

# INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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## No Shift in U.S. Policy

# Reagan Still on Collision Course With Central American Revolutions



Jose Lavanderos

Guerrillas in a liberated area of El Salvador's Morazán province. Salvadoran junta is losing ground to freedom fighters.

**Workers in Poland  
Begin Reorganizing**

**Pentagon Boosts  
Chemical War Budget  
Behind Screen of  
Lies on 'Yellow Rain'**

# Haitian rebels jailed while Nicaraguan terrorists go free

By Fred Murphy

Bernard Sansaricq, Philippe Carre, and Milo Gousse were hauled into U.S. Federal Court in Miami on January 18. The three Haitians were charged with violating the U.S. Neutrality Act for their role in an ill-fated attempt by Haitian exiles to overthrow the dictatorship of President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier.

Sansaricq, a resident of the Miami area since the early 1960s, had set out from there with thirty-six followers in early January. From a base camp on Caicos Island, a British colony, the exiles hoped to land in Haiti and spark a rebellion against the U.S.-backed Duvalier regime.

An advance party of exiles managed to reach Tortue Island, just off the northern Haitian coast. At least three of them were killed by Duvalier's forces.

The expedition came to an end on January 13, when Washington intervened directly in support of Duvalier. Sansaricq and twenty-five other exiles were captured on the high seas by the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Gallatin*. That ship has been stationed in recent months in the harbor of the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, ostensibly to halt Haitians who seek to flee in flimsy boats to the United States.

Sansaricq, Carre, and Gousse now face up to three years in U.S. prisons and fines of up to \$3,000 apiece. Nineteen other participants in

Sansaricq's venture have had their residency status revoked by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and may face deportation from the country.

### Selective prosecutions

The law under which the three Haitians are being prosecuted, known as the Neutrality Act, makes it a crime to prepare from U.S. soil "any military or naval expedition or enterprise" against a country or people "with whom the United States is at peace. . . ."

The Reagan administration wasted no time in charging the leaders of the anti-Duvalier expedition under this law. But it has turned a blind eye to the far grosser violations of the Neutrality Act that are being openly committed by right-wing Nicaraguan and Cuban exiles in the United States.

Front-page articles on the military training camps operated by these counterrevolutionaries have appeared in recent weeks in the *New York Times*, *Miami Herald*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *San Diego Union*.

"In a camp near the Florida Everglades, the military training of exiles to infiltrate and overthrow the Government of Nicaragua has taken on a special urgency," correspondent Jo Thomas reported to the December 23 *New York Times*.

"Within three months the situation in Nica-

ragua will blow up," Cuban exile Hector Fabian of the self-styled Inter-American Defense Force told Thomas. Fabian has boasted to Thomas and other reporters that more than 100 Nicaraguans trained at his camp have moved on to clandestine bases inside Nicaragua and Honduras.

### 'Boy Scouts do that'

The December 28 *Miami Herald* reported the existence of five other camps in addition to the one visited by Thomas. Two of these are also operated by the "Inter-American Defense Force," two by the Cuban terrorist group Alpha 66, and the newest by the 2506 Brigade, an organization of veterans of the April 1961 CIA-organized invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs (Playa Girón).

The latter camp, whose opening-day celebration the *Herald* covered, has been dubbed "Trax Base No. 1." This was the CIA's code name for its secret training camp in the highlands of Guatemala from which the invasion of Cuba was prepared.

Alpha 66 has another camp in the desert in southern California. Reporter Arthur Golden of the *San Diego Union* visited that installation and then consulted the U.S. Justice Department regarding possible violations of the Neutrality Act.

"For a group to get together and put on fatigues and run double time, per se, is not illegal," Justice Department spokesperson John Russell responded. "You can call it paramilitary training or what have you. Boy Scouts do that" (*San Diego Union*, January 11).

Likewise, Russell told the *New York Times*, "Officially we're not aware of any military maneuvers taking place in Florida."

## Thousands say 'free Haitians!'

Protests are mounting in the United States and Puerto Rico against Washington's racist policy of throwing Haitian immigrants into detention camps.

Some 2,500 Haitians fleeing the brutal U.S.-backed Duvalier dictatorship have been detained indefinitely in makeshift prisons at Fort Allen, Puerto Rico; the Krome Avenue detention center outside Miami; and other locations.

On January 9, 5,000 persons joined a march in Brooklyn, New York, to demand the release of the Haitian refugees and an end to U.S. support to the Duvalier regime.

In Puerto Rico, similar actions involving thousands of persons have taken place. Catholic clergy on the island urged that candles be placed in windows on New Year's Eve as a demonstration of support for the Haitians.

Some of the most militant pro-Haitian actions have occurred in Miami, where

2,000 attended an emergency rally on December 29. The rally — held in the largely Black area of Liberty City — heard the Rev. Jesse Jackson condemn the Reagan administration's attempts to stir up antirefugee hysteria.

Jackson explained the international significance of the Haitian struggle: "We support the Solidarity movement in Poland, but we also support the solidarity movement in South Africa and Haiti. . . . When they crushed the labor movement in Poland, the president imposed sanctions; when they crush the movements in South Africa and Haiti, the president increases trade."

The Miami rally was called to respond to a police attack on a peaceful demonstration that occurred two days earlier at the Krome Avenue detention camp.

On Christmas Eve, the 700 refugees held in Krome began a hunger strike, vowing to

continue until their release. On December 27, about 600 people arrived at Krome to visit relatives and to publicly express their support for the hunger strikers.

But officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service provocatively canceled visitation rights and refused to allow anyone to enter the camp. As the angry crowd demanded that they be allowed to enter, the guards suddenly threw tear gas and attacked the protesters with clubs. In the confusion, 150 Haitian refugees managed to escape.

Support for the Haitian refugees continues to grow. Father Gerard Jean-Juste, director of the Haitian Refugee Center Incorporated in Miami, says that "the change has been dramatic since we listened to Mr. Reagan give us all this baloney about Poland. How can a country talk about human rights in Poland when we have what is going on here?"

"The Justice Department's position," *Times* correspondent Stuart Taylor Jr. said Russell had informed him, "is that it would not 'condone' violations of the neutrality laws but is not aware of or investigating any violations" (*New York Times*, December 24).

Myles Frechette, head of the State Department's Cuba Desk, claimed that no law violations were involved so long as the exiles refrained from launching invasions directly from the United States. "You can train until you're blue in the face," Frechette told the *Miami Herald*, "but it's only when they catch you at the seashore . . . that [the government] can show that you are carrying out an invasion."

Similar arguments were put forward by then-Attorney General Robert Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs. He claimed the Neutrality Act had not been violated, since the invading exiles had departed from camps in Central America rather than from the United States itself.

#### What about the Haitians?

With the prosecution of Bernard Sansaricq and his comrades, this argument loses its force. The Haitians, after all, launched their anti-Duvalier expedition from a British colony and were captured on the high seas — not "at the seashore."

Reagan administration officials are well aware that they are overlooking the ongoing violations of U.S. law by the counterrevolutionary Cuban and Nicaraguan exiles. In fact, they have as much as informed the Nicaraguan government that this is what they are doing. The *Washington Post* revealed last December 10 that in diplomatic letters to Managua, "the United States presented drafts of statements pledging to 'vigorously enforce' neutrality laws and clamp down on paramilitary exiles training on U.S. soil. . . ."

In return, Washington demanded that the Nicaraguan government simply disarm.

Since the Sandinistas rejected the U.S. ultimatum, Washington's support for the exile terrorists has become more open. According to the January 23 issue of the *Nation* magazine, the Pentagon's contingency plans against Nicaragua "call for the United States to provide covert support to the former National Guardsmen and other Nicaraguan exiles attacking Nicaragua from camps on the Honduran border." And exile spokespersons openly acknowledge the links between those camps and the ones in Florida. "There is an underground railroad between Honduras and Miami," an attorney for the exiles told the *Miami Herald*.

#### Opposition within ruling class?

Some sectors of ruling-class opinion in the United States have expressed discomfort with the glaring contradictions in Reagan administration policy pointed up by the arrests of the Haitians and the toleration and encouragement of Nicaraguan terrorists.

"The letter and spirit of the Neutrality Act are offended by adventurers who boast that hundreds of recruits have already been air-dropped into Nicaragua to fight against the

left-wing Sandinist Government," the *New York Times* lectured Reagan in a January 19 editorial. "By comparison, the prosecuted Haitians are hapless romantics. . . ."

"The hypocrisy of prosecuting one group while exonerating another serves neither law nor diplomacy. Until the United States proves that it rejects military intervention in Nicaragua, it makes only hollow protest against the Sandinistas' alarming arms buildup."

In 1961 the editors of the *New York Times* had advance knowledge that the Bay of Pigs invasion was being planned. They helped the Kennedy administration cover it up. Either they are now reluctant to be party to a similar debacle in Central America, or else their pious warnings are themselves part of a new smoke-screen.

Whatever the case, the intentions of the Reagan administration could not be clearer. □

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# No letup in U.S. intervention threat

## Why Reagan must confront revolutionary struggles

By José G. Pérez

For nearly three months now, defenders of the right of the peoples of Latin America to control their own affairs have been on an emergency campaign against U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean.

This campaign was launched in early November, after leaks to the press by the Reagan administration revealed that the U.S. government was considering everything from a naval blockade of Cuba to an outright invasion of that country, on the pretext of Cuba's alleged intervention in the Salvadoran civil war. Similar threats were also leveled against the revolutionary governments of Grenada and Nicaragua.

From the end of October until right before the Christmas holidays, every few days brought new official statements or carefully planted leaks from top administration figures reiterating the threats.

At the same time, the U.S. government reorganized its military command structure in Central America and the Caribbean. It conducted military maneuvers that included a practice invasion of Grenada and a provocative joint exercise with the Honduran navy just outside Nicaragua's territorial waters.

### A change in Reagan's line?

Since mid-December, however, reports about U.S. threats against the revolutionary governments and struggles in Central America and the Caribbean have been much less prominent.

The *New York Times* — one of the most influential U.S. big-business dailies — recently printed a series of articles emphasizing the degree of popular support for the Nicaraguan revolution. It also described the important role capitalist forces continue to play in that country's economic life. The message was that Reagan should switch tactics on Nicaragua, relying more on economic and diplomatic pressure than military threats.

A January 9 editorial that accompanied the series stressed the opinion of Nicaraguan capitalist leader Alfonso Robelo, who told *Times* reporter Warren Hoge, "All this verbal aggressiveness doesn't help our case at all."

Arguing that "the direction of Nicaragua's revolution . . . is still ambiguous," the editors of the *Times* recommend that "a touch of nuance may be worth more than a ton of menace" in trying to influence events in that country.

Does the quieter tone in the capitalist news media mean that the war danger has receded, that the statements by U.S. Secretary of State

Alexander Haig and others were just empty "jawboning," or that the U.S. rulers have changed their minds?

Such a conclusion would be extremely dangerous and totally unwarranted.

### 'Press covert action'

First of all, Washington is stepping up its intervention in the region. The fact that the *Times* felt it necessary to publicly argue for a different course by the Reagan administration must be seen in that light.

According to a December 4 *Boston Globe* article, the U.S. National Security Council has decided to:

- Press covert action in Nicaragua and El Salvador to infiltrate hostile elements both to gain intelligence and to try to destabilize their effectiveness.

- Intensify public relations efforts at home and abroad to provide heretofore classified details on what the Soviets, Cubans and Nicaraguans are doing in Central America to create a climate of opinion in which stern action later might be supported.

- Instruct the Pentagon to work up very specific contingency plans on such things as quarantines, blockades and military exercises in the event future events — such as the shipment of combat jets to Nicaragua — might call for consideration of a military response."

The article — written by William Beecher, a former Pentagon official during the Carter administration — was headlined "US rejects military options in Cuba, Nicaragua, for now," and was pitched to allay the alarm raised by earlier administration statements.

But everything in the article points to the fact that the U.S. government is still on a course toward direct confrontation with the revolutions in Latin America, whatever the precise timing and specific options being discussed in the White House and Pentagon.

"While no one will talk about the details of covert activities," Beecher said, some officials did give an "effective example of low-profile activity" of the kind the National Security Council decided to carry out. The example cited was "The covert supply of anti-aircraft and antitank missiles to Moslem insurgents in Afghanistan."

Such an "example" can only be read as a U.S. pledge to arm and supply the terrorist bands operating against Nicaragua. Since early December there have been a spate of reports in the U.S. press about Cuban and Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries training on U.S. territory.

The terrorist training camps are run with the blessings of the Reagan administration and in

flagrant violation of U.S. neutrality laws. One of the bases in Florida — "Trax Base No. 1" — is named after the Guatemalan camp where Cuban counterrevolutionaries trained for the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

### The Honduran connection

Meanwhile, in Nicaragua, there has been a marked escalation of counterrevolutionary violence, especially near the border with Honduras.

Beecher, citing unnamed "officials" and "sources," claims that "it is unlikely . . . that force would be used [by Washington], except in response to a serious provocation, such as delivery of a significant number of combat jets or tanks to Managua or an attack by Nicaragua against the forces of a neighbor." (Emphasis added.)

This last statement is extremely ominous for two reasons. First, there have been reports that former Somozaist National Guards have obtained Sandinista uniforms and are planning to stage a fake Nicaraguan invasion of Honduras to provoke a war between the two countries.

This charge was originally leveled by Sandinista leader Luis Carrión on November 4 and subsequently confirmed a few days later by a coalition of thirty labor, political, and religious groups in Honduras itself.

Second, at the beginning of January the Honduran government charged that Nicaraguan troops had crossed into Honduran territory December 26 and killed 200 Nicaraguan exiles there.

The Sandinista authorities denounced that accusation as "false and absurd." But this did not stop *Time* magazine from reporting a version of the alleged incident as if it were incontrovertible fact in an article titled "A left-wing military buildup worries Washington" in its January 18 issue.

In fact, Honduras's own minister of justice, Carlos Mejía Arellano, had already acknowledged that the charges were baseless in a statement made on January 6 and reported by the Interpress news agency. Mejía said the claim that Nicaraguan troops had attacked refugee camps was "totally false" and that "there has not been a single problem or a single death" in the camps.

What is more, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees conducted a four-day fact-finding mission in Honduras and concluded that there was "no evidence of violence, fighting, or kidnapping," according to the commissioner's office in New York.

The truth, however, is not what the capitalist media is after. The February 1 issue of

*Business Week* repeated the whole phony story, with further embellishments.

#### Anti-Sandinista 'uprisings'?

On December 20, John Wallach of the *San Francisco Examiner* reported on another variant of U.S. contingency plans leaked by the government. According to unnamed administration officials, a blockade would be difficult to justify unless "it was connected to some uprisings in Nicaragua . . . unless parts of Nicaragua were taken by anti-Sandinist guerrillas."

In the event of such an "uprising," Wallach was told, a blockade could be instituted on the pretext of preventing "outside intervention" in Nicaragua's internal affairs.

No doubt the *Wall Street Journal* had such possibilities in mind when it ran a January 21 article recalling a week of anti-Sandinista protests in the town of Bluefields in October 1980. Bluefields, on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, is in the most isolated and underdeveloped region in the country.

An article in the January 17 *New York Times* also took up "the strained relations" between the Black and Indian population of the Atlantic Coast and the government in Managua. These articles were designed to boost the claims of counterrevolutionaries operating from the Atlantic Coast of Honduras that they are leading a popular movement for independence of the area.

#### Escalation in El Salvador

In addition to running guns and providing training facilities for Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, Washington has also escalated its intervention in the Salvadoran civil war.

On December 15, while world attention was focused on the declaration of martial law in Poland, the Reagan administration announced that 1,000 Salvadoran troops and 500 to 600 officers would come to the United States for military training beginning January 9.

In addition, although major U.S. newspapers have failed to report this, top administration officials have explicitly reiterated the threats against Cuba, Nicaragua, and the revolutionary fighters in El Salvador.

On January 13 Thomas Enders, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, spoke to the Pan American Society of New York. "El Salvador and Honduras are the countries that are most threatened," Enders said. "The militarization of Nicaragua threatens both."

The United States, Enders declared, "must communicate to Cuba that the costs of increasing its intervention in the region will be very high. We will not accept, nor do we think that the countries of the region will accept, that the future of the Caribbean basin be manipulated from Havana."

Although all major newspapers had access to this story — it was carried by the Associated Press wire — the only place where it appeared, as far as we know, was in the Spanish-language edition of the *Miami Herald* (from which Enders's statements have been retrans-

lated into English).

Behind the continuing U.S. threats of direct military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is the rising revolutionary tide in the region.

Since 1959 the U.S. government has been working overtime to smash revolutionary Cuba. Washington has employed diplomatic isolation, economic blockade, sabotage, assassination plots against Fidel Castro, chemical and bacteriological warfare, and mercenary invasions to try to bring Cuba to its knees. In October 1962 it even brought the world to the brink of nuclear war in its efforts to overthrow the revolutionary government.

Above all else, the U.S. rulers sought to prevent "another Cuba," another deepgoing social revolution that would bring the workers and peasants to power in some other Latin American country.

The history of Latin America over the past twenty years is the history of merciless war carried out by Washington, and the servile dictators who do its bidding, to stop the workers and peasants from following Cuba's example. The U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 and the coup in Chile in 1973 are just two of the many U.S.-sponsored bloodbaths carried out in pursuit of this policy.

This unending counterrevolutionary war has been carried out by every U.S. administration since Eisenhower, "liberal" or "conservative," Democratic or Republican.

Despite everything Washington threw against it, however, the Cuban revolution not only survived but prospered. Cuba's working people enjoy the highest standard of living of any country in Latin America. And despite the merciless U.S. pressure, the Cuban people have never abandoned their commitment to build a better future free of poverty, exploitation, and oppression not only for themselves, but for working people in all of Latin America and throughout the world.

And today, the Cubans are no longer alone.

#### Revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada

In 1979, two new "free territories of the Americas" were established when popular revolutions brought workers and peasants governments to power in Nicaragua and Grenada.

Together with the deep crisis of the world capitalist economy — which has demonstrated once again that working people can expect no improvement in their lot from a society that puts private profit above human needs — these two victories have unleashed a powerful mass upsurge that is shaking Central America and the Caribbean.

The U.S. government under Carter and Reagan has done everything it can to stop the New Jewel government in Grenada and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua from following a revolutionary course. But the U.S. attempts to bully, intimidate, blackmail, or buy off these revolutionary leaderships have been rebuffed.

Meanwhile, in El Salvador, the U.S.-backed junta faces a desperate situation. The freedom fighters of the Farabundo Martí National

Liberation Front (FMLN) now control about one-fourth of the country. The most optimistic U.S. analysts say the war is, at best, stalemated. They warn that the guerrillas will eventually win if the stalemate is not broken.

In 1981, the junta launched forty offensives against the guerrillas, but none of these were successful in dealing the freedom fighters a major defeat. Among the largest of the junta's efforts was a December offensive in Morazán province, where the government claimed it had routed the guerrillas, captured their shortwave radio station, Radio Venceremos, and reasserted its control over the province.

But despite the junta's claims, Radio Venceremos resumed its daily transmissions at the end of December. By mid-January, it was reporting that FMLN forces had overwhelmed government troops and taken control of the entire town of Jocoaitique in Morazán province.

An article in the January 13 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde* reported that since the middle of last year the guerrillas have enlarged their zones of control, have established corridors linking the various fronts (effectively splitting the country in two), and have substantially increased their capacity to carry out nationally coordinated actions. The truth of this was seen on New Year's Day, when simultaneous guerrilla attacks on electrical installations in widely separated areas blacked out the entire country.

#### Civil war in Guatemala

Neighboring Guatemala is also in the midst of a full-scale civil war between liberation forces and the U.S.-backed military dictatorship there. While the Guatemalan army does not yet appear to be as hard-pressed as its Salvadoran counterpart, the liberation struggle is clearly gaining strength.

According to the January 25 issue of *Time*, "Guatemalan army analysts now estimate the guerrilla strength at 3,000 active fighters, plus as many as 30,000 untrained reserves and supporters."

A December 21 *U.S. News & World Report* article states that the guerrillas "harass and outfight" the government's troops. "What surprises Guatemalan experts," the article continues, "is that the insurgents are winning converts among the Indians" who make up close to half of the country's population.

"Even without the Indians, Guatemala's guerrillas have grown strong enough to attack provincial population centers," the article complains.

Despite frequent victory proclamations by the Salvadoran and Guatemalan regimes, these rightist dictatorships have been losing ground over the past year. This has been true despite Reagan's efforts to beef up the Salvadoran regime in particular through massive infusions of economic and military aid, and despite the use of U.S. advisers to lead combat operations carried out by the junta's troops.

That the United States government has not yet carried out an invasion of El Salvador with

its own troops, or sponsored an intervention by other Latin American dictatorships to help the Salvadoran military, is testimony to how much Washington fears the explosion of popular outrage — in the United States and throughout the world — that would surely follow any such step.

The political price Reagan would have to pay would be enormous, and this is a major factor being weighed in the White House and the Pentagon.

But from the point of view of the imperialists, even such a price is not too much if the alternative is an ever-increasing number of revolutionary governments in a region that the U.S. rulers consider their own backyard. Social revolutions that deprive U.S. corporations of

“their” markets, “their” superexploited workers, and “their” superprofits are something that U.S. imperialism cannot tolerate. The rulers in Washington will do everything in their power to prevent the spread of such revolutions.

There is no way of knowing the exact timing, options, forms of intervention, or pretexts that Washington will eventually use, and it is useless to speculate about that. But the official statements, unofficial leaks, and actions of the Reagan administration — and above all, the entire political context that these take place in — show that Washington is moving precisely toward such intervention. That is why it is essential to continue the campaign against U.S. intervention. □

## United States

# Reagan tries to deport activists

By Will Reissner

According to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service's *Investigator's Handbook*, the INS has an important role to play in “combating the Communist conspiracy” through “exclusion and deportation processes.”

The existence of this handbook was revealed in the course of the Socialist Workers Party's nine-year-long lawsuit demanding an end to U.S. government spying and harassment against the SWP and its members.

The handbook advises investigators to look for and use nonpolitical technicalities in moving against noncitizens whom the government wants to deport because of their political views.

The INS is currently using that very strategy to try to deport two outspoken critics of U.S. foreign policy — Black South African poet Dennis Brutus and Iranian college student Mojgan Hariri-Vijeh.

Brutus, fifty-seven, has lived and taught in the United States since 1971. Despite that, he faces deportation. His Zimbabwean passport had expired and a governmental reorganization in Zimbabwe last year caused his passport renewal to be held up in red tape. As a result his U.S. visa expired.

Mojgan Hariri-Vijeh is threatened with deportation because of an expired student visa, although she is still enrolled at Maryland's Morgan State University. She has been in the United States since 1977. Her visa expired after the Iranian revolution, and she was afraid to apply for a renewal, given the anti-Iranian hysteria the U.S. government was attempting to whip up.

### Dennis Brutus

Brutus is a professor of African literature at Northwestern University outside Chicago. He is currently a visiting writer at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

According to former South African secret police agent Gordon Winters, the racist South African government considers Brutus to be among its twenty most important opponents.

In 1961 the South African government ordered Dennis Brutus not to speak out on political issues, and in 1963 he was imprisoned on the infamous Robben Island. The Robben Island prison is also where freedom fighter Nelson Mandela has been held for nearly two decades. In 1965 Brutus was released and went into exile.

Dennis Brutus was born in what was then the British colony of Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. He holds a Zimbabwean passport, although he was brought up, educated, and imprisoned in South Africa, and considers that country his home.

The INS is trying to deport Brutus to Zimbabwe. But Brutus points out that his life would not be safe there due to South African murder squads at work in Zimbabwe. He cites the case of Joe Gqabi, a South African nationalist with whom Brutus was imprisoned on Robben Island.

Gqabi was murdered in Zimbabwe by agents of the South African government in July 1981.

Brutus links the move to deport him with Washington's efforts to strengthen its alliance with the apartheid regime in South Africa. The South African government, he points out, “functions as an instrument” for U.S. foreign policy, receiving “not just aid, but direction from outside.”

On January 14, a United States immigration judge allowed Brutus twenty days to seek political asylum in the United States. His petition for asylum will be submitted to the State Department, which makes the ultimate decision.

Supporters of Brutus's right to asylum are calling on people to send telegrams and letters to the State Department urging a favorable ruling on his petition for asylum. Copies should be sent to Brutus's lawyers: Mahmoud and As-

sociates, 53 W. Jackson, Suite 1264, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

### Mojgan Hariri-Vijeh

The attempt to deport twenty-year-old Mojgan Hariri-Vijeh began nineteen days after she joined the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) in Baltimore.

At a deportation hearing last October 15, Hariri-Vijeh argued that the immigration cops had singled her out for deportation because of her political activities.

On January 11, Immigration Judge Joan Arrowsmith ordered Hariri-Vijeh to leave the United States by June 15, 1982. The delay, in response to the broad support already mobilized in her defense, is to allow her to complete the present semester at Morgan State University, where she is studying computer science.

Following the ruling, Hariri-Vijeh, who is a member of both the YSA and the Socialist Workers Party, told reporters: “I will not be intimidated. I will appeal this ruling and continue to fight for my rights.” An appeal was filed on January 15, charging that the deportation proceedings were “initiated on the invidiously discriminatory grounds of INS opposition to respondent's lawful political beliefs and activities.”

The Political Rights Defense Fund, which is defending her against the INS, is calling for a flood of emergency protests against the INS political persecution of this young Iranian. Messages should be sent to: Commissioner, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D.C. 20536.

The urgency of the need for protests in the cases of Brutus and Hariri-Vijeh can be seen by the fate of Palestinian Ziad Abu Eain, who remained in a U.S. jail for two and a half years while supporters fought his extradition to Israel, where he faces trumped-up charges of setting off a bomb.

On December 13, Abu Eain was turned over to Israeli authorities and flown to Tel Aviv in handcuffs, without his attorneys even receiving notification. He is now in jail there, awaiting trial. □



Hariri-Vijeh (left) explaining her case to interviewer in Baltimore.

# Workers begin to reorganize

*Factory committees, bulletins, work slowdowns*

**By Ernest Harsch**

A Warsaw television commentary on January 19 claimed that there was a "gradual normalization of life in Poland," a theme that has been repeated frequently since the imposition of martial law on December 13.

But many of the regime's own statements and actions contradict this picture, and show that the privileged bureaucracy that rules Poland is still a long way from its goal of stifling the militancy of the working class and reasserting its unchallenged authority.

On January 16, Jerzy Urban, a government spokesperson, denied an earlier statement by Deputy Prime Minister Jerzy Ozdowski that martial law might be lifted within a matter of weeks. Urban insisted that "the duration of martial law depends on progress achieved in the stabilization of the situation in Poland."

Another deputy prime minister, Mieczyslaw Rakowski, indirectly acknowledged the extent of opposition the bureaucracy still faces when he explained why the authorities are not going to end martial law soon:

"We can't lift martial law today or tomorrow. We'd just return to the situation before the 13th, and this modern polonaise — the strike dance — would start anew. Why should we be so foolish as to stake everything on a drastic step and then just give it up and go back to what we were?"

In other words, the influence of Solidarity has not been broken among working people. This is the case despite thousands of jailings, the killing of at least seventeen protesters (according to the regime's figures), the suspension of most democratic rights, the firings of thousands of union activists, and a massive display of police and military might.

## **Bureaucracy in a jam**

This reflects the bureaucracy's fundamental problem: It is confronted with a large industrial working class that has just gone through the most massive revolutionary upheaval in Polish history, a working class that has learned many important political lessons over the past year and a half and has gotten a sense of its own power.

That is something that the imposition of martial law alone cannot wipe out.

While the authorities have been able, for the moment, to put down large-scale protest strikes and demonstrations, they have not been successful in ending the workers' resistance. That has already begun to take other forms, through the organization of workers committees, the launching of work-to-rule actions in many large factories, the circulation of bulletins and other uncensored information, and so on.

tins and other uncensored information, and so on.

This resistance presents a major obstacle to Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski's "normalization" plans. It makes it much more difficult for the martial-law administration to try to divide or isolate the Solidarity leadership, or to ram through new economic policies that are against the workers' interests.

Numerous other problems beset the regime as well, and limit its room to maneuver.

## **Austerity plans**

Not least of those is the disastrous state of the economy — a legacy of years of bureaucratic mismanagement. Poland's foreign debt now stands at \$28.5 billion, the vast bulk of it owed to imperialist governments and banks. Poland desperately needs new loans and credits to import the spare parts and raw materials needed to stave off a further decline in production, but it cannot get them unless it finds the money to meet its repayment obligations.

Since the regime is incapable by its very nature of instituting the kind of economic reforms necessary to increase productivity — the institution of workers control and democratic participation in economic decision-making — the only alternative left to it is to impose severe austerity measures. The announcement that prices on some basic food items will go up on February 1 by between 200 and 400 percent is just one part of that austerity policy.

A front-page editorial in the January 20 *Trybuna Ludu*, the official daily of the ruling Polish United Workers Party (PUWP, the Community Party), admitted that the authorities would have to pay an additional political price for such measures. "Price increases," it said, "have never been, are not and will not be popular or welcome."

On top of these problems, the PUWP itself has been weakened by a sharp internal crisis. Tens of thousands of rank-and-file members are resigning in disgust over the party leadership's blatantly antiworker policies. In many factories and offices, wastebaskets are being filled with membership cards. Other party members are being purged, either for being too discredited in the eyes of the masses or politically suspect in the eyes of the hierarchy.

## **Solidarity 'caught by surprise'**

The December 13 crackdown was a severe blow to the workers movement. Much of its initial impact was due to the element of surprise and the effectiveness of the communications blackout.

Zbigniew Bujak, the head of Solidarity's

Warsaw regional chapter and one of the highest-ranking union leaders still at large, acknowledged in an interview in the January 16 *New York Times* that the imposition of martial law "caught us all by surprise."

Another Solidarity leader, Zbigniew Kowalewski, explained several weeks earlier, "We did not expect this takeover. Solidarity thought the government was tending toward the establishment of a police state, but it was believed that this would be an evolutionary process and that it would have a parliamentary facade. We thought that under heavy pressure from Solidarity on the Polish parliament, this dictatorial tendency could be averted."

As a consequence, the ten-million-member union was simply unprepared for the scope and speed of the crackdown. The cutoff of all telephone, telex, and postal communications; the imposition of rigid censorship; the sharp restrictions on travel within the country; and the simultaneous detention of a large majority of the union's national and regional leaderships made it extremely difficult for Solidarity to respond in an organized manner.

The ranks of the union nevertheless showed that they were willing to defend themselves as best they could. Within hours of Jaruzelski's declaration, workers in factories, shipyards, mines, and other workplaces had gone on strike and occupied their premises. The authorities themselves admitted that some 200 strikes were launched.

In two areas in particular — the northern port city of Gdansk and the southern Silesian coal-mining region — the protests led to sharp clashes with the police.

## **'It was a real war'**

One account of the Gdansk strikes and demonstrations, by a young worker, provided a graphic picture of the level of resistance there — and the brutality of the police, especially the ZOMO, the motorized riot police. According to his account, which appeared in the January 15 *New York Times*, the Lenin Shipyard, where Solidarity was born, was occupied by workers within hours of the declaration of martial law.

"Many leaflets were being thrown to the crowd," he said. "Buses with workers pulled up. . . . A group of soldiers came to the gate and brought hot tea and coffee to the strikers. It was a nice gesture. The workers shared what they had with the soldiers. I saw a platoon commander come over to a nun and hand her a plastic bag that had donations for the mass" that was planned to commemorate the striking workers killed in Gdansk in 1970.

The regular army was not subsequently used



Main gate of Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk after tanks broke through on December 16.

against the strikers. On December 16, which the worker called "the day of revenge against the working people," ZOMO and regular police attacked some 20,000 protesters. They fought back:

A man called Maciej — I don't know his last name — shouted "Hurray!" and we all charged the Zomo. The Zomo were hard pressed and fell back. People picked up the [tear gas] cannisters and threw them back at them. There were shouts of "Gestapo!" and "Murderers!". . . .

We hit the trucks and burned the tarpaulins. Then with great fear I saw airplanes coming over, like cropdusters. They dropped some kind of tear gas, but it wasn't effective. The wind blew it away.

At about six, a group broke off and hit the provincial police headquarters at Okoewa Street. They broke all the windows and siphoned gas out of the police cars. We wanted to use it against the armor. We put the gas in milk bottles. . . .

It went on like this all evening. People constructed barricades and charged the Zomo. The Zomo charged with their batons. . . .

[The next day] we heard a 6-year-old boy was wounded in the head the day before. He was hit by a gas cannister and he died in the hospital.

The attacks were more fierce. The Zomo used the cobblestones we had been throwing at them and threw them at shop windows. We were being treated as a gang of hooligans. They wanted to blame us for looting. . . . People were very excited by the devastation of the property and they attacked the Zomo with their own hands. . . .

Then the tanks came. They fired some kind of shells that made a terrible noise. We were frightened but we decided to stop them. Small groups attacked them from all sides. We used gasoline and when flames appeared on their engines they were withdrawn. It was incredible, so hard to describe. People just running all over the place. Flying fragments of exploding gas cannisters. It was a real war.

The radio in Gdansk — that damned box — called it hooligan excesses. All we wanted was to help peo-

ple who were misled by the Government. We're young, but we know what the situation is — all the food lines, the hunger, the breaking of the agreements that Solidarity wanted.

The Polish government subsequently admitted that nine demonstrators were killed in the street fighting in Gdansk.

#### Coal miners fight back

A somewhat similar situation developed at the Wujek coal mine in Katowice, according to a detailed account compiled by Solidarity activists (portions were summarized in the January 17 *Washington Post*, and parts of another eyewitness account in the January 5 *Le Monde*).

On December 14, the day after the declaration of martial law, the Wujek coal mine was occupied by some 3,000 miners, including some from other mines. The strikers had heard about brutal beatings of workers elsewhere and prepared to defend themselves. Guards were posted, and the blacksmith's shop began producing weapons: metal pikes, ax handles with chains on the ends, wire cables cut into segments.

On December 16, a column of tanks, followed by 2,000 ZOMO, advanced on the mine. The crowd of strike supporters outside, particularly women, attempted to stop the tanks by lying down in front of them. They were swept aside with water cannon.

The tanks broke through the gate, and strikers and ZOMO fought for several hours. The police opened fire on the miners, killing six on the spot. Two more later died in hospitals. According to the account that appeared in *Le Monde*, four ZOMO were also killed.

In general, however, the workers did not physically resist the police, or respond by at-

tacking party or government buildings, as they did during the 1970 strikes. When confronted with massive police or military force, they decided to retreat and give up their occupations.

This no doubt flowed from a sober assessment of what the outcome would be if they engaged in direct physical confrontations. The police had guns and tanks; the workers did not. The government forces could be sent around the country at will and concentrate on particular enterprises; the strikers, cut off from workers in other cities, had no clear picture of the level of resistance in the rest of the country and could not coordinate their response.

Moreover, workers in Poland have learned important lessons from past struggles. As a result of their experience in the 1970 strikes, when scores of workers were gunned down in Gdansk, Gdynia, and Szczecin, they have concluded that unorganized actions can be counterproductive.

Polish workers have shown that they are not afraid of confrontation. They simply want to be sure that the conditions are as favorable to their side as possible.

The authorities, for their own reasons, also were reluctant to crack down too brutally. They were afraid of provoking too great a response by the workers, and were still uncertain about the extent to which the regular army troops could be relied on. The last time regular troops were ordered to fire on workers in Poland, during the 1956 Poznan uprising, some units went over to the side of the demonstrators.

#### Workers committees

With the end of the protest strikes and demonstrations, workers went back to their jobs.



But they did not give up their resistance.

In cities and factories around Poland, workers committees are being established. According to Zbigniew Bujak, Solidarity is in the process of reorganizing itself under the new conditions of repression. He said that he was already in contact with groups in Warsaw, Gdansk, Wroclaw, Lodz, and other regions.

Other Solidarity leaders who have evaded arrest include Bogden Lis, a former vice-chairman of the union; Alina Pinkowska, who played a major role in the Lenin Shipyard strike of August 1980; Bogdan Borusewicz, a leader of the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) and the editor of *Robotnik* (The Worker); and Zbigniew Janas, the head of the Solidarity chapter at the militant Ursus tractor factory outside Warsaw.

According to the official newspaper *Gazeta Robotnicza*, Wladyslaw Frasyuniuk, the chairperson of Solidarity for the Wroclaw region, has also gone into hiding. The paper complained that Frasyuniuk refused to give himself up, despite an offer of amnesty for anything he may have done before the imposition of martial law.

Other, lesser-known worker activists are undoubtedly beginning to play leadership roles as well.

To counter the government's lies and efforts to keep working people in the dark about what is really going on in the country, these committees have been publishing numerous leaflets and bulletins.

### Breaking the wall of silence

In a dispatch from Warsaw in the January 12 *Le Monde*, correspondent Bernard Guetta reported, "Rare before, clandestine leaflets are multiplying at a surprising rate in all corners of the country. Filled with information and accounts that are more or less well documented, these tracts, through their very existence, have broken the silence of the uniformed television announcers, of the few newspapers that have been authorized to reappear, and of the still-closed theater halls."

One leaflet in Krakow declared that "every typewriter should now be working for Solidarity. . . . We realize that information about events is almost as important as the events themselves."

These leaflets have explained the kinds of activities that should be carried out to counter martial law: gathering information about those who have been detained, and providing assistance to their families; helping workers fired from their jobs for their union activities; organizing opposition to the signing of loyalty oaths that the authorities are demanding Solidarity activists put their names to; painting slogans and putting up posters; refusing to give the police or army any information whatsoever; working slowly and following all instructions in the factories to the letter.

One leaflet, signed by Bujak, Janas, and Wiktor Kulerski, the vice-chairman of Solidarity in the Warsaw region, also outlined measures to put social pressure on people who were

collaborating with the martial-law authorities. "Do not meet, do not shake hands, do not talk with collaborators," it said. "Let them feel emptiness all around them."

A leaflet issued in Krakow, the center of the Malopolska region, declared, "The Malopolska regional leadership [of Solidarity] warns union members, youth, and all people of good will against the danger of terrorist attempts provoked by the Security Service. . . . Terrorism serves to compromise them in the eyes of society and creates the legal basis for government repression against all social and opposition movements."

According to *New York Times* correspondent John Darnton, Bujak said in his interview "that if liberalization over the next few months did not return to the level that existed before the crackdown, the underground would grow quickly. Its activities, he said, would include distributing leaflets and conducting demonstrations and other protest actions."

### 'We are like flowers'

In the factories themselves, the workers' resistance has often taken the form of work slowdowns or work-to-rule campaigns.

At the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, little work is being done, and many workers have not even returned to their jobs.

According to a Polish television report, the Ursus tractor factory produced 90 tractor engines on December 30, compared to 230 during a normal work day. One worker at the FSO automobile factory northwest of Warsaw estimated that only 10 cars were being built each day, compared to 350 normally.

In some cases, these production slowdowns have been caused by a lack of raw materials or spare parts, or the disruption caused by the imposition of martial law. But the regime's brutal crackdown on workers' rights has certainly impelled workers to strike back in one of the few ways they can with relative impunity.

At a finishing plant near Warsaw, for example, workers who inspect the products are applying the official selection criteria very meticulously, rejecting products that they would have previously passed.

At the PZO optical instruments plant, also in Warsaw, the situation was similar. In the past, workers in the factory themselves produced parts that were missing, even though that was not part of their job. Now they are refusing to do so, and are working strictly according to the rules.

When a group of foreign reporters were allowed to visit the giant Cegielski metalworks in Poznan, a stronghold of Solidarity, one worker said, referring to reports of persistent work slowdowns there, "We are like flowers that stand — and do not move."

What these workers are seeking to tell the bureaucrats is that productivity cannot be increased through the use of repression.

### Union leaders hang tough

This spirit of resistance among the ranks of Solidarity — the workers on the shop floor —

has done much to strengthen the resolve of the union leaders in detention and to inspire other layers of the population as well.

From the beginning of its crackdown, the regime has sought to break the Solidarity leadership, or at least some prominent figures in it. This is vital if it is to realize its aim of setting up a new, housebroken union, perhaps one that is even called Solidarity.

But thus far, it has not succeeded. No Solidarity leaders of national stature have agreed to come out in support of martial law. One regional leader, Zdzislaw Rozwalak of Poznan, who had been compelled to sign a statement supporting martial law shortly after it was imposed, later publicly repudiated it.

One figure the authorities would dearly like to break is Lech Walesa, Solidarity's national chairman. He has been held in isolation ever since December 13. According to Deputy Prime Minister Rakowski, he met with Walesa briefly, but apparently the discussions did not go the way Rakowski would have liked. He later commented that it was not "impossible" to imagine a Solidarity without Walesa, implying that he might not be allowed to resume his union activities.

Other social layers that have looked to Solidarity for leadership have also continued to defy the martial-law administration.

Intellectuals have circulated protest letters denouncing the crackdown. One letter, sent on January 21 to the Sejm (parliament) and Archbishop Jozef Glomp, was signed by more than 100 prominent intellectuals, including Andrzej Wajda, the internationally known film director; Tadeusz Konwicki, a novelist; and Edward Lipinski, a prominent economist. "We demand of the authorities," it said, "an end to the confrontation with their own nation, revocation of the state of war, freeing of the interned, a halt to repressions against Solidarity members."

University students have continued to organize themselves, a fact the regime has indirectly acknowledged by keeping the universities shut.

Under the pressure of the workers movement, Catholic church figures have spoken out publicly against martial law and have urged workers to resist the regime's campaign to get them to sign loyalty oaths. A message from Poland's bishops and Archbishop Glomp, which was read in 18,000 churches across the country on January 24, called for "the quick release of all detainees, cessation of all duress on ideological grounds and of dismissals from work for political convictions or trade union membership." It went on, "We make it clear that the right of working people to organize themselves into independent and self-governed trade unions and of youth into their own associations must be restored in the name of freedom."

The 1.5-million-member independent farmers' organization, Rural Solidarity, has also spoken out against martial law. "The rebirth of our nation," one Rural Solidarity leaflet stated, "is like a river that may be blocked for a while but cannot be stopped." □

# What kind of of solidarity with Poland?

*Anticommunist demonstrations hurt cause of workers*

By Larry Seigle

[The following article appeared in the January 29 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

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Workers in Poland are continuing their heroic battle against repression by the bureaucratic caste that rules their country. Far from being defeated, the workers are continuing to fight.

Even in the government's courtrooms, ringed with secret police, open declarations of defiance and class solidarity are being heard, as working-class leaders go on trial for organizing strikes.

Poland's Solidarity union has been built by mobilizing working people and their allies in a many-sided struggle. They are fighting to democratize the workers state and reduce the inequalities that plague Polish society.

This sounds like a good idea to more and more workers in the United States, who would like to see more democracy and less inequality here.

Solidarity has shown iron-willed determination to continue the struggle despite all obstacles. It has refused to knuckle under to the government. This has also inspired workers here. What a contrast to our own sniveling AFL-CIO [the U.S. labor federation] officials! All they seem to know is how to make more and more concessions to the employers, thus weakening the unions.

But for the very reasons militant American workers identify with Solidarity, the capitalists recognize the Polish workers movement as their deadly enemy. This is true despite the public tears shed over martial law. "Most bankers think authoritarian governments are good because they impose discipline," one banker told the *Wall Street Journal* recently.

Canada's Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau expressed a view privately shared by his counterparts in the imperialist countries: "We see unions in Canada are always asking for more. I don't suppose the union movement in Poland is very different, they would want more, but at some stage it was obvious that the government couldn't give any more." Trudeau added that he hoped the Polish authorities would be able to "keep Solidarity from excessive demands."

## Reagan's real position

While Reagan lights candles in public for Solidarity, in reality the last thing Washington wants to see is a victory for the Polish workers. Reagan knows that the U.S. government will be the loser if the Polish workers succeed in gaining control over their country. With the

working class — instead of the privileged, petty-bourgeois social caste now in power — deciding domestic and foreign policy for Poland, a powerful new force would join the revolutionary struggle. Poland, by its actions and its example, would then pose a gigantic problem for world imperialism.

This, however, has not prevented Reagan from trying to use the repression in Poland to justify Washington's rapidly escalating militarization drive.

The strategy of the ruling class in this country has been to try to channel the genuine and progressive sentiment of solidarity with the Polish workers into support for these reactionary policies, which are not in the interests of workers — in the United States or in Poland. The rulers' aim is to draw attention away from their bipartisan offensive at home and abroad, and prevent the necessary link-up between solidarity with the Polish struggle and political opposition to the course of American imperialism.

As is their custom, the labor bureaucrats have lined up like tin soldiers in support of this policy of the employers.

In the weeks following the declaration of martial law in Poland, the AFL-CIO bureaucrats organized demonstrations on Poland. Often these were cosponsored by reactionary, antiunion Polish émigré groups, such as the Polish-American Congress.

Slogans such as "Communism means death and hunger," and "U.S.A. wake up, help us to victory over the communists," predominated at these "labor" actions.

## Gleason's boycott

That fine defender of union democracy, Thomas Gleason of the International Longshoremen's Association, ordered ILA members not to handle any cargo going to or from Poland. "In conscience we can do no less," declared Gleason, who has made clear on numerous occasions that he does not know what a conscience is.

The fact that it will be the workers and farmers of Poland who will suffer from restrictions on trade does not bother Gleason. Nor does it bother the AFL-CIO officialdom.

They followed up Gleason's anticommunist boycott with a rally December 19 outside the Polish consulate in New York. Speakers urged Reagan to impose economic sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union.

"Poland is afire, and we want action now from the U.S. government," said AFL-CIO Regional Director Michael Mann, in a militantly reactionary speech.

Labor officials in Canada have followed a

parallel course. The Canadian Labor Congress has centered its efforts on a joint campaign with the Canadian Polish Congress, an organization of right-wing, anticommunist émigrés. The *Militant's* English-language sister publication in Canada, *Socialist Voice*, reported on a December 16 rally in Toronto organized by this alliance:

"Michael Wilson, the Tory federal financial critic, warned of the specter of socialist revolution that has threatened the 'free world' since the Russian revolution of 1917. Paul Cosgrove, the Liberal housing minister, led the crowd in the singing of 'O Canada' [Canada's national anthem]. He tried to convince us that working people in this country aren't having such a hard time after all!"

In Washington, D.C., on December 23, Tom Kahn, head of the AFL-CIO's misnamed Polish Workers' Aid Fund, went before a congressional committee. He complained that Reagan's sanctions did not go far enough. He urged that the entire Polish debt to the United States be called in, that no further loans be made to any East European country, and that the grain embargo against the Soviet Union be reinstated. He also urged beefing up U.S. propaganda broadcasts to Poland.

Such a policy does nothing to aid the workers and farmers in Poland — or in this country.

## Lift the economic blockade

Instead of calling for economic sanctions, the labor movement ought to be campaigning *against* them. The AFL-CIO ought to be insisting on the lifting of all restrictions on trade with the workers states, including an immediate end to the criminal economic blockades against Cuba and Vietnam.

If the AFL-CIO wanted to provide some real aid to the Polish workers, it could start by joining with the labor forces in Europe who are opposing the introduction of new nuclear weapons into their countries. It is the U.S. arms buildup that forces states where capitalism has been overthrown, such as Poland, to undertake huge military expenditures, which of necessity come out of the pockets of the working people.

If the AFL-CIO tops really want to aid the Polish workers, why don't they point out that Western banks are extorting huge interest payments from Poland? This forces Poland to devote almost all foreign-exchange earnings to service the debt. Tom Kahn might have suggested, for instance, that interest-free loans and other economic aid be provided to Poland.

But that is not what the Polish Workers' Aid Fund is all about. Rather than aiding the Polish workers, the AFL-CIO misleaders are mainly

interested in helping the Democrats and Republicans to carry out their bipartisan foreign policy, which is more and more heading toward the direct use of U.S. military forces overseas, under the banner of anticommunism.

The reactionary character of the AFL-CIO campaign around Poland has repelled everyone motivated by genuine feelings of solidarity.

At the same time, right-wing forces have flooded rallies on Poland called in the name of the AFL-CIO after the declaration of martial law in Poland. Progressive-minded workers who attended these protests quickly realized they were in bad company.

#### 'Leftist' anticommunist actions

Essentially the same thing happened when a few groups calling themselves socialist tried to organize demonstrations on Poland that would be more "radical" than the AFL-CIO actions. Such actions were held in a number of cities.

For example, in New York City, an ad hoc coalition held a demonstration on Poland December 16. The sponsors included organizations such as the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, the Revolutionary Socialist League, and Workers Power. The demonstration took place at the Polish consulate within hours after another, right-wing, rally was held there. As could be expected, the news media lumped in the "prosocialist" action with the right-wing protest in reporting the events.

What the sponsoring groups had in common is their refusal to politically defend the workers states against imperialism. Rather, they place "equal blame" on both imperialism and the workers states for the evils of the world, placing themselves in what they call the "third camp." But in the context of the imperialists' campaign around Poland, this "third camp" position, under the guise of "fighting Stalinism," becomes nothing but another voice in the anticommunist and anti-Soviet choir, lending left cover to the Reagan propaganda effort.

For these reasons, the Socialist Workers Party opposed demonstrations called by these forces in New York and other cities. Members of the party sold the *Militant* to people who were drawn to these actions because of their solidarity with the Polish workers, and got a good response.

#### San Francisco demonstration

A similar demonstration took place in San Francisco, December 14. Called by a few small radical groups within hours of the crackdown in Poland, the protest was billed as a "prosocialist" demonstration on Poland. On the basis of this information, the San Francisco branch of the Socialist Workers Party decided to participate.

However, the demonstration turned out differently than had been anticipated. Members of the right-wing Libertarian Party turned out, carrying virulently anticommunist placards. Among their slogans were "Smash the Communist Tyrants," and "Hang Jaruzelski." Some anarchists carried slogans advocating "Anarchy for All of Poland."



Teachers union president Albert Shanker (at left in sunglasses) at New York AFL-CIO rally on Poland. Reactionary campaign of labor bureaucrats plays into Reagan's hands.

Members of "third camp" groups turned out with signs such as "CIA/KGB — Both Sound the Same to Me."

The capitalist press took full advantage of this incongruous coalition.

The *San Francisco Examiner* ran a picture of an SWP placard sandwiched between two of the Libertarian anticommunist slogans. The *San Francisco Chronicle* carried an article entitled, "A Catch-All Protest in S.F."

The *Chronicle* story began, "The Libertarians were there because they hated socialism. The Socialists were there because they thought the Polish government was giving socialism a bad name." Stating the obvious, the *Chronicle* observed, "Just what the demonstration symbolized . . . was open to much disagreement among the varied protesters."

Speaking at a Bay Area-wide Militant Forum held the following weekend, SWP National Cochairperson Barry Sheppard explained that the San Francisco demonstration and others like it were an obstacle to carrying out a genuine campaign of solidarity with Polish workers. The San Francisco protest, he said, "was an anticommunist demonstration that played right into the hands of the Reagan administration and its war drive."

#### Provocative slogans

Sheppard pointed to the "extremely provocative" slogans, such as "Hang Jaruzelski." These not only do not offer any solidarity to the Polish workers, but lend credence to the lies of the Kremlin bureaucrats — and of groups such as the Communist Party, the Workers World Party, and the Spartacist League — who support the crackdown on the Polish workers.

Their strategy is to smear Solidarity as a right-wing movement. To the degree that workers who support Solidarity march side by side with right-wing and even semifascist

groups, this appears to support these accusations, therefore undermining Solidarity itself.

Sheppard added, "Marching with signs such as 'Anarchy for All of Poland' simply reinforces Moscow's false charge that Solidarity is responsible for 'anarchy' in Poland."

For these reasons, he said, "the demonstration was a blow to the Polish workers."

The San Francisco branch of the SWP had decided to participate because it wanted to take advantage of every possible opportunity to express working-class solidarity with Poland. At its meeting the next week, the branch concluded that this decision had been dead wrong.

Real solidarity with Polish workers includes both telling the truth about Solidarity's struggle, and campaigning at all times against the imperialists' hypocritical attempts to use the Polish events to justify their drive toward war and their offensive against the working class at home.

The San Francisco demonstration, Sheppard said, and others called by the same forces, play right into the hands of those who are the enemies of working people in Poland and in the United States.

Sheppard said the SWP will step up its efforts to explain the truth about what the Polish workers are fighting for, and about the true aims of Washington. This campaign will involve widened circulation of the *Militant* and of the new pamphlet, "Workers in Revolt," as well as public meetings, radio and television interviews, election campaigns, and utilization of every other avenue of reaching working people.

"We were burned once, but we will not be burned again," Sheppard stressed, referring to the San Francisco demonstration. The San Francisco SWP will not make the same mistake again, he added.

The lesson is a good one for all who are interested in genuine solidarity with Solidarity. □

# The 'yellow rain' frame-up

*U.S. boosts chemical warfare spending behind screen of lies*

By Steve Bride

[The following article appeared in the January 22 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

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After months of trying, the Reagan administration has convinced almost no one that the Vietnamese are dropping poison gas on the rest of Indochina.

This is not surprising, in that Washington has never had much evidence for this supposed mass murder, and what evidence it does have is not very persuasive.

But charges of Vietnamese and Soviet use of chemical and bacteriological weapons are used to cover the Pentagon's own increase in its chemical warfare arsenal.

On January 15, it was reported that the Reagan administration is planning to double its budget requests for biological and chemical weapons next year.

The charge that Vietnam is using poison gas in Laos and Kampuchea got its initial boost from the publication, in August 1981, of the book *Yellow Rain*. This was advertised as a work of nonfiction in which the author, Sterling Seagrave, offers evidence that Vietnam is waging chemical war.

## Mercenaries and medics

Stripped of his own lurid prose, Seagrave's story is this:

In October 1978, in Washington, D.C., he is introduced by an intelligence officer to a man named Jack Schramm, who had been wandering about Laos in the company of armed Hmong tribespeople, opponents of the Laotian regime. In his travels, Schramm met four French mercenaries. The mercenaries (who, it is later learned, were in all likelihood trafficking heroin out of Laos) told him the Vietnamese had gassed a nearby Hmong village.

A year later, the U.S. State Department sends an army medical team to Thailand to investigate. Seagrave follows them. Hmong refugees tell the army medics stories about "yellow rain" falling from the sky, but display no symptoms of having been gassed. The medics are given samples of tree bark covered with a yellow substance. This turns out to be soap. The army medics and Seagrave nevertheless conclude the poison gas reports are true.

This is Seagrave's evidence. It takes up twenty-five of the first thirty-six pages of the book. The next 100 pages are turned over to a history of chemical warfare.

Understandably, the army team's conclu-



Gen. Vang Pao, commander of CIA's mercenary Hmong army in Laos.

sions met with skepticism. This troubles Seagrave. Why, he asks, would people not believe "simple, straightforward details offered up by earnest hill people"? He relates one story from a Hmong tribesman:

"I was up on a hillside across a stream from the village, tending my poppies . . ."

## Heroin and the CIA

Laos is one corner of what is called the "Golden Triangle." It is called this because it is a center of the opium and heroin trade. The Hmong have been involved in this trade for decades.

The Hmong are also involved in a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation that dates back to the Vietnam War. They formed the ranks of a mercenary army recruited and trained by the CIA, and led by General Vang Pao. This army fought the Pathet Lao, Vietnam's ally during the war and now the major component of the Laotian government.

While running the CIA's secret army, Vang Pao also ran a heroin processing plant at Long Tieng, headquarters for CIA operations in northern Laos.

Today, Vang Pao exercises command of the Hmong forces from his exile in the United States.

Seagrave is obviously aware of all this, but if it occurred to him that it might have something to do with the anti-Vietnamese tales emanating from Laos, he does not say so.

He maintains a similar silence when, halfway through the book, he does another twenty pages of "research." This consists of traveling to Afghanistan and interviewing more heroin traffickers: that country's armed rebels. Seagrave notes their reports of being gassed are identical to the Hmong's. He also notes the place is crawling with CIA agents, but does not

connect the two facts.

He finds no symptoms and no physical traces.

The last 130 pages of the book are devoted to more history and his own speculation on what "yellow rain" might be. What sort of poison, he wonders, produces the reported symptoms, causes "death in minutes," yet leaves no physical trace? He decides it is mycotoxins — fungal poisons — produced by the *fusarium* fungus.

It is at this point that Seagrave's fiction becomes the U.S. State Department's.

## Dubious evidence — I

On September 13, in a speech in Berlin, Secretary of State Alexander Haig announced Washington had "physical evidence" that the "Soviet Union and its allies have been using lethal chemical weapons in Laos, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan."

Next day, the State Department held a news conference and unveiled its evidence: a single leaf and stem from Kampuchea. A panel of "defense, intelligence and medical experts," who would not give their names, said it was loaded with mycotoxins.

The department's statement contended these mycotoxins "do not occur naturally in Southeast Asia." It described the "rapid onset" of symptoms and death from the poison. A department spokesman said Seagrave's research had been "instrumental" in making their case. Their case began to fall apart the next day.

First it was learned that the sample had been

## Who threatens chemical war?

The Pentagon is requesting \$810 million for chemical warfare expenditures in 1983, and \$1.4 billion for 1984. Part of this money will go to produce new poison gas weapons — so-called binary gas shells, in which nonlethal components would combine to form a deadly nerve gas after the shell is fired.

According to an editorial in the January 21 *New York Times*, "The Pentagon plan requires up to \$4 billion for new gas weapons and \$3.7 billion to destroy the old — and even more for defensive equipment, research and development, chemical troop pay and service-wide training."

Leaving aside the frills, a total of \$7.7 billion for new nerve-gas weapons. That is just about the same as the Gross Domestic Product of Vietnam.

provided by right-wing Khmer Rouge guerrillas. These are the people who exterminated an estimated 3 million Kampuchean in the four years they ruled that country, and are now supported in exile by the U.S. government. Even the *Wall Street Journal* had to admit their "credibility is close to zero."

Evidence then began to emerge from scientists who actually know something about mycotoxins.

According to the September 17 issue of Britain's *New Scientist* magazine, Julian Perry Robinson, who authored a text on chemical warfare, "says they are 'rather weak' poisons [that] need a day or so to take effect. . . ."

"Mycotoxins would be the worst agents to choose," added scientist Tony Rose of Bath University, because they have to be eaten regularly for days or weeks to have any effect.

As to whether mycotoxins "do not occur naturally in Southeast Asia," a third expert interviewed by *New Scientist*, John Smith of Strathclyde University, said, "I would be surprised if that statement were actually true." Fusarium fungi (from which mycotoxins are derived) occur throughout the world, he stated.

They are "one of the most common fungi on the planet," Dr. Matthew Meselson, Harvard biologist and chemical warfare expert, told the *Portland Oregonian*.

Consequently, most scientists who were asked shared the view of James Bamberg, the Colorado State University biologist who first identified the fusarium fungus: Washington's case was "pretty shaky."

Undeterred, the State Department said it was turning its leaf and stem over to the United Nations, which was planning to dispatch a team to Southeast Asia to investigate Haig's charges.

#### Dubious evidence — II

On November 10, the State Department said it had come up with three more samples. "We now have the smoking gun," declared Richard Burt, director of the department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs.

Burt reiterated that the fusarium fungus was not indigenous to Southeast Asia, and that victims died "within an hour" of being gassed.

Of the three samples, one came from the Khmer Rouge and two from Laos. At least one of the latter traveled a rather curious route: from the Hmong to a "reporter" for *Soldier of Fortune*, a magazine for mercenaries; to an unidentified third party; to James Leach, a Republican congressman from Iowa; to the State Department; to the lab of the scientist who testified for the department.

This was a bit much for the *New York Times*. "What company is the department keeping?" it editorialized on November 17. "With what certainty can it assure the public that its samples are genuine?"

There was indeed some suspicion that the samples may have been spiked en route to Washington. This doubt grew after it was pointed out in *Science* magazine that two halves of one leaf and stem sample contained



Hmong growing opium poppies in Laos. Hmongs are major source for poison-gas allegations.

widely different doses of toxin.

Dr. Meselson disputed the U.S. State Department contention that mycotoxins are common only to colder climates. Natural occurrences, he said, have been reported in Brazil, India, and Japan — in doses far larger than those claimed by the State Department. "There are very serious questions about the adequacy of the evidence," Meselson concluded.

The verdict from Julian Robinson was the same: "You cannot conclude anything."

To cap things off, on November 23 the UN team reported back from Thailand, where it had interviewed refugees and doctors in three camps along the Kampuchean border. It found no symptoms among the refugees, and the doc-

tors "stated they did not come across cases which could be attributed to chemical warfare agents."

#### Militarization policy

Washington hopes to gain four things by these charges:

- Further its policy of politically and economically isolating Vietnam, and militarily harassing it via the Khmer Rouge, Hmong, and other proxies.

- Distract attention from its plans to deploy missiles in Western Europe, and silence somewhat the massive movement that has developed in opposition to those plans. Hence, the timing and location of Haig's September 13 speech.

- Provide a rationale for not negotiating arms limitation with the Soviet Union. As the *Wall Street Journal* put it on November 6, "Once we recognize that the Soviets are poisoning the Hmong and Afghan rebels with toxins in callous violation of international laws, it follows as night after day that we have no business thinking we can conclude meaningful arms control treaties with them."

- Justify its own buildup of chemical weapons. In May, the U.S. Senate approved \$20 million to equip a nerve gas facility at Pine Bluff, Arkansas. In October, it was revealed Washington plans to spend \$8 billion over five years to expand its chemical arsenal.

Taken together, these add up to the Reagan administration's policy of deepening the militarization of American society and preparing it for war.

It is a matter of record that the last time chemical weapons are known with certainty to have been deployed was during the Vietnam War by Washington. It is now certain that Washington plans to deploy them again. Such is the real danger that hides behind the "yellow rain." □

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# Communists debate political perspectives

*Militants reject Maoist formulas*

By Paul Petitjean

[The following article is reprinted from the December 31 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

Thailand, a country comparable to France in size and population, has been for more than fifteen years the western front of the Indochinese conflicts. It is a country where the American defeat in Indochina and the growth of new social contradictions provoked the outbreak of a major social crisis, which was marked by the student, worker, and peasant struggles of 1973-1976.

At that time the revolutionary movement was dominated by the Communist Party of Thailand and the People's Liberation Army. The PLA was strengthened by the infusion of thousands of urban militants fleeing the cities after the bloody coup in October 1976.

Finally, Thailand today is a country where the left is going through a very difficult period of division and political reevaluation.

Almost all the students who had joined the guerrillas in 1976 have returned to the cities, most of them profoundly disillusioned by the Thai CP and taking advantage of a government

amnesty.

The mass struggles have still not recovered from the murders of peasant leaders in 1975 and the massacre of students in 1976.\*

The People's Liberation Army is now on the defensive, although it has not been destroyed as the regime claims (as always, it likes to count its chickens before they are hatched).

Above all, it is a time of political questioning, especially for that enthusiastic generation that was trained in the mass struggles of the 1970s and then had a head-on collision with the conservatives of the traditional Communist Party apparatus.

## Reevaluation

This period of discussion marks the end of the left's unquestioning acceptance of "models," a left that had no real exposure to Marxism except through simplified Maoism.

"We were taught Mao's theory of contradictions, and then the three worlds theory," explains a militant who has returned from the jungle.

"We did not, in fact, even know about the existence of other frameworks of Marxist analysis regarding the international situation and problems of the revolution in countries like ours. Only very recently have several new works been published in the Thai language, opening up the discussion on the notion of the

transition to socialism, bureaucracy, and the various currents of contemporary Marxism."

Some are beginning to criticize Marxism itself, tempted by liberalism. But the most militant currents are, for the first time in Thailand, carrying out a broad, basic discussion that begins with the experiences of the Communist movement. The classic works of Lenin, which have often been unavailable, are being translated. Ernest Mandel's *Introduction to Marxism* is now on sale in the bookstores in a Thai translation.

This reevaluation movement has obviously been fostered by the backlash from the present Indochinese crisis, the Chinese-Vietnamese conflict, and the evolution of Chinese foreign policy.

The Communist Party of Thailand had received considerable aid from Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea (after 1975), as well as from China.

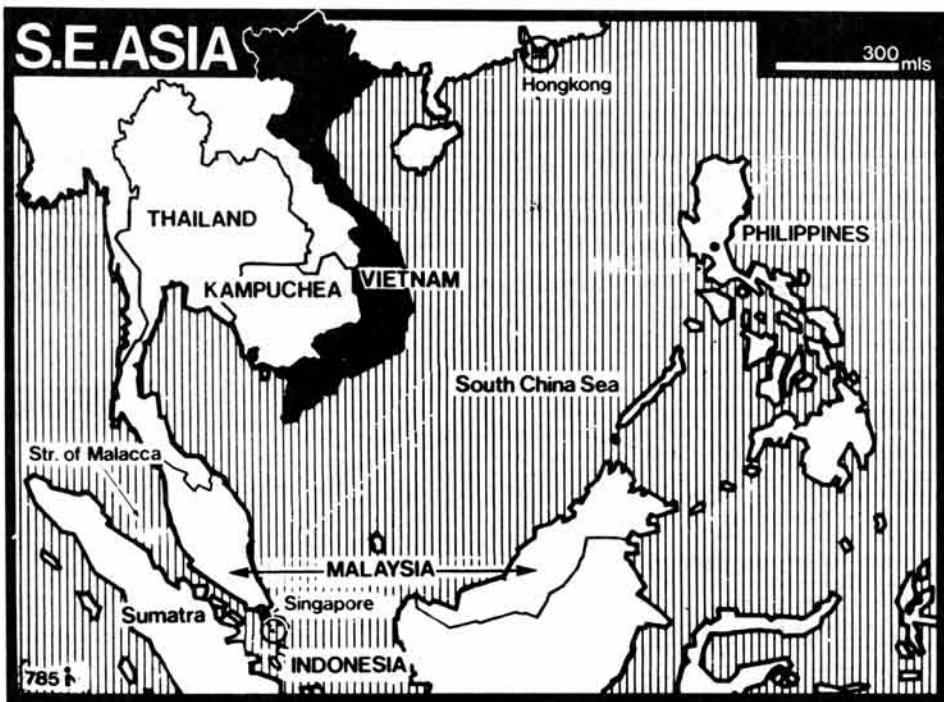
## Aid cut off

Hanoi, Vientiane, and then Phnompenh (in 1979 after the installation of the Heng Samrin regime) broke off their aid to the Thai CP because it was, in fact, supporting the Khmer Rouge and Peking.

Today Chinese aid has also been reduced to the bare minimum, and the CPT radio station that had broadcast from southern China has been closed.

The cuts had a big impact, especially in the northern and northeastern zones bordering on Indochina, where the CPT had benefited from the use of camps in Laotian and Kampuchean territory.

The Thai left's initial reaction was sharply anti-Vietnamese. This stemmed from the pro-Chinese policy of the Thai CP leadership, the Maoist education the ranks had received, and the invasion of Kampuchea, which seemed to prove that Hanoi had "hegemonist" intentions



\*When the Thai military seized power on October 6, 1976, their first move was to try to crush the student movement. Units of airborne, border patrol, marine, riot, and other specialized police surrounded Thammasat University in Bangkok and blanketed the campus with automatic weapons fire for four hours.

The police were aided in their butchery by several thousand armed rightists who attacked students trying to flee the bloodbath. Some students were hanged by the mob. Others were doused in gasoline and burned alive.

More than 3,000 persons, mostly students, were arrested at the university immediately after the attack and throughout Bangkok in the days that followed. (See "Bangkok Police Massacre Student Demonstrators," by Ernest Harsch, *Intercontinental Press*, October 18, 1976.)

over the entire region. It also stemmed from ignorance about what the Pol Pot regime's policies had really been, and from the general pro-Chinese sentiment of the Thai regime and the Thai ruling classes.

In the past year, however, the tone of the militants one meets in Bangkok and in the provinces has clearly changed. Very few will still defend the Khmer Rouge to any appreciable extent. The discussion has become more basic: what kind of socialism do we want?

The Kampuchean experience and the perception of the depth of the Sino-Indochinese crisis are now playing the same role in Thailand that the discovery of the repressive reality of Stalinism once played in the West. They constitute a sharp warning against bureaucratism.

#### Absence of program

The warning is taken all the more seriously by the "critical" militants, because they had to confront the absence of democracy in the party at the very time they were convinced of the need to question the CPT's traditional prescription for Thailand: "The jungle leads the village; the countryside encircles the city."

With perhaps a few exceptions, such as in the Phuphan bases, the party apparatus is treating the present political crisis with silence.

"It is practically impossible to criticize the line," notes a former member of the People's Liberation Army, "because the line is never expressed frankly, through well-developed orientation documents. The Political Bureau keeps silent, the Central Committee does not meet, and only brief and cryptic 'directives' come down in the organization."

In fact, there are very few Thai CP docu-

#### New organizations emerge

The crisis of the Thai revolutionary left has opened up a process of differentiation and division. New organizations are emerging, formed by militants who have recently left the Thai Communist Party. Among them are the Organization of the Democratic Revolution of the Thai People, and the Preparatory Committee for the Movement of the Democratic Revolution of the Thai people.

The group that played the role of a united front — the Coordinating Committee of Patriotic and Democratic Forces — has lost all substance after the departure of the Socialist Party, the United Socialist Front, and nearly all the individuals who made it up. A group of CP members still maintain the name in order to assert a desire for unity.

It is now difficult to speak of the Thai Communist Party as a single national political entity. The differences are expressed inside the party itself, and each group, faction, and committee seems to carry out its own policy in its area.



Roundup of students during 1976 massacre.

ments that are signed by a leadership body or by the general secretary. And there are almost no programmatic or orientation documents worthy of the name (a very succinct ten-point program is obviously not designed for use by the membership in determining their activities).

This lack of programmatic documents is surprising, even for Maoist or Stalinist parties. It is probably partially explained by the political and geographic proximity of the Chinese leadership, whose documents have served as guiding texts for the CPT.

But perhaps there is also a deeper reason. In the 1960s the Communist Party of Thailand was reorganized as a jungle party, with a militarist orientation that was in many ways closer to the Latin American "foco" concept than the traditional Chinese and Vietnamese concepts of guerrilla warfare and people's war.

It achieved some considerable successes, especially in outlying areas, where it protected the Montagnard tribes and peasant villages against the exactions of government functionaries and the army.

But the party's political orientation remained "local," without coming together in a national synthesis. The party apparatus never seems to have thought of its intervention in terms of organizing and mobilizing the masses, of central social and democratic slogans to awaken the popular masses who were far from the guerrilla zones of influence.

#### Changing period

This is partially explained by what Thailand was twenty years ago: a country where popular resistance forces were still by and large localized. But the 1970s saw the blossoming of

mass student, worker, and peasant struggles — social and democratic struggles of national scope. The traditional Communist Party apparatus showed itself unable to see this decisive change in the course of peoples' struggles, the Thai kingdom's entry into the era of modern class struggles.

The new generation of activists, on the other hand, came out of these upheavals. Because of this it was impossible to have a dialogue between political generations, even though both viewed themselves as Maoist.

"In my zone," notes a militant who returned from the jungle, "the conflict with the party cadres basically crystallized around how to carry out rural work. Not only did the traditional line ignore the importance of the urban work, of mass struggles in Bangkok, but it also forced us to carry out the village work from the jungle bases. With this orientation, we could not penetrate very far into the plains!"

"After a bloody defeat in 1977, we decided on our own to change the orientation, basing ourselves on the lessons of the peasant struggles of 1974-75, which we had participated in as students.

"We had some real successes, but the apparatus rejected any reevaluation that criticized their activities."

The present crisis of the Thai left was not, therefore, artificially provoked from the outside by regional events. It is jointly fed by the deepgoing problems posed by the Sino-Indochinese conflicts and the CPT's alignment with Peking, and by the present impasse in the party's traditional orientation.

By opening up a discussion on a series of basic questions, the crisis can permit the Thai revolutionary left to consolidate politically. □

# Workers parties unite in election effort

## Nominate Gerardo Molina as presidential candidate

### By Eduardo Mackenzie

BOGOTA — For the first time in the history of Colombia, the main parties of the working-class left have united to wage a joint campaign for the May 1982 presidential elections.

At the conclusion of a two-day meeting on November 29, four political organizations — the National Firms Movement, a socialist group; the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), the Colombian section of the Fourth International; the Colombian Party of Labor (PTC), a Maoist grouping; and the Communist Party of Colombia (PCC), a pro-Moscow organization — announced the presidential candidacy of Gerardo Molina, a writer, university professor, and leader of the Firms Movement.

### Political platform approved

In the same meeting, this coalition of forces took the name Democratic Unity (UD). Following two days of deliberations by 1,164 delegates from throughout Colombia, the meeting unanimously approved a political platform and declaration [see box], as well as various resolutions on questions relating to the trade unions, neighborhoods, youth, women, and culture.

In addition, the gathering sent a message to the Peace Commission, a body set up by the government of President Julio César Turbay Ayala. The commission, headed by former president Carlos Lleras Restrepo, is studying the factors that lead to altercations against the country's public order. Gerardo Molina is one of the commission members.

The session proclaiming Molina's candidacy was addressed by Luis Carlos Pérez, a lawyer who is a member of the Firms leadership; Abel Rodríguez, president of the Colombian Federation of Educators and a leader of the PTC; Gilberto Vieira, general secretary of the Communist Party; and Socorro Ramírez, former presidential candidate and a leader of the PSR.

Then Gerardo Molina spoke, formally accepting the presidential candidacy of Democratic Unity. Molina made a biting indictment of the capitalist system in Colombia and laid out the main lines of his election campaign.

### Background to united campaign

Since June 11, 1981, Firms had proposed to the various sectors of the country's left that Gerardo Molina be the presidential candidate. Later, the opposition movements and groups agreed to hold a national convention in late November to decide on a united candidate for the presidential election (the president's term will run from 1982 to 1986).



GERARDO MOLINA

Several days after learning of Firms's proposal, the PSR accepted it and began a campaign to insure that the November assembly would name Molina as the joint candidate. Later the PTC joined with Firms and the PSR in support of this proposal.

The Communist Party was the last group to join the coalition, making its move a few weeks before the November 28-29 meeting. This lateness, which unquestionably retarded the start of the left campaign, was due to political reasons.

The thirteenth congress of the CP, in November 1980, made no specific proposal for a presidential candidate, calling only for "independent and democratic figures, whatever their present affiliation," to form a movement for a "positive change" in the country.

Then on June 30, 1981, the CP Central Committee put forward a spectrum of six suggested candidates: writer Gabriel García Márquez; the Conservative former foreign minister, Alfredo Vásquez Carrizosa; the lawyer and member of the Firms leadership Luis Carlos Pérez; Liberal journalist Alberto Mendoza; Liberal politician Apolinar Díaz Callejas; and Liberal leader of the doctors' union Eduardo Arévalo Burgos.

Later, when the Liberal candidacy of Luis Carlos Galán emerged, the CP described it as a "renovating" and "progressive" option. Galán himself was quick to flatly reject any kind of alliance with the Communist Party in national elections.

Despite Galán's rebuff, the CP has established regional electoral agreements with the

Liberal Party and other bourgeois sectors.

Given the fact that Galán turned them down, and that none of the suggested candidates in the spectrum proposed by the CP really inspired the left and opposition parties, the CP ended up accepting Gerardo Molina's candidacy.

### Who is Gerardo Molina?

Molina's candidacy has been very well received by the working-class and popular sectors. Even the bourgeois press had to admit that the left groups had made a good move in naming him.

Gerardo Molina, seventy-five, has a brilliant and spotless history as a democratic and socialist fighter. Former rector of the National University and the Free University, Molina is the author of a number of scholarly works on the history of political thought in Colombia. In his most recent work, *A Summary of Political Ideas*, Molina makes a devastating critique of liberalism as a political and social system and proposes Marxist socialism as the solution to the country's problems.

Molina was one of the founders of Firms, a socialist movement that arose in mid-1978. Earlier Molina had played a role as a member of the "Central Revolutionary Junta" set up by supporters of murdered leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitán, who was killed on April 9, 1948. The junta was unsuccessful in trying to lead the people's uprising known as the "Bogotazo."

### 'Our policy is different'

In his speech to the national conference of Democratic Unity, Molina stated: "In the economic sphere our movement will not be limited, as some liberal reformers propose, to establishing control over the monopolies, since experience shows that they make a mockery of any control. Our policy is different: it consists of taking the ownership and management of all the vital activities out of private hands and turning them over to the control of the nation."

Referring to the question of peace, he stated that "since we are convinced that the present confrontation between the army and the groups who have taken up arms will not be decided in favor of either of these two forces, we recognize the need for honorable negotiations that will allow the compatriots who make up the guerrilla movements to return to civil life. A general amnesty that would cover the belligerents and the political prisoners; lifting the state of siege, and annulling the legislation that curtails civil liberties are some of the social measures that will benefit the unprotected people."

Molina also advocated respect for the right to self-determination of the peoples of Central



America and the Caribbean, especially El Salvador and Nicaragua. Regarding the border incidents between Colombia and Venezuela, he proposed holding a conference for the new year between people's organizations of both countries, where they could fraternally discuss the possible differences.

#### Additional candidates

One week earlier, the district convention of Democratic Unity had taken place in the same hall. That meeting decided that Carlos Bula, Bogotá council member and leader of Firmes, would head the UD slate for the house of representatives; Socorro Ramírez of the PSR would head the slate for the assembly in Cundinamarca; and Abel Rodríguez, a leader of the PTC, would head the slate for the Bogotá municipal council.

A large number of workers were among the delegates to the November 28-29 convention. Of the 1,164 delegates, 218 were from the trade-union movement. There were also 197 women delegates; and 69 percent of the total delegates came from places outside Bogotá.

A coordinating committee for the national campaign was elected, made up of three members from each of the four parties involved in Democratic Unity. The coalition will remain open to other parties and sectors that want to support its platform and presidential candidate.

In the capitalist camp, the Liberal Party is split between two presidential candidates — former president Alfonso López Michelsen, and former minister Luis Carlos Galán — while the Conservatives have sealed their unity behind the figure of Belisario Betancur, who is now the sole Conservative candidate.

Despite the obstacles that Turbay's government is already placing in Democratic Unity's path, all indications are that this grouping will successfully move forward, getting the attention of the working-class and popular sectors, as well as some abstentionist groupings that justified their attitude on the basis of the divisions in the left in the electoral arena and in day-to-day struggles.

Only two groups remain outside Democratic Unity: the Independent Revolutionary Workers Movement (MOIR), a right-wing

Maoist sect that has formed an alliance with Consuelo de Montejó, a Liberal politician who owns two sensationalistic newspapers; and the Socialist Workers Party (PST), an organization that was until very recently affiliated with the sectarian International Committee to Reorganize (Reconstruct) the Fourth International. In 1981 there was a very important split in the MOIR, out of which the PTC emerged.

#### Need to overcome sectarianism

In the recent period the organizations in Democratic Unity have been showing that they can overcome the old sectarian habits of the past that prevented them from setting up united fronts for action and class-struggle electoral blocs. Last October, through united action by the forces that now make up Democratic Unity, it was possible to organize the Second National Civic Strike. (See *Intercontinental Press*, November 2 and November 9, 1981.)

In addition, this electoral coalition involves an important turn away from the traditional orientation of Stalinist reformism of making electoral alliances with bourgeois figures and parties. However, some problems of this type

## Democratic Unity's political platform

The National Conference for Democratic Unity held on November 28 and 29 in Bogotá unanimously passed a five-point program dealing with democratic rights, nationalization of natural resources and the monopolies, agrarian and urban reform, culture and the rights of youth and women, and international policy.

Regarding democratic rights and political amnesty, the platform states:

"The majority of the Colombian people call for a cessation to the bloodbath through which the present regime is martyring our country."

An end to the fighting between the armed movement and the government, the platform contends, "requires recognition of democratic rights, starting with the lifting of the state of siege, the abolition of the Security Statute, a general and unconditional amnesty for political prisoners and those persecuted [by the government], an end to the military courts, and the demilitarization of the peasant and Indian zones."

The platform also calls for the "dissolution of the secret repressive and paramilitary organizations." It pledges to struggle "for a democratic labor reform that would win back and extend the rights to contracts, to strike, to job security, and for elimination of the compulsory arbitration boards" as well as for higher wages in the urban and rural areas.

Noting that "Colombia has been and is being plundered of its basic natural and energy resources," the platform states that recovery of these resources is essential to

solving the crisis wracking the country. It calls for the nationalization of the big financial, banking, industrial, and commercial groups, "and all the national and foreign monopolies that oppress and exploit the people."

The "fundamental cause of the agrarian crisis and the big social and political problems in the Colombian countryside," the platform maintains, is the growing "concentration of landed property."

Therefore, Democratic Unity pledges "to confiscate the big latifundia and turn the land over to the peasants, as part of a democratic agrarian reform that would substantially change the economic, political, and cultural conditions of the rural population, guarantee the preservation and rational utilization of the natural resources, and also establish ecological balance."

The platform also upholds "the right of the Indians to their land, culture, and forms of organization."

Noting that under the present system Colombia's cities are characterized by the existence of huge areas of abject poverty, in which residents have no basic services, the platform calls for "vacant land and housing to be turned over to people in neighborhoods through an urban reform," and couples that with a call for the establishment of a modern, nationalized transportation system to replace the antiquated and chaotic private transit systems.

"We call for struggle to democratize culture and education by strengthening and nationalizing public education and backing

the struggle of students and university professors against the government's educational reforms," the platform says.

It calls for increased "participation by youth and women in national life to demand the rights they have been denied by the present system." Emphasis is placed on "the struggle of women and youth for real equality in work, health, culture, sports, personal relations, and other spheres of life." The document condemns "all forms of discrimination and oppression of women."

Noting the Colombia's foreign policy has traditionally featured total subservience "to the dictates of U.S. foreign policy," the platform calls for the establishment of "an independent, autonomous international policy that insures the winning and preservation of national sovereignty; that supports the struggle of the working class and peoples of the world for revolution, democracy, self-determination, world peace, national liberation, and socialism; that is against imperialist aggression and racism; and that is for the right of the Palestinian people to their own state."

Singled out for special mention is "support to the struggle of the peoples of El Salvador, Central America, and the Caribbean against the dictatorship and U.S. intervention."

The platform notes that "achievement of the main objectives proposed here requires the installation of political rule by the working and popular masses."

remain in Democratic Unity because of the CP's insistence on establishing regional agreements with bourgeois figures in some areas (Caquetá, Meta, Atlántico, Valle).

This line is being discussed within the coalition, as is the Communist Party's desire to turn the present election coalition into a "broad democratic front to fight the fascist danger."

#### Victory for workers movement

Despite these problems, the PSR viewed the establishment of Democratic Unity and the candidacy of socialist Gerardo Molina as a success for its electoral policy of political inde-

pendence of the working class.

This victory is explained by the fact that in the political field the crisis of the Colombian two-party system is growing ever sharper at a time when the regime's anti-working-class offensive is getting stronger and more centralized. This is giving rise to currents that favor independent political action between the workers vanguard and the trade-union milieu. Another element that has an impact is the example of combative unity being provided the Latin American masses by the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutions.

—December 6, 1981

## Norway

# Split in Socialist Youth

## Left-wing opposition forms new organization

[The following article appeared in the January 11 issue of the Paris fortnightly *Inprecor*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

At the Sixth National Conference of the Socialist Youth (SU), which took place November 13-15, 1981, the tensions and contradictions that had existed in the organization for more than two years reached the breaking point.

On the first day of the conference, a split took place in the SU. It occurred when the majority of the leadership, in close collaboration with the leadership of the "parent organization," the Left Socialist Party (SV), decided to toss aside any observance of the bylaws and any respect for the organization's internal democracy, in order to expel a segment of the opposition.

When some of the delegates at the conference refused to recognize the legitimacy of this expulsion, the whole organization was declared dissolved, obviously following a decision by the leadership of the Left Socialist Party.

The aim of this bureaucratic operation is to rid themselves of the encumbrance of the opposition within the Socialist Youth. In particular, the Oslo section had exasperated the majority of the SU and SV ever since it became the beacon for oppositional criticism of the party's reformist line.

The SU-SV leadership did everything possible to avoid a real discussion of the political differences, reducing them to a question of "loyalty" to the party and its leaders. The opposition, however, had openly criticized the restriction of the SV's activities solely to the parliamentary sphere, its tailending policy toward the social democrats of the Labor Party, its sectarianism, nationalism, and lack of serious orientation toward the working class and workers struggles.

The entire leadership of the Socialist Youth

had supported these criticisms in principle. But the opposition also wanted to translate these criticisms into action, through a more independent line in relation to the "parent organization" and by giving priority to work in the trade unions.

But this was rejected with the formalist argument that the SU, being a youth organization, had to therefore concentrate its activities on "the problems of young people," and leave trade-union work to the party.

When the conference was held, the SU-SV leadership tried to divide the opposition and isolate the Oslo section. But the delegates from all the large cities, like Bergen, Trondheim,

## Leading Irish republicans held in U.S.

On January 21, two leading Irish Republicans, both of whom have been denied U.S. visas, were arrested while trying to enter the country from Canada to address a meeting in New York City.

Owen Carron, a member of the British parliament who won the seat left vacant by hunger-striker Bobby Sands's death, and Sinn Féin public relations director Danny Morrison are being held in Buffalo, New York, on charges of making false statements to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

According to the INS, the arrests came about as a result of eighteen months of U.S. surveillance of Irish republican supporters in Canada.

These arrests followed an important victory for the Irish freedom struggle and civil liberties in the United States in the case of Dessie Mackin. Three weeks earlier, after fifteen months in a New York City jail, Mackin was freed and allowed to return to the Republic of Ireland.

Mackin came to the United States to tell the American people the truth about the plight of Irish political prisoners in British-occupied

and Tromsø, lined up beside the Oslo delegates. Nearly 40 percent of the delegates remained in their seats when the majority decided to leave the conference hall to found a new youth organization that was "loyal" to the party.

Through the Oslo oppositional section, the minority of the SU has now undertaken the building of a new organization — the Power to the Workers Group (AMG). The AMG is still largely limited to Oslo but, since the majority of former SU members in Bergen, Trondheim, and Tromsø are now outside the new youth organization that is loyal to the SV, it is hoped that the AMG will grow in the months to come into an organization on a national scale.

It is also possible that the AMG can develop as a center of regroupment for the whole Norwegian left. This could particularly be the case with regard to the opposition current within the Maoist party, the Communist Workers Party Marxist-Leninist (AKP-ML). The AKP-ML has greater influence in the working class than the pro-Moscow CP which, in Norway, is a small sect.

A number of Trotskyist activists had been members of the SU for eighteen months. Taking part in the opposition, they had cooperated closely with the opposition current that was the motor force within the Oslo section. The Norwegian revolutionary Marxists fully supported the criticisms against reformism and the positive turn in the direction of the working class. For that reason they have become members of the AMG to take part in the construction of this new revolutionary organization.

Up to now, left reformism and Maoism have been dominant in the Norwegian left. But new opportunities are arising. □

Northern Ireland. Like many Irish Republicans, he was denied a visa and had to come here without one. He was arrested on October 1, 1980, and charged with entering the country illegally.

At that time, Mackin agreed to accept deportation to the Irish Republic. But shortly before his plane was to leave, he was informed that the British government had filed a warrant to extradite him to Northern Ireland, where he faces frame-up charges of attempted murder of a British soldier.

On August 14, 1981, U.S. Magistrate Naomi Reice Buchwald ruled that even if Mackin had committed the act he is accused of, it grew out of a political conflict, and therefore he was protected from extradition under an exemption in a treaty between the United States and Britain.

Although he had won his case, Mackin was still denied bail while the U.S. government appealed the decision. The appeal was rejected by the court on December 23; and one week later the U.S. and British officials decided to accept defeat rather than allow the case to generate more bad publicity for them. □

# Begin's course stirs wide opposition

*Annexation of Golan Heights protested by thousands*

**By Michel Warschawsky**

[The following article appeared in the January 11 issue of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

TEL AVIV — On December 14 Prime Minister Menachem Begin submitted a draft law to the Israeli Knesset (parliament) confirming the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights, which were captured in 1967 by Israel.

In only eight hours the law was passed by a large majority. The Labor Party, now in the opposition, saw the majority of its deputies support the Golan annexation, and emerged from this parliamentary maneuver in tatters. The majority of the Labor members of parliament did not take part in the voting for technical reasons. The rest were divided in their vote on Begin's proposal.

For the inhabitants of the occupied Golan Heights, the new law will not change their situation much. But it would be wrong to take this move by the Begin government lightly. This was not simply a blustering or pro forma move. It was a real provocation against Syria, against whom the Israeli government dreams of crossing swords.

## Israeli regime pushes for war

In April 1982, under the terms of the Camp David accords, Israel is supposed to return the rest of the Sinai to Egypt; and it is very likely that this will mark the end of the Camp David accords framework. Menachem Begin and Ariel Sharon would like to see a broad military confrontation that would bury the Camp David accords before Israel is obliged to return the Sinai and dismantle the Zionist colonies in the Yamit region, south of the Gaza Strip.

They have, therefore, done whatever they could in recent months to torpedo the ceasefire that they were forced to agree to on the northern border with Lebanon.

The key question today is not the formal status of the occupied Syrian territories, but a new Zionist military adventure and an increasing offensive on all the fronts against the Palestinian national movement and the Arab world.

That is why thousands of demonstrators mobilized after the announcement of the new Golan law, demanding withdrawal from both the Golan Heights and the West Bank. It is becoming increasingly clear that the only alternative to withdrawal from all the territories conquered in June 1967 is another war. And this time the costs of such a war would be incalculable, not only for the Arabs but also for the Jewish masses.

Since 1967 there have been protests in Israel against the occupation and repression in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These protests by and large involved only members of the anti-Zionist organizations and the Israeli Communist Party (Rakah). Although for three or four years these actions have had a certain impact in Israel, and especially abroad, this impact owed more to their being an isolated voice in a desert of chauvinism than to their concrete impact on the Israeli political reality.

But the November 28, 1981, demonstration organized by the Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University (CSBZU) marked a qualitative turning point in this regard. Two hundred young Israelis, including members of left-Zionist and anti-Zionist organizations, but mostly people who belonged to no organization, went right into the heart of the occupied territories, the city of Ramallah, to show their opposition to the Begin government's repressive policies.

For the first time in the history of the occupation, the Israeli repressive forces were ordered to use some of the methods reserved thus far for Palestinians against Jewish demonstrators. They dispersed the demonstration with tear-gas grenades, blackjacks, and nightsticks, causing several major injuries, and arresting fifty.

What is new is the reaction to the repression against the Ramallah demonstration. Despite the radical character of the demonstration, despite the predominance of "extremist" forces in the Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, and despite the mass media's stress on the number of members of Matzpen\* among those jailed, hundreds of people turned out the following day in a number of demonstrations that linked solidarity with the imprisoned protesters to denunciation of the repression in the occupied territories. The demonstrators included Labor Party deputies, members of the United Workers Party (Mapam) youth, kibbutz members, and spanned the whole spectrum in Israel that is liberal and even to a slight extent critical of Begin's policies.

## Change in attitude of workers

No less significant was the reaction of workers in the factories where some of the demonstrators work. These workers saw their workmates "in action" on television.

Without necessarily agreeing with the demonstration's themes, most of these workers

\*The Revolutionary Communist League, the Israeli section of the Fourth International, is often referred to as Matzpen (compass) after the name of its newspaper, *Matzpen Marxist*.

were sincerely interested in understanding what the demonstration was about, and they opposed any attempt to fire the demonstrators for their beliefs, as was tried in some places.

Far from being a flash in the pan, this solidarity movement grew in a remarkable way over the next weeks. Nearly 2,000 people demonstrated on December 14, in response to a call by the CSBZU, against repression in the occupied territories and the annexation of the Golan Heights, which the Knesset was discussing at the very moment the demonstration was taking place.

The fact that the majority of demonstrators did not belong to left organizations, and that Labor deputies felt obliged to speak alongside leaders of the Communist Party and members of the far left, confirms that this is a new phenomenon, a qualitative leap toward the formation of a united mass movement against the occupation.

This change is explained by a combination of objective and subjective factors. First of all, the question of the occupied territories now plays a much bigger part in the crisis of the Zionist state. It is no longer just a question of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian population. The question of the occupied territories is now seen as decisive to the future of the inhabitants of Israel, following the proof that the Camp David accords did not resolve anything.

## New possibilities for action

In addition, the absence of any credible opposition force — with the Zionist left being squashed and the Labor Party being torn apart — leaves a political vacuum the likes of which Israel has never seen.

Finally, the crudity and the fanaticism of the new government is such that a fairly substantial element among liberal layers is for the first time viewing the Israeli government as a more dangerous enemy than the left organizations, which raises the possibility of a real united front.

For nearly fifteen years, the Israeli anti-Zionists have placed the struggle against the occupation at the center of their concerns and activity. For the first time they now have the possibility of leading a mass movement around this question. This is a heavy responsibility.

December 20, 1981

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# Palestinians resist occupation

*'Civil administration' in West Bank escalates repression*

By Michel Warschawsky

[The following article appeared in the January 11 issue of the French-language fortnightly *Inprecor*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

TEL AVIV — The Camp David accords of late 1978 and early 1979 have already been buried. In Washington; in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and in Fez, Morocco, the U.S. and Arab bourgeoisies have been trying to put together a new framework to defuse the ongoing crisis in the Middle East and stabilize the imperialist order in this region, which is of central strategic importance to Wall Street.

The majority of the Arab bourgeoisies, in contrast to the late Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, are convinced that any peace plan, if it is to be successfully applied, must contain a solution to the Palestinian question that is acceptable to a significant portion of the Palestinian people and their leaders.

Precisely because the Camp David accords evaded that question, Israel was relatively eager to support the agreement, gaining a peace accord with the largest Arab country without having to commit itself to withdrawing from the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 or recognizing the Palestinian national movement.

The Israeli veto of the Saudi Fahd plan proposed in August was, therefore, to be expected, despite its openly proimperialist character. For Prime Minister Menachem Begin and his government, it is crucial to carry on as if the political framework opened by the Camp David accords still exists. That is why, after nearly two years of a freeze in negotiations on the future of the "autonomy" plan for the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, Defense Minister Gen. Ariel Sharon, who is responsible for the occupied territories, just set up a "civilian administration" to replace the military government that has administered the occupied territories since June 1967.

## 'A new page' in occupation?

After setting up the "civil administration," General Sharon announced that "a new page has been turned in our policy in the occupied territories," meaning, he added, a more humane attitude toward the population.

But being a creature of habit, he was anxious not to leave any ambiguity: "We will be good to those who collaborate with us and fierce with those who oppose us. Calm will either reign for all, or there will not be calm for anyone."

Officially the civil administration differs

from military government on three levels. First, the military authorities are no longer responsible for anything but "maintaining order" under the authority of the head of the civil administration, Professor Menachem Milson. Milson is a reserve colonel who was part of the military government for many years.

Second, the diverse tasks of civil administration are to progressively pass into the hands of Palestinian functionaries and will no longer be under the army's direct authority.

Third, it is envisaged that a local "leadership" will eventually be set up, composed of collaborators who are ready to accept the framework of "autonomy" under Israeli domination and totally disassociate themselves from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The first two elements — the civil administration and the increased responsibilities of Palestinian functionaries — in no way change the character of the occupation. Their fictitious nature is shown in countless examples, such as the fact that the "civil" administrator of the Gaza Strip is none other than the colonel who was the military governor and has, for the occasion, gone out of uniform.

## Search for collaborators

By contrast, the third element — the search for Palestinian collaborators — is more significant. It aims to achieve what the Zionist state has been unable and unwilling to do during the first fourteen years of the occupation — find intermediaries within the occupied Palestinian population who would "represent" the Palestinians before the occupation forces and serve as a counterweight to the PLO.

What might still have been possible in 1968 or 1971, based on a large layer of moderate, pro-Jordanian notables, for example, is today impossible. Over the course of years, the policy of total repression and the opposition by the occupation forces to any political organization or to any form of local leadership have left the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people in the eyes of the immense majority of the occupied masses.

The Israeli government, using notorious collaborators who have no credit with the masses and no support among the Arab regimes, is ten years too late in trying to set up pseudorepresentatives of the occupied population.

The League of Villages, led by the collaborator Mustafa Dudin, is currently the backbone of this plan. The principle behind it is simple: Israel is now preventing the distribution of most of the material aid for the Palestinians that comes from abroad (from the Arab states and the mixed PLO-Jordan commission). It is using the League of Villages as the channel for

the meager budgets allocated by the Zionist government, the limited contributions allowed from abroad, and the construction permits and various authorizations the population needs. This body therefore becomes, at least for the population living in the countryside, the sole means of taking care of the diverse problems of daily life.

Through these methods General Sharon hopes to counterbalance the weight of the PLO and the Palestinian village leaders who are tied to the resistance organizations, and to create moderate "representatives" of the occupied population.

## Palestinians reject 'civil administration'

But even in the villages the League of Villages is having very little success. Through the proletarianization of many peasants, the long occupation has significantly reduced the gap that once existed between the cities, countryside, and villages.

The killing of Yusef Hatib, leader of the League of Villages in the Ramallah area, three weeks ago, and the various attacks and demonstrations against those who would like to more openly choose the path of collaboration point out the likely future of this plan.

The carrot is much too small to induce substantial sectors of the Palestinian population to get caught in the trap of the "civil administration."

Since power passed into the hands of Professor Milson, the Palestinian population on the West Bank has clearly and massively shown its opposition to the "civil administration" plan. General strikes in most of the cities on the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, demonstrations by high school and primary school students, mass meetings with the participation of all the representative elements of the Palestinian population, declarations by local trade union and religious leaders — all these leave no doubt in anyone's mind about the real sentiments of the inhabitants of the occupied territories.

"We have no chance of finding Quislings\* in the occupied territories," explained Reserve Gen. Shlomo Gazit, who was formerly in charge of coordinating activities in these territories.

In an October 29 article in *Ha'aretz*, Yehuda Litani explained: "Recently the military government proposed to certain inhabitants of

\*Vidkun Quisling, a pro-Nazi Norwegian politician, headed the Norwegian puppet government following the German invasion in February 1942. His name has become synonymous with collaboration with an occupying power.

the occupied territories that they take charge of the departments in which they work [in the military administration]. But up to now they have refused . . . basically because they fear the negative reactions from the population of the West Bank."

In the same newspaper, Amos Elon, one of Israel's more astute political observers, summarized the situation: "It is even more difficult to expect the participation of Palestinians in the establishment of 'total autonomy' in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. But that is precisely the objective this government has set for itself and on which it has run aground and continues to run aground."

"Without the participation of the Palestinians, there will not be autonomy. Who would want to be in Professor Milson's place today, agreeing to head up this civil administration? What might perhaps have been possible several years ago is virtually inconceivable in the present situation."

"At a press conference some months ago," Elon continued, "this scholar [Milson] expressed his conviction that it is possible to politically 'break' the PLO in the occupied territories. Is the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip going to start turning its back on the PLO precisely at a time when the PLO is definitively recognized by the peoples of the world?"

The rejection of the Israeli occupation by the Palestinian population has reached levels that are unprecedented in recent years. For example, the Gaza Strip, which has reputedly been "calm" since the murderous pacification carried out by Gen. Ariel Sharon in the early 1970s, saw several days of general strikes and mass demonstrations that quickly turned into bloody confrontations with the occupation forces, resulting in the death of a young child and several dozen wounded.

And there is every reason to believe that the establishment of the civil administration will have the effect of bringing together the organization and struggles of the populations in the two main components of the occupied territories, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

#### Behind the carrot lies the stick

"If they do not want our civil administration, that means they want repression." That seems to be the logic guiding General Sharon and Professor Milson. And in this area they have not skimped on resources. In one month the civil administration has carried out as much repression as the military government generally did in a whole year.

They closed Bir Zeit University, the main institution of higher education for the Palestinian population. They closed the daily newspaper *Al Fajr*. They arrested well-known leaders like Dr. Azimi Shoubi, a member of the Al Bira municipal council; Ahram Khania, editor in chief of the daily *Al Shaab*; and Dr. Samir Kateb, president of the Union of Doctors. Dozens of people, mostly students and student leaders at Bir Zeit, were placed under house arrest.

But the new dimension in the repression in the occupied territories is best seen in the "collective punishment" — the curfews imposed on neighborhoods, villages, or camps from which stones or bottles were thrown, and the dynamiting of houses.

There has been heavy criticism of the dynamiting of three houses in Beit Sahur, near Bethlehem, even from within the Labor Party. These houses were destroyed on the pretext that the children of some of the families living in the houses had thrown stones at an Israeli army command car. Labor Party figure Abba Eban and Victor Shem Tov, the general secretary of Mapam (the United Workers Party — a component of the Labor Party coalition) denounced these dynamitings.

But as Menachem Begin himself has noted, this form of punishment was not invented by the present Likud government. Until the Labor Party was ousted from the government, in May 1977, it carried out the dynamiting of 1,224 houses.

In an editorial entitled "Not in My Name!" in the November 20 *Davar*, the daily newspaper of the Histadrut union federation, Hanna Zemer wrote: "Once again, we are dynamiting houses, we are blocking up apartments, we are welding shut the steel shutters of stores. I hear the cries of mothers and the tears of children; I see people whose housing has just been taken. Even without trying to compare what cannot be compared, one cannot help being reminded of sad memories, of another time in another place. . . ."

And in a style featuring less pathos, Yehuda Litani wrote in the November 18 *Ha'aretz*: "When you destroy houses on an assembly-line basis (seven houses were destroyed in the last two weeks) so that 'no one will throw a single stone on the West Bank,' you provoke an escalation. It is difficult to imagine that a population whose houses are being dynamited will become peaceful. It may be afraid and live in fear, but it will always find people who have the courage to throw stones, even in the most frightening situation, and even some who will fire shots, throw gasoline-filled bottles, and place bombs."

There can be no doubt about the consequences of the policy of the stick. Indiscriminate repression that strikes equally against those who are called "extremists" and those who are moderates, against armed commandos and youth who throw stones, can only provoke a generalized realignment around the most radical positions.

As Dani Rubinstein writes in the November 20 *Davar*: "The policy of Minister Ariel Sharon in the West Bank is the coarsest and most violent since Israel has had power in the occupied territories. . . . Bethlehem and Beit Sahur are among the calmest cities in the West Bank and their mayors, Elias Freij and Hana al-Atrach, do not belong to the Committee of National Guidance (made up of supporters of the PLO) and are not considered extremists. Now, for the first time in their careers, both of

them led a demonstration where people shouted 'PLO yes, Israel no!'"

#### Growing opposition inside Israel

Every day on the television news Israelis can see the horrors of the occupation and General Sharon's expedient methods. They also see the determination of the high school students in Beit Sahur, the merchants in Gaza, the Bir Zeit University students, and therefore the ineffectiveness of the repressive measures taken by the so-called civil administration.

Among the mass of Jewish workers we are increasingly seeing a sense of weariness, a refusal to believe that this time the Palestinians will finally learn their lesson and have no choice but to accept the solutions imposed by Menachem Begin.

But there are increasing numbers who understand that it is suicidal to give a free rein to Ariel Sharon; and that it is precisely the extreme character of the repression that makes the emergence of a vast movement in opposition to what is happening today in the occupied territories not only necessary but also possible.

In recent weeks it has no longer been just Arab students and radical groups in the Jewish community that have demonstrated against the closing of Bir Zeit University, the dynamiting of houses, and "collective punishment." There have been hundreds of people who, even yesterday, were not ready to deliberately get involved alongside the Palestinian masses.

The growing impact that the Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University is having and the broad sympathy toward its activities confirms that for the first time since 1967 the base exists for a large, united movement against the occupation.

The views of the Palestinian people will, in the final analysis, decide the viability of the different occupation plans that the Zionist governments will develop. But the existence of a massive movement against the occupation within the Jewish population of Israel will not only speed up the process of withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories, but also create the basis for collaboration between Jews and Arabs, which remains the absolute precondition for a just and durable solution to the Palestinian question.

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# Military government under siege

*Economic and political crisis feeds opposition*

By Marcelo Zugadi

On December 11, 1981, a muffled coup ousted the president of Argentina's military government. Gen. Roberto Viola, who had been elected to the post by the military in March, was unable to complete nine months in office.

Viola was replaced by army chief Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri, who retains his post as army commander and as a member of the military junta, the regime's highest body according to the law on the "Process of National Reorganization" passed after the military seized power in 1976.

The form in which this coup took place illustrates the weakness that afflicts both the outgoing and incoming presidents. Viola was forced to take a "sick leave" in early November, with Gen. Horacio Liendo, a man in whom he had confidence, filling in for him.

Since Viola did not have enough backing in the armed forces to keep himself in power, and Galtieri did not have the backing to topple him, the battle was carried out through a grotesque exchange of declarations, with Galtieri asserting that Viola's illness prevented him from resuming office and Viola maintaining that he was perfectly fit to return immediately to Casa Rosada, the presidential palace.

The press covered this dogfight with obvious signs of alarm over the breakdown in the military regime.

After five weeks of this exchange, with Viola steadfastly refusing to resign for "health reasons," the junta issued a communiqué relieving him of his post for "reasons of state." The communiqué also announced that Vice Admiral Carlos Lacoste would serve as interim president until General Galtieri assumed the office on December 22.

So in the course of 1981, five officers — Videla, Viola, Liendo, Lacoste, and Galtieri — had the opportunity to be president of Argentina. This is a record that challenges the old champions in this field, the Bolivian military. While all these political intrigues were going on, the rate of exchange for the peso went from 2,000 pesos to the dollar in January to 15,000 by December.

## Why Viola fell

In fact, Viola did not fall so much as crumble, without enough vitality even to put up minimal resistance. When Viola took office in March, his predecessor, Gen. Jorge Videla, had completely lost all political initiative. The disastrous, out-of-control state of the economy was reflected in a wave of bankruptcies of ma-



GEN. LEOPOLDO GALTIERI

nor corporations and banks, triple-digit inflation, recession, and a massive outflow of foreign currency.

But it was also reflected in the breakdown of the bourgeois front that had backed the dictatorship during the initial period. Repression, which is the fundamental basis of the regime, was already showing itself unable to put a stop to expressions of discontent and the growing struggles by all the oppressed social sectors.

Viola's primary function was to rebuild the bourgeois front and regain political initiative. The key to his future was to get the economic crisis under control. Aware that the junta lacked the authority needed to establish a Bonapartist government, Viola resorted to an extraordinary alternative measure: he divided the ministry of the economy into five portfolios, giving one to each sector of the bourgeoisie.

Instead of overcoming the fissures in the bourgeois front, this move shifted the divisions within the bourgeoisie into the government itself. Paralyzed, Viola was limited to watching the crisis unfold, totally out of the government's control.

The gap between the government and the opposition turned into an abyss. The five main political parties were driven to form a front — the Multiparty Bloc — that put forward an alternative economic plan and demanded the im-

mediate scheduling of elections.

With the economy adrift and all the parties demanding a return to constitutional government, and with an explosive social climate, the armed forces had to act. Viola was fired one week before the Multiparty Bloc issued a document calling on the military junta to withdraw from the government.

## 'Before It Is Too Late'

Five months after the Multiparty Bloc was revived (it was originally set up in 1974 under Gen. Juan Perón), and having failed in their initial intention to converge with the Viola government around a common plan, the five parties in the bloc issued a document on December 17 entitled "Before It Is Too Late."

The Multiparty Bloc is made up of the Justicialist (Peronist) Party, the Radical Civic Union (UCR), the Movement for Unity and Development (MID) led by former president Arturo Frondizi, the Intransigent Party, and the Christian Democracy. Together they won more than 80 percent of the vote in the last election.

Describing itself as "We, the representatives of the majority of the Argentine people" (a phrase taken from the first paragraph of the national constitution), the bloc demanded a "concrete announcement to the country on a timetable for elections, with immediate and specific dates that must be inexorably complied with," and called for "general elections, without proscriptions, gradualism, or conditions of any kind."

The document calls for the "reconciliation . . . of the entire nation, including the armed forces." Referring to the repression carried out in recent years, it asks for an "official explanation" about the fate of 30,000 people who have disappeared and raises the "need to regularize the situation of [note it does not call for freeing] the prisoners held without charges or sentence."

In addition, the document calls for the legalization of party and trade-union activity, wage increases, and reactivation of the economy.

## The new government

General Galtieri, who is attempting to build up his image as a "hard-liner," formed a homogeneous cabinet and reunified the five economic portfolios into one ministry. Named to head this ministry was Roberto Alemann, the Buenos Aires representative of the Union of Swiss Banks and a monetarist — in short, a direct agent of finance capital.

Alemann announced his dedication to improving the currency, restraining inflation

(now on the order of 140 percent), lowering state expenditures, and selling state enterprises to the private sector. These are the same steps, it should be noted, that the military government proposed in March 1976 just after it overthrew Isabel Perón.

Nicanor Costa Méndez was named minister of foreign relations. He previously held that post in Gen. Juan Onganía's government in the late 1960s. He supports a policy of complete and unconditional alignment with Washington, and favors sending Argentine troops to back the Salvadoran junta.

During the Conference of American Armies held in Washington last November, Galtieri announced that the Argentine armed forces were ready to fight in El Salvador. In his speech upon taking office, Galtieri made an elliptical reference to this view, and also asserted that he intended to take Argentina out of the Nonaligned Movement.

An active duty general, Alfredo Saint Jean, was named interior minister, the most political post in the cabinet. Saint Jean's main claim to fame is the fervor with which he announced that Argentina would send troops to El Salvador, while then-Foreign Minister Oscar Camilión was trying to say the opposite at the conference of the Organization of American States.

Although Galtieri had trouble getting a cabinet together, especially with regard to the ministry of the economy, the cabinet that was finally formed is a homogeneous group with an ultraconservative, monetarist, and Reaganite stamp.

#### Not a sign of strength

The character of this cabinet — coming at a time when the bourgeois parties are putting forward a very different position, when the armed forces are showing very deep internal conflicts, and while the country is shaken by an unprecedented economic disaster and the working class is reorganizing and anxious to mobilize — is hardly a sign of strength on the part of the military high command.

The junta is renouncing any attempt to play a Bonapartist role. It is abandoning its role as an arbitrator in the crude confrontation going on inside the bourgeoisie over the remains of the national income and over how to "reorganize" the country.

There are two roads open to General Galtieri. He can either negotiate a political solution with the bourgeois opposition for 1984, when his term is scheduled to end, or he can try to tighten the screws, taking back the democratic space that the opposition has won, and rush headlong down the road of confrontation.

Applying Alemann's economic program will generate a big resistance in either case. But if that program is accompanied by a crack-down by the regime and the absence of a political timetable with a concrete date for elections, this would stiffen the bourgeois opposition and push it toward the left, toward a confluence with the discontent in the working class. In that

case, splits in the armed forces would be inevitable.

The fact that there are no political parties that can control the workers movement — a factor that dominates all aspects of the crisis — along with the fact that the present ruling group does not have solid support in the ranks of the military itself, has forced the government to try to act in concert with the bourgeois opposition.

Very early, in his first speech, Galtieri stated that "it is not hard to understand the need for a common plan," adding that "we will continue with the development of political activity in order to push forward the nation's institutional normalization."

It is true that the logic of finance capital does not subordinate itself to political considerations. It is true that through its alliance with the military hierarchy, a governing bureaucracy has been created that operates with great autonomy with respect to other sectors of the bourgeoisie. It is also true that the wounds inflicted on Argentine society during the recent years make any political opening extremely difficult; because there will be no opening without a general clamor that calls for and obtains retribution for the crimes of the military.

But these arguments cannot obscure the de-

### José Páez released from jail

José Francisco Páez, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party (PST) of Argentina, was released from jail in November of last year, according to a report in the December issue of the Argentine socialist monthly *Opción*.

The paper reported that Páez is still subject to police controls and is being kept under a form of house arrest.

Páez spent nearly six years in jail, first under the regime of President Isabel Perón and then under the succession of generals that have ruled Argentina since the April 1976 military coup.

The socialist trade-union leader was arrested in Córdoba in January 1976. At that time he was charged with "illegal associations" and possession of "subversive" literature, but he was never brought to trial.

Páez was a central leader of the automobile workers union in the industrial city of Córdoba, where he played a key role in the two big working-class upsurges of 1969 and 1971 known as the *Cordobazos*.

In 1973 Páez supported the PST's call for an independent working-class slate in the Argentine federal elections. He ran for governor of the province of Córdoba in the March election of that year, and was the PST's candidate for vice-president in the September 1973 election.

The PST was a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International until late 1979, at which time it split from the international.

cisive fact that will determine the country's immediate course — the military junta is in retreat.

The military regime is in a state of decomposition. The government has completely lost the political initiative.

The alliance between finance capital and the military bureaucracy, it is clear, is not sensitive to political arguments. But it will respond to the relationship of concrete forces. And the alignment of bourgeois parties, employers' organizations, the church, and the trade-union bureaucracy in support of a return to the bourgeois-democratic system of government means the position of the military regime has been severely weakened. It is isolated along the whole front by the new combination of opposition forces.

#### Galtieri promises 'timetable'

There are concrete signs that the new government is bowing to this reality. In the first place, it is enough to compare Videla's theme of "we have objectives, not timetables," with the opening lines of Galtieri's speech: "I know that the time for words and promises has come to an end. I also know that words have lost their strength and their power to bring people together. . . . I will show that real authority does not need to call upon authoritarianism. . . ."

Moreover, the newspaper *La Nación*, which is a mouthpiece for the military-financial-land-owning oligarchy in power, in addition to warning that now "the objectives have a timetable," reveals that Galtieri's "original idea was to set up a cabinet made up entirely of civilians" (December 27, 1981). But the armed forces could not agree among themselves.

The new government, despite its homogeneous character and Galtieri's hard-line posturing, begins by recognizing the obvious: that it is a weak government, without civilian or military support, confronting a unified opposition in the midst of an unprecedented economic crisis. The new government will be even more ineffective than Viola's unless it reconciles itself to negotiating with the opposition.

And even if it does agree to a political plan with the bourgeois opposition, it will have enormous difficulty remaining in power. To the extent that the government attempts to get out of the crossfire by implementing a political solution, it will be stymied by the economic crisis and by the radicalization of the masses, which would be expressed in an uncontrollable way.

#### Union bureaucracy also deserts ship

In a document issued the day after Galtieri took over as president, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), citing "the total and absolute failure of the so-called process," called for the formation of "an emergency government," with the participation of all sectors.

The CGT also demands that general elections be scheduled in the near future and calls for "a people's mobilization to concretize that

high and patriotic proposal."

The CGT, which had already declared its agreement with the objectives of the Multiparty Bloc, repeats "a call for national unity," proposing that "we all apply ourselves to the urgent task of leading the country out of the swamp."

During the months of the Viola government, the CGT was increasing its oppositional stance. It called a general strike in June and a march for "peace, land, and work" in November. On both occasions the leadership acted in a bureaucratic manner, showing great fear of organizing an authentic working-class mobilization; as a result the strike was only partial and the mobilization brought out only 20,000 people.

In fact, both these actions were boycotted by the very leadership that called them. The CGT leadership claimed, as it has done so often in its history, that it was warning the government. But it refused to organize and mobilize the ranks.

Nonetheless, the CGT's position seems combative when compared to the openly collaborationist attitude of the other faction of the bureaucracy, organized in the National Labor Convention (CNT), which actively opposed the June strike and did not participate in the November march.

Faced with the impossibility of further postponing action, the CGT is now trying to protect itself inside the Multiparty Bloc, where it will coexist with the CNT, hoping to repeat the political maneuver that between 1969 and 1973 prevented the workers' resistance struggles from developing into an independent political alternative for the proletariat.

December 30, 1981

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## South Africa

# Khotso Seatlholo faces trial

### *Black youth leader held in leg irons*

By Ernest Harsch

After nearly six months in detention, Black youth leader Khotso Seatlholo was brought before a Johannesburg court in early December and charged under South Africa's notorious Terrorism Act.

Seatlholo, twenty-five years old, was detained by the Security Police in late June 1981 with seven other Black activists. Since then, he has been kept in incommunicado detention, without charges or the right to receive visitors or meet with lawyers.

Seatlholo first came to prominence in 1976, during the massive student and youth rebellions that shook most Black townships in South Africa. In August of that year, he was chosen president of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), one of the most influential Black organizations in the country at that time.

In face of widespread arrests of Black activists and a murderous police repression that left hundreds of Blacks dead, Seatlholo left the country in January 1977 to continue his political activities from exile. Throughout this period, he lived in Gaborone, the capital of neighboring Botswana, where many young Black South African exiles were based.

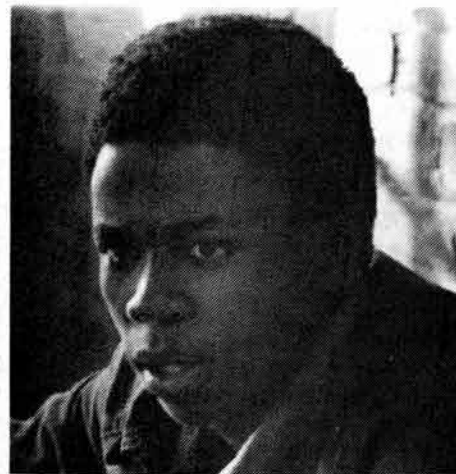
In April 1979, former members of the SSRC and other young Black activists met in Gaborone and formed the South African Youth Revolutionary Council (SAYRCO). Seatlholo was elected its first president. The SAYRCO publicly called for a socialist revolution in South Africa, which it said could come about only through a combination of the class and national liberation struggles.

The SAYRCO included both members who had been forced by the repression to live abroad and those who were still able to function within South Africa. This required some travel back and forth across the South African border, despite the risks involved.

It was on a trip back into South Africa that Seatlholo was captured last year. According to the South African authorities, he and the others detained with him had distributed leaflets in Soweto on June 16 — the fifth anniversary of the original 1976 Soweto rebellion — calling on Blacks to "organize and act against the enemy."

When he was finally brought before the Johannesburg Regional Court, Seatlholo was charged together with twenty-three-year-old Masabata Mary Loate, who was also accused of being a member of the SAYRCO. Under the Terrorism Act, virtually any form of political or trade-union activity can be defined as "terrorism."

Among the specific accusations against them are:



Susan Ellis/Militant

KHOTSO SEATLHOLO

- that Seatlholo and Loate engaged in "terrorist activities" and belonged to the banned SSRC;
- that Seatlholo formed the SAYRCO and became its president;
- that the aims of the SAYRCO included the undermining of law and order through armed resistance;
- and that Seatlholo and Loate attempted to recruit members to the SAYRCO and make contact with other organizations in South Africa.

Loate is, in addition, charged with seeking to arrange meetings between SAYRCO members and leaders of the Azanian People's Organisation and the Azanian National Youth Unity, as well as prominent Black journalist Thami Mazwai, who was detained about the same time as Seatlholo.

On December 10, Seatlholo was again brought to court. According to the Black-run *Sowetan* newspaper, the slightly-built Seatlholo "appeared in Court 19 in leg irons amid tight police security."

The trial of Seatlholo and Loate was set to begin in the Vanderbijlpark Regional Magistrate's Court on February 8. If convicted under the Terrorism Act, they could face sentences ranging from a minimum of five years in prison to a maximum of death.

The only real "crime" of which Seatlholo and Loate are guilty is fighting for the liberation of South Africa's oppressed Black majority and for an end to the barbaric apartheid system.

Defenders of human rights around the world should demand that the charges against them be dropped and that they be immediately set free. □