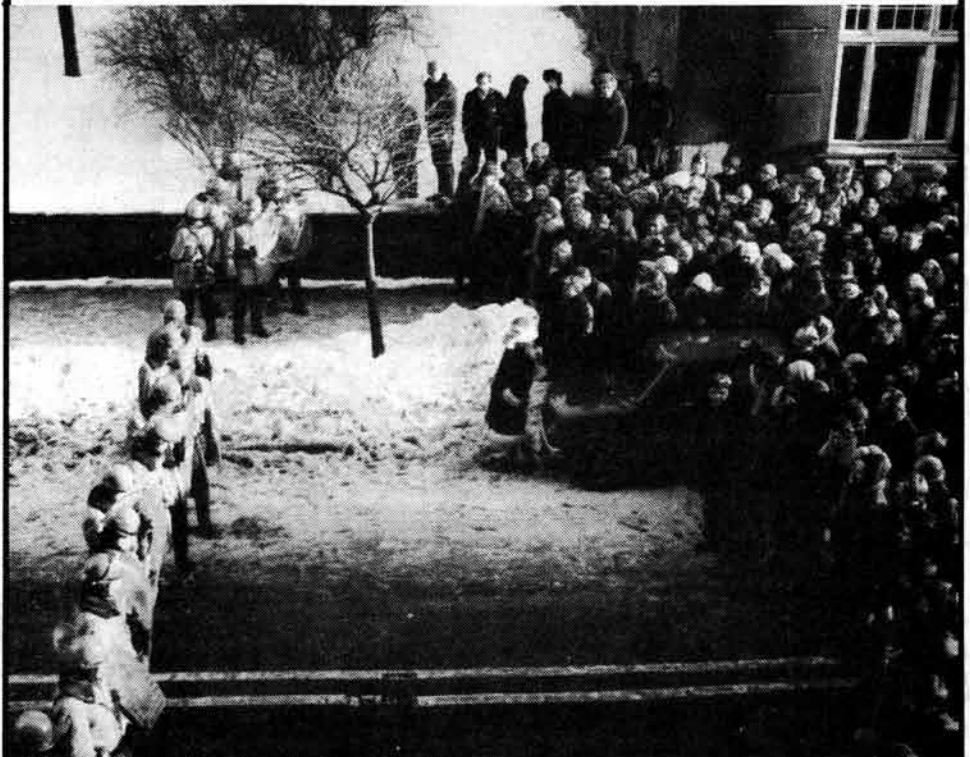
**Iran: Reza Baraheni
Released from Jail**



**Rightist
Terrorists
Step Up
Attacks in
Nicaragua**

POLAND

- **Jaruzelski Wages
War on Workers**
- **Imperialists on
Anticommunist Binge**



Warsaw crowd confronts Polish police.

Imperialists campaign on Poland

By David Frankel

Over the past several weeks the U.S. ruling class and its allies have taken advantage of the declaration of martial law in Poland to launch an anticommunist propaganda and action campaign.

Time magazine named Lech Walesa its "Man of the Year" in its January 4 issue, declaring: "Walesa and his movement had made a travesty of Communism's pretensions in the eyes of the world. An authentic proletarian revolution had risen, just as Marx had predicted, only to be put down by the guns of the oppressor class: the Communists themselves."

A feature article on communism in the same issue insisted: "Poland in the past year and a half has taught the world a lesson that is both stark and undeniable: as a means of organizing an economy and providing for the well-being of a citizenry, Communism is a failure."

In France, the most prestigious capitalist daily, *Le Monde*, offered the same message. Maurice Duverger took to task the "socialists who still retain a certain respect for the October Revolution" in the December 24 issue.

He approvingly quoted Italian Communist Party leader Enrico Berlinguer, who "has taken his implacable judgment of the states of the East right to the final conclusion," and who "very clearly states that 'the path toward socialism in the developed and democratic societies of the West cannot find a basis in Lenin.'"

Duverger suggests that European Social Democrats should "show the same rigor of thought as Mr. Berlinguer in the face of the Warsaw putsch."

'Economist' urges step-up in armaments

In Britain, *The Economist* featured a year-end special on "The East-West Struggle" in its December 26 issue.

"The road from Afghanistan to Poland has changed the way in which most Americans — and many, though not yet enough, west Europeans — look upon what Russia is trying to do in the world," *The Economist* claimed.

"Until 1979," it continued, "the prevailing view was that Soviet motives were primarily defensive."

"This comfortable view has had to be reassessed."

A particular target of the big-business weekly was the movement against NATO missiles in Europe. "Anti-nuclear feeling has re-emerged with a vengeance this year in much of western Europe," *The Economist* complained.

It lumped together progressive actions — such as the Cuban role in defending Angola against imperialist attack and the Ethiopian revolution, as well as the Vietnamese role in sweeping away the genocidal Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea — with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the declaration of martial law

in Poland.

These manifestations of "imperial power," *The Economist* argued, show that it is "essential to re-create a secure balance of power. . . . That is why President Reagan is re-arming."

Here is where the reactionary propaganda campaign crosses over into action. The imperialist rulers are in a weaker position than at any time since World War II to challenge the existence of the workers states in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But they have been able to take advantage of the criminal attack against the Polish working class by the bureaucratic regime there to advance their propaganda campaign around the Soviet threat and to push forward their overall militarization drive — in particular the drive toward military intervention against the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean.

Thus, on January 7, in the midst of his campaign around Poland, Reagan announced that the registration of eighteen-year-olds for possible military conscription would continue. During his election campaign, Reagan had vowed to end draft registration.

Economic sanctions

The economic sanctions imposed by Washington should also be seen in light of this political campaign. Reagan announced a number of economic sanctions against Poland on December 23, including continuation of a ban on U.S. government-sponsored food aid and the cutting off of fishing rights and export credits.

On December 29 Reagan took another step with the imposition of a series of sanctions

against the Soviet Union. These included a ban on sales of computers, electrical components, and equipment for the Soviet energy industry. But none of these moves were followed by Washington's NATO allies.

From the point of view of the European imperialists, it was one thing to beat the drums against communism, but it was quite another matter to cut off billions of dollars worth of export contracts in the midst of an economic crisis.

The European rulers pointed out that Reagan had carefully avoided inclusion of the lucrative U.S. grain sales to the Soviet Union in his sanctions. Furthermore, the ten European Common Market countries sold \$10.5 billion worth of goods just to the Soviet Union in 1980, compared to \$1.5 billion sold by U.S. business.

Washington has been particularly annoyed about the natural gas pipeline from Siberia to Western Europe that is now under construction. The U.S. rulers would much prefer that their capitalist competitors buy their energy supplies from U.S.-owned oil companies.

Schmidt under fire

Although none of its European allies have been quick to invoke sanctions, Washington chose to focus its attack on this issue on West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. To begin with, West Germany is by far the most powerful NATO country after the United States. The West German imperialists also have the biggest stake in maintaining their economic ties with Moscow — their trade was worth \$8.6 billion in 1980. Moreover, West German banks are Poland's leading creditor.

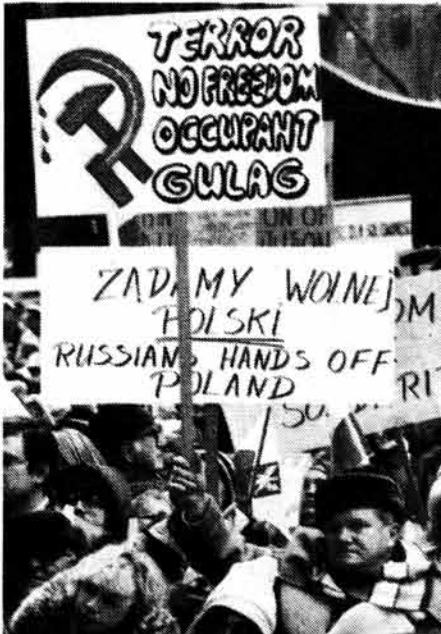
From an objective point of view, therefore, the U.S. rulers need to get the agreement of the West Germans if they are to mount the most effective campaign. At the same time, Washington took the opportunity to put some pressure on Schmidt to take a tougher line against the antimissile movement in Germany.

On January 4 — the day before the West German leader was scheduled to meet with Reagan in Washington — the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* complained: "Mr. Schmidt's stance toward Moscow speaks of a demoralized leadership whose best vision of West Germany's future is as a Finlandized, industrial vassal of a totalitarian empire."

Describing Schmidt's arrival in Washington, John Vinocur said in the January 6 *New York Times*, "There were pickets in front of the White House questioning his resolve as a man of the West, newspapers that found his position on Poland lukewarm and selfish and not a trace of the usual after-dinner-speech vocabulary of Schmidt's expertise, Schmidt's steadfastness, Schmidt's wisdom."

Washington Post columnist Mary McGrory declared January 7, "Schmidt illustrates the business-as-usual mentality that has made it impossible for Reagan to appear as the leader of the Western world in the wake of the suffocation of Poland."

Following their meeting, however, Schmidt



Right-wing demonstration in Chicago.

and Reagan issued a joint statement on Poland. Speaking of the divisions that had previously been apparent within the imperialist camp, *New York Times* correspondent Bernard Gwertzman noted January 9:

"The early rents have been mended because the Administration has refrained from trying to press key European nations like West Germany into adopting sanctions against Moscow.

"In return, the West Germans and others who have opposed sanctions have been amenable to Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr.'s call for 'a vigorous, robust and realistic common assessment' of Soviet involvement in the Polish crackdown."

But on January 10, the day before NATO foreign ministers were scheduled to meet in Brussels, Washington asked its European allies and Japan to stop supplying equipment for the gas pipeline from Siberia to Western Europe. The rightist propaganda campaign continues, and with it the demand for the extension of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union and Poland.

The lies must be answered!

A full-page advertisement in the January 10 *New York Times* declared:

"Both Poland and the Soviet Union desperately need Western loans, Western grain, and above all Western technology. By denying them access to all three we could, at no risk of military confrontation, further the processes of disintegration from within that may mark the beginning of the end of the Soviet empire."

The advertisement was sponsored by "The Committee for the Free World," and endorsed by such anticommunist intellectuals as Raymond Aron, Midge Decter, Luigi Barzini, Saul Bellow, Alain Besancon, Leszek Kolakowski, Irving Kristol, and Hugh Thomas.

Such advertisements and propaganda statements are appearing in all the imperialist countries. They must be answered.

It is a lie that economic sanctions would do anything to help the Polish workers. On the contrary, they would increase the pressures on the working class and on the workers state. They would make it more difficult for the workers to win demands such as the five-day workweek, lower food prices, better working conditions, and improved social services. They would do nothing to advance the struggle for workers democracy. Such sanctions are directed *against the gains* the Polish workers have made by abolishing capitalism.

It is a lie that economic sanctions are a peaceful action. That is only true if sanctions are abstracted from the overall functioning of the imperialist system around the world.

The imperialist rulers seek to maintain and extend their domination through a worldwide system of military bases, through support to rightist dictatorships, through the use of secret armies and spy agencies such as the CIA, through diplomatic pressure, economic blockades, and direct military aggression. Whatever methods they use at any particular time are part and parcel of this overall system.

As investment banker Felix Rohatyn explained in the January 11 *New York Times*, "In our constant competitive struggle with the Soviet Union, capital can be as potent a weapon as intercontinental ballistic missiles."

Cutting off normal economic and diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is also intended to advance the climate of fear and the myth of a Soviet threat that the imperialists need to foster in their drive toward counterrevolutionary war in Central America, the Middle East, and Africa.

Above all, it is a lie that the imperialist powers stand for democracy or have the slightest progressive role to play anywhere in the world.

If the imperialists want to talk about sanctions, let them impose sanctions against the racist criminals who rule in South Africa and Israel, and who maintain their power with the active support of Washington, Paris, London, and Bonn.

If the imperialists want to implement sanctions, let them cut off their aid to the butchers in El Salvador and to the murderous Khmer Rouge gangs in Kampuchea.

There can be no genuine support for the Polish working class that does not put opposition to the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy within the context of opposition to imperialist oppression and support for the struggle for socialism. □

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Counterrevolutionary terror on the rise

Somozaists operate openly from U.S., Honduran camps

**By Arnold Weissberg
and Matilde Zimmermann**

MANAGUA — In an interview published here December 31, State Security chief Lenín Cerna predicted a big increase in counterrevolutionary terrorism in the coming year.

Cerna's statements came after a month of killings, robberies, rapes, and kidnappings by counterrevolutionaries. These attacks even included an attempt to destroy a Nicaraguan airliner in mid-flight.

The government security chief's prediction of stepped-up violence in 1982 was proven correct almost at once. Before dawn on January 1, two counterrevolutionaries who had infiltrated the Sandinista Air Force attempted to hijack the jet aircraft used to transport Nicaraguan government leaders. The counterrevolutionaries were captured after the pilot on duty refused to fly the plane to Miami, even when the terrorists threatened to kill him, and after a hostage escaped and alerted security forces.

At 6 a.m. the same day, a band of ten counterrevolutionaries attacked a militia post sixty kilometers north of the town of Jinotega, near the Honduran frontier. Three peasant militia members held them off for almost an hour, killing three of the attackers before the rest of the band fled. One of the dead counterrevolutionaries was identified as a former village military chief under Somoza.

Encouragement from Washington

It takes no great imagination to see the link between the mounting terrorism and the threats against Nicaragua emanating from the White House. The connection was made particularly obvious when a new training camp for Nicaraguan and Cuban exiles seeking to overthrow those governments was opened with a public celebration in Florida December 27.

Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders had already given the administration's blessing, declaring that such camps do not violate U.S. laws "as long as they don't hurt anybody and as long as they don't actually conspire to invade in a specific way. . . . It is not illegal to have military exercises, guys running around the fields with guns, or to say, 'Uncle Sam, we're ready when you're ready — wink, wink — and here we go'" (*New York Times*, December 23).

According to counterrevolutionary leader Héctor Fabián, at least 100 Nicaraguans have sneaked back into that country to participate in military actions against the Sandinista-led government.

"They have to act," Cerna said in the December 31 interview, speaking of Nicaragua's

enemies. "First of all, because time is slipping by. And the passage of time makes it possible for the Nicaraguan revolution to make progress in accomplishing its goals, which in fact is exactly what's been happening."

Attempted mass murder foiled

The most serious attack so far came on December 12, when a powerful bomb exploded in the passenger compartment of an Aeronica airliner parked at the terminal in Mexico City. Aeronica is Nicaragua's national airline.

The passengers had not yet boarded the plane, but five crew members were injured. The blast blew a three-foot hole in the plane's side.

The device had been timed to go off while the plane was in the air over El Salvador. If it had, according to expert opinion, it is highly likely that all 110 people aboard would have died. A fifty-minute departure delay probably saved their lives, averting a criminal outrage like the one in 1976 in which a terrorist bomb destroyed a Cuban airliner in mid-flight, killing seventy-three people.

Bomb plot smashed

MANAGUA — On January 8, the Nicaraguan Ministry of the Interior announced the capture here of a commando squad of fifteen counterrevolutionaries. The squad possessed 300 sticks of dynamite and was preparing to destroy Nicaragua's only oil refinery and a Managua cement plant.

According to the Ministry of the Interior, the commando squad was part of the Honduran-based Nicaraguan Democratic Union (UDN) and its armed wing, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Nicaragua (FARN). These groups are led by Fernando and Edmundo Chamorro Rapaccioli, once prominent figures in the bourgeois opposition to Somoza. UDN-FARN leaders have claimed they have no ties to the Somozaists, but three of those captured in Managua were ex-National Guardsmen. Two of these had been in prison but had been released upon receiving pardons.

The Ministry of the Interior also stated that evidence existed to indicate that the UDN-FARN is receiving financing from "military officials of governments with which Nicaragua maintains diplomatic relations." The specific governments involved were not disclosed. — M.Z.

Mexican and Nicaraguan investigators agreed that the bombers boarded the plane in El Salvador, where it had touched down before arriving in Mexico. They were reportedly traveling with Guatemalan passports. Composite portraits of two men were drawn up and are being circulated worldwide.

Lenín Cerna announced there was evidence that the would-be murderers were linked to Cuban and Nicaraguan exile groups.

It remains to be seen if the Reagan administration will assist in the search for these real terrorists the way it searched for non-existent Libyan "hit teams" in early December.

Reign of terror against peasants

Inside Nicaragua, armed counterrevolutionary bands have created a reign of terror in rural areas of Boaco, Chontales, and Zelaya provinces. Four armed groups have carried out a string of murders, rapes, robberies, and kidnappings.

Peasants began fleeing the area, unwilling to return until the armed forces clean out the counterrevolutionaries, a process that has already begun. The government announced December 10 that sixteen counterrevolutionary terrorists had been killed during the preceding week.

Meanwhile, other counterrevolutionaries operating out of Honduras killed seven members of the armed forces and kidnapped another twenty-seven. Several of the dead were murdered in Honduras after being kidnapped and tortured.

Nicaragua's charges that elements of the Honduran army were cooperating with the counterrevolutionaries were borne out December 28 when a Honduran army plane crashed at Puerto Lempira, just outside Nicaragua on Honduras's Atlantic Coast. On the plane were, among others, fourteen Honduran soldiers, including a major, and Steadman Fagoth, a former leader of Nicaragua's Indian population and now a counterrevolutionary exile.

'False and absurd' charges

In an apparent effort to draw attention away from Honduran military involvement with the Somozaists, representatives of the Honduran government charged in early January that Sandinista troops had crossed into Honduran territory December 26 and killed 200 Nicaraguan exiles there.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto denounced that charge as "false and absurd." As of January 4, the Foreign Ministry had received no official complaint from Honduras about the alleged incursion. In fact, Ni-

caraguan authorities first learned of the Honduran charges from an article in the *Washington Post*.

FSLN leader Luis Carrión had warned last November of the possibility of counterrevolutionary exiles in Honduras carrying out attacks inside that country while disguised as Sandinistas. Labor and religious organizations, as well as liberal opposition figures inside Honduras, have also warned of this possibility.

'We have to defend ourselves'

The killings and other terrorist attacks inside Nicaragua do not appear to have reduced support for the revolution. "Even though I feel a great loss, I believe that my son, Carlos Altamirano Borda, gave his life in a just cause, to defend the revolution," said Elba Borda upon receiving the young soldier's body. "We have to arm ourselves. We have to defend ourselves."

The remains of Altamirano and five other dead soldiers were returned to their families in a moving ceremony December 27, in which eight of the nine members of the FSLN National Directorate participated. The body of the seventh victim, Roy Smith López, was taken to his home in Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region.

In another incident, which suggested that the terrorists might be preparing even more serious attacks, an unidentified man was killed December 23 in Managua when a bomb he was carrying exploded. The blast occurred in a park only yards away from the headquarters of the national teachers association, ANDEN.

So serious has the situation become, Minister of the Interior Tomás Borge said in a December 21 speech, that the government is considering the declaration of a state of war. Borge said two days later the government had evidence that terrorists would seek to assassinate revolutionary leaders.

No Christmas amnesty

Some of the members of the counterrevolutionary bands are former prisoners, released through the generosity of the Sandinistas. For this reason, the government decided against

Somozaist thugs in Costa Rica

Apparently not content with murdering and looting in Nicaragua and Honduras, the Somozaist ex-National Guards have also made an appearance in Costa Rica.

Striking banana workers at the U.S.-owned Banana Development Corporation (BANDECO) have charged the company with hiring ex-National Guards to terrorize them. BANDECO workers are among 4,000 Costa Rican banana workers currently on strike. They have refused to continue negotiations until the company gets rid of the Somozaist hired guns. —M.Z.



Barricada

Nicaraguan soldiers bear coffin of one of their seven comrades killed by counterrevolutionary terrorists in late December. Members of the FSLN National Directorate and relatives of the slain soldiers look on.

granting its usual Christmas pardons this year.

"I had hoped that my husband would be pardoned at Christmas," said Marina de Alemán, whose husband is serving a ten-year term for his Somozaist activities, "but I am aware that the *contras* [counterrevolutionaries] who are attacking us are the ones responsible for the government's decision. The *contras* are at fault for the fact that my husband is still in jail, because their armed attacks force the government to take drastic measures to defend the revolution."

This attitude is not universally shared, however. The right-wing daily *La Prensa* lamented the fact that no Somozaist ex-National Guards had been released at Christmas. The paper's generosity toward these killers is not surprising, since it refers to the counterrevolutionary terrorists now operating in the country as "armed opposition groups," thus making the current crop of murderers sound almost like legal political activists. This characterization by *La Prensa* has provoked a sharp exchange in the three daily papers.

'Unity against aggression'

The Sandinista government is trying to prepare the Nicaraguan people politically as well as militarily for the attacks it fears are coming in the first months of 1982. The Government of National Reconstruction has declared 1982 the "Year of Unity Against Aggression."

On January 3, the FSLN daily *Barricada* ran a front-page story entitled "Blockade — other

nations have survived it." It described the U.S. aircraft carrier *Nimitz*, a ship that could be used in a naval blockade of Nicaragua. "Just the waves from this giant," *Barricada* said, "would be enough to sink our entire navy."

But in addition to outlining the devastating impact that a U.S. naval blockade would have on Nicaragua, the article also described how the Vietnamese and Cuban people have stood up to commercial and military blockades.

As *Barricada* explained in a year-end roundup article December 31, the revolution is in a better position than ever to defend itself and move forward.

"Above all else, 1981 has been a decisive year for the consolidation of the revolution. With every day that passed, the revolution was consolidated and strengthened, and thus every day was a big loss for our enemies. Nineteen eighty-one gave us another year, and the foreign and domestic enemies of this process know all too well what this means.

"It is absolutely clear that we are stronger than we were yesterday, better able to resist any aggression, better able to deal with our problems and to deepen the gains the Nicaraguan people have made." □

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Reza Baraheni released

Defense effort strengthened democratic rights

By Fred Murphy

A broad defense effort — waged both inside Iran and internationally — succeeded on January 4 in gaining the release of Dr. Reza Baraheni from Tehran's Evin Prison.

Baraheni, a prominent Iranian poet and writer who played a key role in exposing the crimes of the shah's regime and denouncing U.S. imperialist domination of Iran, had been detained on October 12 outside his office at Tehran University. He was held for a total of eighty-four days; no specific charges were ever brought against him.

According to the poet's wife, Sanaz Baraheni, who spoke to supporters of the defense campaign in the United States shortly after Baraheni's release, he was "in excellent spirits" and reported that he had been well treated while under detention.

Appeal from Ireland

[The following telegram was sent to the Iranian authorities by three Irish organizations on the same day that Reza Baraheni was released.]

* * *

We have recently learned of the imprisonment of Dr. Reza Baraheni on October 12, 1981, in Evin Prison in Tehran.

As leaders of the defense campaign to save Bobby Sands, we are particularly pained by the continued imprisonment of Reza Baraheni, who is well known to us as a principal figure in the campaign against the Pahlavi tyranny. His voice and pen were always placed in the service of social justice and his consistent role as an anti-imperialist fighter was a source of strength in our own struggle against colonial oppression.

We have been particularly affected by Imam Khomeini's support of our long struggle for self-determination and social justice in Ireland. The Iranian revolution's solidarity with Bobby Sands touched the hearts of all in Ireland who have suffered — as have the Iranian people — from colonial exploitation. This is why we appeal in remembrance of Bobby Sands, for the immediate release from prison of Dr. Reza Baraheni, our brother in the fight against imperialism and injustice.

National H-Block Committee
Irish Republican Socialist Party
Bobby Sands Defense Committee

In 1973, Baraheni was jailed and tortured by the shah's secret police, SAVAK. He wrote about those experiences in a book, *The Crowned Cannibals*, which was an important resource in the international campaign against the U.S.-backed Pahlavi monarchy.

Since the downfall of the shah, Baraheni has been working in Iran as a translator and professor at Tehran University. In all his recent writings, he has been a staunch defender of the Iranian revolution against the attacks and destabilization attempts mounted by U.S. imperialism.

Support for Baraheni from abroad came from those who share his stance in defense of the Iranian revolution. Telegrams and messages calling for his release were sent to the Iranian authorities from Irish leader Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, from three Irish organizations that were active in defending the republican hunger strikers (see box), from American Indian leader Russell Means, from U.S. Black leaders such as Dick Gregory and James Forman, and from leaders of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party.

According to socialists in Iran, Baraheni reported upon his release that the international telegram campaign had a big impact on the Iranian authorities. He said that the officials who interrogated him showed him the original copies of some of the telegrams and that he was able to explain that his defenders were all active opponents of U.S. imperialism.

Inside Iran, the first to publicly defend Baraheni were the socialists of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) and the Workers Unity Party (HVK). After their newspapers published some of the messages of support that had come from abroad, various Iranian intellectuals were inspired to speak out on Baraheni's behalf.

Letters to the Iranian authorities were sent by prominent writers such as Cyrus Tahbaz, Mahmoud Enayat, Shams al-Ahmad, and Mohammed Ali Sepanlou. These intellectuals also joined the socialists in campaigning for the release of other literary figures who had been detained around the same time as Baraheni. As a result, all of these prisoners were set free in the days leading up to Baraheni's own release. Among them were Mostafa Rahimi, Homa Naftegh, Morteza Ravandi, and Bagher Parham.

Socialists in Iran report that the victorious effort to free the imprisoned intellectuals has resulted in a broader discussion among political activists there about the need to step up defense of democratic rights. In particular, writers and intellectuals associated with the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party have come out publicly against the party leadership's stance of refraining from any criticism of the Islamic Republic

HKE leader jailed in Tehran

Bahram Ali Atai, a leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) of Iran, was arrested in Tehran on December 11.

Atai was distributing leaflets at the Friday prayer meeting in the capital when he was detained. He was taken to the Central Islamic Revolutionary Committee of Tehran, held for several hours, then released and told to come back the next day. When he did so he was again arrested.

As of January 8, HKE members in Tehran contacted by telephone indicated that Atai was still being held and that he had been taken to Evin Prison. They reported he had been allowed to call his family to say that he was not being mistreated.

Representatives of the Islamic Revolutionary Prosecutor's office have responded to inquiries about Atai's case by saying that he is under investigation. They accuse Atai of involvement with a small ultraleft group known as Rah-e Kargar (Workers Path). This group has called for taking up arms against the current regime in Iran.

Bahram Ali Atai is well known in Iran as a leader of the HKE, which, as is also well known, rejects the political positions of groups such as Rah-e Kargar.

Since last January, Atai and other HKE members have been waging a campaign for reinstatement of their jobs at the Iran National automobile factory in Tehran. Before his dismissal a year ago, Atai participated in a military unit of Iran National workers that fought at the front in the war against the Iraqi invasion. He received a letter of recognition from the Islamic Revolutionary Committee at the factory "for the defense of the sanctity of the Islamic Republic in service in the south of the country."

Atai was distributing leaflets calling for the reinstatement of fired Iran National workers at the time of his arrest.

Telegrams and messages calling for the release of Bahram Ali Atai should be sent to Hojatolislam Mousavi Tabrizi, Prosecutor General, Islamic Revolutionary Courts, Tehran, Iran. Copies may be sent to *Kargar*, P.O. Box 43-174, Postal Area 14, Tehran, Iran.

Party (IRP) regime on this question.

The IRP government, which has used the fight against terrorist attacks as a pretext to go after intellectuals and militant workers, was put increasingly on the defensive during the course of the campaign for Baraheni and his colleagues. At first, the authorities refused to even acknowledge that the poet was being held.

On December 7, however, the head of the Supreme Court, Ayatollah Mossavi Ardebili,

responded to a question at a news conference about Baraheni's imprisonment by declaring that "I respect every wholesome thought about the struggle against imperialism." Other officials had to reiterate publicly that no one should be imprisoned for their political views or religious beliefs.

Commenting on Ardebili's statement, the December 19 issue of the HVK's newspaper *Hemmat* pointed out that the arrest of Baraheni, "this anti-imperialist intellectual and freedom-lover who has achieved world renown for his broad struggle against Pahlavi's oppression, has made our revolution lose face all over

the world and has weakened the ranks of anti-imperialist fighters."

The release of Baraheni and the other jailed intellectuals strengthens the fight against U.S. imperialist threats to the Iranian revolution, and at the same time bolsters efforts by the Iranian workers and their allies to defend and broaden the democratic rights they won by overthrowing the shah.

"The fight we waged has changed the whole atmosphere in the society with regard to repression," an HKE leader reports. "It showed how you can actually win the release of those unjustly imprisoned." □

China

Ban on protests defied

Huge crowd demonstrates in Tien An Men Square

By Jun Xing

[The following article appeared in the December 1981 issue of the Hong Kong monthly *October Review*. The translation by *October Review* has been slightly amended.]

* * *

On November 1, 1981, the Peking municipal government decreed that parades, rallies, and speeches would not be allowed in Tien An Men Square, that no propaganda material of any kind could be posted or distributed there, that all activities disturbing public order would be prohibited, and that commercial stalls and services could no longer operate in the square.

The official reason for the move was that "Tien An Men Square is an important location for the state to hold political gatherings and to receive guests. Its dignity, solemnity, tidiness and good social order should be maintained" (Xinhua News Agency, November 1).

This is ridiculous! Tien An Men Square is the site where the Chinese people have held political gatherings and demonstrations. Glorious chapters in modern Chinese revolutionary history are inscribed at Tien An Men Square: the May Fourth Movement in 1919;¹ the March 18, 1926, anti-imperialist event;² the December 9 Movement of 1935;³ the December 1946 protest against U.S. imperialism

(protesting a U.S. soldier's rape of Peking University student Shen Chong); the 1947 movement against hunger and the Kuomintang's waging of civil war; and more recently the April 5 movement in 1976⁴ and the mass rallies and wall poster movement that emerged in subsequent years.

All these mass activities were aimed directly or indirectly at the rulers of the time. The present official stipulation implies that only the ruling bureaucrats have the right to use the square, which is a further legalization of bureaucratic privileges and a naked deprivation of the rights of the people.

The reason given about receiving "guests" is also absurd. The square is frequented by the general public and ordinary tourists who need services like drinks and food and photo-taking. Now all these stalls are banned, not only depriving many people of their livelihood but also creating inconveniences for citizens and tourists, although this would not bother state guests, who are well taken care of by the government.

In fact, the official "reasons" are merely pretexts to justify prohibiting rallies and parades. This move is a further restriction of the people's democratic rights following the removal of the Four Freedoms from the constitu-

3. The December 9 Movement in 1935 was aimed against Japanese imperialist pressures on China and the Chinese government's unwillingness to resist.

4. In the first week of April 1976, thousands of people gathered daily at Tien An Men Square to commemorate the death of former premier Chou En-lai. These gatherings began to take the character of rallies opposing the Maoist leadership of the Communist Party.

On April 5, the government ordered the removal of all wreaths and posters from the square. An angry crowd gathered, totalling 100,000 people at its height. Demonstrators held the square all day, battling police and militia units sent to disperse them.

tion⁵ and the arrest of militants of the democratic movement. An arbitrary decision by the local authorities is thus used to annul article 45 of the constitution, which provides for the people's democratic rights.

Just a few years ago, when the faction now in power still needed mass gatherings and wall posters in Tien An Men Square to aid them in their power struggle against the Maoist faction, people like Deng Xiaoping claimed to support the masses' demands for democracy. But having managed to grasp power, they tear off their mask of "democratic reformer" and stand opposed to the people. They have become so afraid of Tien An Men Square that they list it as one of the zones where political activity is forbidden.

The rapid self-exposure of China's "democratic reformers" is partially due to the powerful impact of recent events in Poland. They realize that if they are to avoid following in the footsteps of the Polish bureaucrats, they must try to root out all possible threatening shoots before there is an upsurge of the Chinese masses.

But this attempt by the bureaucrats has been thwarted. Just two weeks after the announcement of this decree, the Chinese masses expressed their reaction in action: some Peking citizens, mainly youth, ignored the decree prohibiting gatherings at the square. They ignored the threat of severe punishment for violators and the special appeals in the *People's Daily*, and for two consecutive days (November 16 and 17) they gathered in Tien An Men Square, with up to 200,000 people there the second day.

Some people were there to celebrate China's victory in the women's volleyball world championship, but many took advantage of the opportunity to break through this new forbidden zone and challenge bureaucratic autocracy.

Even though the subjective motives of the participants may vary, the objective significance of their act is the same: it shows that the broad masses defy party decrees, and it indicates the extent to which the party's authority has declined. □

5. Article 45 of the constitution previously guaranteed the Chinese people "Four Big Freedoms" — the right "to speak out freely, air views fully, hold great debates and write big-character posters." These rights were deleted from the constitution by the National People's Congress in August 1980.

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Jaruzelski's war on workers

Strikes broken with bullets and clubs

By Ernest Harsch

Several weeks after the imposition of martial law on December 13, Poland's bureaucratic rulers have succeeded in putting down most protest strikes and demonstrations. They have dealt the workers movement a severe blow, but the struggle in Poland is far from over.

Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski has utilized a massive show of force against the working class. He ordered the arrest of thousands of trade unionists, intellectuals, students, and political activists; imposed strict control over all communications; sent armed police against strikers and demonstrators; and outlawed the activities of the 10-million-member Solidarity union movement.

Under these conditions, the authorities claim, Poland is getting back to "normal." To Jaruzelski and the other bureaucrats who rule Poland that means, above all, safeguarding their material privileges and reasserting their absolute control over all political, economic, and social decision-making — against the interests of the working class and to the detriment of the Polish workers state. Their ultimate aim is to break Solidarity as a representative organization controlled by the workers themselves.

Widespread strikes

The Polish workers — who had already been mobilized for a year and a half in the most massive upsurge in Poland's history — have not taken this attack lying down.

In factories, mines, and shipyards across the country, they have responded with defensive protest strikes, and the organization of underground committees — despite the fact that almost the entire Solidarity leadership has been detained, and workers in different cities cannot communicate effectively on a national level because of the suspension of telephone service and restrictions on travel.

The government itself admitted that some 200 strikes broke out in the wake of Jaruzelski's December 13 declaration. Solidarity sources put the figure even higher.

Because of government censorship, details about these strikes are sketchy. In some cases, local Solidarity activists managed to circulate information about them through clandestine news bulletins. In others, Radio Warsaw itself reported on them — usually after they had been broken or in connection with trials of strike organizers.

One Solidarity bulletin reported that a day after the declaration of martial law, all large factories were paralyzed in the key industrial cities of Poznan and Wroclaw.

The government radio acknowledged other strikes in Warsaw, Gdansk, Katowice, Bydgoszcz, Kielce, Bialogard, Szczecin, Lublin, Olsztyn, Krakow, Swidnica, and Lodz.

At the large Nowa Huta steelworks in Krakow, a strike by about 10,000 workers was broken by a massive show of force. According to Stanislaw Zwada, a former union official who was interviewed on Radio Warsaw, "We knew that the state authorities would not accept the strike, and would try to do something. We were waiting for an attack and we were afraid."

It finally came at 1:00 a.m. on December 16, involving riot police and more than 100 military vehicles. Confronted with the possibility of massive bloodshed, the workers decided to give up their occupation.

Workers gunned down

Some of the most massive and persistent resistance was mounted in the northern port city of Gdansk and in the Silesian mining region in the south, two areas that played key roles in the August 1980 strike wave that gave birth to Solidarity. In both areas, the response of the police was particularly brutal.

In Gdansk, workers occupied the Lenin Shipyard, where several prominent Solidarity leaders who had escaped arrest set up a national strike committee and issued a call for a countrywide general strike (see box).

Le Monde correspondent Bernard Guetta managed to enter the occupied shipyard and

file a report that appeared in the December 18 issue of the Paris daily. Present in the shipyard were Anna Walentynowicz, a longtime union activist whose firing in August 1980 sparked the original sit-in strike there; Jan Waszkiewicz, a member of Solidarity's National Committee; and delegates from other strikebound enterprises in the area.

During a meeting of the strike committee on December 14, Guetta reported, the strikers received greetings from a Polish farmer who declared, "Dear brother shipyard workers, in 1980 the spark that set Poland alight came from here, because of what you decided. Today, once again, you have decided not to leave your enterprise. We, the farmers, will do everything to ensure that you do not die of hunger."

A younger worker said, "If the army comes, we should give them flowers and maybe they will give us guns in return."

The army did come, early on December 16. Tanks broke down the main gates of the shipyard. The strike was broken and most workers left.

On December 17, the eleventh anniversary of the 1970 massacre of striking workers in the northern port cities, Gdansk was swept by large street demonstrations. The police attacked and fighting ensued. Vehicles were overturned and set afire.

According to Radio Warsaw, police clashed with demonstrators at a steel plant and "crowds" of "young rowdies" took to the streets else-

General strike call

On December 14, a day after the declaration of martial law, five members of Solidarity's National Committee (KK) issued a call for a countrywide general strike. Signed by Miroslaw Krupinski, Jan Waszkiewicz, Andrzej Konarski, A. Szumiejko, and W. Przygodzinski, the appeal read:

A state of war has been proclaimed in our country and there have been massive arrests of Solidarity leaders and activists. In light of the activities of the Polish authorities prior to the current events, our union had taken decisions that now go into effect. In accordance with resolutions adopted on December 4 in Radom and by the KK on December 12, our answer to the violence is a general strike.

No union or organization can passively allow its leaders to be victimized by repression, its rights to be taken away, or the free-

dom of citizens to be restricted. In launching this strike, we specify that it continue until the following conditions are met: freedom for all imprisoned persons and the lifting of martial law.

Only when these conditions are fulfilled can we enter into negotiations with the aim of achieving a basis of agreement. We also note that this action is taken in accord with Solidarity's statutes and in the interests of the workers.

In undertaking this strike, we stress the necessity of maintaining discipline and peace, respect for state property, and the avoidance of anything that could lead to an unnecessary confrontation with the security forces. Our weapons are the calm, dignity, and organization within the factories. Our hope is the unity and solidarity of all the workers of Poland.

where. "Street barricades began to be erected," the radio said.

A later report on Radio Warsaw stated that 324 persons were injured in the police attack. The government, after weeks of silence on the death toll, finally admitted on January 8 that at least nine persons had been killed.

Also on December 17, thousands attempted to demonstrate at Victory Square in Warsaw, but were dispersed by riot police. Crowds jeered at the police, chanting, "Long live freedom!" and "Gestapo! Gestapo!"

In Silesia, where many coal mines were initially occupied by the workers, the police also unleashed a bloodbath. On December 16, security police opened fire at the Wujek coal mine, killing at least eight workers (according to the official death toll).

Despite this massacre, the strikes in Silesia lasted for nearly two more weeks. By the end of the year, the last major protest strike in Poland, at the Piast coal mine, had been broken.

Thousands arrested

To break these strikes, the authorities resorted not only to direct police and military action against the workers, but to widespread detentions of Solidarity leaders and activists, as well as numerous other supporters of democratic rights.

Since December 13, thousands have been seized. They include union officials, strikers, journalists, artists, writers, political activists, scientists, and even Solidarity supporters within the ruling Polish United Workers Party (PUWP, the Communist Party).

Among those known to have been detained are Lech Walesa, chairman of Solidarity; Jan Kulaj, head of Rural Solidarity, the farmers organization; Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik, key activists in the Solidarity movement and leaders of the disbanded Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR); Halina Mikołajska, a well-known actress and fighter for democratic rights; Jerzy Strzelecki, a leading sociologist; Tadeusz Mazowiecki, editor of Solidarity's national newspaper, *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*; and numerous union leaders like Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Andrzej Gwiazda, Karol Modzelewski, Jan Rulewski, Ryszard Bugaj, Seweryn Jaworski, and Marian Jurczyk.

According to one Solidarity bulletin, fifteen PUWP members were arrested in Torun, where rank-and-file dissidents in the party launched a strong challenge to the party hierarchy in early 1981.

The authorities admit that nearly 6,000 persons have been detained. Solidarity estimates put the figure much higher.

In cities around the country, workers accused of organizing strikes or violating other martial law regulations have been brought before summary courts, sometimes in handcuffs. The trials have been brief, with the defendants drawing sentences of at least two or three years in prison. Some sentences have been up to eight years or more. The defendants have no right of appeal.

In addition, many workers are being fired

from their jobs, as part of an official "verification" campaign to weed out key union activists and terrorize the rest of the workforce.

At the same time, the authorities appear to be preparing for major show trials of top Solidarity leaders. The Polish press has been filled with all sorts of fabrications and accusations against Solidarity.

Employing the slanderous methods used during the Stalinist purge trials, the Polish government has charged the Solidarity leadership with acting in collusion with the CIA and other imperialist agencies. Documents claimed to have been found in Solidarity offices purportedly called for "urban guerrilla warfare" and a "general uprising against the people's state."

In propagating such charges, the Polish bureaucrats have been handed valuable ammunition by the Reagan administration in Washington. Reagan's phony and hypocritical claims of support for the Polish workers — and particularly his imposition of sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union — have made it easier for the Stalinists to try to portray Solidarity as an "antisocialist" force.

For example, one Polish radio broadcast following Reagan's imposition of sanctions claimed that Reagan's "exaggerated interest in the internal affairs of Poland" came "while the extremist activists of Solidarity and other anti-socialist groups made preparations for taking over power in Poland and sought ways of achieving counterrevolutionary changes in the system."

Anti-Semitism

In seeking to justify their attacks on Solidarity, the Polish authorities have revived the vilest anti-Semitic invective.

Trybuna Ludu, the official daily paper of the PUWP Central Committee, pointed to the "Trotskyist leanings, Zionist links and anarchosindicalism of Jacek Kuron," a founder of the KOR.

In Poland, the term "Zionist," as it is used by the authorities, does not necessarily refer to one's political views, but is employed as an epithet against critics who are Jewish or who are accused of being Jewish. (Officially, there are only about 7,000 Jews left in Poland, following the extermination of millions under the Nazi occupation and the departure of most others during a government-sponsored anti-Semitic campaign in the late 1960s.)

Similar charges against Kuron were raised in a December 17 television broadcast. In it, he was accused of having "maintained close contacts with émigré circles, especially émigrés of the Jewish nationality."

Two days earlier, a Warsaw radio and television broadcast charged that "persons of Jewish origin had turned Solidarity into an antinational body." Bronislaw Geremek, a key adviser to Solidarity, was called a "son of a rabbi" who spent his time "deforming Polish history in his books." The broadcast also maintained that a "chauvinistic Jewish international" was aiming to seize power in Poland

through the KOR.

Because of the strength of the workers movement, General Jaruzelski has been unable to rely on repression alone. He has sought to combine the crackdown with pledges of economic concessions and promises to adhere to the agreements signed with striking workers in 1980.

While the prices of certain staple goods are likely to go up even more, the authorities have at the same time promised wage increases to help offset the price hikes. Though meat rations have been cut back further, other items like fish, cheese, carrots, honey, cabbage, and beans have turned up in food stores in quantities not seen in months.

A number of the most discredited bureaucrats have been arrested and are being brought to trial for corruption.

In another attempt at undermining opposition, the authorities have claimed that they will allow Solidarity to resume its activity after martial law is ended. Capt. Wieslaw Gornicki stated in an interview January 5 that the ruling Military Council for National Salvation had "no intention of dissolving Solidarity."

But at the same time, they have made it clear that it could not be the same kind of organization. "There is certainly no place for a trade union as a vehicle for political activities," Gornicki said. A day earlier, an article in *Trybuna Ludu* declared, "The Solidarity union, in the real form in which it functioned up to Dec. 12, 1981, cannot have a place in the Socialist state system."

What they want is a new, bureaucratically controlled union that would masquerade under the name of Solidarity and refrain from challenging any key aspect of bureaucratic rule.

Solidarity is now fighting for its survival. Though its members were taken off guard by the scale and suddenness of Jaruzelski's crackdown, they are continuing to fight a defensive struggle, seeking to preserve what they can.

Numerous clandestine committees have been established on the local level, many of them issuing mimeographed or typewritten bulletins. Some key national leaders of Solidarity — like Zbigniew Bujak, Bogdan Lis, Alina Pinkowska, and Bohdan Borusewicz — managed to escape the roundup. Solidarity leaflets have called for the formation of "circles of social resistance" to help gather and circulate information, provide assistance to political prisoners, and engage in passive resistance.

One message, signed by Wladyslaw Frasiński, a member of the union's national Presidium, stressed that the union had to devise new forms of struggle under the conditions of repression. Another, signed by Zbigniew Janas, head of the Solidarity chapter at the Ursus tractor factory outside Warsaw, urged workers not to engage in direct confrontations with the regime, so as to avoid further bloodshed.

"In these difficult days," Janas said, "we all must prevent the destruction of Solidarity, which is the only hope of Poles." □

THE MILITANT

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

The December 25 issue, the first published after the declaration of martial law in Poland, featured a front-page editorial under the headline, "Defend Polish workers! Stop U.S. war threats against Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador!"

The editorial began, "The brutal suppression of the Polish workers and farmers by the Polish regime, backed up by the Kremlin, must be condemned and opposed by everyone who is fighting for workers' rights and for socialism. . . ."

"The crackdown in Poland, falsely carried out in the name of communism, is a blow to the working-class movement throughout the world and to the cause of communism everywhere."

At the same time, the editorial stressed, the Reagan administration and the other imperialist governments were seeking to take advantage of the Polish crackdown:

"Two days after the declaration of martial law in Poland, by no coincidence whatsoever, the Reagan administration announced that military 'contingency plans' are in preparation for U.S. intervention in the Caribbean and Central America. . . ."

"Thus, under cover of the propaganda bonanza handed to them by the Polish and Soviet bureaucracies, the Reagan administration is stepping up its public justifications for its planned military moves against the advancing revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean."

After noting the condemnations of the crackdown in Poland coming from the American, British, and French governments, the *Militant* continued, "Polish workers don't need phony solidarity from those who shed crocodile tears over the suppression of democratic rights in Poland, but stand silent in the face of Washington's acts of war and oppression."

"American imperialism is as much the enemy of the Polish people as it is of the peoples of the entire world."

"And what the Polish movement is fighting for is as much a threat to imperialism as it is to the Stalinist bureaucrats. . . ."

"The most urgent task of those in this country who support the Polish workers and farmers is to cut through the imperialist hypocrisy and lies, and tell the truth about what the Polish workers are fighting for."

The January 1 *Militant* reviewed the positions taken by the newspaper following the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Similar considerations applied in those cases. "One of these," the article pointed out, "is the need to distinguish Marxist opposition to reactionary moves

by the Soviet bureaucracy from the loud chorus opposing it from a proimperialist perspective." A *Militant* headline on Czechoslovakia in 1968, for instance, declared, "Soviet troops, go home! U.S., get out of Vietnam!"

The Socialist Workers Party, as the *Militant* reported, organized a number of public forums in solidarity with the Polish workers. A prominent feature in all of them was staunch opposition to U.S. imperialism. This was in stark contrast to the many anticommunist actions held in the United States, including one called by the AFL-CIO trade union federation outside the Polish consulate in New York December 19.

Another theme of the *Militant's* coverage has been to explain the need to defend the workers states against imperialism, and how actions like that of the Polish bureaucracy actually weaken them.

An editorial in the January 1 issue, for instance, explained how workers democracy is indispensable for the defense of workers states like Poland and the Soviet Union. It cited the example of Cuba:

"It is no coincidence that Cuba, which is the most democratic workers state in the world, is also the land where the toiling masses have achieved the highest levels of political consciousness, including internationalist consciousness. The Cuban working class is the most politically advanced working class in the world."

"As the Cuban example proves, workers democracy and proletarian internationalism go hand in hand."

"That is why the imperialists have viewed with horror the prospect of a victory for the political revolution in Poland. Despite their hypocritical statements of support for union rights in Poland, they understand that a victory for the Polish working people would open the possibility of bringing to power a revolutionary government, like the one in Cuba."

Socialist Challenge

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

"Defend Polish Workers" declared the front page of the December 17 issue.

In addition to several pages of coverage of the imposition of martial law in Poland, the background to it, and the numerous public protests around the world, *Socialist Challenge* featured an editorial on page 2. It stated, in part:

"The Polish workers are in great danger. General Jaruzelski and the Military Committee are out to smash the strength of the independ-

ent union movement, Solidarity. The defeat of the Polish workers would be a huge setback for the workers of the whole world. Workers power in Poland and international workers' solidarity are the only effective answers to the regime's counterrevolution. . . ."

"The Kremlin, which still has blood on its hands from the invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, has expressed its strong approval of the crackdown. Other Warsaw Pact countries have followed suit."

"The response of the imperialist powers has been equally predictable. 'Strict nonintervention' was how Lord Carrington described the Tories' approach. Similarly mild remarks were made by the Reagan administration. . . ."

"Gone are the days when the Western media rallied to the cause of the Polish workers. They feel much more at home with the rule of the bureaucrats than with an emerging workers' power. The only real friend of the Polish workers is the international labour movement. It is on its shoulders that the full responsibility for solidarity with Solidarity now falls. . . ."

"We appeal to all our readers to campaign as vigorously as possible to build a massive solidarity campaign with the Polish workers. In particular the Labour Party and TUC [Trades Union Council] leaders should be forced to lead this campaign."

Socialist Challenge urged participation in a national march to the Polish embassy in London called by the Polish Solidarity Campaign, East European Solidarity Campaign, and Eric Heffer, a Labour Party member of Parliament.

Rouge

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

Rouge, in its two issues immediately following the declaration of martial law in Poland, devoted a big majority of its coverage to the Polish events and the international reactions to them. Fourteen of the sixteen pages of the December 18 issue were taken up with Poland, and eight of the twelve pages of the December 24 issue.

Besides numerous background and news articles on the rise of Solidarity, the nature of the Polish bureaucracy, and the repression, *Rouge* provided its assessment of what the crackdown means and how the international workers movement should respond to it.

A statement published on the front page of the December 18 issue declared:

"The struggle of Solidarity, after dozens of years of Stalinist repression, has constituted the living hope of socialism. After all, what the Polish workers are fighting for is to take con-

control over their own affairs. The bureaucrats could not support that, any more than the Western governments, who fear that the contagious effects of the workers revolt in Poland could spill across the 'Iron Curtain.' That is why all of them, from Reagan through [French Foreign Minister Claude] Cheysson to [West German Chancellor Helmut] Schmidt have tried to minimize the stakes in the situation. . . .

"In the decisive trial of strength that is underway, workers' Poland needs our support. A number of leaders of Solidarity have issued appeals to the workers of the world. Those who do not respond, in the name of the sacred principle of 'noninterference,' become accomplices of the hangmen. Since who can doubt that Jaruzelski has the logistical support of the Warsaw Pact forces and that he never would have launched such an adventure without assurances of aid from Brezhnev?

"One cannot, as François Mitterrand did on December 16, declare oneself in favor of the defense of freedoms in Warsaw without doing anything concretely about it.

"In all the cities of France, workers parties and unions must take to the streets, shoulder to shoulder. In all the factories united support committees must be formed. There is not a minute to lose in defense of the Polish revolution."

The same issue reported favorably on a demonstration of more than 50,000 held in Paris December 14 outside the Polish embassy. It was called by the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), which is led by the ruling Socialist Party, and included other trade unions. Similar actions around the country — and throughout the rest of Europe — were also reported.

The center-spread of the December 18 issue was dominated by the headline: "Workers unity for Solidarity; the government, SP, and CP must demand an immediate end to the repression."

Articles in the center-spread attacked the French Communist Party for backing the Polish bureaucracy's crackdown and French government officials for not denouncing the state of emergency sufficiently.

"At no moment," one article said, "did the French leaders condemn the recourse to a state of emergency or declare themselves in favor of an immediate restoration of the freedom of expression and organization, the reestablishment of Solidarity's rights, and the freeing of imprisoned unionists. By doing this, they have fallen into line with the stance of the Western imperialists: to make the smallest waves possible and to avoid, at all costs, a confrontation between the working class and Polish regime that could destabilize the world order and engulf the imperialist capitals themselves."

The following issue of *Rouge*, dated December 24, attached a slight note of caution to the newspaper's demand that the French government act more forcefully against the crackdown in Poland. A small boxed article on an inside page began:

"The 'interference' that is the duty of a government that claims to be of the workers does not in any way mean participation in imperialist maneuvers. The *coup de force* in Warsaw in effect gives an open field that the Pentagon strategists are not failing to exploit. They are now using it to legitimize the arms buildup in which they are engaged, to strengthen their military presence in various parts of the world, and to step up their pressure against popular struggles, especially in Central America and the Caribbean.

"Already, a meeting took place in London December 19 of NATO experts, chaired by Lawrence Eagleburger, the American assistant secretary of state. The purpose of the summit: to arrive at a common response among countries belonging to the Atlantic alliance. France was officially represented at it. That is not excusable."

BARRICADA

"*Barricada*," daily newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Published in Managua, Nicaragua.

The December 30 issue of *Barricada* carried a series of articles rounding up the major international developments of 1981. The article on Poland was headlined, "From crisis to crisis until the state of emergency."

The year began, *Barricada* said, "with the continuation of the economic, social, political, and ideological crisis" in Poland. This crisis finally resulted in "drastic governmental measures to overcome it, bringing the country to the center of world attention."

According to *Barricada*, declining productivity in Poland was due to "the persistence of errors in economic matters, principally the lack of collectivization in agriculture and the strike activity of the Solidarity union. This trade-union organization obtained the support of many sectors of workers who were discontented with the previous branch unions. But its leadership more and more took a rightward course, through its links both to local organizations of that tendency as well as with imperialist sectors abroad."

The July 1981 congress of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), *Barricada* said, was held amid "great expectations." But it demonstrated "the lack of a precisely defined way to face the crisis." The Sandinista daily continued:

"The line of socialist renewal turned out to be insufficient to regain the masses' confidence in the PUWP. Nor could it halt the economic crisis or deal with the growing activity of Solidarity, which was aimed at stimulating disorganization."

According to *Barricada*, the crisis deepened with the holding of Solidarity's national congress, which the paper said adopted "a plan of action that, starting from strike activity, aimed at the taking of political power."

With the December 13 declaration of martial

law in Poland, "The militarization of workplaces gave rise to opposition by the leaders of Solidarity, many of whom were detained. At various workplaces, incitement of strikes — now prohibited — caused confrontations, with a toll of seven dead at one mine. Lech Walesa remained under virtual house arrest, and he was repeatedly invited to negotiate a solution to the crisis. In the top political circles of the capitalist countries, there was an unusual reaction against the Polish government, accompanied by an intense propaganda campaign against that country and the Soviet Union.

"As the year ended, the situation was being restored to normal with difficulty. Services and the rhythm of production improved, but foodstuffs were still in short supply. While food and medical aid flowed in from the neighboring socialist countries, the U.S. government launched a food and credit boycott of Poland.

"General Jaruzelski defined the new framework of government action to preserve the socialist regime. He pledged that the state of emergency would last no longer than would be necessary to guarantee that course. At the same time, he affirmed the role of the independent trade unions, but without manipulation from outside the working class."

DIRECT ACTION

Socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia. Presents the views of the Socialist Workers Party.

The December 16 issue featured several articles on the crackdown in Poland. The main article reported on the events leading up to General Jaruzelski's declaration of martial law and some of the implications of the bureaucracy's crackdown.

Another article, entitled "What Solidarity stands for," explained the real goals of the Polish union: for the abolition of bureaucratic privilege and the institution of workers control over economic and political decision-making.

"Moreover," the article reported, "Solidarity's most prominent leader, Lech Walesa, has said this is the best way forward for the West as well.

"Speaking to 3000 members of the French Democratic Labor Confederation in Paris on October 15, he said:

"France would be much better off if power and the means of production belonged to the workers."

Another article, on the role of the Western banks in Poland, stated, "While, for propaganda reasons, the imperialist politicians like Reagan and [Australian Prime Minister Malcolm] Fraser have issued statements against a possible Soviet military intervention, they have taken a very mild response to Jaruzelski's massive repression of the Polish workers movement. . . .

"US President Ronald Reagan's first comments were limited to stating that the US gov-

ernment viewed the situation in Poland 'seriously.'

"Malcolm Fraser's first comments were similarly guarded."

Direct Action also reported on demonstrations held around Australia to protest the crackdown in Poland, in which members of the Australian Socialist Workers Party participated and spoke.

At one demonstration of more than 100 outside the Polish consulate in Sydney, *Direct Action* reported, "The demonstrators — including members of the Socialist Workers Party, the International Socialists, left-wing members of the ALP [Australian Labour Party], and a couple of members of the Communist Party of Australia — chanted slogans such as 'Defend Solidarity!' 'Defend Polish Workers' Rights!' 'Defend Socialist Democracy — Defend the Polish Workers!'"

This rally was followed by another organized by the Polish community in Sydney. "Although this rally attracted some right-wing anti-communists," *Direct Action* stated, "the organisers stressed that their main aim was to show Solidarity had broad support from Poles around the world."

The paper also polemicized with the Communist Party of Australia, which had issued a statement expressing its "alarm" over the imposition of military rule, for participating in the protests in only a few areas.

l'Unità

"Unity," organ of the Communist Party of Italy (PCI). Published daily in Rome.

The headline on the front page of *l'Unità*'s December 14 issue — the day after the declaration of martial law in Poland — declared: "State of siege in Poland: the PCI expresses its condemnation and demands the reestablishment of civil and trade union freedoms."

A statement issued by the PCI leadership said, "The grave measures taken by the Polish government through the declaration of a state of siege, the setting up of an extraordinary military council, and arrests and courts martial arouse extreme disquiet. It is necessary to condemn the blow struck against efforts to achieve a political solution to the Polish crisis with the responsible participation of all sectors of society through an effective process of democratization."

"The PCI has always recognized and approved the demand for a profound renewal capable of correcting the past errors of the leadership in the economy and political life, supported by the basic forces of a renewed Communist Party, union organizations representing the will of the workers in an independent and responsible way, as well as the church."

The next day, however, PCI General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer made it clear that the PCI's criticisms of the Polish government were not directed from the left. In a televised discus-

sion, he declared:

"An era has ended. The motor force that had its origins in the October Revolution has been exhausted, as has been the capacity for renewal of the societies of Eastern Europe. . . ."

"The fundamental teachings of Marx and certain theses of Lenin retain their value; but others must be abandoned, and, moreover, that is what we have done. Our ideas on the road to socialism in the developed societies of the West cannot be based on Lenin."

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

WEEKLY NEWS REVIEW

Weekly news bulletin published in New York by the Vietnamese mission to the United Nations.

The December 14 issue cited the response of one prominent Vietnamese newspaper to the declaration of martial law in Poland: "In a relevant commentary, *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* on December 14 hailed the Polish government's decisions to form a Military Council for National Salvation, to impose martial law throughout the country, [and] to intern extremist elements in the 'Solidarity' union."

The next issue, dated December 21, provided further Vietnamese press summaries:

"Concerning the situation in Poland, papers reported on latest developments and expressed Viet Nam's resolute support for the timely and firm measures taken by the Polish government against the counterrevolutionaries. They front-paged statements by the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and the Viet Nam Democratic Party as well as by various trade union organizations and mass meetings, strongly condemning the 'Solidarity' union's frenzied opposition to socialism, and firmly backing the Military Council of National Salvation's efforts towards stabilizing the situation and overcoming the crisis."

"World opinion in favour of [the] Polish government's efforts were also reflected in the papers. Both *Nhan Dan* and *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* on Sunday, December 20, ran commentaries condemning President Reagan for seeking to distort the current situation in Poland's internal affairs."



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

An editorial in the December 19 issue stated:

"The Polish ruling bureaucracy, almost a year and a half after the beginning of the mass struggles of the country's people for democratic rights and workers democracy, has begun a sweeping counterrevolutionary offensive

aimed at turning back all the gains of the Solidarity movement. . . ."

"The ruling council of Poland has carried out its counterrevolutionary offensive under the banner of 'saving socialism'. . . ."

"[General Jaruzelski] claimed that the union's leadership was about to resort to force to dissolve the Polish socialist state, and concluded that the formation of a military government and the limiting of democratic and civil rights in that country were to prevent a civil war and save socialism."

"But the truth is different. The Solidarity union, which has ten million members, expresses the general demands of the workers and toilers of the country and enjoys the firm support of the Polish people. Solidarity has always used the mass mobilizations of the people in political struggle and has never needed to use force to express the Polish people's demands. . . ."

"Although the imperialists express concern in their public statements about recent developments in Poland, they were very happy about the Stalinist bureaucracy's counterrevolutionary offensive. They never had anything to do with supporting the Polish people, and looked at that country solely for purposes of anticommunist propaganda."

"The imperialists intensified their propaganda and their hue and cry about how the imposition of martial law in Poland is inseparable from the socialist system. The imperialist press called the struggle for democracy hopeless and fruitless within the framework of a socialist system of production, taking into account the fact that Solidarity has given growing layers of workers in the Western capitalist countries a vision of real socialism and workers democracy."

"Above all, the imposition of martial law in Poland and the Soviet intervention in that country give the imperialists the best possible excuse to step up their militarism and military aggression . . . to crush liberation movements, victorious revolutions, and nationalist regimes the world over — such as the Salvadoran liberation movement, the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Grenadian revolutions, as well as the Iranian revolution and the Libyan regime. . . ."

"International solidarity with the Polish people and the independent workers union is now one of the most basic duties of the workers and all liberation and revolutionary forces around the world. Large and frequent demonstrations in the cities of Western Europe in defense of Solidarity and the support of the biggest union in Japan for the workers of Solidarity are the best examples of this international solidarity, which must be expressed the world over."

"In Iran, too, all Islamic factory councils and committees must express their solidarity with the independent workers union in Poland and demand the abolition of martial law and the restoration of political liberties in that country. The Islamic Republic must support the above demands in solidarity with the people of Poland."

STATEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Solidarity with the Polish workers

[The following statement was issued December 17 by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The Polish bureaucracy has declared war on the workers, students, and all the uncorrupted forces of the whole nation. It cannot accept the putting into practice of the old slogan: "the emancipation of the workers will be the task of the workers themselves." It has launched a massive, brutal, and bloody repression against the working class and its allies.

Eighteen months after the beginning of the antibureaucratic political revolution, Jaruzelski, his stooges, and the Kremlin have unleashed the counterrevolution by the military coup d'état of December 13, 1981. Their objective is clear: to eliminate all the political gains that the proletariat has wrested from the bureaucracy over the last months. The program of this counterrevolution speaks for itself — suspension and destruction of the independent trade union controlled by the workers themselves; elimination of the right to strike; abolition of the free and uncensored working-class press; ending of the "free" Saturdays; lengthening of the working day; suspension of all basic democratic rights; and the proclamation of martial law. Tens of thousands of trade-union leaders and shop stewards freely elected by the workers and members of Solidarity have been arrested. Any room for free and independent political, ideological, and cultural activity has been eliminated.

This repression will almost certainly become more severe. The bureaucracy, once it has started off along this path, will not shrink from slaughter and setting up concentration camps. It will trample underfoot the most elementary human dignity.

The onset of the counterrevolution expresses the will of the Polish bureaucracy, vigorously urged on by the Soviet bureaucracy and all its allies, to maintain at all cost its monopoly of political power in Poland, which is the basis of its exorbitant material privileges. It has launched one operation after another since the summer of 1980 in an attempt to keep its grip on power, seeking to contain and divide the mass upsurge. In the eyes of the bureaucracy, the Gdansk agreement in itself was only a maneuver to gain time.

Parallel to its appeals for "national unity" the bureaucracy has not spared its efforts over the last months to prepare the counteroffensive. The attack on and evacuation of the Firefighters Academy on December 2 was a test chosen by the bureaucracy — the situation was heading towards an inevitable showdown. Attempts at conciliation from all sides had failed.

This failure was neither due to the "extremists" inside Solidarity nor to the hardliners inside the bureaucracy. *It is the result of the fundamental incompatibility between the bureaucratic dictatorship and trade-union and democratic rights for the workers.* In the long term the only way to defend the rights of workers is to overturn the bureaucracy. The only way to defend the bureaucratic dictatorship is to repress the workers.

In recent weeks the bureaucracy realized that its credibility was on the wane and that, to the same extent, Solidarity's credibility was on the ascendant, and that the workers organization was emerging in the eyes of the masses as a full-fledged alternative power. The most recent opinion poll conducted by Polish sociologists backs this up. The rank and file of Solidarity was pushing forward towards setting up a system of workers control over production and distribution of goods and a system of workers councils and workers defense guards in the factories.

This radicalization was expressed even inside the National Commission of Solidarity, despite the fact that advocates of moderation had done everything they could to resist it. The "active" general strike and the preparation of an emergency plan were the logical response of the proletariat to the attempts of the bureaucracy to disorganize the supplies of basic necessities and then to blame this on the trade union. In practice the workers answered all these liars and saboteurs who ruled the country by giving examples of how, under their control, production could proceed smoothly and meet the needs of the people.

The Polish revolution has shown once again that the masses will display great courage, initiative, creative capacity, and willingness to fight in the course of a revolutionary upsurge. Without such qualities no revolution is possible. But by themselves they are not sufficient to ensure victory. The question of power remains decisive.

The enemy can retreat. It can appear to be paralyzed. It can refrain from striking back and even intervening during a certain period. But as long as it maintains the essential part of its power (an operational nucleus of repressive force, access to telecommunications, the capacity to act in a centralized way) and there is not a centralized counterpower which opposes it at every level, it can decisively retake the initiative at the time, place, and in the conditions which it chooses. From that moment on, the balance can shift back in its favor.

To prevent such a negative outcome the masses must have centralized organs of power able to marshal their enormous strength, and on this basis emerge as contenders for power.

Furthermore it was around this question that a process of differentiation developed inside the ranks of the trade unions. Thus elements were coming together that could have given rise to a leadership capable of mobilizing the masses and leading them in the fightback at the decisive moment. The ruling bureaucracy fully recognized the development of this advance of political consciousness. It has come down hard also to put an end to that. Its response has literally been to declare war on its own working class — like some vulgar Pinochet. This has been done by cynically violating its own constitution and laws, which give the right to proclaim a state of siege only to the Sejm (parliament). This military dictatorship has been established in the name of, and in the interests of, the bureaucracy as a whole, and not to benefit some "military caste" or other.

The immediate aim of the political counterrevolution which has begun in Poland is not at all to "defend socialism" against the bourgeoisie or imperialism. It is to defend the power and privileges of the bureaucracy against the working class — to liquidate the gains the workers have made in the last eighteen months. But behind this immediate political aim looms another social and economic objective which is just as important for the bureaucracy.

Through its arbitrary power, wasteful management, corruption, the incoherence and disproportion of its economic projects; by its resorting, on an irresponsible scale, to capitalist loans; and because of the blows it has struck against planning itself, the bureaucracy in Poland has caused the most serious economic crisis experienced by a bureaucratized workers state since the end of the Second World War. The fall in industrial and agricultural production, the disorganization of the transport system and of the supply of basic necessities and basic social services to the population, have provoked unbearable economic and social tensions. Whoever governs Poland would be obliged to take radical measures in order to put the house in order and bring about an economic recovery.

But the concrete content of any "economic reform" that is applied does not simply express technical preferences or ideological choices. It expresses political and social priorities in accordance with the interests of quite specific social groups. The economic "reform" that the ruling bureaucracy is aiming to carry out, with the support of a sector of the technocracy and intellectuals, would have to accomplish, through a *severe austerity policy at the expense of the working class*: a drastic reduction in real wages; elimination of the right to work, i.e. mass redundancies in the workplaces;

along with lengthening of the working day and speedup.

The bureaucracy is perfectly aware of the fact that such a reform cannot be achieved with a working class that is organized and free to express its opposition. Thus the unfolding counterrevolution aims to disorganize and once again atomize the working class in order to reduce it to silence.

Just before the coup d'etat, the director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism (close to the Polish United Workers Party), Jerry Wiatr, in a lecture given at Krakow and reported by the local Stalinist daily *Gazeta Krakowska*, laid out four possible "political solutions" to the Polish crisis. The third one, according to him, was the "establishment of a military government . . . a benevolent autocratic power . . . basing itself on the peasantry and highly competent white-collar workers." Let us not comment on this "competence." We can also leave aside the possibility Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski has for broadening his social base through a coup d'etat — in fact the likelihood is that the base will narrow. It seems that there was a clear understanding of the government plan to base itself on the "peasantry and white-collar workers" (a sector of the latter being part of the bureaucracy). But against whom?

The pressure that international capital, particularly from Europe, has been putting on the Polish bureaucracy to establish order in its own country has to be understood in the same way. This capital wants its interest and debt repayments to once again flow without restriction to the Western banks. These Polish workers are always on strike, keeping the people on top from going about their exalted tasks, risking the spread of disorder throughout Europe with their foolish pretensions of wanting to be their own masters and even to manage their own factories and state! According to the Swedish bourgeois paper, *Dagens Industri* (December 15, 1981), these bankers are said to have even discreetly intervened in favor of a strong government before December 13. The London *Sunday Times* (December 13) reported similar information from other sources.

Besides this, ever since the negotiations for rescheduling loan repayments due in the spring of 1981 and the preliminary negotiations requested by the Polish bureaucracy for joining the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the autumn, the Western capitalists have exerted pressure on the Polish government to commit itself to imposing tough austerity measures on its people, which it acknowledges would reduce living standards and increase unemployment (*New York Times*, April 28, 1981).

One just has to listen to the reaction of all these "responsible world leaders," the day after December 13, from the pope to Ronald Reagan and Helmut Schmidt, Claude Cheysson and Margaret Thatcher, to grasp how much this worldwide "Holy Alliance" fears the potential of the Polish proletariat's struggles. It wants to let the clique in Warsaw plant its boot on the neck of the Polish masses. So that order can continue to prevail in Europe, they berate



JARUZELSKI

the Polish workers on hypocritical "humanitarian" grounds — "Moderation, moderation! Above all no organized resistance! Nor irresponsible actions!"

But the Polish workers have not listened to these voices which call on them to capitulate and give up. Feeling the force of their numbers, their organization, and the weight they have in the social and economic life of their country, and conscious of the fact that the whole nation lives from *their work and their efforts*, they have begun to resist, to strike in their hundreds of thousands, and to occupy their factories. They call for the liberation of their arrested comrades and for the reestablishment of the rights and liberties that have been taken away from them. Following on from the *first upsurge of July-August 1980*, they have thus given a magnificent example of class solidarity and action to the whole international workers movement. A national strike committee has been set up. They have tried to rebuild basic trade-union structures and have called for a general strike on the 19th of December.

It is too soon to know whether this exemplary fightback will rapidly meet with success or if more time will be needed to undermine the bureaucracy's military dictatorship. But one thing is certain — the self-organization of the working class has been, and will remain, too broad and its impact on the whole society has been too deep for the bureaucracy to be able to quickly put an end to it all. The struggle will be long and hard.

The international working class has indeed understood the message coming out of Warsaw, Gdansk, Krakow, Wroclaw, Szczecin, Poznan, Katowice, Lodz, and Lublin as a call from their class brothers and sisters. It has mo-

bilized on a vast scale, above all in France and Italy, but also in all countries of capitalist Europe and North America, and in several Third World countries, to express its solidarity with its repressed Polish brothers and sisters who are defending themselves with exemplary courage. *An attack against your trade unions is an attack against our trade unions. When your liberty is taken away our liberty is threatened. An attack on one is an attack on all. That is the cardinal principle of international workers solidarity — of proletarian internationalism.*

The class character of the Polish struggle has thus determined the class character of the masses' response in the capitalist countries. Much more than during the repression of the Hungarian revolution in 1956 by the Kremlin's tanks, even more than at the time of the invasion of the Czech Socialist Republic by Warsaw Pact armies in August 1968, this response has had a marked working-class character. Bourgeois forces have played only a marginal role in the street demonstrations, in some places even being easily brushed aside.

These people — who are the shameless apologists of the Chilean, Brazilian, Uruguayan, and Argentine dictatorships; who justify the repression of the Palestinian people; and who do not lift a finger against the Turkish military (tied to NATO), which has suppressed the trade unions and the right to strike and arrested thousands of trade unionists — have no moral right to raise their voices against the violation of workers rights and liberties in Poland.

The wave of solidarity with the Polish working class must therefore be organized on the basis of class independence and be prepared for a long-term activity. It should bring together, on the largest possible united-front basis, the whole of the workers movement, above all the trade-union organizations, for the defense of workers and trade unions repressed in Poland.

Certain social-democratic forces, especially in West Germany, Austria, and Great Britain, are terrified by the revolutionary potential of the Polish proletariat and are looking for a way to capitulate to Warsaw's fait accompli. They do this because they fear the appearance in their own country and in their own ranks of the mass self-managed trade unionism represented by Solidarity in Poland. That is to say, a trade union democratically controlled and led by its own members and not by a bureaucracy that is increasingly integrated in the state apparatus. They also do so because they play the game of their own bourgeoisie, which is interested above all — in a period of crisis and intense international competition — in maintaining East-West trade. For these social-democratic forces, the demands of this commerce and collaboration have overridden, for a long time, the needs of international working-class solidarity. Finally, they do it because they are afraid of anything that shakes up the status quo in Europe and the world. As if humanity could get rid of the imperialist system, with its train of blood and hunger, or finish with capitalism —

whose crisis already is paid for by 30 million unemployed in the industrialized countries alone — without disturbing the status quo.

Other social-democratic forces are inclined to participate more directly in the solidarity movement — while looking to limit its extension, duration, and class consciousness.

More serious and criminal are the hypocritical arguments of those Communist parties in the capitalist countries — led by the French, Portuguese, and West German ones — who are open or veiled apologists of the bureaucracy's military dictatorship established in Warsaw. For these bureaucrats, "socialism" continues to be identified with the interests of the ruling caste in the Kremlin. These party-states in Eastern Europe continue to "represent the working class" even when the latter openly shows them its contempt and hatred. The balance sheet is "positive overall" even for these people who trample on the rights of workers and give orders to fire on strikers.

Furthermore it would seem, according to these CPs, that it is the victim that has "provoked" the butcher by working out "wild plans" for a fightback against any eventual proclamation of a state of siege. It is the age-old argument of all cops throughout the world — if you keep quiet there will be no need to repress you! In addition they would have us believe that the repression of trade-union liberties in Poland is a "purely domestic affair." This is good news for the dictators who are plunging Guatemala and El Salvador into fire and blood, or for the would-be putschists in Spain — they can go right ahead since nobody is going to get mixed up with what happens in their country. In place of Marx and Engels's famous rallying cry "Workers of all countries, unite," these Stalinists and their stooges substitute the ignominious slogan "Workers of the world, do not get involved in the affairs of countries which do not concern you!" With this line you will be defeated one by one, and then all be led helplessly to the slaughterhouse.

The Communist parties who have committed themselves in a more consistent way to the so-called Eurocommunist line, above all the Italian and Spanish CPs, have condemned the military coup d'état and the anti-trade-union repression in Poland. But they refuse to support the workers resistance or to call for support to Solidarity. They propose conciliatory solutions of a "national unity" type.

Make no mistake about it — it is the same spirit that inspires the workers of the world to oppose the military intervention in Poland, to be against the imperialist preparations for intervention in Central America, and to mobilize in their millions against the escalation of the arms race.

Through such actions the international working class forges its internationalist class policy, which it must put forward as an alternative to the international policy of the capitalists if it wants to stop the march towards a third world war.

A working class that is capable of defending its international political interests is a working

class that is capable of preventing a war. A working class that is incapable of reacting to international events and is absorbed only by "immediate, national" concerns is a working class on the road to demobilization and depoliticization, that is incapable of opposing the crimes of capital and the bureaucracy on a world scale. This would open the way to the world holocaust.

That is why by mobilizing today in defense of the Polish workers on the biggest and most united scale possible, we are not only defending the Polish revolution and our class brothers and sisters in Poland. We are also struggling for our own interests, for those of the workers in all countries — and first of all for those in the Soviet Union — we are struggling for the

interests and future of all humanity.

- Solidarity with the Polish workers!
- Down with the bureaucracy's military dictatorship!
- Immediate release of all arrested trade unionists and intellectuals, of all political prisoners in Poland!
- For the reestablishment of the right to strike, freedom of action for Solidarity, of all political and civil rights and freedoms of the Polish people!

Long live the international solidarity of the workers of the world, with all liberation struggles, in all countries, in defense of all the exploited and oppressed. All of these battles are part of the same struggle for the socialist world of tomorrow. □

Police gun down Mexican socialist

Francisco Lozano Pérez, a member of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT, Mexican section of the Fourth International), was shot to death by a traffic policeman in Mexico City on November 28.

According to the December 7 issue of the PRT's weekly newspaper, *Bandera Socialista*, the incident resulted from a minor traffic accident. "The police intervened, calling on our comrade to pull over. As he was doing so, Officer Jorge Néstor Castro, badge number 07478, shot him in the head and then fled, protected by police from Patrol No. 2817."

"The PRT," *Bandera Socialista* continued, "has seen several of its militants fall victim to political repression. Now, with sadness but above all with indignation, we see the loss of a valuable revolutionary cadre owing to the irrationality and arrogance of the police."

Francisco Lozano Pérez had been a member of the PRT for more than two years at the time of his death. He served as a delegate to the party's second national congress. Lozano was also an activist in the Mexican Union of Electricians (SME) and participated in the Trade-Union Struggle Bloc, a current in opposition to the progovernment bureaucrats that control the SME.

The police officer who killed Lozano was later detained. He acknowledged the shooting in the following way, according to *Bandera Socialista*: "That fellow wanted to make fun of me, but nobody plays around with me. That's why I killed him. I don't repent what I did."

Bandera Socialista pointed to the need for broad protests against such police attacks. "In our country, one does not have to be a militant in a political party to be exposed to police brutality. Any person can be illegally detained, kidnapped, tortured, assaulted, blackmailed, and even — as has just been proven again — murdered. Though they are not always directly political, such arbitrary actions by the police do have a clear class character. In the absolute majority of the cases, the victims are workers or poor residents of the cities."

"We offer the best homage we can to our

comrade Lozano," *Bandera Socialista* concluded, "to persist in the revolutionary struggle to which he dedicated himself, until we destroy the society that generates irrational violence, and construct a new one in which equality among all human beings will allow no place for such barbarism." □

Lola Dallin

A memorial meeting for Lola Dallin was held at Community Church in New York by relatives and friends on October 27, 1981. She had died earlier in the year following surgery.

Born before the turn of the century into a Jewish family in Latvia, then a part of Tsarist Russia, Lola became a socialist and studied law. In Berlin, Lola married a fellow socialist and law student, Samuel Estrin.

During the Stalinist repression her sister and brother-in-law, who lived in the Soviet Union, were imprisoned. He died in prison; and after her imprisonment was over, Lola's sister was sentenced to six years of exile in Siberia. Throughout this period Lola made great sacrifices to send material aid to relatives in Russia who were raising her sister's children and to aid other victims of Stalinist repression.

The menace of Nazism forced Lola and her husband to move to Paris, where they expanded their efforts to help political prisoners and refugees to aid victims of the Nazi terror.

In this period of the 1930s Lola became the assistant and collaborator of Leon Sedov, Trotsky's son, who coordinated the work of the movement for a Fourth International and published the Russian-language *Bulletin of the Opposition*. Articles she contributed to that journal are signed L. Yakovlev.

As the cloud of Nazi conquest darkened over France, Lola and her husband fled to the United States. In the United States she dropped out of radical political activity. Throughout this period, however, and, indeed, up to the time of her fatal illness, she remained active in the work of assisting political refugees and émigrés.

The capitalist offensive, the trade unions, and the working class radicalization

By Cindy Jaquith

[The following three articles appeared in the December 4, December 11, and January 1 issues of the U. S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

LONDON — American workers face a grim winter with unemployment officially at 8 percent and predictions it will reach the highest level since the Depression.

But unemployment is already twice the American rate in some parts of Britain today.

As an American visiting Britain in November, this reporter was stunned at the number of plant shutdowns. The TV evening news has added a special feature: after the domestic and international news, and the sports, the announcer reports which factories have closed down that day and how many other layoffs have taken place.

The official unemployment rate is over 12 percent, but everyone admits that it is much higher for youth, especially Blacks and Asians; and in certain parts of the country, like Wales, where it is over 15 percent; Scotland; and the West Midlands, heart of the auto industry, where it reaches 16 percent.

The British Steel Corporation, which laid off 68,000 workers in the last two years, has now announced plans to throw another 20,000 onto the streets.

The machine tool industry has cut 26,000 jobs in the last decade, and another 20 percent of the workforce in just the last year.

The garment and textile bosses are laying off 700 workers a month. The total number of garment workers has plummeted from 92,000 in the 1970s to 34,000 today.

Inflation

Along with double-digit unemployment, Britain has double-digit inflation — currently 11.7 percent and due to go up. Many consumer items are far more expensive than in the United States.

A pack of cigarettes easily costs \$1.80. Until recent fare cuts, a subway ride in London was way over \$1, and the fares are going to go back up again. The kind of restaurant meal you would buy in the United States for \$5 costs about \$8 in Britain.

Industrial workers are paid considerably less than workers in the United States. Many unionists take home a lot less than \$200 a week, making the inflation squeeze all the worse.

In the past, Britain has been referred to as a "welfare state." That is because after World War II, major struggles by the workers forced

through social measures much more extensive than what American workers have ever won. These included nationalization of major industry, health insurance that paid for virtually all medical care, rent subsidies, and nursery care.

The workers made these gains because, unlike in the United States, where the two major parties are both capitalist parties, in Britain there is a labor party, based on the trade unions. The workers were able to pressure this party into taking some measures to improve their standard of living.

Reaganism and Thatcherism

But beginning in the 1970s, as British industry went into serious decline, the capitalists began to attack workers' wages and social benefits, using the Labour Party administration in power to carry out the offensive. This eventually resulted in big struggles by the workers and increasing disillusion with the Labour government. In 1979 Thatcher got elected, and the ruling class decided to sharply step up the attacks.

The American media frequently compare the economic and social programs known as "Thatcherism" to "Reaganism." The fundamental source of the policies is the same: the declining ability of capital in both countries to profitably compete on the world market and the necessity therefore to drive up the rate of exploitation of the working class.

Because British big business is in worse shape, the crisis there is much deeper. But the goal of the capitalists on both sides of the Atlantic is the same: to retool and restructure industry so it is more competitive in the world market, which means lowering wages, increasing productivity, pressuring the unions to relinquish on-the-job control, and ultimately, breaking the unions.

'Choices'

Like in the United States, British capitalists tell the workers the recession is their own fault — they've asked for wages that are too high. And the workers are given a "choice": accept pay cuts or face even higher unemployment.

In early November, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) held its annual meeting. The industrialists laid out the "choice" nakedly. Said CBI President Sir Raymond Pennock:

"Pay is the very root of inflation. . . ."

"It is our job and above all else our job to make the 20-odd million people in jobs really understand that the major cause of having three million not in jobs is because for five years they have been paid more for less and less output.

"The quickest way back to competitiveness, prosperity and reduction of that three million out of work is for the 20 million in work to receive increases, if not nothing, at least not more than those of our German and Japanese rivals, and positively no pay increases unless backed by increased productivity."

Pennock insisted that the government make more cuts in social services and stick to its 4 percent guideline for pay raises. Even that was too much, he complained, pointing with satisfaction to the 250,000 workers who got no wage increase this year.

Pennock explained big business intends to teach the British working class a lesson: "people have been pricing themselves out of jobs. Until we get that simple truth across, the dole queues [unemployment lines] will get longer and more companies will go bust."

In other words, if you want a job or you want to keep your job, get ready to work harder for less pay.

A few days after the CBI conference, Parliament heard the annual "Queen's Speech," an event similar to the State of the Union speech in the U.S. Congress each January.

Queen Elizabeth called for "further reductions in the level of wage settlements," and for less spending on social services. She also declared Britain would stay in NATO, despite a demonstration of 250,000 October 24 against the stationing of NATO missiles in Britain. She indicated Britain would step up its repression in Northern Ireland, and increase its collaboration with other imperialist governments in the Middle East and in southern Africa.

Thatcher bares teeth

But the real teeth of the new government proposals were outlined by Thatcher. "The generation which was brought up to believe that governments can guarantee prosperity, full employment and happiness for all, now knows that life is not really like that," she said.

Then she outlined a series of major new anti-labor measures: including a new union-busting bill, denationalization of gas production; efforts to protect "commercial and industrial" taxpayers from higher taxes; and stiffer penalties for youth convicted of "crimes."

Thatcher also vowed to continue her war against "terrorism" in Northern Ireland — in other words, to maintain, by an occupation army, the subjugation of Britain's colony. She carried out that pledge two weeks later with the dispatch of another 600 troops to Northern Ireland as resistance to British repression broke out once again.

To only see one side of the class struggle in



Cindy Jaquith/Militant

Cops hold back pickets outside Laurence-Scott plant in Manchester.

Britain — what Thatcher and the capitalists are doing — would be just as wrong as seeing only the side of Reagan's offensive in the United States and missing the growing resistance to his policies.

Thatcher and the capitalists are still winning most of the battles in Britain. But the fightback in Britain is more advanced than in the United States.

The British workers have obviously suffered very severe blows. Seeing no counteroffensive from their union leaders, and acquiescence from the leadership of the Labour Party, many workers have felt they had no choice but to accept the blackmail of wage cuts, speedup, and forced retirement in order to hold onto their jobs. That has not worked, of course, and now the mood of fightback is growing.

In some plants threatened with closure, the workers have decided to occupy the factory rather than let the boss close it down, despite opposition from top union officials. One such occupation by machinists at the Laurence-Scott plant in Manchester, lasted seventeen weeks. The workers are still on strike, picketing from the outside.

These battles have been isolated by lack of official union backing, but a few have won. Such fights are symbolic of a more general political discussion going on in the working class over the fundamental perspectives for the labor movement.

In the last year this has exploded inside the

Labour Party, as more and more unionists demand that the party they see as theirs wage a struggle against big business.

The workers have forced the Labour Party to take an official position for unilateral disarmament and against the stationing of NATO missiles in their country.

At the party's annual conference last September the "Labour left," as it is called, nearly succeeded in electing Tony Benn deputy leader of the party.

Benn has supported strikes and appealed to the industrial unions to fight back against Thatcher. He calls for more jobs and opposes social cutbacks. He supports legal abortion. He campaigns for greater democracy in the party, and for elected party representatives in Parliament to carry out the mandate of the membership.

As a result of leftward motion inside the Labour Party, tens of thousands of workers have joined it recently. There is even discussion of forming Labour Party branches in factories to give the workers a more direct role in formulating the policy of the party.

Two other struggles indicate the rising class consciousness in Britain. One is the antimilitarization movement, which turned out a quarter of a million people in a demonstration against Cruise and Trident missiles in October. One of the most popular slogans was "Jobs, not bombs," signaling the refusal of British workers to sacrifice more so that Thatcher can

increase the war-making powers of imperialism.

Second is the growing struggle among Black and Asian youth, graphically brought home to the world last summer when rebellions exploded in nearly every major British city.

The rebellions showed the deepening class consciousness of the working class as a whole. Many white youth, also hit hard by unemployment, joined the protests.

The response among white workers in the factories was significant. Several told this reporter they sympathized with the rebellions because jobless youth have no alternative today.

In Manchester's Moss Side rebellion, defiant youth nearly dismantled the police headquarters. Many now face stiff prison terms.

An older white man on strike at the nearby Laurence-Scott plant told the *Militant*: "This is supposed to be a democracy, but it's becoming more like a police state. Do you know they had imported machine guns from West Germany to use against those kids?"

In mid-November the political and economic crisis in Britain came to a head when British Leyland auto workers refused to accept an insulting 3.8 percent wage increase and voted overwhelmingly for the first time in years to strike. Had the workers been backed up, instead of betrayed, by top union officials, we could have seen the biggest confrontation between workers and the British rulers in several years. □

Auto workers fight Thatcherism

Lessons of British Leyland experience

By Cindy Jaquith

BIRMINGHAM, Britain — U.S. Chrysler workers have a lot in common with workers at British Leyland (BL) in Britain. Both have seen their wages cut and their jobs taken away without even a struggle by the labor movement.

British Leyland makes the Mini Metro car, but it is better known in the United States for its production of the Jaguar, Land-Rover, and Triumph. The company is nationalized, like much of British industry.

Several years ago BL began to go under financially. It appealed to the government for help. The Labour Party was in power, and it responded by appointing Sir Michael Edwardes to head up company operations.

'Survival plan'

Edwardes came up with a "survival plan" for British Leyland — survival at the expense of the workers. The idea was to rationalize production and drive down wages to make the company profitable again.

A young shop steward at BL's Longbridge plant here in Birmingham described the results to the *Militant*: "They told us, 'the wage rises will be low for a little while, and then everything will be okay again.'

"But what has actually happened, by the company's own figures, is that BL workers have gone from being second or third top paid in the country to number ninety-two. Pay is down by 30 percent in real terms and productivity is up by 30 percent.

"Sixty-four thousand jobs have been lost since Edwardes took over.

"And the unions' power in the plants has been drastically whittled down."

Most workers at British Leyland make less than \$200 a week now. Many also get public assistance in order to get by. Inflation is currently running at 11.7 percent.

The heads of the eleven different unions that represent BL workers supported the "survival plan" and discouraged strike action against it. The Labour government also backed the plan, despite the fact that the Labour Party is based on the trade unions and is supposed to defend the interests of the working class, not the bosses.

BL workers were divided over the "survival plan." Some hoped it would work. Most reluctantly accepted the wage cuts, if they were lucky enough to keep their jobs. Only a minority favored trying to fight for higher pay.

Change in mood

That changed with this year's contract negotiations. The BL workers demanded a £20

across-the-board wage increase per week [£1 = U.S. \$1.90] and a 53.5 percent increase for sixteen-year-old apprentices.

They also asked for more holidays, a reduction in the workweek, and improved sick and layoff pay.

Edwardes's response was brutal — a 3.8 percent increase, take it or leave it. The measly offer amounted to £2.50 a week for the high-est-paid workers.

And if you strike, Edwardes threatened, we'll close down British Leyland completely, forever.

This "offer" was so outrageous that even the union officials supported a strike this time. In plant after plant, the workers voted overwhelmingly for a strike on November 1 if their demands were not met.

The liberal capitalist press portrayed Edwardes as a bit "unreasonable."

But Edwardes was simply carrying out his job for the British capitalists and the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, of the Tory Party. His job was to grind the BL workers further into the ground, strip away even more of the severely weakened unions' power, and set an example for workers in other industries.

The 3.8 percent increase offer was a deliberate test of Thatcher's policy that no wage increases exceed 4 percent. If the 58,000 BL workers challenged that and won, millions of other workers would also be inspired to fight for a living wage.

A major confrontation was brewing as the strike deadline approached. Thatcher's whole program of saving ailing British capitalism by increasing unemployment, cutting wages, and slashing social services was being challenged. A national walkout by the BL workers was sure to get the solidarity of millions of unionists. Some even predicted that the Thatcher government might fall if the strike won, just as the miners' strike in 1974 brought down the Tory government of Edward Heath.

The workers at British Leyland felt they had no choice but to fight. "Blokes have worked their backsides off for this company," said a maintenance worker at Longbridge. "This strike is not just about more cash — though we could all do with more money — it is against the bloodymindedness of management."

"Call it the need to keep our dignity, if you like," said another. "But we think our very rights as free men are at stake in BL now."

No backing down

Faced with this militancy, Thatcher and the ruling class had no intention of backing down. At the last minute, Edwardes made a tiny in-

crease in the bonus rate, but that was it.

As the BL strike deadline neared, the ruling class unleashed a ferocious propaganda campaign in the media. Newspapers declared that as many as 450,000 related jobs in the auto industry would be lost if the strike went on.

Special propaganda was beamed at the West Midlands, where BL is concentrated and unemployment is already 16 percent.

One Tory politician predicted a disaster for the area worse than World War II. "The West Midlands faces devastation to its already weakened economy of a magnitude that the might of the Nazi bombers in five years of war could not bring about," he said.

In a further twist of the knife, the government announced that if the strike "forced" British Leyland to close, the workers would initially get no unemployment benefits.

Enormous political pressure was coming down on the BL workers. And not only from the capitalists and their Tory Party.

Michael Foot, the head of the Labour Party, pleaded with Thatcher to intervene (as if she was not already fully involved) to "stop this tragedy."

Foot said, "Anyone who talks to the management and unions, as we have done, would come to the conclusion that there is a possibility of a settlement without victory or defeat for either side, but solely a victory for the nation as a whole."

As the workers began preparing for picket duty, the union officials met for a last time with Edwardes. The BL executive stuck to his 3.8 percent; the officials retreated. The majority came out of the meeting telling the media it was now clear there was no more money to improve the offer.

The leaders of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW), one of the main unions at BL, as well as Len Murray, head of the Trades Union Congress, the British equivalent of the AFL-CIO [the U.S. trade-union federation], said they now thought a strike was unwise.

The senior shop stewards met the next day to vote on the offer. Meanwhile, the strike was on, with hundreds of pickets at most plants, and 2,000 outside the Cowley plant in Oxford.

Angry picketers also poured into the shop stewards' meeting, fearing that the top union officials would get the stewards to call the strike off. "You're trying to stitch a deal up!" they shouted.

Under this pressure, the stewards voted 238-12 to continue the strike. Mass meetings at each plant were scheduled for the next day, where the stewards would report back and the workers would make the final decision on

whether to continue the strike.

Terence Duffy, head of the AUEW, appealed that night to his members to go back to work. There was no more money, he insisted. "I am backing England," he declared. "I believe we have reached a time of diminishing returns."

The vote at the mass meetings the next day was 25,058 to accept the offer and return to work; 19,963 to continue the strike.

The strike was over. What happened?

The *Guardian*, one of Britain's main dailies, suggested the workers were more conservative than their leadership. "... the stewards were faced with voting figures which showed that their own enthusiasm for continuing the potentially crippling strike was not shared by a majority of the labour force."

BL workers interviewed by the *Militant* saw it a little differently. One worker at the Land-Rover plant, where the vote was evenly split, explained what happened at his union meeting. "The shop stewards said the deal was no good, that we should strike. Some right-wing stewards warned us the strike might cripple the economy.

"But none of them explained how we could win the strike. Some of the workers didn't trust the top officials. It was clear they weren't for a strike.

"So there was a feeling we might as well go back to work.

"As one guy who voted to go back said, 'I voted to keep my job, not for the wage deal.'"

A worker at the Rover Solihull plant, due to be shut down this month, said, "The shop stewards simply didn't answer the questions on people's minds. Like, where will the money come from for a bigger wage increase?

"They didn't explain how the strike would actually be fought. Everyone knew it would be a big battle."

'Economics' vs. 'politics'

"There's a tradition in the labor movement here," explained a young shop steward at the Longbridge plant. "The unions look after economic matters; the Labour Party takes care of political matters.

"But that doesn't work anymore. You can't fight on a plant-by-plant basis and win, no matter how militant you are."

As explained by these workers, the problem seems very similar to what we face in the American labor movement. Any attempt today to take on the employers, even if only on "economic questions," very quickly runs up against political questions, and up against those who hold political power in the government and the courts.

Efforts to avoid politics, or worse and more common, to accept the capitalists' political framework that "the pie is shrinking" and you

have to accept a lot less, spells defeat.

What if the BL union officials had demanded that the company's books be opened to see where the money has actually been going? What if they had pointed to the billions being spent by the British government for U.S. nuclear missiles and demanded that money go for a real wage increase at British Leyland and other industries? What if they had appealed to workers throughout Britain — to the unemployed Black and Asian youth, and other victims of Thatcherism — and built a giant solidarity movement behind the BL strike?

That kind of political perspective, taking head-on the lie that the workers, not the bosses, are responsible for unemployment and inflation, would have given the British Leyland workers the weapon they needed to go in to battle with confidence.

They got the opposite perspective — class collaboration — from the union leaders and from the leadership of the Labour Party.

British workers, and American workers too, need a labor party and a union leadership that does not start from the idea of pleasing both the workers and the bosses, does not try to dissolve the class struggle into appeals to save "the nation," and does not look at strikes as "tragedies" to be avoided at all cost.

Experiences like that of British Leyland have convinced many British workers that big changes are needed in the Labour Party. □

The struggle inside the Labour Party

Class polarization forces shift to the left

By Cindy Jaquith

"No government constitutionally or politically dependent on organised (let alone disorganised) labour must again be allowed to rule Britain," declared the British *Economist* last September.

"The duty of the responsible left in British politics . . . is no longer in doubt. It should abandon Labour."

The *Economist* called on Labour Party members to join the Social Democratic Party (SDP), a right-wing split from Labour last year, and through the SDP "smash, . . . demoralise," and "split" the Labour Party.

The *Economist* editorial was written as an election battle was taking place at the Labour Party conference over who should be the party's deputy leader: Tony Benn, leader of the left wing, or Denis Healey, a leader of the right wing.

Although Healey eventually squeaked by with a less than 1 percent majority over Benn, the battle was over as far as the *Economist* was concerned. The Labour Party could never be the same.

Benn and his supporters "are already the most powerful political element within Labour's ranks," said this prominent voice of

British big-business. "The Labour Party is at the mercy of block union votes" and "the party's parliamentary leadership can no longer rely on union bosses to get it out of trouble. . . .

"It is equally inconceivable that the forces now rampant within the Labour party will allow it, before the next elections, to put forward policies to reform industrial relations, support the Nato alliance or defend free trade. . . . The party's enmity towards free enterprise can only deepen."

Even if a Labour government headed by the right wing were to take office, the *Economist* warned, it would be "blighted by Bennites at every turn." It would be "an extremist group" — "a disaster for Britain."

The *Economist's* horror at what is happening inside the Labour Party, and its fear of what might happen if that party takes power in the next elections, accurately reflects the thinking of British capitalists — and those in the United States as well.

Opportunity for workers

The changes in British politics reflected in the Labour Party and the movement around Tony Benn represent the biggest opportunity in decades for British workers to push forward

the fight for a workers government. And that struggle will have big repercussions on this side of the Atlantic, where workers do not yet even have a labor party.

Where did the British Labour Party come from, and why have the British employers always considered it a mortal enemy?

In the late nineteenth century, British trade unions had grown relatively strong. The working class was in fact the majority of the population. Yet the unions maintained their practice of supporting one of the two capitalist parties, the Tories or Liberals, and usually the latter.

In the 1880s a group of socialists in the labor movement founded the Social-Democratic Federation, whose object was to build an independent labor party fighting for socialism. Frederick Engels, who lived in Britain at that time, worked closely with the group.

Changing composition

As British capitalism stepped up its exploitation of colonies abroad and began restructuring industry at home by lowering wages, introducing speedup, and attacking union rights, it became more and more clear that the workers were foolish to keep voting for one of the

bosses' parties.

At the same time, the composition of the labor movement was changing, with a massive influx of unskilled workers as changes in industry wiped out more and more of the skilled trades. This brought younger, more revolutionary-minded workers into the labor movement, less conservative than those in the craft-dominated unions.

They saw a powerful example in the Irish nationalist party, which was fighting for home rule and running candidates independent of the Tories and the Liberals.

In 1893 the Independent Labour Party (ILP) was formed. Marxists played an important role in its founding.

The ILP made a big advance in 1900 when it convinced some unions to join in setting up the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) to run candidates for Parliament independent of the two ruling-class parties.

It soon became clear that labor could win in elections. In 1906, the LRC got fifty candidates elected as Members of Parliament (MPs). The group took the name "Labour Party."

When the Labour Representation Committee was set up, the Marxists in the Social-Democratic Federation had argued that workers who got elected should form a "distinct party based upon the recognition of the class war and having for its ultimate object the socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange."

Other forces in the new formation did not draw clear class lines. Some tried to maintain a policy of running labor candidates only in districts where the Liberals couldn't win. They continued to view the Liberals more as allies than as representatives of the enemy class.

But this policy broke down as Labour showed its ability to get elected. The very break with the capitalist parties and formation of a workers party raised the question of which class should rule. It pointed in the direction of the Labour Party fighting to take power and establishing a workers government. In the eyes of the working-class supporters of the party, the obvious next step was to end private ownership of basic industry and the banks. It was under this pressure that the Labour Party affiliated to the socialist Second International in 1908.

First step

The Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir I. Lenin supported this move, on the basis that the Labour Party "represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organizations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and towards a socialist workers party."

The enemies of the working class also saw this logic. The British ruling class worked to integrate Labor MPs into the capitalist state apparatus and into helping administer its antilabor, proimperialist policies. Labor MPs were brought into cabinets, where they were used to defuse strikes and other protests by the unions. These MPs often argued that the unions should

stick to economic struggles and leave the political struggles to the chambers of Parliament.

Anti-working-class forces also began joining the Labour Party. Some Liberal politicians, seeing a way to get reelected, switched their party affiliation to Labour. Social reformers, like Sidney and Beatrice Webb, joined and argued that socialism could be achieved by winning reforms in Parliament, one by one until all the evils of capitalism were expunged.

When World War I broke out, Labour was split. Marxists in the party opposed the imperialist war. Some Labour leaders equivocated, and most supported the British capitalist class's war aims and the expansion of the British Empire that resulted from the war.

Despite the proimperialist, antilabor role of the Labour Party leadership, Lenin urged British communists to work inside the party and fight to bring it to power. He explained in 1920 that Labour "is a thoroughly bourgeois party" in its program and the outlook of its leadership, but that the great majority of workers supported it. Abstention from the party by communists would leave the Labour misleadership unchallenged. Far better to join the party, fight for a revolutionary program within it, and build a communist party outside it at the same time.

Labour in power

Since Lenin's time, the British workers have brought Labour to power several times in their fight against ruling-class attacks. Under some Labour governments, when capitalism was still expanding in Britain, the workers were able to wring significant concessions, especially in the years immediately after World War II.

But Labour's subservience to the domestic and foreign policy of the capitalists has not changed. Labour governments during the 1920s administered Britain's colonial empire, and in the period following World War II a Labour government presided over a full-scale colonial war in Malaya and was responsible for brutal repression of the independence struggle in India. During the 1970s Labour governments carried out the same brutal policies against Northern Ireland as the Tories.

And when the world economic crisis hit Britain in the early 1970s, the Labour governments of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan followed the example of the Tories in imposing austerity measures against the working class. Callaghan's government became so unpopular that Labour lost the elections in 1979. Margaret Thatcher of the Tory Party became prime minister and stepped up the ruling-class offensive with a vengeance.

New opposition

The 1979 defeat for Labour opened a major debate inside the party. The party leadership's support for imperialism, the austerity drive, and its lack of internal democracy became focal points of discontent. The main leader of this opposition was Tony Benn, who had been a minister in five previous Labour gov-

ernments.

"Capitalism cannot work because it rests on inequality," Benn explains. "What's happening is not some left-wing takeover of the Labour Party. Rather, the party is moving back to its socialist roots. People who vote Labour should know that if we win we'll get Britain out of the Common Market, get rid of American nuclear bases, get back to full employment, and expand public service."

He has spoken out in defense of the freedom struggles in Central America, and against the role of the U.S. and British governments in propping up the shah of Iran, the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia, the Chilean junta, and the racist regime in South Africa.

He defends Black and women's rights. "The results of mass unemployment are far-reaching," he says. "It particularly affects women, because when there are few jobs on the market we are often told that women ought to go back to the home and leave room for men. Unemployment strikes at Blacks more sharply than whites. . . . If a Black man has a job then he is said to have stolen a white man's job; if he has no job, he is called a scrounger on the welfare state."

Benn calls for the abolition of the House of Lords, the parliamentary body that is not elected but hereditary, and for reform of the parliamentary system. He speaks out for free speech. He has also focused on the lack of democracy inside the Labour Party, from the failure of elected MPs to carry out the mandate of party members, to the bureaucratic structures of the party.

He calls for opening up the party: "We must work with the trade union movement; establish workplace branches; strengthen the party itself; and attract community groups, many of which were formed because they did not see in Labour the instrument for realizing their hopes.

"They must find their hope in Labour now. Labour must cooperate with and speak for the women's movements; the environmental groups; the ethnic communities; the peace movement. We must reawaken rural radicalism which is still reflected in the battle against the squirearchy."

Benn is not a revolutionary socialist. He believes there can be "evolutionary change towards democracy," won through Parliament, and that through these reforms socialism will be established.

"The basis of the deep commitment of the Labour Party to the parliamentary system lies in the belief that, by the adoption of candidates who are pledged to policies agreed at annual conference, the party rank and file can . . . win a majority to carry through those policies in a peaceful and democratic way," he says.

The workers movement has always sought to end capitalism by peaceful means, but the bourgeoisie historically has never permitted that. Rather the workers have been forced onto the road of socialist revolution — involving mass strikes, insurrection, and other forms of struggle — in every case.

Along this revolutionary course, reforms have always been a byproduct, not the goal, of the struggle, just as parliamentary activity has played a subordinate role to the mobilization of the workers and their allies to bring down the capitalist order.

Benn and the left

A positive feature of Benn's policies is his appeal to leftists who have shunned participation in the Labour Party in the past.

"All who call themselves socialists and are truly committed to democracy should abandon their sectarian isolation and become loyal individual members of the Labour Party," he says.

Most groups on the left in Britain today are becoming involved with the Labour Party. A significant exception is the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), a sect that calls itself Trotskyist but holds the non-Marxist position that the Soviet Union is a capitalist country.

The British SWP argues that the most important developments today in Britain are occurring in the trade unions, counterposing these to the Labour Party. They dismiss as a passing phenomenon the movement around Benn and encourage their supporters to have little to do with the Labour Party.

By contrast, the recent congress of the International Marxist Group (IMG), the British section of the Fourth International, decided to campaign for all workers to join the Labour Party and push forward the fight to change it.

This approach was totally connected to the perspective of getting the majority of IMG members into industrial jobs. The congress itself registered significant progress toward this goal, and linked it to the crucial role industrial workers must play inside the Labour Party.

Contradictory party

A resolution adopted by the IMG conference explains, "We wholeheartedly endorse . . . the battles to democratise the [Labour] party, to win support for a programme adequate to meet the needs of the working class and to elect a Labour government committed to socialist policies. . . ."

"The Labour Party is a contradictory party. It is dominated by a leadership that expresses the political interests of the trade union bureaucracy. Nevertheless the LP has the affiliation and support of all the main sections of the working class. The formation of the LP was a huge step forward in the fight for political independence from the ruling class.

"But, as the workers come into collision with the interests of Capital, so they are pitched against the politics, traditions, and apparatus of the labour leadership. This tension pushes to the fore new forms of struggle, like the democracy campaign, and new leaders who take up those struggles. . . ."

"The revolutionaries will go as far as it is possible to go with those in the LP who fight the present leadership on a class struggle basis."

As a result of the movement to change the Labour Party, tens of thousands of workers —



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including immigrant workers from India, Pakistan, and the West Indies — have joined in the recent past. Under their impact, the last two national Labour conferences have been quite different affairs than previous gatherings of the party. At the September conference where Benn nearly won the position of deputy leader, the ranks were able to get some important stands adopted:

- Reaffirmation of unilateral disarmament and opposition to Cruise and Trident missiles;
- Opposition to wage controls;
- Nationalization of major industry and commerce;
- A campaign for a thirty-five-hour week and against the Tory 4 percent wage ceiling for public employees;
- Repeal of the anti-immigrant Nationality Act;
- Repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which has been used to brutally suppress the Irish freedom struggle, and support for the eventual reunification of Ireland.

Despite his loss in the election, Benn declared it is "quite clear that the forces of democracy and socialism cannot be stopped in Britain. This is only the beginning, and not in any sense the end."

The ruling class also recognizes that the battle is not over. They have stepped up their at-

tacks on Benn and their promotion of the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Social Democratic Party

The SDP was formed last March when several leaders of labor split from the party. Since then, more than twenty MPs have gone over to the SDP and it has won several local elections in alliance with the Liberal Party.

The SDP has not yet entered contests in strong working-class districts. In fact, its victories have been mainly in middle-class areas where the Tories had been in office.

The bourgeois media particularly hailed the election victory of SDP leader Shirley Williams in early December. Interestingly enough, the largest meeting held during her campaign was one addressed by Tony Benn, who was backing her Labour opponent.

The SDP enthusiastically supports NATO, although it is more cautious about whether to install Trident missiles on British soil. It is for remaining in the Common Market. It favors wage controls.

The bourgeois press in the United States and in Britain is trying to portray the SDP as what British workers really want. The *Washington Post*, for example, editorialized that Williams's victory "hints at the formation of a constituency that accepts what seem to be the economic realities of the 1980s — a decade of growth but growth that is neither so steady nor so easy as the past two decades' rhetoric had led voters to believe."

The British press has made similar pronouncements. They clearly hope the SDP can win enough votes in the next general election to deny Labour a majority and prevent a Labour government.

The capitalists are also using the SDP as a club over the Labour Party, warning more conservative Labour leaders that if they do not tone down their program and take measures against the left wing, they will be defeated at the polls.

In response Michael Foot, LP leader, and Denis Healey have openly violated the party's policy on unilateral disarmament. Healey explicitly denounced it in Parliament. And Foot gushed with praise for Ronald Reagan's November 18 speech demanding the Soviet Union get rid of its medium-range missiles in return for the United States not adding to its arsenal on European soil. Foot called the proposal "a response which people in Europe can understand."

Meanwhile both have demanded that the left shut up, suggesting that debate inside the party hurts Labour. "What worries me is that all this infighting among ourselves is distracting us from what should be our task," said Foot, "bringing down the dismal Thatcher government."

Healey has gone further.

"Anyone who seeks to disrupt and divide the movement by trying to blow up differences . . . into major issues of principle is simply a recruiting sergeant for the Social Democrats and handing the election to Mrs. Thatcher on a

plate," he charged.

What particularly angered Foot, Healey, and the capitalists was Benn's speech in November during a Parliament debate on Thatcher's proposal to denationalize oil production. Benn stated that the next Labour government would renationalize the companies without compensation.

The capitalist media went wild. An editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* declared his proposal "barefaced robbery . . . tyrannical expropriation," and "state theft."

"We would like there to be a reasonable Labour party," the *Telegraph* had written earlier that week. It warned that the party would "drift absurdly to the barbarous Left" under the rein of "the fevered and unforgiving young men with clenched fists and clenched minds."

But the working class has not paid much attention to these screaming editorials. In early December the coal miners elected Arthur Scar-

gill as their new president by more than 70 percent. Scargill is part of the Labour left and an ally of Benn.

He campaigned in the mineworkers election for a break with the union's conciliationist approach to the government and pledged he would lead a fight for a major wage increase and a halt to mine closings. He emphasized the need for union democracy.

The miners are asking for a 23.7 percent wage increase, a big challenge to the government's efforts to keep increases within the 4 percent range. They are the union in the strongest position to wage this fight. In 1974 their strike eventually contributed to the downfall of the Tory government headed by Edward Heath. Scargill says this year's contract battle "looks as though it is a little comparable with 1974."

Scargill's election demonstrates that the miners are prepared to wage quite a struggle to gain a decent contract.

That poses a big problem for the Thatcher government. In the past Thatcher has chosen to make concessions to the miners in order to avoid a showdown with the powerful union. If she decides to take the miners head on this time and loses, there is a good likelihood her government would fall and the Labour Party would then have a chance of forming the next government.

Given the expectations of workers in Britain today, and the development of the left inside the Labour Party, a Labour government would be an explosive development.

It would be "a disaster," to use the *Economist's* phrase, for the ruling class. And the best opportunity in decades for the working class and revolutionary socialists, to advance the struggle for a workers government that breaks with the Labour policy of imposing the needs of the capitalist class, and instead defends the interests of the working class. □

Martinique and Guadeloupe

The struggle against French colonial rule

Interview with Gilbert Pago of the Socialist Revolution Group

[The following interview with Gilbert Pago, a leader of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS) in the Caribbean islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe, was conducted by Baxter Smith on December 20, 1981. The translation from French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. Can you briefly describe the background of the GRS?

Answer. The GRS has been in existence for about twelve years. It was formed by activists who were expelled from the Communist Party of Martinique because of their opposition to the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, and who were also supporters of independence for Martinique and Guadeloupe from France, while the Communist Party put forward the perspective of autonomy.

After a few years, the organization was able to intervene in various political and social struggles in Martinique. We have comrades who were members of different unions and we began to publish a four-page weekly newspaper, *Revolution Socialiste*, which is by now the oldest proindependence weekly in Martinique.

Q. Almost two months ago the Caribbean islands of Antigua and Barbuda got their independence from Britain. Martinique and Guadeloupe are still French colonies. What are the attitudes of people here toward independence and what is the status of the independence movement?

A. The proindependence movement in Martinique and Guadeloupe is much weaker than on the English-speaking islands. There are two reasons for this.

First, in 1946 the French government adopted a law making Martinique and Guadeloupe departments of France with the same formal status as any other section of France.

In the second place, French social security laws are in effect here, and the standard of living is in fact much higher than in the neighboring islands. This allows colonialist propaganda to argue that without the French presence the standard of living would not be as high.

But the colonial policy also contains some contradictions. And while at present the independence movement is not very strong, at the same time it offers the only real solutions to the fundamental problems of Martinique and Guadeloupe.

Q. Can you describe the living conditions in Martinique and Guadeloupe?

A. Since 1946, when Martinique and Guadeloupe became departments of France, industry and agriculture have both declined drastically. In 1946, for example, Martinique had a network of factories that processed sugar cane and produced rum. Today there are only two factories left.

Agricultural production has also declined. There is now much more fallow land and much less land cultivated in cane, bananas, and other export crops, and in food grown for the local

population. Today more than 70 percent of the food consumed here is purchased in France. The fishing industry has also declined.

As a result, unemployment has risen considerably. In Martinique today, 32 percent of the population is totally unemployed and more than 20 percent is only partially employed.

But alongside this, the French government has, since 1946, developed a whole layer of civil servants. They get much higher salaries than in France, while the rest of the population, the rest of the workers, get wages that are 30 to 40 percent lower than in France. This means that there is a very big gap in wages between the government employees and the workers in other sectors.

This layer of civil servants functions as a base of support for the policies of the French government, since they know that only the French government, the French presence, can guarantee them their high salaries.

Moreover, the French government carries out what it calls an "assistance" policy toward the large number of unemployed people. They receive government grants of all kinds — grants to the handicapped, aid to single mothers, to orphans, etc. As a result, the "assistance" policy also helps to dampen the independence sentiment.

But this policy also has its contradictions. With the international economic crisis, the French government itself is beginning to question and cut back some of these programs. Therefore there will soon be a number of at-

tacks on these benefits.

Q. How is the labor movement here organized, and what is its outlook?

A. The trade union movement in Martinique is extremely divided. There are many unions, the most important being the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the federation led by the Communist Party. But there are many other unions as well. There are not many workers inside the unions. This is partially due to divisions in the trade-union movement. But it is also due to the fact that these unions simply put forward reformist demands, and the workers only come into the unions during strikes and struggles, meaning that the unions do not have a full, ongoing internal life of their own.

In general, the goals of the unions revolve around questions like the application of labor laws, and wages and hours and the like. But inside the unions there is a growing layer of more radicalized workers who want to link the workers' trade-union demands to the demands for national liberation.

Q. In recent weeks the United States government has made increasingly threatening moves against Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, and El Salvador. What do people here think about this and what sort of response has it provoked?

A. We in the GRS are very concerned by U.S. imperialism's threats against the Central American revolution and the progressive countries of the Caribbean. But because of the bourgeois propaganda, the anticommunist campaigns of the mass media, and the lack of information, most people here are not very aware of the U.S. threats.

Among the youth, and to a certain extent in the unions, there is some attention to this problem, but there is still no real solidarity organization. The GRS is carrying out a campaign to get out information on the real situation in the region and what imperialism wants to do there.

We are now in the process of helping to organize a Martinican Committee in Solidarity with the Peoples of the Caribbean and Central America. This committee is still at an early stage, but we hope that in the coming weeks we will be able to mobilize enough people to provide effective aid to the struggles of the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean.

Q. Recently in the United States, groups of Black activists who are fed up with and opposed to the policies of the ruling Democratic and Republican parties have organized the National Black Independent Political Party. How does the formation of this party relate to the struggles of Blacks in Martinique and the Caribbean?

A. Here in Martinique there has been very little information about this development. But certainly as this party begins to carry out activities, it will have an impact here, as was the case with the U.S. Black Power movement.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, during the civil-rights movement in the United States, the population in Martinique was very sensitive to and supportive of the struggle of Blacks there. The formation of a Black party in the United States can have a very big impact in Martinique, because people here are in solidarity with the struggle of Black people in North America against racism and discrimination.

Q. The militant, anti-French-colonial writings of Blacks like Frantz Fanon, Léopold Senghor, and Aimé Césaire were an inspiration to many Blacks in the civil-rights movement in the 1960s in the United States. Today Césaire is the mayor of Martinique's capital, Fort-de-France. What are his present politics?

A. Aimé Césaire is the chairman of the Martinique Progressive Party (PPM) and he is, as you say, the mayor of the city of Fort-de-France. His party is the largest on the left in Martinique. Césaire is in favor of autonomy, not immediate independence. He says that Martinique should be independent at some time, but refuses to carry out a struggle for independence at present.

Because Césaire is the one who has spoken most about the Martinican nation, about rights for the Martinicans, about forming a separate community, but is willing to see the Martinicans as a part of the French people, his policy seems a bit hazy.

This has an important effect on the anticolonial movement because his writings have had a great deal of influence on the formation of generations of anticolonialists in Martinique,

and his party has had a great deal of influence among the workers.

Because of the importance of Césaire and the PPM, it is necessary to engage in united activities with his party. But at present, due to the new political situation in France and the fact that Césaire's party hopes to engage in a dialogue with the French government, the PPM refuses to engage in any action.

Q. How has the election of French President François Mitterrand of the Socialist Party affected the political situation here and in Guadeloupe?

A. Since Mitterrand's election there has unquestionably been a decline in the level of repression. In the final months of Giscard's government, the anticolonial movement in Martinique had been under heavy repression. Several leaders of anticolonial groups were jailed, including some leaders of the GRS. Giscard was trying to eliminate the anticolonial movement.

The second effect of Mitterrand's election victory was that many workers began to hope that some of their living and working conditions would be improved. If we look closely at the situation after seven months of the Mitterrand government, there have been surface changes, but nothing fundamental has been altered. The colonialist system remains in place in Martinique.

Therefore, I believe that although the workers have remained quiet for some months, waiting to see what the new French government would do, there will soon be a rise in struggles. □

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Junta losing ground in war

1,500 government troops to train in USA

By Will Reissner

In the first hours of 1982, all of El Salvador was plunged into darkness as guerrilla attacks on electrical installations throughout the country led to a nationwide power failure.

The success of these attacks shows the growing strength of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrillas, who are battling the U.S.-backed military-Christian Democratic junta that rules El Salvador.

The Reagan administration has responded to the deteriorating situation of the murderous Salvadoran junta by announcing on December 15 that the Pentagon will bring 1,000 Salvadoran troops and 500 to 600 Salvadoran officers to the United States for military training beginning January 9. There are already fifty-six U.S. advisers currently operating inside El Salvador.

Washington is also stepping up its military and economic aid to the junta, following a warning by Secretary of State Alexander Haig that the regime could collapse under the combined military and economic pressure it is facing.

In 1981, U.S. military and economic aid to the Salvadoran regime totaled \$144 million. Aid for 1982 is expected to reach at least \$250 million, with some U.S. officials talking of levels as high as \$400 million or even \$700 million.

Failure in Morazán

Adding to Washington's nervousness about the situation in El Salvador was the failure of the junta's mid-December offensive to clear FMLN guerrillas from their longtime strongholds in northern Morazán province.

Between December 10 and December 18, more than 1,500 government troops, backed by warplanes, helicopters, mortars, and heavy artillery, carried out offensive operations in the province. Junta representatives claimed that the operation had driven the guerrillas out of Morazán and had destroyed Radio Venceremos, the FMLN shortwave radio station.

In fact, however, the junta's troops were unable to engage the FMLN forces, who lost only eight fighters. But government troops massacred some 900 civilians in Morazán before they withdrew.

On December 29, the FMLN replied with its own offensive in Morazán, attacking at least a dozen towns.

On January 1 guerrillas seized Radio la Romántica in the San Salvador suburb of Cuscatancingo and broadcast a half-hour message declaring that the "last stretch" of guerrilla warfare is at hand.

According to Radio Venceremos, which is

again broadcasting from Morazán despite the junta's claim to have destroyed it, between July and December FMLN guerrillas killed 2,083 government troops in 279 attacks.

Radio Venceremos also stated that FMLN forces held eighty-five cities and towns for a time during that same period.

Power and communications cut

Nor has the junta been able to maintain normal energy supplies and communications. On December 16 the capital city, San Salvador, was blacked out as guerrillas destroyed two high-voltage power lines. Power was also cut off to the towns of Aguilar, Suchitoto, and Cojutepeque on December 24, and the entire province of Chalatenango was blacked out the same day.

On December 28, guerrillas exploded four powerful bombs in central San Salvador and in the suburb of Mejicanos, knocking out portions of the telephone system. The December 20 issue of the Spanish-language edition of the *Miami Herald* reports that from mid-November to mid-December the FMLN destroyed thirty-one communications terminals.

The FMLN is also disrupting the junta's ability to transport troops around the country. On December 27, guerrillas destroyed the San Francisco Bridge, severing the country's main north-south highway. In mid-October the FMLN blew up the Golden Bridge on one of the two main east-west arteries.

Guerrillas have also been setting up roadblocks on the Pan-American Highway, the only remaining link between the capital and the

eastern third of El Salvador, and have been collecting war taxes at several points only thirty-five miles from San Salvador.

On December 30, guerrillas penetrated the tight security around the Ilopango air force base outside San Salvador, setting off explosions there.

There has also been an increase in FMLN military operations around Santa Ana, the country's second largest city, which had seen relatively little military activity previously. On December 17, FMLN forces ambushed government troops in Santa Ana and burned down a huge government warehouse there.

U.S. charges 'outside interference'

As the military and economic situation of the ruling junta continues to deteriorate, the danger of direct U.S. military intervention in El Salvador grows.

Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Fred Iklé told a Senate subcommittee on December 15 that the Reagan administration is carefully watching what Iklé alleged were military threats to El Salvador from Nicaragua and Cuba. Iklé told the subcommittee that "we would be remiss if we failed to advise you that we are developing the necessary contingency plans to respond as required and appropriate to further military threats and acts of aggression."

While the Reagan administration attempts to blame the revolution in El Salvador on outside interference, the Salvadoran junta is becoming increasingly isolated in the international arena.

On December 16, the United Nations General Assembly voted 68-22 (with 53 abstentions) for a resolution presented by France, Denmark, Greece, and the Netherlands calling on the Salvadoran government to negotiate with the guerrillas and urging an end to all military aid to El Salvador. The U.S. delegation voted against the resolution, which was sponsored by four of its North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies. □



Peasants celebrate in liberated area of El Salvador.

AP/A