

# INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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## El Salvador

# 'We're Losing the Fight,' Says Junta, as Fear of Another Vietnam Grows in U.S.



Salvadoran troops training at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.

An Exchange of Views

*How to Aid Polish Workers' Struggle*

# U.S. bolsters Arab monarchs against Iranian revolution

By Fred Murphy

Washington and its allies among the reactionary Arab regimes of the Middle East are alarmed at the growing likelihood of an Iranian victory in the seventeen-month-old Iran-Iraq war. They fear such an outcome could lead to revolution in Iraq, result in a further deepening of the Iranian revolution, and inspire the Arab masses of the Persian Gulf region to revolt against the ruling kings, princes, and sheiks.

The concern of the U.S. imperialists was evident during Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's tour of Arab capitals in early February.

In Riyadh, Weinberger convinced the Saudi royal family to participate in setting up a Saudi-U.S. Joint Committee for Military Projects. According to the February 10 *Washington Post*, about twenty-five U.S. military specialists will work with the Saudi armed forces to coordinate U.S. aid and thus "help stabilize the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, and parts of Africa."

Preparations for a similar military committee were advanced during Weinberger's stop in Oman. In Jordan, the defense secretary held talks with King Hussein, who had just announced the establishment of a "volunteer" force to bolster the Iraqi regime's war against Iran. Weinberger aides claimed Washington remains neutral in that conflict, but statements by other U.S. officials have evinced a clear tilt toward Iraq.

## 'New dangers from Iran'

Shortly before Weinberger's tour, the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates met in Bahrain "to discuss joint action against Iran" (*New York Times*, February 11). The six states have formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which according to the February 22 *U.S. News & World Report* "commits the states to defend one another from both external attack and internal subversion."

Washington has welcomed this counterrevolutionary alliance. "We have been urging them to do it for years," a U.S. diplomat in Bahrain told the magazine. "Now that the Iraq-Iran war and the Iranian revolution have them terrified, they finally are getting together."

The justification usually given by Washington for its massive military buildup in the Middle East is the alleged "Soviet threat" to U.S. oil supplies. But another theme has begun to be sounded in recent weeks — what the February 22 *Newsweek* termed "new dangers from Iran." The magazine explained:

"The Iranians have done better than expected in the war against Iraq, leaving the government of President Saddam Hussein exposed to fundamentalist rebellion from within. If he and Assad of Syria were to fall, a crescent of fundamental-

ist Muslim regimes would spread across the northern tier of the Mideast."

"Muslim fundamentalism" is not what really worries Washington. The Saudis and the rulers of the smaller Gulf states claim to be among the strictest followers of the Islamic faith, but this hardly impedes Weinberger and company from peddling them billions of dollars worth of arms.

Code words like "Muslim fundamentalism" are designed to cover up the real fears of Washington and its clients: the anti-imperialist dynamic of the Iranian revolution, the increasingly anticapitalist direction of the Iranian masses, and the growing desire of the Arab workers and peasants to emulate their Iranian neighbors.

## 'Internal threats' worry Pentagon

"Saudi Arabia we will not permit to be an Iran," Ronald Reagan declared last October. Weinberger's trip was aimed at furthering the implementation of this pledge to the region's reactionary rulers.

A report on the defense secretary's tour in the February 15 *Washington Post* credited "a Pentagon official traveling on Weinberger's plane" with the following views:

The assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and the near toppling of the pro-western government in Bahrain in December by Iranian-trained Moslem extremists were the latest in a series of events that convinced the Pentagon that the biggest threats to Western oil supplies in the Persian Gulf were internal — not external. . . .

All this, the Pentagon official continued, made a direct Soviet attack against pro-western governments in the Indian Ocean theater "look like the least likely threat" to Pentagon analysts.

The Bahrain events involved the arrest of sixty men by that country's security forces in mid-December. The regime claimed these were "a group of terrorists trained in Iran." Saudi Interior Minister Prince Naif Bin Abdel-Aziz later charged, "The sabotage plot was engineered by the Iranian government and was directed against Saudi Arabia."

This frame-up of Iran was concocted shortly after a series of huge demonstrations were held in that country to denounce the so-called Fahd Plan — an eight-point proposal on the Arab-Israeli conflict drawn up by Saudi Crown Prince Fahd. The plan implied Arab recognition of the state of Israel and won praise from Reagan as a "hopeful sign." But it became a dead letter after rejection by the Arab League summit conference in Morocco in late November.

The opposition of the Khomeini government in Iran to the Saudi attempt to sell out the Palestinians reflected its overall stance in favor of anti-imperialist struggles in the Middle East. It

is this which brings it into conflict with staunch proimperialists like the Saudi royal family.

## An attractive example

The example set by the Iranian masses in overthrowing the repressive monarchy and in standing up to U.S. imperialism remains powerfully attractive to the oppressed and exploited peoples of the Middle East. Fear that the example might spread across Iran's long border with Iraq was what led Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein to launch his invasion of Iran in the first place.

Hussein's move in September 1980 was viewed favorably by U.S. imperialism. Bankrolled by the Saudis and other Gulf rulers, the invasion was aimed at curbing the Iranian masses and putting a halt to the revolution.

But stiff Iranian resistance quickly halted the Iraqi onslaught. For almost a year, the war remained stalemated. But since last September, Iranian troops and militia volunteers have been driving the Iraqis back from key positions. At the same time, morale among Iraqi troops has plummeted and opposition to the dictatorship inside Iraq has mounted.

Fear that Saddam Hussein's days may be numbered led his ally, King Hussein of Jordan, to issue his January 28 call for Arab volunteers to join the beleaguered Iraqis in the fight against Iran. In a televised address, King Hussein claimed Iran represented a threat to the entire "Arab homeland" and urged Jordanians to sign up for a special battalion to be sent to the Iraqi front.

## Response to King Hussein's call 'muted'

The Jordanian monarch's call to arms apparently failed to generate much enthusiasm. "Less than a week after King Hussein's surprise announcement," David Ottaway reported from Amman in the February 7 *Washington Post*, "the response to the king's plan has been muted.

"Inside Jordan, the government has put a tight clamp on information about the plan, its establishment and maintenance."

In an earlier dispatch, Ottaway noted concerns among Western diplomats in Amman that the king's call would "not prove all that popular at home, particularly among Palestinians, who make up 60 percent of the kingdom's population. . . .

"A sounding among some educated Palestinians here found most far from pleased. There was a feeling that the king's show of Arab nationalism was misdirected, particularly at a time when most Arab nations are fearful of another Israeli strike either into southern Lebanon or against Syria" (*Washington Post*, February 1).

The Iranian government's response was aimed at furthering precisely such sentiments. Tehran immediately announced plans to form a "Golan Battalion" — made up of volunteers from among Iraqi refugees and prisoners of war — to go to Syria and strengthen that country's defenses against the mounting military threats of the Zionist regime.



If King Hussein "really wants to fight," Iranian parliamentary speaker Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani asked, "why does he not fight to liberate occupied Jordanian territory, or fight to recover Jerusalem?"

"There is nothing sweeter than to see our nation in a war with Hussein of Jordan," Rafsanjani declared. "It is good to fight against a person who was behind the Black September tragedy and massacre of the people of Palestine." (In September 1970, King Hussein's tanks and troops slaughtered thousands of Palestinians in an assault aimed at liquidating the Palestinian resistance movement.)

For its part, the Syrian government denounced King Hussein's move as a "worthless political stunt designed to distract attention from the Arab-Israeli conflict." The statement added that the king was "trying to provoke Syria and invent a marginal battle useful only to the enemies of the Arab nation."

Libyan leader Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi blasted the Jordanian ruler in similar terms: "We expected that King Hussein would want volunteers to liberate occupied Palestine and Jerusalem . . . and not to fight with Iran. The Arab countries that are threatened by the regime that occupies the Holy City still do not understand who their real enemy is. We emphasize that we are opposed to the occupation of Iran's territory by Iraq."

#### Rajavi protests 'export' of revolution

Another side of the imperialists' drive to weaken and destroy the Iranian revolution has been their search for allies among counterrevolutionary Iranian exiles. The point-man in this effort has been Saddam Hussein.

Hussein has long collaborated with figures such as Shahpur Bakhtiar, the shah's last prime minister, and various monarchist generals. Last November, the Iraqi ruler offered "unconditional cooperation" to any Iranian opposition group trying to bring down the Khomeini regime, "irrespective of the stand this faction may have taken on the current war."

That was an obvious appeal to Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, who was president of Iran at the time of the Iraqi invasion, and to Bani-Sadr's chief allies, the People's Mujahedeen Organization headed by Massoud Rajavi.

Rajavi and Bani-Sadr have made it increasingly clear where they really stand on U.S. imperialism, the Iraqi invasion, and the struggles of the peoples of the Persian Gulf states. In an interview published in the January 13 issue of the U.S. weekly *Guardian*, Rajavi charged that Khomeini was responsible for the Iran-Iraq war, "by following reactionary policies of exporting the revolution that were condemned by the Mojahedin from the beginning."

In an interview with ABC television in mid-January, Bani-Sadr said, according to a summary in the January 21 *New York Times*, that Iran "should . . . turn to the West for help in solving its economic problems." Bani-Sadr termed the seizure of the U.S. embassy and holding of CIA agents and other diplomats as hostages was "a very bad thing for Iran." The

ex-president also said, according to the February 8 *Newsweek*, that he hoped to convince the Iranian middle class of the need for another revolution to "end the insecurity and the anarchy once and for all."

Such appeals for support through the capitalist news media are not falling on deaf ears. The following report appeared in the January 23 issue of *8 Days*, a British business weekly that covers political and economic developments in the Middle East:

"The Gulf States, Iraq and the US agree on two things: that there is a rising resistance to Ayatollah Khomeini's rule in Iran, and that the sooner it succeeds the better. . . ."

"US sources say Washington, Baghdad, and Riyadh would all like to see Abol Hassan Bani Sadr restored to power in Tehran, and US officials have had substantial contact with the

former Iranian president and his entourage in Paris."

During a recent trip to Washington, *8 Days* continued, former Iranian Central Bank head Ali Reza Nobari pressed "Bani Sadr's cause on Capitol Hill, at the State Department, and with selected reporters. . . ."

"Nobari noted that Bani Sadr, his ally, Mujaheddin leader Masoud Rajavi and he himself had all escaped from Iran with the complicity of senior members of the Iranian armed forces."

"Now that the CIA has virtually recovered administration approval of covert activities overseas," *8 Days* concluded, "Washington observers believe it is likely that the US will help to supply the logistics and weaponry for a campaign against the embattled fundamentalist regime" in Iran. □

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# Junta says 'We're losing the war'

*Fears of 'new Vietnam' spur antiwar drive in U.S.*

**By Fred Murphy**

"We are losing the fight with the guerrillas in the countryside," Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte admitted February 15.

The next day, U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger acknowledged on U.S. television that there is "considerable danger" Duarte's government will fall without stepped-up aid from the Pentagon.

Weinberger insisted that Washington will not allow what he termed a "bastion of communism" to be established on the American mainland. He echoed Secretary of State Alexander Haig's declarations that the administration will do "whatever is necessary" to prevent a victory by the Salvadoran freedom fighters.

## **General Garcia's shopping list**

As Weinberger spoke, the top U.S. military commander in Latin America, Lt. Gen. Wallace Nutting, was arriving in El Salvador for a firsthand look at the junta's deteriorating situation.

Nutting told reporters in San Salvador on February 18 that he had "absolutely no idea" how much more aid might have to be poured into the regime's faltering effort to defeat the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

"There is no quick or easy or cheap solution to the challenge," Nutting said.

Gen. José Guillermo García, the Salvadoran defense minister, told a U.S. congressional delegation on February 19 that his armed forces need patrol boats, cargo planes, electronic surveillance equipment, ten more fighter jets, and 180 helicopters — enough to transport two battalions of troops simultaneously. The total cost would be "easily half a billion dollars," said Representative Tom Harkin of Iowa.

In recent weeks the Reagan administration rushed \$55 million worth of aircraft and matériel to the junta, and announced it would seek some \$400 million in additional military and economic aid during the next two years.

But U.S. diplomats in El Salvador are now worried that arms and money alone will not be enough to turn the tide.

"At issue," correspondent Raymond Bonner reported in the February 17 *New York Times*, "is whether the Salvadoran military can absorb more equipment and whether it has enough officers to fight a guerrilla war." Bonner continued:

"American officials estimate that the Salvadoran Air Force has the personnel to fly only 6 helicopters more than the 14 already supplied by the United States, fewer than needed. The entire 500-member student body of the Salva-

doran military academy is going through accelerated officer-training in the United States."

The troops already trained by U.S. advisers in El Salvador have achieved no victories against the rebels. Instead, they have carried out massive slaughters of the civilian population in the countryside.

## **400 more massacred**

Nearly 1,000 peasants in Morazán province were massacred by the U.S.-trained Atlacatl Brigade in December. During the second week of February, this unit swept through Usulután province, the scene of recent rebel advances. According to a UPI dispatch printed in the February 17 *New York Daily News*, Salvadoran "government officials, who asked not to be identified, said surviving peasant refugees told them security forces had massacred about 400 civilians after a sweep" through Usulután.

Revelations of such brutality in the U.S. news media are helping to fuel opposition to Washington's intervention among working people in the United States. Liberal members of Congress like Harkin are feeling the heat.

At a news conference in San Salvador on February 19, Harkin and other members of his delegation — one of several that visited the country in mid-February — said General García had been "evasive" when asked about violations of human rights by the military.

"There is every indication," Harkin said, "that innocent civilians were killed at the hands of the military." In particular, the congressman said, the Salvadoran regime had carried out "a massive cover-up" regarding the deaths of twenty-seven residents of the San Antonio Abad neighborhood northwest of the capital on January 31.

García claimed the victims died in a fire fight with guerrillas. "But the [U.S.] embassy people said they found people with bullet holes in the back of their heads and with powder burns," Harkin said.

## **Army begins to fall apart**

Such killings are convincing more and more Salvadorans to participate actively in the war being waged by the FMLN.

The revolutionary forces already enjoy the support and cooperation of tens of thousands of the country's workers and peasants. As a result, the junta is desperately trying to double the size of its army.

Bonner of the *New York Times* reports that "several religious leaders here said recently that in some areas the army is engaging in forced recruiting, sweeping into villages and hauling off boys of fighting age. It is not unus-

ual to meet 15-year-old soldiers, even though the legal draft age is 18."

The resort to such drastic steps is one sign that the Salvadoran armed forces are beginning to fall apart. Bonner also reports concern among diplomats in El Salvador that "supplying the Salvadorans with more rifles and ammunition . . . could be counterproductive since many of the arms would be bought or captured by the rebels."

Moreover, the massive dragooning of youth could backfire badly on the junta. Many of the draftees undoubtedly sympathize with the FMLN. News reports have already pointed to the regime's suspicion that air force personnel aided the commando squad that destroyed planes and helicopters in a raid on Ilopango air base on January 27. And the FMLN's clandestine Radio Venceremos continually calls on young Salvadorans to accept military service, learn to use weapons well, and discuss the war and the situation in the country with fellow soldiers.

## **Reagan's secret plan**

Concern among U.S. and foreign diplomats in San Salvador over the state of the junta's armed forces has reached such a point, says Bonner, that there is growing "doubt that a military victory is possible without ground troops from other countries. . . ."

"The Salvadoran Government 'cannot win without troops from the United States — or from someone,' a non-American diplomat said."

At a February 18 news conference, a reporter asked President Reagan "under what conditions would you send combat troops to El Salvador?" Reagan replied that there are "all kinds of options" but that "I just don't believe that you discuss those options, or what you may or may not do, in advance of doing any of those things."

Reagan did claim that "there are no plans to send American combat troops into action any place in the world." But four days earlier the *Washington Post* had revealed that Reagan had "authorized a broad program of U.S. planning and action in war-torn Central America" that includes "the possible use of U.S. forces to deter the possible introduction of Cuban military forces in Central America."

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Referring to the *Post* article, another reporter asked Reagan, "might there not be a secret plan that you will not tell the American people about?"

"I can't answer your question," Reagan replied. "I just can't answer on that."

#### 'Another Vietnam'

In response to an earlier question about parallels between the current situation in Central America and the beginnings of U.S. intervention in Indochina in the early 1960s, Reagan produced what *Washington Post* columnist Philip Geyelin later described as "a garbled version of the furtive progression from a handful of military advisers in Vietnam to the first landing of American combat units in a way that could only feed the worst fears" of opponents of U.S. intervention.

Writing in the February 20 *Post*, Geyelin pointed out how in Reagan's reply, Washington's support for "a repressive military cabal beholden to a rapacious oligarchy," and presidential certification of human-rights progress in El Salvador all combined to produce "the specter of yet another open-ended 'limited' war — 'another Vietnam.'"

Such parallels to Vietnam are being drawn more and more frequently as the capitalist news media and politicians in the United States debate the situation in Central America. The debate reflects deep concern on the part of U.S. working people that the rulers in Washington are trying to drag them into another Indochina-type conflict.

And the more parallels with Vietnam are drawn, the deeper the opposition to Reagan's war moves becomes. On February 19, administration spokesmen admitted that mail to the State Department and White House has been running *20-to-1 against* further U.S. involvement in El Salvador. This indicates good prospects for the March 27 demonstration in Washington that has been called by a coalition of groups headed by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

#### Phony elections

The march on Washington to demand a halt to all U.S. intervention in El Salvador is scheduled to take place one day before the junta holds its phony elections. Amid a state of siege, press censorship, and massive repression, Salvadorans are supposed to vote on March 28 for a constituent assembly that will name a new president.

Leaders of the political parties and popular organizations that make up the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) — which supports the FMLN's armed struggle — have rejected participation in these phony elections. They point to the atmosphere of terror, the army's long history of electoral fraud, and the standing threats issued by the armed forces to assassinate FDR leaders.

Even if the elections do come off, it will be clear to world public opinion that the vast majority of the Salvadoran people had no real choice and were prevented from voting for

those who represent them.

In fact, the elections are so obviously fraudulent that almost all of Washington's closest European allies have rejected requests from the Reagan administration to send observers to El Salvador for the vote. According to a diplomat quoted in the February 20 *Washington Post*, Reagan's emissaries "got nowhere and most European governments let these entreaties fall off them like water off a duck's back." Only the Thatcher government in Britain has agreed to send observers.

#### NATO maneuvers vs. Cuba

Reagan is getting more cooperation from his imperialist allies on the military level, however. As part of the continuing pressures and threats against the revolutionary governments of Cuba, Grenada, and Nicaragua, unprecedented naval maneuvers by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will be held in the Gulf of Mexico and the Florida Straits (between the United States and Cuba) from March 8 to March 18. The exercise will involve twenty-eight ships and eight aircraft from the

United States, Canada, Britain, West Germany, and the Netherlands. Planning is being carried on from NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Prior to the NATO maneuvers, thirteen U.S. and Canadian warships will conduct exercises in the same area from February 27 to March 3.

Such complicity on the part of the West European and Canadian imperialist regimes points up the need for broad international protests against Reagan's war drive in Central America and the Caribbean. In addition to the march on Washington and an international solidarity conference being held in Mexico City March 26-28, British activists will hold a march and rally in London on the day of the junta's elections.

Some important actions have already taken place. On February 20, some 25,000 persons marched past the U.S. embassy in Athens to demand a halt to intervention in El Salvador. Nearly 5,000 persons marched in New York City on the same day.

Such mobilizations can play a key role in the fight against Reagan's drive toward war. □

## Rightist terrorists strike in Nicaragua

MANAGUA — A bomb, tucked away in a suitcase, claimed the lives of four airport workers here February 20 and seriously wounded two others.

An estimated seventy persons in the customs area were narrowly spared because the bomb exploded outside the building. The suitcase was on a conveyor belt used to carry the luggage inside.

It was a scene of tremendous panic as parents and children searched for each other and then for the doors. There were cries of "Death to Somozaism."

Had the Honduran airlines flight carrying the explosives been delayed by ten minutes, the bomb could have killed all forty passengers.

The explosives were designed for military use, and the damage to the airport was quite extensive. One expert commented that the powerful device showed a high level of technical sophistication.

Commander Tomás Borge, minister of the interior, was addressing 1,500 people at the final session of the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties (COPPPAL) when the news arrived. After reporting the attack to the crowd, Borge, visibly shaken, declared that "we will never be frightened off by bombs and assassins."

COPPPAL President Pedro Ojeda Paulada read a message on behalf of thirty political parties belonging to the organization, repudiating the terrorist crimes, expressing solidarity with Nicaragua, and declaring that such "cowardly acts will never out-

weigh" the heroism of the Nicaraguan people.

The following day, thousands of Nicaraguans poured into the Plaza of the Revolution to greet Mexican President José López Portillo.

Commander Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the Junta of National Reconstruction, took the opportunity to contrast the solidarity of the Mexican people with the secret plans of the White House. Ortega made it clear that he did not view the airport explosion as an isolated incident.

He said "the most recent revelations show that undercover actions against the Nicaraguan revolution have already been approved. They have even been denounced in the United States, where the administration has allocated \$19 million to encourage a series of actions to destabilize the Nicaraguan revolution. . . .

"We know that they have plans to assassinate members of the directorate [of the Sandinista National Liberation Front]. They think that by assassinating several of us, the National Directorate will be divided and decentralized. They do not realize that the national leadership of the Sandinistas holds the power conferred on it by the working people, and by the farmers of Nicaragua. . . . They do not realize that they can assassinate one of us, that they can assassinate the whole national leadership, but they cannot assassinate the longing for freedom and justice of this people. For that they would have to kill us all."

— Jane Harris



# Whole country a school

*'If you know, teach; if you don't, learn'*

By Pat Kane

ST. GEORGE'S — Colonialism leaves its mark on any country. It was not just the state of the roads, or the inadequate health facilities, or the destruction of local agriculture that the Grenada revolution had to face. It also had to tackle an education system deformed by 400 years of colonialism, and twenty-five years of the Eric Gairy dictatorship.

It is through education that the "new Grenadians" are developing those who will lead their country out of the trap of underdevelopment.

Like everything else here on this small Caribbean island, education suffered under Gairy. Higher education was for the tiny elite who could afford to pay for it. There were only twenty-five teachers trained each year, and then the majority left to work in the United States or Britain. The revolution had to confront the problems of illiteracy and adult education.

One of the first acts of the revolution was to establish the Centre for Popular Education (CPE). This is the institution of the revolution that fought illiteracy and now carries out the campaign for adult education.

"We found that our adults had a low cultural level," explained Val Cornwall, the CPE coordinator. "In order to be able to build a revolution, in order to involve people in the democratic activities, they must be able to read and write. Here we say that 'the people cannot be truly free unless they have a high level of education.'"

## Mass literacy campaign

The first tasks of the CPE were to investigate the educational needs of the country and plan a mass literacy campaign. Volunteers traveled to every village, finding out who could teach and who needed to learn. The CPE developed a three-stage plan: adult literacy, adult primary education, and skills training.

The first stage, the adult literacy campaign, has now been completed. At the time of the revolution illiteracy stood at 5-10 percent, while functional illiteracy was close to 30 percent. It has now been reduced to 6 percent.

The CPE had to work out a methodology for the mass literacy campaign, which was to take place in the local communities, and not in a formal classroom situation. They looked at the Cuban and Nicaraguan experiences, and invited leading educators like Paulo Freire to assist the program. But they found that while they could learn from these experiences, the language differences meant they would have to develop their own teaching methods. Two manuals were produced — one for students

called *Let us learn together*, and a guide for teachers called *Forward ever*. The students were of all ages. The teachers were all volunteers, the youngest being twelve years old.

"The point of all our teaching methods is the theory of the revolution itself," explained Cornwall. "When our people understand the needs of the country, they can then seek to make their own input into the process, both economically and politically. Most of the lessons involve some aspect of the revolution . . . things that relate to their practical needs like

agriculture and the different programs of the revolution."

It was through the mass mobilization of the Grenadian people that the campaign was actually carried out. Teachers and students both came from the mass organizations. Trade unions, parish councils, women's and youth groups all discussed the campaign. It lasted six months, from August 1980 to February 1981. Rural workers, who suffered the highest illiteracy, benefited the most.

Trudie, a young woman from Carriacou, told me she had been a CPE teacher. "I used to teach a twenty-five-year-old woman — I was only seventeen then. She's catching up real fast. So now she can go to banks and offices for herself, and sign her name and read the forms."

Counterrevolutionaries spread rumors about the program, claiming that it was "communist." "Counters," as they are called in Grena-

## Grenadian volunteers in Nicaragua

Grenada's literacy campaign was aided by revolutionary Cuba, which shared its experiences, printed some materials, and provided other assistance.

But the Grenadians are internationalists, so they do not view international cooperation as a one-way road, with aid just coming into Grenada, or as an abstract principle. Despite the huge problems of resources within Grenada, they are sending regular volunteers to Bluefields, on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, to help teach English-speaking Nicaraguans to read and write.

Michael Brown is from the Belmont branch of the National Youth Organization. He has been selected as one of the twenty-two volunteers who will be leaving this month for Nicaragua. There were hundreds of youths who wanted to go. Forty attended a special seminar, out of which the twenty-two were finally chosen. At the seminar, they learned about the problems and gains of the Nicaraguan revolution.

"My duty in Nicaragua," explained Michael, "will be to train other brigadistas to go out and teach in the villages. Others will be going to live in the villages."

"Revolutions have to be internationalist. And in order to be really internationalist, you cannot just speak internationalist, and not be internationalist in practice. By doing this, we are meaningful and practical revolutionaries."

In October 1980, two young Grenadians traveled to the Bluefields area. James "Skeffie" Wilson is nineteen, and he was one of them. He tells his story in the pamphlet, *Is Freedom We Making*.

He worked in a small isolated village called Barra de Rio Maiz. It had sixty peo-

ple, fifty-five of whom were illiterate.

Once, some Somozas . . . came in search of us, to kill us, so that they could stop the Literacy Crusade and try to overtake the government and turn back the Revolution. So they came into the village armed with guns and asked for us. But by this time the people had realised that we were doing good for them and that the Somozas would only harm them. So they didn't let them know who we were.

We hid our uniforms and books around the lagoon at the backs of the houses and stayed there in the yards as if we were Nicaraguans. They came very close to us and passed by us with their guns while the villagers spoke to them in Spanish. But they didn't find us because the people in that community told the Somozas that we were their brothers and sisters or even their wives. So they went away without knowing who we were. So the families of Barra de Rio Maiz were very faithful and loyal to us, and saved us from getting killed. And those Somozas knew that the Crusade was very dangerous for them because it would expose all their tricks and oppression of the people.

In the C.P.E. programme here, I can use a lot of things that I learned in Nicaragua. For example, the value of patience. . . . Now I think I can persuade people and talk to them much more patiently about why they should join the CPE.

I asked Michael if he knew about the counterrevolutionaries operating in Bluefields, and if he was afraid. "Sure I know. Maurice [Bishop, prime minister of Grenada] came to the seminar and spoke on it. He told us straight up, man.

"Now, when Cubans come here, we have counters. Didn't stop no Cuban coming. If we don't go to Nicaragua, it will be a victory for the counters there and here, because the literacy campaign will not be helped to win."

— Pat Kane

da, want to turn back the clock, and each new CPE graduate makes it harder for them to attack the revolution. The CPE has been one of the most popular programs of the revolutionary government.

The next stage of the CPE's work is primary education for all adults, which starts in April. This will deal with specific subjects like arts, language, arithmetic, natural science, geography, community health education, history, and agricultural science. Graduates from the literacy campaign, and the far greater number who need primary education will take part. It will last for two years.

Then the third stage will start, "training for skills," which will involve even more Grenadians.

#### Teachers also learn

The CPE program ranks among the finest achievements of revolutionary Grenada. But not only the illiterate have to learn. School teachers also have to go back to school. After the revolution only 30 percent of primary and junior secondary school teachers had received professional training. The rest had no qualifications for professional teaching.

In January 1980, all of Grenada's teachers assembled to discuss the new educational system. Each morning, members of the revolutionary government told them how education affected their sector. The teachers had workshops, and from these discussions the National In-Service Teacher Education Program (NISTEP) was formed.

While the teachers were at their two-week-long conference, the local pupils and community carried out basic repairs to the school buildings.

Chris Searle, a coordinator, told me, "This [problem of untrained teachers] was clearly another factor in keeping rolling the whole cycle of underdevelopment in education.

"In October 1980, NISTEP got under way, and in a three-year course, they hope to retrain every teacher who does not have a qualification."

While the teachers are at NISTEP, the schools are not closed. They are turned over to community school day programs. In these programs, the mass organizations provide classes in car repairs, agriculture, and other practical skills.

In Grenada, "If you know, teach; if you don't, learn" is how they sum up their approach to education.

#### 'Every worker a student'

But education is not confined to these programs, or the island's school system. Every day, Radio Free Grenada announces yet another training course for youth or women's organizers, trade unionists, leaders of cooperatives, government employees. The entire country is teaching and learning.

"Every worker a student, every student a worker," declare the posters and billboards across the island.

There are huge problems in educating a new Grenada. Every school is understaffed and has very few materials. When I asked Val Cornwall what she needed for CPE, she said simply, "Pencils."

But the energy of the Grenadian working

people is being harnessed by this government to overcome the material problems. In every school and community center I visited, the children were laughing. That should be tribute enough to the new, revolutionary educational system of free Grenada. □

## India

# Bombay textile workers strike

*200,000 take part in first walkout since 1974*

### By Sharad Jhaveri

JAMNAGAR — Some 200,000 Bombay textile workers have gone on an indefinite strike over wage demands and working conditions. The twelve-day-old strike, the first in the textile industry since 1974, has crippled sixty mills, with a production loss of 40 million rupees per day, representing over 4 million meters of cloth.

The cotton textile industry is one of India's oldest, and it is the largest industry in Bombay, employing 220,000 workers. In recent years it has been undergoing a rapid transformation due to modernization and automation.

A number of so-called "sick mills" have been closed, and others have been taken over by the government-run National Textile Corporation. According to the January 29 *Economic Times*, 81,000 textile workers have lost their jobs due to closures and 1.44 million spindles and 16,000 looms have been idled.

The mill owners have been using the growing number of closures to argue against demands raised by the workers. But the closures are only one side of the picture. The other side is the increasing modernization and takeovers in the industry. Several leading Indian monopolies have been introducing the latest automated techniques in production.

The automation and modernization have led to a reduction in the workforce, a restructuring of the production process that allows the bosses to exercise greater control over the reduced workforce, an intensification of the pace of work, a deterioration of working conditions, and an increase in the skill levels of the workers.

According to one estimate, the permanent workforce in the industry has dropped from 225,000 to 175,000 workers in the past decade.

The officially recognized union is the Rastriya Mill Sazdoor Sangh (RMMS — National Mill Workers Association). Non-RMMS workers, however, felt that the RMMS was not pushing for the wage increases and other demands that were presented to the Mill Owners Association in May 1979.

At that time, a flat 45 rupee increase was granted, although that sum was not included in the basic wage when calculating cost-of-living increases. The last wage agreement was signed

in 1974, following a forty-two-day strike in the textile industry.

The current strike is being led by Datta Samant's independent union. Samant, a charismatic figure, is a card-carrying member of the ruling Congress Party, but works on his own as a trade-unionist and has bypassed the established trade-union framework.

Samant's approach is that of business unionism. He has made productivity deals that are quite in tune with the present requirements of the capitalists in the textile industry. There is no rank-and-file democracy in the unions he leads. Nevertheless, workers have rallied to his banner because he is at least willing to lead them in direct actions, such as strikes, and to fight for higher wages.

According to a report in the January 27 *Economic Times*, the mill owners have decided to go into industrial court to have this strike declared illegal.

The current strike follows a September 27 warning strike in support of a demand for a 12.33 percent bonus payment by mills that are losing money, and a 20 percent or higher bonus by mills that are profitable.

This strike has not raised issues of the pace of work or working conditions in the textile industry. But it is unlikely that the mill hands will be satisfied simply with monetary concessions, if they win those. The problem of those who have been thrown out of work has also assumed importance.

February 1, 1982

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# A week with the People's Militia

*Young and old mobilize to defend revolution*

By Robert Martin

MANAGUA — "Get ready, we've been called up. Grab your toothbrush and flashlight and meet us at the corner in ten minutes."

So began a grueling week with the militia reserve battalion from my neighborhood in Managua. U.S. citizens are not permitted to join the Nicaraguan militia, but I was able to accompany my neighbors in the first part of the mobilization as an observer.

We had been told to be ready to leave from Thursday on. All of us were surprised when the call-up came two days early, and the 700 of us went off on an all-night march.

The reason for the change was a border attack by Honduran troops in the north and a fresh series of verbal threats from Washington. Although there are always some militia groups mobilized as a rear guard for the army, more are activated in such moments of alert.

What followed were days of trench digging in a blistering sun, alarm drills in the night to prepare for a variety of possible attacks, periodic trips through an obstacle course, occasional infantry drills, and constant assembly and disassembly of rifles.

Those who had uniforms brought them. All of us brought only what we could carry, as mobility is considered key to defense. This went to the extreme of keeping shoes on at all times and one's rifle over the shoulder. Sleeping like that for a week is a truly unforgettable experience.

## Why there is a militia

The Sandinista People's Militia is part of Nicaragua's response to counterrevolutionary bands within the country and the hostile armies of the "northern triangle" — Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador — on the border. The reserve battalions are formed either on a geographic basis or according to one's workplace.

Participation is entirely voluntary. About a dozen people from my neighborhood found the training too difficult and went home. But the rest of the 700 stayed to take the punishment of the training and maintained high spirits through it all.

Daniel Ortega, coordinator of Nicaragua's Junta of National Reconstruction, said at the United Nations last October: "We do not want war, but if we are attacked, we will resist with people's war." Such resistance will require an armed and ready population. That is why there is a militia.

I recently read an article from the U.S. press about the "plummeting popularity" of the Sandinistas. No one could have written that if, like me, they saw old men, their faces lined but never fearful, as they crossed the obstacle course.



Robert Martin/IP

Carlos, a member of the Sandinista People's Militia: "This government is ours."

One grandfather was unforgettable. He faltered at the first attempt to run up a steeply inclined board. He came back twice more until he did the exercise well. This same man came to me several days later to ask if I had any medicine for rheumatism.

Since I was helping out as a doctor, he confided in me that he suffered from severe arthritis. Because he was mobilized directly from work, he had had no chance to bring his medicine.

## Composition of militia

A lot of young people thirteen or fourteen years old are in the militia, although officially one must be at least fifteen to join. Some of them are not even as tall as their rifles.

One teenager was so small that the others thought he was only nine years old and lying about his age. I knew that his growth was stunted as a toddler by a lack of food at the time of the 1972 earthquake.

Although relief supplies came to Nicaragua

after that disaster, Somoza resold them and the needy were left with nothing. To me he presented walking evidence of the oppression of the past and the need to defend the revolution today.

Who made up the battalion? Some unemployed men. Many students. Economists from the ministry of commerce. A musical group which just pressed their first record. A radio announcer. In short, you could find anyone there.

This means, however, that other economic tasks are being set back as the most conscientious workers and administrators are in the militia. I asked one of the leaders about this.

"It is true that we lose a lot in production with these mobilizations," he said. "But they not only serve for our nation's defense.

"Many of the young people in Nicaragua come from broken families and have little orientation to social conduct or personal hygiene. And many do not even have the mental concentration to perform productive tasks. We hope the discipline of the militia, the need to work together in groups, and our political lectures will help them to raise their cultural level and their ability to participate consciously in rebuilding Nicaragua.

"There is another thing too. You know that the shortage of trained personnel means that there are many people in the government and the public sector who are not very revolutionary. Activities like this mobilization help us to determine which are most fit to become leaders and take responsibility at their jobs when they return."

## Why people join

This relates to one of the right wing's criticisms. They say that many people join the militia to win recognition for promotions. Personally, I think the experience is too difficult for any but the dedicated.

Moreover, some of the militia members have jobs in the private sector, where there are no such prerequisites. I met an Ecuadorean, a naturalized Nicaraguan citizen for thirteen years. He has his own small business, which his wife runs while he is on maneuvers. "Sure, it sets back my pocketbook, but this is what we must do to protect the revolution."

I asked if he was not afraid that the government would take over his business one day. "No," he said, "the government is not crazy. What they have done so far is take over the banks and foreign trade, which they had to do. If there comes a time when they want to make little workshops like mine public, I will keep on working there, only with the greater security of government credits and technical backup, and with the profits going back into the public coffers."

And what about women? Why were there only men in the battalion? There used to be women, I was told, but there were a lot of complications that reduced the group's unity and effectiveness as a fighting force. Because of this, and to make it easier for women to



join, they now have their own separate battalions and a big recruiting effort is under way.

#### Carlos's story

I made friends with Carlos in the first days of the call-up. It was not until the end of the week that he mentioned to me he had seven brothers who were all in the United States. All have become successful lawyers, scientists, or engineers. Meanwhile, Carlos lives in Managua with his wife and two sons and has been unemployed for several years.

I had to ask, "Don't you want to move to the United States too?" He answered, "I do not like to be out of work, and anybody has got to be crazy to want to come out to the militia and

fight. But I would not leave. My youngest son was traumatized by the earthquake. To this day if he is not with his mother or me constantly he gets scared. I am afraid that he would not be understood or accepted in the U.S.

"But more than this, I had an older son who helped the FSLN [Sandinista National Liberation Front] during the war. One day he disappeared off the street. Later Somoza's National Guard delivered him to the house — his genitals had been cut off and stuffed into his mouth and he had bled to death. After losing my son like that, how could I leave Nicaragua?"

One of the youths in the battalion then joined us, and I realized that he was Carlos's other son.

"For you, coming from the United States, the discipline and deprivation of living here and traveling with the militia must be difficult. For most of us, though, it is different. We remember when the Guard could take you away at any time, evict you without notice, or take your children if some captain so decided. We survived the earthquake and the war and learned to tolerate hardship. And now, we have a reason to tolerate it — this government is ours."

Carlos, his son, and most of my other neighbors took the hardships gladly. Such spirit and discipline gives them the confidence to say, "An invader can enter Nicaragua, but he will never leave. We will see to that." □

## DOCUMENTS

# Salvadoran rebels reply to Reagan

## FMLN-FDR statement on junta's record

[The following statement was released by the Political-Diplomatic Commission of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) on February 1. It is in reply to President Reagan's certification that the government of El Salvador has met criteria set down in U.S. law for continued receipt of military aid. The translation has been provided by the FMLN-FDR.]

\* \* \*

### I. Introduction

On January 28, 1982, President Reagan certified to the U.S. Congress that the government of El Salvador has fulfilled the five conditions required by the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1981 in order to continue economic and military aid to the military-Christian Democratic junta of El Salvador.

The Political-Diplomatic Commission of the FMLN-FDR believes it is necessary to state our position in this matter due to the importance it carries, not only for the Salvadoran people who suffer the effects of U.S. assistance to the government of El Salvador, but also for the American people whose taxes are used to finance the Salvadoran junta, despite the fact that Americans have on numerous occasions expressed their opposition to the government of El Salvador and to the increasing intervention of the Reagan administration in our country.

We believe that the lack of information and depth as well as the inaccuracies in the administration's certification totally impair the will of Congress, which established the conditions.

For these reasons, the Political-Diplomatic

Commission of the FMLN-FDR hereby issues the following statement.

### II. Compliance with internationally recognized human rights

The information gathered by numerous human rights organizations during 1981 demonstrates that the Salvadoran junta did not make significant efforts to protect human rights. On the contrary, the human rights situation in El Salvador clearly deteriorated:

- The number of civilians not involved in combat who were assassinated by the army and security forces is much larger than the total number of victims assassinated during 1978, 1979, and 1980. The total number of victims in 1981 amounted to 12,501, while in the previous three years there was a total of 9,239. (See chart.)

- With respect to the right to political freedom, there has been an increase in the number of individuals who have been deprived of their freedom for political reasons. According to the Center for Documentation and Information of the Central American University of El Salvador, 1,972 people were imprisoned in 1981 — that is, 597 over the total in 1980 (*Proceso*, no. 46, p. 13).

- The fundamental freedoms of expression, association, movement, etc., remain suspended, given that the state of siege is still in effect. On the other hand, Decree 507 has been in effect since December 3, 1980, making it legal for the authorities to keep a prisoner incommunicado for sixteen days and suspending his or her right to legal defense for a period of 195 days.

- The government of El Salvador has deprived workers of their union rights by prohibiting collective bargaining through Decree 544 issued on January 5, 1981.

As a result of this deteriorating situation, in December 1981, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution regretting "the persistence of a situation in which governmental paramilitary organizations and other groups continue to act with total contempt for the life, security and tranquility of the civilian population." The same resolution urged the Salvadoran government to take the necessary measures to remedy the situation (U.N. A/36/792).

For the same reason, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS) reported that the worst human rights violations took place in El Salvador and Guatemala. According to the report, illegal executions have taken place there in "truly alarming numbers" and "most of them were directly committed by the security forces (OAS/Ser. G, CP/doc. 1201/81, October 20, 1981, pp. 111-112).

President Reagan's certification, aside from issuing excuses and blaming the "extremes" — thus absolving the Salvadoran government — only presented three concrete pieces of evidence in favor of the junta.

The first was the declaration of the Salvadoran government outlawing the paramilitary organization ORDEN. This took place during the first junta (October 1979–January 1980), not during the present one; and in any case declaring ORDEN illegal was a formality without real results since ORDEN's presence is now more evident than before in statistics of human rights violations.

The second piece of information the president's certification provided was the Code of Military Conduct established in October 1980. This, as many other declarations, has not been applied in practice. Suffice it to say that on December 10, 1981, the Salvadoran Communal Union (Unión Comunal Salvadoreña — UCS),

a progovernment peasant organization financed by the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), recommended "to the government and to the Armed Forces that a system of detention be set up under which persons . . . can be detained . . . rather than being summarily executed" (*El Salvador Land Reform Update*, "Land to the Tiller Program," December 10, 1981, p. 9).

Third, the certification states that the government of El Salvador has removed ultrarightist military officers. As we will see in the next section, this measure has merely been a cosmetic change that has not resulted in a decrease in the repressive practices of the armed forces against the civilian population.

### III. Control of the armed forces to bring an end to indiscriminate torture and murder of Salvadoran citizens

We do not believe that the lack of a significant improvement in the human rights situation in El Salvador is mainly due to the junta's inability to control its armed forces. Our position in regard to this matter is in accord with the report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS, which states that the numerous illegal executions committed by the security forces and paramilitary organizations take place because these forces "act without punishment . . . with the acquiescence or tacit consent of the government."

According to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, such acquiescence has meant that "governmental authorities do not proceed to an adequate and effective investigation in regard to who is responsible for such crimes."

Putting aside the statements made by junta members, reality demonstrates that it is precisely the high governmental authorities who are implementing a policy of indiscriminate torture and assassination against the civilian population. During 1981, this policy became more generalized, especially since the armed forces began to put into practice their "scorched earth" policy. Let us look at some examples:

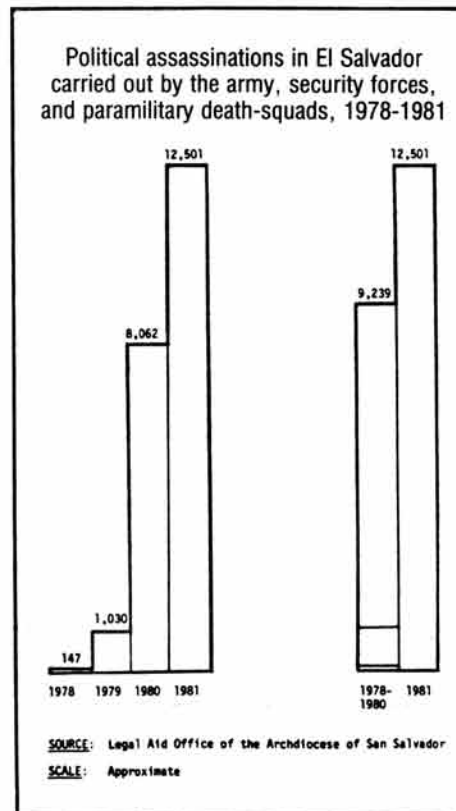
- According to reports by the Center for Documentation and Information of the Central American University of El Salvador, from January to November 1981, 3,386 civilians were assassinated by the armed forces through "scorched earth" tactics.

- From December 7 to December 17, 1981, the armed forces carried out the most cruel and massive slaughter in the province of Morazán: in just ten days, more than 1,009 peasants were assassinated. The army razed entire villages such as El Mozote, where 472 people were eliminated, and Cerro Pando, where 92 children below the age of fourteen were murdered. Ample information on this massacre has been published by the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* on January 27 and 28, 1982.

- Torture is an ongoing practice. The cases of fifty-one political prisoners under custody in the Santa Tecla Prison have been documented. The political prisoners have denounced the tor-

tures to which they have been submitted by the security forces.

- It is true that some military officers with a well-known reputation as torturers have been



assigned to the diplomatic corps (we know of five such cases). The point, however, is that these have been cosmetic changes since torture continues to be practiced and the high military officers in charge of the most repressive and unpopular security forces have been given promotions. Such is the case of the directors of the Treasury Police and the National Guard, who have held their positions since November 1979. The former was recently promoted to colonel and the latter to general.

- At the same time, military officers known to have practiced repression and who were removed from the armed forces at the time of the young officers' coup on October 15, 1979, are being reincorporated into the armed forces. The most notorious case is that of Colonel Rafael Flores Lima, who served as private secretary to General Carlos Humberto Romero (ousted in the October 1979 coup) and who now is chief of staff of the armed forces.

- Equally revealing is the testimony of a former army soldier, Carlos Antonio Gómez Montano, published in the *New York Times* on January 11, 1982:

One of those conscripted with him was promoted to sergeant a few months later after he had killed his own parents and two siblings because they were guerrilla sympathizers, Mr. Gómez recalled. During a military ceremony, he added, an air force colonel pointed to the sergeant's act and his promotion as demonstrations of "bravery" and the "hope for progress in a military career."

Therefore, the assertion President Reagan makes in his certification, that the level of violence and abuse perpetrated by the security forces decreased in 1981, is far from reality.

The accuracy of the statistics compiled by the U.S. embassy in El Salvador is questionable, especially in view of Ambassador [Deane] Hinton's statements of January 8, 1982. In reference to the massacre in the Morazán province in December 1981, he affirmed that "I certainly cannot confirm such reports, nor do I have any reason to believe they are true." Later, however, in an interview published by the *Washington Post* on January 31, 1982, he stated: "From the details I read in the story, there definitely must have been something. But I don't think it's anywhere near what they say in the propaganda."

Once again, we ask ourselves if the administration's policy is to conceal the junta's deeds against the people, or to truly contribute to peace in Central America.

### IV. Continued progress in implementing reforms

In regard to this point, the president's certification centers on the agrarian reform program, begun in March 1980. Aside from our evaluation of the program's content and objectives, there are no facts that confirm the certification's contention that "continued progress" is being achieved in implementing the agrarian reform. On the contrary, the program has shown a tendency of reversal and stagnation.

The Basic Agrarian Reform Law contained three phases. Phase I, involving properties larger than 500 hectares [1 hectare = 2.47 acres], began in March 1980.

Phase II involved properties between 150 and 500 hectares. Phase II was crucial to the land reform process since coffee production, the economic basis of the Salvadoran oligarchy, took place on these properties. This phase has not been implemented and it will not be. In early March 1981, José Napoleón Duarte publicly announced its suspension.

Two months later, on May 14, the junta's vice-president, Col. Abdul Gutierrez, announced in a press conference held in San Salvador that "there won't be a land reform beyond Phase I and Decree 207." (See below for Decree 207.)

Another obvious reversal in the land reform process has been the establishment of the Commission on Restitutions by the Salvadoran government, through which no less than twelve but as many as forty-five estates that had been expropriated have been returned to their former owners. This commission has no basis under the Basic Agrarian Reform Law decreed in March 1980.

Furthermore, in regard to the implementation of the "Land to the Tiller" program (Decree 207), the Salvadoran Communal Union, which had promoted the program in the country, stated in a report at the end of 1981 that "according to survey data, more than 25,000 families have been illegally evicted, and tens of thousands of additional families have reason



to fear another wave of evictions before spring 1982."

This report, which gains more importance because it comes from an organization of peasants that has contributed with the junta in the process of land reform, goes on to say that "we must be very clear in recognizing that the failure of the agrarian reform is an immediate and imminent danger," and it further states that "what had begun in March and April 1980 with bright promise, and had continued to show bright promise even through the end of 1980, now threatens to become a nightmare of bureaucratic red tape, evictions and killings. . . ."

#### V. Good faith efforts for a political solution and free elections

This is a crucial condition in the legislation approved by Congress, which states that before receiving additional assistance from the United States, the government of El Salvador must be committed to the holding of free elections at an early date, and to that end must have demonstrated its good faith efforts to begin discussions with all major factions in El Salvador that have declared their willingness to find and implement an equitable solution to the conflict.

The government of El Salvador has categorically rejected any possibility of discussion that could lead to a political settlement.

On September 29, 1981, before the United Nations General Assembly, José Napoleón Duarte stated: "My government's expressed desire for peace and concord completely excludes any negotiations or dialogue with organized armed sectors." In a speech delivered in San Salvador on October 8, 1981, he once again said that "our government has repeatedly stated that at no time will it negotiate behind the backs of its people with armed groups, or even less, accept the negotiations of a new social order or the ridiculous notion of restructuring the armed forces to incorporate into them terrorist groups which are responsible for innumerable crimes."

On September 30, 1981, the president of Panama, Aristides Royo, offered Panamanian territory and his good offices in order that communication between the parties in conflict could take place. On October 7, 1981, the Salvadoran junta issued a communiqué reiterating its position against any form of dialogue: "It is clear that there is no chance of dialogue or negotiation with armed sectors and therefore any possibility of mediation is excluded" (UPI, October 7, 1981).

Another communiqué issued by the junta on October 22, 1981, stated along the same line that "The position of the Revolutionary Salvadoran Government is not to negotiate and not to favor any basis for dialogue with the armed groups of the FMLN or with any other similar sector" (EFE, October 23, 1981).

On the other hand, the FMLN-FDR has made public and repeated proposals for peace talks aimed at solving the present armed con-

flict by means of a political settlement, and thus creating the necessary conditions for a truly democratic electoral process. In the letter presented before the United Nations General Assembly of 1981, as well as in the letter delivered to President Reagan on January 28, 1981, both the FMLN and the FDR have expressed their will to participate in a political settlement.

It is clear, then, that the military-Christian Democratic government, besides not having shown good faith efforts to begin discussions, has explicitly opposed them.

The administration is well aware of these facts, but in its certification to Congress has blatantly attempted to conceal them.

In regard to the elections scheduled for March, the FMLN-FDR has argued that there are no minimum conditions for such elections to have any meaning at all. We have clearly stated that "our fronts consider elections a valid and necessary instrument of expression of the people's will, wherever [the] conditions and atmosphere exist that allow the people to freely express their will" (FMLN-FDR Proposal for Finding a Political Solution to the Situation in El Salvador, October 7, 1981).

Even five political parties now participating in the March elections submitted a letter to the secretary general of the OAS on December 17, 1981, in which they declare that "by putting aside the draft of the Provisional Electoral Law, approved by the political parties, and by imposing the thesis of the Christian Democrats, the Government of El Salvador has lost completely the confidence of the political institutions of the Republic. . . ." Therefore, the statement made by the administration that "the new electoral law was promulgated by the junta in December after thorough discussions among the political parties" seems questionable to us, especially in light of the fact that the same parties later express in the aforementioned letter that "the Christian Democrats are mainly responsible for blocking the electoral process because after having obtained international support, they have deceived the political parties that drafted the Provisional Electoral Law in the inter-parliamentary forum. . . ."

It is thus clear that the government of El Salvador has systematically rejected any possibility of dialogue that could lead to a political solution, has not demonstrated "good faith efforts" even toward those political parties registered for the scheduled March elections, and has not created the necessary conditions for holding free elections.

#### VI. Efforts to investigate the murders of U.S. citizens

It is now fourteen months since the assassination of the four American churchwomen, and twelve months since the assassination of the two land reform advisors. The junta's promises and statements aside, the facts are that up to this moment, no charges have been brought against the six enlisted men involved in the churchwomen's assassinations; and the two civilians arrested in connection with the

assassination of the two land reform advisors have been recently freed.

We fully agree with the families of the assassinated churchwomen when they point out in a letter to President Reagan that "every indication seen by the families points to a cover-up by the Salvadoran government." We fully support the efforts made by the victims' families and by the American people demanding that the Salvadoran government bring to justice those responsible for these crimes.

If it is true that "Salvadoran officials fully recognize how important it is to solve these matters," as the presidential certification states, then how is it possible that even with the help of the FBI, nothing has come out of such investigations?

#### VII. Conclusions

We believe that the presidential certification does not address the real situation in El Salvador, and that the conditions approved by Congress, interpreting the will of the American people, have not been accomplished.

We believe that the presidential certification is only a formality aimed at justifying the administration's support to the military-Christian Democratic junta, notwithstanding its responsibility in the continuous violations of human rights against the Salvadoran people.

Finally, we believe the certification shows the administration's commitment to continue its militaristic approach, through increasing military intervention. This approach not only disregards the appeal made by the United Nations in its 36th General Assembly in December 1981 to "abstain from intervening in the internal situation in El Salvador and suspend all supplies of arms and any type of military support," but is also following the same path that led the U.S. government to a full involvement in the Vietnam War.

We therefore call upon the American people and the Congress to oppose further military aid to the government of El Salvador. We also request a change in the Reagan administration's policy towards El Salvador so that a comprehensive political solution that will guarantee the peace and justice our people deserve can be achieved. □

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# An exchange of views

## How to aid workers' struggle

[The following letter to the editor of *Intercontinental Press* was dated January 10.]

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Dear Comrade,

The last issue of 1981 of *Intercontinental Press* published an article by Larry Seigle under the title "How to aid Polish workers." While we obviously agree with much which is being said in this article, it contains errors which are so grave that we cannot keep silent on them.

1. The article does not clearly say what "the imposition of martial law, the arrests of workers' leaders and the use of force against strikers" objectively means. The truth is that what has happened in Poland since December 13 is the beginning of a *political counterrevolution*. The Polish workers had conquered *de facto* legal autonomous mass organizations of a semi-soviet type. These have now been suppressed, at least temporarily, through massive repression and terror. It is important to understand that the Polish and international working class have thereby suffered a serious defeat.

2. The article states: "It is no coincidence that the most democratic workers state in the world, revolutionary Cuba, is also the land where the toiling masses have achieved the highest level of political consciousness, including international consciousness. It is the most politically advanced working class in the world. And it is this understanding that makes Cuba an unshakeable defender of the Soviet workers state and at the same time places Cuba shoulder to shoulder with revolutionary fighters throughout the world — from Indochina to Nicaragua."

This statement is factually wrong and politically irresponsible.

It is true, and all to the honor of Cuba, that that small workers state fully supports revolutionary fighters in many countries of the world, at great risks and at great costs to itself. We are enthusiastically on the side of Cuba in all such solidarity actions. But it is unfortunately untrue that "Cubans [are] shoulder to shoulder with revolutionary fighters *throughout the world*." In Poland, where a political revolution was developing in which 10 million workers and large allied forces were engaged, which constituted one of the highest forms of proletarian activity and self-organization which the world has seen since the Russian revolution, the Cuban press is now supporting counterrevolution and not the revolutionists, in full contradiction to what it is doing in relation to other parts of the world. The Cuban workers, systematically misinformed on that issue through the only mass media to which

they have access, cannot, under these circumstances, autonomously manifest internationalist solidarity with the Polish working class. The limitations of workers democracy have led to a demise of proletarian internationalism. This is a serious blow against the interests and the defense of revolutionary Cuba and of the revolution in Central America and Latin America. We have to say so clearly and openly, not irresponsibly hide that fact.

3. The article states: "In France, the imperialist propaganda campaign carried out under the guise of 'solidarity' with Poland reached unrivaled heights. In Paris, the Socialist Party leadership, along with SP-led unions, organized a protest march against the actions [*sic*] of the Soviet and Polish governments. The major bourgeois parties held a demonstration at the same time and the same place."

This statement is again factually wrong and politically misleading. The truth is that the march to which comrade Seigle alludes was called by all French working-class mass organizations outside of the CP and the CGT [General Confederation of Labor] majority (a large sector of CP oppositionists and the CGT minority participated). The tens of thousands of demonstrators were overwhelmingly working class in composition. The attempt of less than 1,000 Gaullists to join the march failed because the Trotskyists expelled them from it. Contrary to what happened in 1956 after the crushing by the Soviet army of the Hungarian revolution, and in 1968 after the entry of Warsaw Pact armies in Czechoslovakia, this time

the Socialist Party was forced by the changed relationship of class forces and by working-class pressure to refuse any common action with bourgeois parties. The foreign representatives of Solidarnosc also directed themselves exclusively toward the French trade unions.

It also has to be added that short, token strikes in solidarity with the Polish workers took place, called by the trade unions. Several million workers participated in these strikes in France and Italy, and hundreds of thousands in Belgium and Norway.

The defense of the Polish workers through such class-struggle forms of working-class activity today calls for a long-term solidarity campaign essentially based on the mass organizations of the working class. That is what the Fourth International is fighting for, through a correct application of the united front tactic.

So, far from being a triumph of the "imperialist propaganda campaign," the solidarity demonstrations in France with the Polish workers were highpoints of elementary proletarian internationalism. It is through the development of such solidarity actions with the *three sectors of the world revolution* that proletarian internationalist consciousness will be raised in practice in the international working class. This is the only way today to achieve bigger and bigger success in our campaign for the defense of the Central American revolution, threatened by imperialism and its stooges.

This is what Trotskyists everywhere in the world — including the USA — clearly understood and practiced in 1956 and 1968. Comrade Seigle's article represents a departure from that tradition. We have to dissociate ourselves from that departure.

Comradely greetings,  
Pierre Frank  
Livio Maitan  
Ernest Mandel  
Contributing Editors

## In reply . . .

By Steve Clark, George Novack, and Larry Seigle

Comrades Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel take issue with the news analysis entitled "How to aid Polish workers" in the December 28, 1981, *Intercontinental Press*. They charge that it contained "grave" errors and "politically irresponsible" assertions. Most importantly, they contend that the line of the news analysis is a "departure from [the] tradition" of Trotskyism. It signifies, they state, a rejection of "what Trotskyists everywhere in the world — including the USA — clearly understood and practiced in 1956 and 1968."

The charges are serious ones. But they are entirely misdirected. Far from being a departure, the offending news analysis simply reaffirmed the positions taken by revolutionary Marxists not only in 1956 and 1968, but also,

as we shall see, in 1953 and still earlier.

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel begin by finding fault with the news analysis because it failed to explain what the December 13 declaration of martial law in Poland and the subsequent events there "objectively means." This is true. The news analysis did not attempt an assessment of the longer-term impact of the crackdown on the political revolution in Poland. This was not its topic or purpose. Its subject was clearly indicated by its title: "How to aid Polish workers."

The point was to explain how the labor movement in the imperialist countries can help the struggle of Solidarity. The framework was clearly stated: "the imposition of martial law, the arrests of workers' leaders, and the use of force against strikers are criminal acts, condemned by working-class fighters every-



where." In its concluding paragraph, the news analysis said:

Once again the bureaucratic rulers of the Soviet Union and Poland have revealed themselves to be the betrayers of the ideals of communism, obstacles to its advancement, and deadly enemies of the fight for workers democracy and self-determination, which were an essential element of the program that the Bolshevik Party in the time of Lenin fought to implement.

#### What Polish events 'objectively mean'

A separate article in the same issue of *Intercontinental Press*, entitled, "A revolution for workers democracy," by Ernest Harsch, did take a look at what the events in Poland "objectively mean." This article was put together in the days after the declaration of martial law, when information from inside Poland was hard to come by because of the total news blackout imposed by the Polish regime. Harsch stressed that "despite the suddenness of the move [the declaration of martial law] and the detention of many of their leaders, Polish workers immediately responded. Workers in factories around the country went on strike, in many cases occupying their plants."

Harsch added, in assessing the events, that "the Polish revolution is not over. It has entered a new — but critical — stage."

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel do not express an opinion one way or the other about this assessment. Certainly it was not as detailed as the further analyses that *Intercontinental Press* has published based on more recent information coming out of Poland. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that Harsch's article avoided a mistake made by many radical and petty-bourgeois commentators, whose immediate reaction to the crackdown against Solidarity was to despair, and to draw the impressionistic conclusion that the heroic Polish working class had been crushed, and its struggle ended for an historic period.

The bureaucracy has succeeded in driving Solidarity underground, dispersing it to a large extent, and arresting many workers' leaders. But it has not definitively destroyed Solidarity, nor has it broken the back of the workers struggle. Decisive battles are yet to be fought.

#### What kind of solidarity is needed?

The most extensive part of the criticism offered by the three comrades concerns what revolutionists in the imperialist countries ought to be doing to advance the interests of the Polish workers.

In addition to pointing to the hypocrisy of the likes of Reagan and Thatcher, the news analysis went after the misleaders of the labor movement in France and in the United States. It said, "In the United States, the bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO trade-union federation jumped into the anticommunist campaign with a vigor noticeably missing when it comes to defending the rights of workers against the capitalists — in the United States or anywhere else."

With regard to France, the news analysis noted the extreme hypocrisy of the leadership



December 14 march in Paris called by leadership of French Socialist Party.

Rouge

of the French Socialist Party, the governing body in imperialist France. It observed that "the SP government of François Mitterrand has given wholehearted support to Reagan's military buildup in the name of countering the Soviet 'threat.'" It pointed out that the enthusiasm of the French SP leaders for the demonstrations against the crackdown in Poland was in marked contrast to their boycott of a demonstration held in Paris a few weeks earlier to protest the planned introduction in Europe of new nuclear missiles by NATO.

The news analysis stated, "In Paris, the Socialist Party leadership, along with SP-led unions, organized a protest march against the actions of the Soviet and Polish governments. The major bourgeois parties held a demonstration at the same time and same place."

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel assert that this is "factually wrong and politically misleading." First, they say that the "tens of thousands of demonstrators were overwhelmingly working class in composition."

But the news analysis did not say anything about the composition of the demonstration, and there is no reason to dispute the fact that the overwhelming majority of those who participated were people who work for a living. Since in France, everyone from ships' officers to doctors, engineers, and even cops and judges belong to unions, it might even be true that most of those participating were unionists.

However, that does not determine the political character of the demonstration. Just because an action is called by trade unions, and workers respond, does not automatically make it progressive.

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel re-

port that the "attempt of less than 1,000 Gaullists to join the march failed because the Trotskyists expelled them from it." (The news analysis did not say that the Gaullists joined the march, but that they and other bourgeois forces "held a demonstration at the same time and same place." This in fact happened.)

#### 'High point of proletarian internationalism'?

But the question is posed, why did 1,000 Gaullists want to join the demonstration? Could it be because they found themselves in agreement with the social democrats and other labor lieutenants of the capitalist class who organized the action and established its political character? Doesn't that point to a problem in what Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel characterize as one of the "highpoints of elementary proletarian internationalism"?

Shouldn't we explain to other workers who participated in the march that there is a better way to differentiate a working-class line on Poland from that of the Gaullists than by organizing demonstrations that the bourgeois parties have to be physically restrained from joining? For example, shouldn't those concerned about aiding Polish workers have directed their fire against French imperialism and not limited themselves to condemning the crackdown in Poland? Are the interests of Polish workers different from those of French workers?

Perhaps the comrades took offense at the remark in the news analysis that the proimperialist hypocrisy around Poland reached "unrivaled heights" in France. This point was aimed at the French SP officialdom, which in the name of socialism is administering capitalism

in France and its colonial possessions, and defending the French bourgeoisie's imperialist interests.

By all reports, none of the organizers of this "highpoint of proletarian internationalism" held in the streets of Paris raised demands on the French government for withdrawal of French military forces from Africa and other parts of the world, independence for the French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe, or any such anti-French-imperialist slogans. This kind of hypocrisy, if not unrivaled, at least has yet to be surpassed.

Referring to this Paris demonstration, Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel state, "The defense of the Polish workers through such class-struggle forms of working-class activity today calls for a long-term solidarity campaign essentially based on the mass organizations of the working class." But a working-class approach needs to include more than that it be "based on" the trade unions and the mass reformist workers parties.

The only meaningful solidarity activities are those that objectively advance the working class in the capitalist countries along its own strategic line of march. Our starting point must be to find ways to deepen the class consciousness, political understanding, and combativity of workers who are motivated by solidarity with the Polish struggle. That means promoting awareness not only that Stalinism is counterrevolutionary, but also that social democratic anticommunism and "third campism" are deadly enemies of the workers movement and workers democracy.

#### How revolutionary Marxists responded in 1968

This essential element is missing from the line proposed by Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel. In leaving it out, they discard the approach that has guided revolutionary Marxists in the past, as can be seen by looking at the line the Fourth International has followed throughout its history. Our response to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 is a good place to start.

The *Militant*, which expresses the views of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the United States, protested the invasion with a banner headline demanding, "Soviet troops, go home! U.S., get out of Vietnam!" In a front-page statement, SWP presidential candidate Fred Halstead emphasized the connections between opposition to the Soviet invasion and defense of the Vietnamese revolution against Washington's occupying army. This sharply differentiated the SWP from "third camp" and openly proimperialist defenders of national self-determination and democratic rights.

Halstead said:

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia directly injures the Vietnamese revolution since it is being exploited by the U.S. imperialists and their allies to sanction the continuation of their war against the Vietnamese people. It serves to dishearten the antiwar forces within the United States. A call for the invad-

ing Warsaw Pact armies to get out of Czechoslovakia must be coupled with an equally vigorous demand for U.S. troops to withdraw immediately from Vietnam.

The same general stance was adopted by the French Trotskyists. Eight members of the banned Revolutionary Communist Youth (JCR) issued a statement on their release from prison August 23, just days after the Soviet tanks rolled into Prague. The eight had been imprisoned on charges of reconstituting the JCR, which had been dissolved by the French government following the massive upsurge of May-June 1968. They focused their fire on the French government, as well as expressing opposition to the Soviet invasion. They said:

The Soviet aggression has dealt a blow to the entire international workers movement. It has encouraged the imperialists to step up their aggressive policy throughout the world and especially in Vietnam. It has given ammunition to the French bourgeoisie which pretends to believe that the May movement wanted to establish a bureaucratic dictatorship in France, although the May revolutionists are in solidarity with the Czechoslovak workers as they were with the Polish students.

The socialism we want assumed total democracy for the workers and students. It is with this aspiration that tens of thousands of young people have entered into struggle today. The fact that in many capitals demonstrations of support for the Czechoslovak people have marched behind red flags to the tune of the 'Internationale' testifies to this. But we will never add our voices to those who support [Lyndon] Johnson and [Francisco] Franco.

#### Hypocrisy of British Labour Party

This approach was also followed in London, at a rally organized by the Labour Party on August 25. Alan Harris, writing in the September 9, 1968, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, recounted what happened when radical youth, prominent among them members of the International Marxist Group, the British section of the Fourth International, confronted leaders of the Labour Party and the British union federation, the Trades Union Congress. The Labour Party was then in office, lending full support to Washington's dirty war in Vietnam.

Despite a battery of high-wattage loudspeakers, government orators George Brown, Jennie Lee, Richard Crossman and Fred Layday of the Trades Union Congress had a hard time making themselves heard above the din.

Protected by police, they were jeered, booed, and pelted with pennies.

When Brown lost his temper and called the hecklers "fascists," large sections of the audience chanted back, "Hypocrites!"; "What About Vietnam?"; "What About Biafra?"

Loud laughter greeted Brown's solemn declaration: "We are in the fight. New ideas are bound to win and Labour pledges to be there when the fight is won."

The response to Brown's cynical pledge indicated the audience's awareness of the record of the Labour party leaders. In violation of official Labour party policy they have not organized a single solitary rally on Vietnam; they have done absolutely nothing in defense of the French workers and students; they apologized for the military takeover in Greece; they did not say a single word in defense of the Domini-

can Republic against the U.S. invasion; in short, they have not dissociated themselves in the slightest way from U.S. foreign policy — they are anti-Communist to the core. Yet within five days of Moscow's invasion of Czechoslovakia, they had the gall to speak in the name of the communist workers of that country!"

The stance of the revolutionary-minded comrades at the demonstration was one of exposing the fakery of the social democratic politicians and trade-union officials of the Labour Party, which, like the French SP leadership today, was administering an empire on behalf of the capitalist rulers of the country.

The comrades participated in the demonstration and expressed their point of view — vigorously. But it never occurred to them to label the demonstration organized by the governing party of imperialist Britain as a "highpoint of elementary proletarian internationalism."

#### 'Tear away the hypocritical mask'

This approach was in line with the position adopted by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International in response to the invasion of Czechoslovakia. In a statement issued the day after the invasion and published in *Intercontinental Press* on September 2, 1968, the United Secretariat condemned the Soviet move, and answered the lies offered by the Stalinists in self-justification. It then went on to state,

While condemning the crimes of the Kremlin, the workers must not forget for one moment the bloodier crimes committed by imperialism every day in Vietnam. Let us tear away the hypocritical mask worn by imperialism. The imperialists are shedding crocodile tears over the violation of the right of the Czechoslovak people to determine their own destiny, but they rain napalm and poison gas on the Vietnamese people to prevent them from setting up the kind of government and social regime they want.

Then, turning to the question of the tasks facing the workers movement in the imperialist countries, the United Secretariat said, "The Fourth International reminds the workers of all the capitalist countries that the best help they can give to the struggle of their Czech brothers is to redouble their efforts to overthrow the regime of capitalism, and to commit themselves even more wholeheartedly to the road of socialist revolution."

#### 'How to aid Hungarian Revolution'

In 1956, when the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin directed the crushing of the Hungarian workers revolution, revolutionaries likewise worked to advance class consciousness inside the capitalist countries as well as in the workers states.

Marxists rejected the idea of an all-inclusive front of "anti-Stalinists" within the labor movement to mobilize support for the Hungarian revolution, arguing that solidarity with the Hungarian workers in the capitalist countries had to start from the standpoint of opposition to imperialism. This point of view, in the context of U.S. politics, was expressed in an editorial entitled "How to Aid Hungarian Revolu-



tion" in the *Militant* of December 3, 1956.

The editorial explained:

The principle of international working class solidarity gives world and U.S. labor the obligation to aid the Hungarian workers who are leading a historic struggle for national independence. But such aid must be so designed and executed as to further the aims for which the Hungarian workers are fighting — an independent socialist Hungary.

Genuine support to the Hungarian revolution by American labor therefore means, first of all, to expose and to combat the reactionary aims of U.S. Big Business in Hungary. For despite their hypocritical display of concern for the Hungarian masses, the Wall Street politicians are working to thwart their socialist objectives.

The *Militant* focused its fire on the line being proposed within the labor movement by Walter Reuther, head of the United Auto Workers. Reuther was a "progressive" labor faker of the American breed — that is to say, he acknowledged that he had been a socialist in his youth and was now a loyal Democrat.

Reuther launched a UAW campaign around Hungary, including calling for lunchtime protest meetings in the auto plants and collections by the union for Hungarian relief. Reuther also urged that Washington "take the lead" in the establishment of a "United Nations International Police Force to move in and maintain order and resist aggression in such cases as that of Hungary."

The *Militant* said, "The American working people are sympathetic to the Hungarian struggle for national independence. But this sympathy is being subverted by the official leaders of the union movement to further the policies of the U.S. State Department."

The editorial argued that this anticommunist and anti-Soviet "labor" campaign was reactionary. It pointed out that Reuther's "real concern is not to defend the interests of the Hungarian workers but to further U.S. cold-war objectives." And it concluded by addressing the responsibilities of class-conscious workers in the United States:

"U.S. labor must couple its support for the Hungarian workers' demand on the Kremlin — 'Get your troops out!' — with demands of its own addressed to the U.S. government: 'Hands off the Hungarian Revolution!' 'Withdraw all American troops from foreign soil and waters!'" (Emphasis added.)

In 1956, the Fourth International was divided into two public factions. However, the common reaction by both wings of the international to the events in Hungary was one of the key factors that led to the reunification process. This line in the *Militant* reflected the general approach of experienced leaderships of the sections of the Fourth International.

#### East German uprising in 1953

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel speak of what Trotskyists "understood and practiced in 1956 and 1968." This omits the year 1953, when the East German workers staged the first massive uprising against the bureaucratic overlords in the deformed workers states in Eastern Europe.

Differences over the East German events, which reflected a broader divergence over what some in the Fourth International had come to believe was a new capacity of the Stalinist bureaucracies to reform themselves, played a central role in the 1953 split in the international.

However, if we look at the 1953 position of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States, as reflected in the *Militant*, we will see that its approach was exactly the same as in 1956, 1968 — and today.

The *Militant* greeted the strike demonstrations in East Berlin in June 1953 as pointing "to the only progressive way in which Stalinism can be destroyed — the independent action of the working class, fighting militantly for their own economic, political and social interests."

In its lead editorial the following week, the *Militant* stated its view of the task of the labor movement in the United States in regard to solidarity with the East German workers.

"To mobilize their forces for a definitive settlement with their oppressors, the German workers need our help. *American labor has the duty to demand that Washington keep its hands off East Germany, withdraw all U.S. troops from Germany, and allow the German people to handle their own affairs.*" (Emphasis added.)

The *Militant* also ran a front-page story by George Breitman entitled, "Lessons for U.S. Labor from East Germany," explaining how class-conscious unionists should respond to Walter Reuther and George Meany (then head of the American Federation of Labor), who were spouting off about the need for labor to "support" the courageous East German workers.

Breitman wrote,

The real test of political courage is the willingness and ability to oppose the government in your own country on its reactionary policies, both domestic and foreign. The East German workers meet this test. Meany and Reuther don't. . . .

Nothing is cheaper or safer than opposing the crimes of a government that is far away. The East German workers, in the face of tanks, oppose their own government. Meany and Reuther oppose — the Kremlin and its agents. Nothing is more respectable in Washington today.

#### Is the old framework out of date?

Thus, we submit, the line of the news analysis was consistent with what U.S. Trotskyists and most others understood and practiced in 1953 as well as in 1956 and 1968. It was not a departure. The same, however, cannot be said of the line being advanced by some leaders of the Fourth International today and being implemented by some of its sections.

An example of such a departure is the article by Comrade Jacqueline Allio in last week's *Intercontinental Press*, entitled "Protests Against Polish Crackdown." Comrade Allio is a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International who has written extensively on the events in Poland and is active in

organizing solidarity activities throughout Europe. Her article was distributed as an advance promotional issue of *International Viewpoint*, a new English-language magazine published by the United Secretariat. We can assume that her article does not express a line different from that of Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel.

Under the subheading "For unity of action" Comrade Allio writes, "mobilizations in support of the Polish workers resistance make the battle for unity in action of the various forces of the workers movement a priority — whether actions organized for food aid and financial support for Solidarity or commissions of inquiry and sponsorship schemes aiming to establish direct links with the Polish workers of such and such a town, sector, or workplace."

The political basis for this "unity in action" is to be the single issue of opposition to the Stalinist repression in Poland. What it leaves out is what must be at the heart of working-class solidarity with Polish Solidarity: opposition to our own capitalist governments, and genuine proletarian internationalism, which necessitates defense of the workers states against imperialism.

#### Have the social democrats adopted 'advanced positions'?

Comrade Allio goes so far as to hail the "advanced positions adopted by the leadership of the CFDT" (the French union federation dominated by the Socialist Party).

But what do these "advanced positions" consist of? Have the social-democratic bureaucrats who head the CFDT come out in defense of the Soviet Union and all other workers states against imperialism? Have they declared political war on the capitalist government of France?

What Comrade Allio ignores is that the CFDT official leadership is firmly supporting the current capitalist government of France. Its "advanced positions" do not extend to launching a campaign inside France against the introduction of new NATO nuclear missiles in Western Europe, nor a fight against French imperialism's own "nuclear strike force."

Nor do its "advanced positions" include opposition to the imperialist draft, which the Mitterrand government is dutifully enforcing. Nor do they include a campaign against French imperialism and colonialism in Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere.

To be proimperialist and militantly anticommunist is hardly an "advance" for social democrats. This has been the case since 1917. They have never wavered for an instant from their steadfast opposition to the Soviet workers state, and to every workers state that has been established since. Their "solidarity" with workers' struggle in these countries has always been in this framework. What is new is to see this reactionary position winning praise from revolutionary Marxists.

#### Stalinism and anti-Stalinism

The framework for the working-class ap-

proach to this question was spelled out by James P. Cannon, one of the founding leaders of the Fourth International.

In 1945, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Russian revolution, Cannon gave a speech reaffirming the stance of the Fourth International in defense of the Soviet workers state against imperialism. This was an important speech for the whole world movement, since it was the first opportunity for such a public declaration by any of the central leaders of the Fourth International since before World War II.

Cannon took aim in that speech at the development — already discernable in the United States — of what would become known as “Stalinophobia,” as the postwar imperialist onslaught against the workers states and the witchhunt at home reached full steam. Cannon said:

The Trotskyists understood the nature of Stalinism better, and explained it earlier, and fought it longer and harder than any others. Therefore nobody needs to incite us against Stalinism. But vulgar “anti-Stalinism” is no more revolutionary, and no more attractive to us. We know where this “anti-Stalinism” leads. Up to now it has always led to the camp of “democratic” imperialism.

We can have no quarrel whatsoever with those who denounced Stalinism for its bloody crimes against the workers — and they are legion. But excessive zeal in criticizing and denouncing the Soviet Union and those who still defend it — that part of it which is worthy of defense — against imperialism is subject to suspicion. The unbridled antagonism bordering on Russophobia — which one can notice in the atmosphere these days — is a very dangerous sentiment. . . .

Cannon returned to the same theme two years later in response to a proposal from Ruth Fischer, an exiled former leader of the German Communist Party, who had in the mid-1930s served on the International Secretariat of the International Communist League, the predecessor of the Fourth International. She had since left the Trotskyist movement.

In 1947 Fischer proposed the establishment of a “united front” against Stalinism. Cannon responded with a series of articles in the *Militant*, later published as a pamphlet under the title, *American Stalinism and Anti-Stalinism*. (This pamphlet is now included in the Pathfinder Press book, *The Struggle for Socialism in the “American Century”*. It is available for \$8.95 from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014.)

Cannon wrote:

“So that there may be no misunderstanding, let us make our position clear at the outset. We believe that the greatest and most menacing enemy of the human race is the bipartisan imperialist cabal at Washington. We consider the fight against war and reaction in the United States to be the first and main duty of American revolutionists.”

(At the risk of oversimplification, we might observe that had he been living in France, Cannon would have written, “We consider the fight against war and reaction in France to be



James P. Cannon. “The greatest and most menacing enemy of the human race is the bipartisan imperialist cabal in Washington.”

the first and main duty of French revolutionists.”)

He continued:

This is the necessary premise for cooperation in the fight against Stalinism. Those who disagree with us on this point do not understand the reality of the present day, and do not talk our language.

An understanding of the perfidious character of Stalinism is the beginning of wisdom for every serious class-conscious worker; and all anti-Stalinists who are also anticapitalist should try to work together. But anti-Stalinism, by itself, is no program for common struggle. It is too broad a term, and it means different things to different people. There are more anti-Stalinists now than there were when we started our struggle eighteen years ago, especially in this country where Stalinism is weak and Trumanism is strong, and they are especially numerous in New York and not all of them are phonies. But very few of the current crop of vociferous anti-Stalinists have anything to do with us, or we with them. That is not because of exclusiveness or quarrelsomeness, either on their part or ours, but because we start out from different premises, conduct the struggle by different methods, and aim at different goals.

#### ‘Clearly and unambiguously anticapitalist’

Cannon approached the question from the standpoint of how to win to the genuine communist movement — our movement — radicalizing workers who were repelled by Stalinism’s crimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and in the labor movement in the capitalist countries. That remains our framework today. As Cannon put it in 1947:

“The fight against Stalinism is first of all,

and above all, a political fight. This political fight will never make any serious headway with the radicalized workers — and they are the ones who are decisive — unless it is clearly and unambiguously anticapitalist from beginning to end.”

Turning specifically to the proposal of an “all-inclusive united front” against Stalinism, Cannon added the following:

We Trotskyists, as everybody knows, are also against Stalinism and have fought it unceasingly and consistently for a very long time. But we have no place in the present “all-inclusive” united front against American Stalinism. The reason for this is that we are anti-capitalist. Consequently, we can find no point of agreement with the campaign conducted by the political representatives of American capitalism in Washington, with the support of its agents in the labor movement and its lackeys in the literary and academic world. We fight Stalinism from a different standpoint.

We fight Stalinism not because it is another name for communism, but precisely because of its betrayal of communism and of the interests of the workers in the class struggle. Our exposition of the question is made from a communist point of view, and our appeal is directed not to the exploiters of labor and their various reactionary agencies of oppression and deception, but to the workers, who have a vital interest in the struggle against the capitalist exploiters as well as against perfidious Stalinism.

Cannon concluded this argument by stressing his central point: “The problem of advanced and progressive workers is to learn how to fight Stalinism without inadvertently



falling into the camp of capitalist reaction and thus hurting only themselves."

### 'Passivity' of European social democrats?

Rejecting this framework for the fight against Stalinism leads quickly to the adoption of political positions that are an obstacle to working-class struggles, both in the workers states and in the capitalist countries.

Thus, Comrade Allio criticizes the social democrats not for their support to imperialism, their anticommunism, or their refusal to defend the workers states — but for displaying insufficient vigor in translating their tough talk on Poland into action. She bemoans the "passivity of the trade-union leadership in countries where the workers movement is dominated by social democracy. . . ." This "passivity," she says, is responsible for the fact that in countries such as West Germany, "the activity of the churches, right-wing organizations, and the anti-communist Polish émigrés occupies an increasing place in mass media coverage."

Is vigorous social-democratic anticommunism really more in the interests of the working class than "passive" social-democratic anti-communism or bourgeois anticommunism?

Comrade Allio is even led into the position of giving higher marks to the leadership of the French SP than to that of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD). She writes:

There is no doubt that the most massive solidarity campaign in Europe since the military coup d'état [in Poland] has developed in France. This certainly has to do with the favorable situation — the positions taken by the Mitterrand-Mauroy government, whose declarations, however formal they might be and outside of the clangers dropped by various ministers, is an encouragement to the mobilization of the working class. This is contrary to what happened in West Germany, for example, when Chancellor Helmut Schmidt had decided once and for all that it is a Polish domestic question and that above all it is necessary not to get mixed up in it.

The West German bourgeoisie, ruling through the SPD, judged its interests to be best served by a diplomatic policy that did nothing to jeopardize its plans for the multi-billion-dollar deal involving a natural gas pipeline from the Soviet Union. In this decision, it considered its competition with other imperialist powers, especially the United States and Japan.

The French bourgeoisie, ruling through the French SP, judged its interests differently. Mitterrand also kept in mind the opportunity to deal political blows to the French Communist Party, which maintains a substantial influence in France, especially among industrial workers, thus posing a constant problem for the French ruling class.

By overlooking the fact that this conflict of rival imperialist interests was behind the differing diplomatic and political reactions to the Polish events by the French and West German governments, Comrade Allio can inadvertently leave her readers with the impression that she believes the position of the Mitterrand-Mauroy government is somehow more pro-

gressive than its imperialist counterpart in Bonn.

Comrade Allio starts from the premise that class-conscious workers should lend support to any action called by a trade-union or a political current within the workers movement for the ostensible purpose of demonstrating solidarity with the Polish workers. This false beginning has already led some revolutionists very far afield.

Publications edited by the United Secretariat, and newspapers published by some sections of the Fourth International, have gone so far as to advocate that trade unions in the capitalist countries organize a boycott of trade with the Polish workers state. Such boycotts can serve only the interests of imperialism. Advocacy of them is a reversal of the position the Fourth International has always held.

Comrade Allio, in her article, holds up a four-day strike in Århus, Denmark, as a model solidarity action. She reports that this strike was called by the dockworkers union "to protest against the arrival in their port of a Polish boat which was loaded in Poland by workers who had a rifle stuck in their backs."

A similar position was presented in the January 28 issue of *Socialist Challenge*, published by supporters of the International Marxist Group in Great Britain. In an interview with a *Socialist Challenge* supporter at Massey Ferguson's Coventry plant, the paper reported with approval a vote by the union members to accept a recommendation from the stewards that they refuse to handle parts supplied by Poland's Ursus tractor plant on contract to Massey Ferguson.

"When work on the Massey's order stops," explained this *Socialist Challenge* supporter, "the Polish workers will know they have support despite the bureaucrat's attempt to isolate them from the international workers' movement." In an accompanying article, *Socialist Challenge* stated that while it feels that such boycotts are not necessarily "the most effective way to help Solidarnosc," the paper nonetheless "supports the actions" of the Massey Ferguson union.

### Should workers support U.S. longshore boycott?

It is no coincidence that the one trade union in the United States whose leadership has decided to boycott trade with Poland is the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), which is controlled by a corrupt and notoriously right-wing class-collaborationist bureaucracy.

The ILA misleaders have in the past favored tightening the imperialist blockade of Cuba, and periodically have ordered workers not to handle "Communist" cargo. The ILA president, Thomas Gleason, has also urged the International Transportworkers' Federation to issue a call for its affiliated unions to join in the refusal to handle cargo moving to or from Poland.

The AFL-CIO bureaucracy has hailed the reactionary stand taken by the ILA officials.

Lane Kirkland, AFL-CIO president, has also called on Reagan to halt the sale of "grain, goods, and factories" to the Soviet Union.

Comrade Allio, while hailing the decision by the dockworkers association in Århus, omits any reference to the similar decision by the ILA officialdom in New York. But the Mexican section of the Fourth International, following the same line, saw no reason not to include the ILA's boycott as a positive example for the workers movement everywhere. The January 18 issue of *Bandera Socialista*, published by the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) says the following:

Certainly, the Polish workers need solidarity in their fight against the bureaucracy, not that hypocritical and demagogic kind voiced by their enemies, but solidarity from their class brothers. They need actions like the demonstrations of support carried out by the workers of France, the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Denmark, Japan, Argentina, Mexico, etc.; like the boycott of the 110,000 dockworkers of the International Longshoremen's Association of the United States."

In her article pointing to the example of the Århus union boycott of trade with Poland as the way forward for the solidarity movement, Comrade Allio tries to draw a distinction between such boycotts carried out by trade unions and trade embargoes by capitalist governments. She argues that while revolutionists should support such union boycotts against Poland, they should oppose any move by capitalist governments to do the same thing.

Comrade Allio correctly points out that an economic embargo by "the West" would only serve to "cut off the Polish workers from their class brothers and sisters in the West a little more. Above all its negative effects could only fall on the backs of the Polish workers themselves." This would "only aid the regime in carrying out the austerity plan it has been trying to introduce without success for months."

But what Comrade Allio avoids is the fact that a refusal by a trade union to handle cargo going to and from Poland would harm the working class just as much. Cutting off trade would further undermine the Polish workers state, create still more bitter hardships for the Polish working people, accentuate the economic crisis, and strengthen the position of the bureaucracy.

Moreover, such a boycott would deal a directly political blow to the Polish workers by handing a golden opportunity to the Stalinists to argue anew that the solidarity movement in the capitalist countries is really aimed at bringing down the workers state in Poland.

What is more, arguing within the labor movement that unionists should conduct such a boycott on their own but not demand the same from the government introduces still another problem. If it is correct for our union to boycott trade with Poland, a West German unionist might ask, why shouldn't we demand the same of the government, which is in the hands of those who claim to be leaders of the workers movement?

If British trade unionists ought to reject Pol-

ish goods, shouldn't British workers insist that the Labour Party adopt the same stand, and vow to make it the policy of the next Labour government?

And if American workers should back the ILA boycott, then why *shouldn't* they agree with Lane Kirkland that the AFL-CIO should fight to force President Reagan and Congress to go along?

### **Workers interest lies in more trade with Poland**

Advocating any kind of boycott of trade with Poland amounts to a complete rejection of the position the revolutionary workers movement has fought for since the first workers state was born in Russia. As everyone who has seen the movie *Reds* — Hollywood's version of the Bolshevik revolution — is well aware, the imperialists tried to starve the young workers republic to death with an economic blockade as well as by military assault.

From the day the workers took power in Russia the international communist movement has campaigned for full and normalized trade and diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. In many countries, in the 1920s, this was one of the central agitational slogans of the young Communist parties.

Communists pointed out that expanded trade with the Soviet Union was not only in the interests of the workers state, and therefore in the long-term interest of workers everywhere. It was also in the immediate interest of the labor movement in the capitalist countries, since trade meant jobs and expanded markets for farmers.

With Stalin's rise to power and the consolidation of bureaucratic rule in the Soviet Union, revolutionary Marxists continued to fight against any efforts to embargo or quarantine the Soviet workers state. The Trotskyist movement has always explained that the imperialist encirclement of the Soviet Union helped to create the conditions that gave rise to the Stalinist bureaucracy. Helping the Soviet Union to break out of this encirclement is a necessary part of the fight to restore workers democracy in the Soviet Union.

Never in the history of the Trotskyist movement — not in 1968, 1956, 1953, 1947, nor at the time of the worldwide campaign to condemn the infamous Moscow Trials in the 1930s — has it ever advocated that workers organizations call for or organize a boycott of trade with the workers states.

Rather than imposing economic sanctions against Poland, revolutionary workers ought to be proposing that the labor movement take up the campaign for an end to all restrictions on trade with Poland and every other workers state. That would be a good way to demonstrate to the Polish workers — and to the ranks of the Communist parties in the capitalist countries as well — that their leaders are lying when they claim that the international solidarity movement is hostile to the interests of the Polish workers and farmers.

This campaign should also include the demand for an immediate halt to the economic blockade enforced by the United States against Cuba, as well as the world imperialist campaign to starve out the Vietnamese revolution.

That is the perspective that all those who consider themselves revolutionists and proletarian internationalists ought to be fighting for.

### **Cuba and the Polish events**

Advancing in this direction requires a sharp rejection of the phony solidarity campaign being waged by the officialdom of the European Social Democracy, trade-union bureaucrats, and those on the left who are increasingly orienting to the social democrats. Adopting the framework proposed by Cannon, as we have seen, means campaigning *as part of* the international camp of the proletariat, and *against* those within the labor movement who function as lieutenants of the capitalist ruling class.

Those who adopt this working-class perspective today are part of the same camp politically as the revolutionary leadership of the Cuban workers state. This is true despite differences of opinion — including on Poland. A discussion of such disagreements with fellow revolutionists is a different kettle of fish from the political war that must be waged against counterrevolutionary misleaders such as Mitterrand. Proletarian revolutionists must give battle against these social democratic demagogues, who are trying to draw into their class-collaborationist framework those workers who are motivated by class solidarity with their brothers and sisters in Poland, and by hatred for the counterrevolution that is being pressed by the bureaucratic caste.

The news analysis pointed to the example of Cuba, a workers state with a revolutionary government that advances the interest of the workers and farmers there. It contrasted this to Poland, a workers state saddled with a government that rules on behalf of a privileged, petty-bourgeois social layer whose interests are opposed to those of the Polish toilers.

The news analysis put it this way:

Privileged bureaucracies, like the one ruling Poland, view revolutionary struggles in other countries as a threat to the stability that they see as necessary to preserve their privileges. Their orientation is to reach an accommodation with imperialism in order to protect that stability.

In contrast, a government that represents the interests of the workers and farmers, such as the revolutionary government of Cuba, understands and acts on the view that victories for proletarian revolutions in other countries and defeats for imperialism everywhere are in the interests of the workers in their own country.

That is why the imperialists view with horror the prospect of a successful political revolution in Poland. Despite their hypocritical statements of support for union rights in Poland, they understand that a victory for the Polish working people would open the possibility of bringing to power a revolutionary government, like the one in Cuba. And the thought of a Cuba in Eastern Europe is a horrifying one for them.

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel object to pointing to the proletarian international-

ism of the Cuban leadership and contrasting that with the positions of the Polish regime on the grounds that the Cubans have a wrong line on Solidarity and on the crackdown. They say that references to Cuba in the news analysis were "politically irresponsible" because the Cuban leadership "is now supporting counter-revolution and not the revolutionists" in Poland.

The actual position of the Cuban leadership as reflected in the Cuban press, and a discussion of where this position goes wrong, was the subject of an article by David Frankel in last week's *Intercontinental Press*. The wrong view that the Cubans have presented on events in Poland cuts across working-class solidarity with the Polish workers and miseducates all those who look to the Cubans for leadership. This is a subject that all serious revolutionists are interested in discussing with the Cubans.

### **Cuba's defense of the workers states**

But Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel present a false picture of the Cuban position on the struggle to advance the socialist revolution in the workers states. They do so by entirely leaving out of the picture essential facts about the Cuban position. Among the points they omit are the following:

- The Cubans begin from the correct standpoint of understanding that the overturn of any workers state by imperialism would be a historic blow to the world revolution. They believe firmly in the right and duty of the workers in all the workers states to collectively defend their anticapitalist conquests against any attempts to subvert or reverse them. This places the Cubans on the right side of the class barricades, as opposed to the counterrevolutionary positions of the social democratic and "third camp" forces, who do not defend the workers states against imperialism.

- The Cubans publicly express their sharp disapproval of the bureaucratic abuses and privileges in the party and state apparatus in Poland that have been spotlighted by the struggle of Solidarity. They openly point to the fact that the relationship between the party and the working class in Cuba is the opposite of what exists in Poland.

- Unlike the bureaucratic castes in power in other workers states, the revolutionary Cuban government does not utilize the imperialist blockade and U.S. military threats as a justification for abandoning support for revolutionary struggles in other countries.

Nor do they use the CIA's efforts to disrupt Cuba from within as an excuse to explain away problems or defend bureaucratic privilege and repression at home.

- The Cuban leadership believes that the working class is the only force that can resolve the crisis facing humanity, and they believe that this is just as true in the workers states as in the capitalist world. Their views on this have been expressed the most clearly, as one would expect, in relation to Cuba itself, where they seek to mobilize and organize the working people to fight bureaucratic deformations and



privilege-seeking social layers. Moreover, they strongly link this mobilization against bureaucratic abuses to defense of Cuba's internationalist foreign policy and political perspective.

The Cubans mistakenly view the workers struggle led by Solidarity as posing a threat to the Polish workers state by increasing the danger of successful imperialist intervention and capitalist restoration. In fact, the opposite is true. By trying to crush the workers' own movement, the Polish regime is weakening the workers state itself. Only the Polish workers can ultimately defend their workers state against imperialism's counterrevolutionary aims.

#### 'Demise' of Cuban internationalism?

Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel evidently believe that because the Cubans are wrong on their assessment of events in Poland we should now abandon our traditional use of Cuba as a living example of an alternative to the Stalinist regimes. In arguing for this position, they state:

"The limitations of workers democracy have led to a demise of proletarian internationalism. This is a serious blow against the interests and the defense of revolutionary Cuba and of the revolution in Central America and Latin America. We have to say so clearly and openly, not irresponsibly hide that fact."

Does the Cuban position on the events in Poland really signal the "demise of proletarian internationalism" in Cuba? Such a far-reaching conclusion does not square well with the actual development of the Cuban revolution. Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel confuse a default on an important question by proletarian internationalists with the "demise of proletarian internationalism."

In gauging which direction the Cubans are

headed with regard to proletarian internationalism and workers democracy, it is advisable to keep in mind that the Cuban leadership emerged on the historical scene, and developed as internationalists and Marxists, despite two large historical handicaps. First, there is no mass Leninist international in existence. Second, the most powerful workers state, and the one on which Cuba depends militarily and economically, is governed by a bureaucratic caste that more than half a century ago overturned the Marxist policies and program of the Bolshevik Party, which led the October Revolution.

Despite these obstacles, the Cuban revolutionists have followed an internationalist course and set an example that has inspired and educated anticapitalist and anti-imperialist fighters throughout the world. The attraction of the Cuban revolution has grown stronger in recent years as Cuba has responded to the favorable shift in the world relationship of forces opened by Vietnam's historic victory over U.S. imperialism in 1975.

At the same time, the Cuban Communist Party has brought increasing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership bodies, further strengthening its role as the vanguard of the Cuban proletariat. It understands that the Cuban working class is the only social force that can combat the problems of bureaucratism that impede the progress toward socialism in Cuba. In face of this record, Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel do not make a persuasive case for seizing the errors on Poland as a basis for concluding that Cuba's proletarian internationalism is dead.

Moreover, one has to ask, what is the purpose of issuing such a death certificate? Neither Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel, nor any other responsible leader of the Fourth International, made such a proposal in 1968, when Fidel gave a speech in which he con-

cluded that the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had been justified as a lesser evil to the overthrow of the workers state, which he believed had been an imminent danger.

Why such a departure now?

\* \* \*

The rise of the workers struggle to democratize the workers state in Poland has been a historic advance for the world revolution. Whatever the immediate stage of the ongoing struggle inside Poland, Solidarity has brought the day closer when the proletariat in those workers states ruled by bureaucratic castes will establish governments based on the broadest workers democracy, governments genuinely advancing the interests of the workers and farmers.

In the capitalist countries, the birth of Solidarity has been a gain for the workers movement as well. The heroic struggle of the Polish unionists has inspired class-conscious workers to see more clearly their own potential. The determination of the Polish toilers to fight for socialism and for workers democracy has helped to cut through the lie — which the capitalists spread by their propaganda and the Stalinist bureaucrats by their example — that socialism means tyranny.

Thus, the struggle of Solidarity has helped to win new forces to the organizations representing the continuity of the communist tradition of the Bolshevik Party that led the October Revolution.

The most important task for revolutionary Marxists in the imperialist countries in connection with Poland is to provide leadership to those workers who are inspired by the struggle of Solidarity and motivated by genuine feelings of class solidarity, organizing them to fight more effectively and more consciously against their own capitalist governments. □

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# PRT fields presidential candidate

## *Calls for workers and peasants government*

[The following interview with Sergio Rodríguez, a member of the Political Committee of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International, was conducted in New York on January 19, 1982.

[After a long battle, the Mexican Federal Election Commission was finally forced in June 1981 to grant the PRT "conditional registration" for the 1982 presidential and congressional elections. That registration will become permanent if the PRT wins 1.5 percent of the vote in the 1982 election.

[This interview is abridged from one that appeared in the February 22 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language socialist fortnightly published in New York. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Question. The PRT has nominated Rosario Ibarra de Piedra for president of Mexico. Could you tell us something about her?*

*Answer.* Rosario Ibarra de Piedra is the central leader of the Committee of Family Members, which is fighting to learn the fate of political activists who have been "disappeared," and to win freedom for political prisoners and the right of exiles to return to the country.

She is the leader of the National Front Against Repression, the main organization in Mexico fighting for human rights and civil and trade-union rights. The National Front Against Repression — which includes about sixty-five organizations, including trade-union, peasant, slum-dweller, and political groups — is the broadest united front that exists in Mexico.

The establishment of this body made it possible to stop the repression that reigned in Mexico from 1970 to 1976. In those years there were more than 450 political disappearances and more than 800 political prisoners in the country as a whole.

The question of the political disappearances has still not been resolved, and the majority are still "disappeared." But there are now far fewer political prisoners — about 200 — in the country.

Much of this is due to the work done by Compañera Rosario. She is the mother of a political "disappeared," a comrade from Monterrey who was detained when he left his house in 1974 and has still not been seen, nor brought to trial, but is being held in a clandestine jail.

At that point Rosario Ibarra decided to begin a struggle that was to unite the majority of the family members of these political "disappeareds." However, Rosario's political evolu-

tion has gone far beyond merely the aspect of civil and democratic rights, and for some three years she has been calling for a much closer link with the workers organizations.

She attends, for example, the meetings of the Plan de Ayala National Coordinating Committee, in which she has speaking rights. That body unifies all the independent currents in the Mexican peasant movement.

She attends and has speaking rights in the National Coordinating Committee of Education Workers, which has organized the most important demonstrations in Mexico since 1968. In 1981 they organized three demonstrations of more than 100,000 people.

She also attends and has speaking rights in the National Coordinating Committee of the Urban People's Movement, which brings together all the poor neighborhoods and slum-dwellers movements from the poorest parts of the country.

Rosario was one of the compañeras who played a role in forming the Permanent Forum of Solidarity with El Salvador in Mexico City. Organizations from all over the world took part in this forum, and Rosario was one of the speakers for Mexico.

*Q. What demands is the PRT raising through this campaign? What are its fundamental political focuses?*

*A.* An election campaign is a time when we revolutionaries must clearly raise the question of who should govern the country. In face of the policy of the bourgeoisie, in face of the government that the bosses have controlled for more than seventy years since the Mexican revolution, it is necessary to put forward for the first time a governmental alternative.

The fundamental focus that guides our whole program is the slogan for a workers and peasants government. That is, the call for class independence, the political independence of the working class.

The government's austerity policy is seen concretely in things like the fact that the real wages of Mexican workers have fallen very dramatically since 1975. It is also expressed in the incredible rise in the pace of work, in the utilization of robots in the Volkswagen and Renault plants, and along with this the layoffs of hundreds of workers. In Mexico approximately 50 percent of the workforce is unemployed.

This entire austerity policy cannot be resolved with a government that is either openly for the bosses or that preaches class collaboration. Only a government of the workers and peasants will solve these kinds of problems.

*Q. How does the PRT think there can be movement toward a workers and farmers government?*

*A.* In Mexico, by law, when the workers enter a factory they are signed up in a compulsory, obligatory manner into the party of the bosses, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). This is due to the fact that the organization that includes the bulk of the Mexican workers, the Congress of Labor, is the workers organization of the PRI.

We say that the first task of the revolutionaries in the Mexican workers movement is to call for the political independence of the workers. And we believe that the best way to concretize this is the struggle for a workers party, an independent workers party based on the organizations of the class — in this case the unions.

The workers must create their own party to solve their concrete demands and to fight for a government of the workers and farmers. Since 40 percent of the Mexican population is still peasant, such a party must also provide responses to the struggles of the Mexican peasants, raising their demands, making those demands its own, and also organizing the Mexican peasantry in its own ranks.

*Q. A lot has been said in the United States about the situation in Central America and the Caribbean. What is Rosario's position and the position of the PRT campaign regarding this situation?*

*A.* By law we get a fifteen-minute television program each month. The second program we had we dedicated totally to the revolutions in Central America and the defense of Cuba and Grenada.

It was an anti-imperialist program from start to finish. We exposed all of Reagan's preparations to directly intervene militarily in Central America and the Caribbean. It was the first time one of the television programs of a party was used to directly denounce imperialism.

The defense of the revolutions in Central America, as well as defense of the Cuban workers state, the revolution in Grenada, and the entire revolutionary process in the Caribbean is another fundamental focus of our campaign.

We opened up our program so that the comrades active around the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) could express their point of view and explain what the situation of the Salvadoran revolution is.

*Q. What have the other television programs been about?*



A. The first television program was a presentation on what the PRT is, its origins, its political, programmatic, and ideological positions. It was an initial presentation since we understood that it had a much bigger audience than our propaganda has normally reached. It is estimated that approximately two million people watch these programs.

The third program was an explanation of our program for the elections. It posed the need for a party of the workers and the struggle for their own government.

The fourth program was in support of Solidarity and an explanation of what the Polish workers movement and its struggle against bureaucracy means. The program was a clear attack on imperialism and its moves to try to discredit socialism.

Starting in February the programs will be monthly and will also be broadcast on four radio stations that will cover the whole country.

*Q. I understand that one of your programs was censored? What happened?*

A. This was a very important incident and opened up a whole controversy.

Supposedly the Federal Election Commission is an autonomous body that is not controlled by any ministry. Nonetheless, this "completely autonomous" body decided to cut one television program by two minutes when the question of the clandestine jails, the army's role in the repression, and the 450 political disappearances was raised.

We made a public protest and published a statement in the newspaper *Uno más Uno*, exposing what had happened. Obviously this was censorship by the government.

In response to this statement the Interior Ministry acknowledged that it had done the censoring and promised never to do it again. It was a scandal throughout the country. What was at stake here was not just the problem of freedom of expression in Mexico, but also the very independence of the Federal Election Commission.

We carried out a campaign in this regard and there has been no more censorship after the first program, despite the fact that we have learned, for example, that there were protests from the U.S. embassy about the second program. This was because we raised the question of Vietnam and how U.S. troops are being prepared for intervention in Central America.

*Q. How is the PRT's campaign being organized?*

A. The campaign began in December in the state of Guerrero. We picked Guerrero because that is the state that has suffered the worst repression, has the most political "disappeareds," and the most political murders. It is the state that gave rise to guerrilla warfare in Mexico and is a region where the process of radicalization is quite strong.

First we visited the city of Atoyac. This is where the guerrilla leader Lucio Cabañas, who was murdered in 1975, was born.

The mobilization we organized in Atoyac was important because this area is under constant military repression. You have to go through three military checkpoints to reach the city.

We held the first leftist political action in a long time and there were approximately 800 people present. One of the speakers at the meeting was the niece of Lucio Cabañas. Another speaker, the general secretary of Section One of the Union of Coffee Workers, stated that the workers must break with the PRI. He called on the workers in his union to vote for the PRT and Rosario Ibarra.

From there the election procession went to Acapulco, the capital of Guerrero, where there was a visit to the jail and a meeting with the political prisoners.

Then they went to Copalillo, a town of some 5,000 people, where the municipal authorities are no longer recognized by the people. There was a popular assembly of some 1,200 people who asked to join the PRT.

Then the campaign was suspended so that Rosario, chairperson of the National Front Against Repression, could attend a forum in Mexico City where the whole question of repression in Mexico was exposed. Later there was a demonstration of about 8,000 people where Rosario was the central speaker.

The campaign continued in the mining city of Taxco, Guerrero.

In Iguala, the three members of the PRT who live there organized two meetings, one at the university that drew 350 people and another in the center of the city that drew about 600.

In Chilpancingo there was a meal with the people who have stalls in the poorest market, and a meeting of approximately 800 people.

If we add up the people who participated in this first stage of the campaign, we can say that in Guerrero 5,000-5,500 people attended the various meetings that were held.

The second stage of the campaign began on January 10 in Mazatlán, in the state in Sinaloa. Mazatlán is a tourist and port center. We had a meeting of some 900 people, and on the following day there was a visit to the jail in Culiacán. In addition to the political prisoners, the regular prisoners came around to hear Rosario and there was a meeting of 200 regular prisoners inside the jail.

The following day there was a meeting of more than 1,000 people in the city of Culiacán.

*Q. What other parties have presidential candidates and who are those candidates?*

A. The PRI, which has been in power more than fifty years, nominated Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, the former minister of the Secretariat of Planning and Budget.

He voted in favor of Mexico's entry into the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), which in economic terms would have resulted in a nearly total sale of Mexico to U.S. imperialism. He was also in agreement with the establishment of a Common Market of Canada, the United States, and Mexico —

which would also have been quite harmful, since any common market between countries on unequal levels of productivity benefits the most developed members.

Miguel de la Madrid is closely linked to the U.S. bourgeoisie; and those people in the PRI closest to the populist tradition were against his candidacy.

The other strong bourgeois party, the National Action Party (PAN), nominated Emilio Madero, grandson of the leader of the Mexican revolution, Francisco Madero. He is an ultra-right candidate who is using the name Madero to try to take away one of the PRI's traditional banners.

Another rightist candidate is Ignacio Gollaz of the Mexican Democratic Party (PDM), which does not have much political strength except in a few states.

The candidate of the Socialist Workers Party (PST) is Cándido Cerecedo. This is a left party that is tied to Stalinist positions, and without much strength in the workers movement. We do not think it will have much political strength.

Arnoldo Martínez Verdugo is the candidate of the United Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM), the former Communist Party. For twenty years he was the general secretary of the Communist Party, until the recent fusion, which resulted in there now being five general secretaries of the new party.

Martínez is, we might say, the candidate of the traditional, reformist left. In past elections the CP got about 5.7 percent of the vote.

*Q. What are the differences between the points raised by the PSUM and by the PRT?*

A. The fundamental difference regards the conception of the country and the government we are fighting for.

They speak of developing a "democratic" solution to the crisis the country is going through, an economic and political crisis. For them, a "democratic solution" means a type of co-management in industry, and on the political level the incorporation of Communist ministers in the government. The other ministers, obviously would be from the PRI.

What they are saying is that Mexico needs a type of "people's democracy," without defining it in class terms.

We say that what Mexico needs is a proletarian solution to the crisis, a workers and peasants government. The fundamental thrust of the difference is that they are for a class-collaboration position, and we are for the political independence of the working class and its allies. □

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# Behind U.S. campaign against Qaddafi

*Reagan longs for days of King Idris*

## By Steve Bride

On September 1, 1969, King Idris of Libya was overthrown.

The king was at the time at a health spa in Turkey. With him were 230 pieces of luggage, an entourage of thirty-two, five expensive cars, and \$60 million he had brought along just in case.

The king's hotel bill was \$940 a day. This was more than most Libyans made in a year, so it was generally agreed they had little to lose by the king's departure.

## European colonialism

To most Libyans, in fact, Idris was no more than an unhappy reminder of twenty-five years of colonial rule over their country.

The Italian government of Mussolini occupied Libya in 1925. The Italian forces were replaced during World War II by British troops, who put Idris on the throne and gave the country its formal independence in 1951.

British troops stayed in Libya, while the U.S. military settled in near the city of Tripoli, at Wheelus, and built the largest American air base outside the United States.

Independent Libya was one of the poorest nations in the world, its principal exports being esparto grass (useful in papermaking) and scrap metal left over from the Second World War. Then, in 1957, oil was discovered.

Under Idris, U.S. companies owned 90 percent of the Libyan oil business. Taxes and royalties went to the government, mainly to support the monarchy and its friends. "Our day was hardness and our night was always darkness," one Libyan said of this period.

Twelve years after the coup that ousted Idris, the picture is different.

## Free housing, health care

"Libyans live splendidly," a European ambassador tells the *Christian Science Monitor*, "compared with the hardships most of them endured under Idris." Adds another, to *Newsweek*, "You don't see poverty or hunger here. Basic needs are met to a greater degree than in any other Arab country."

Average annual income in Libya is now \$10,000. The minimum wage is \$500 a month. Health care and education through the university level are free. Over 200,000 new homes have gone up since 1969. Housing is also free.

All this allows Libyans to spend a considerable part of their income on consumer goods, which they do. Observed correspondent Charles Powers in the November 27, 1981, *Los Angeles Times*, "The waterfront is walled by cargo containers piled high, bringing goods

from every country in the world that has something to sell."

Libyans buy these goods at cost from giant, state-owned stores; private shops and the traditional marketplace have been closed by the government.

Of that government, headed by Muammar el-Qaddafi, the *Wall Street Journal* could only lament, in its July 14, 1981, issue, "Col. Khadafy clearly has considerable support from the younger and poorer elements of Libya's population — who have benefited most from his revolution."

## How Qaddafi has done it

What the regime has accomplished begins with the oil discovered in 1957. It accounts for 99 percent of government revenues. Today, though, the terms under which this oil is exploited leave a good deal more for Libyans than any bargain Idris ever struck with imperialism.

In 1971, the new government nationalized the Libyan holdings of British Petroleum. Four others — Standard of California, Texaco, Royal Dutch-Shell, and Atlantic Richfield — had their properties in Libya nationalized in 1974. Meanwhile, in 1973, the Libyan government had installed itself as a 51 percent partner in all domestic drilling ventures with the remaining oil companies.

On the heels of these measures came an increase in the price to U.S. oil companies of extracting Libyan crude from the ground: from \$9.38 a barrel in 1973 to \$37.50 a barrel today. Given the depreciation of the dollar during this period, the increase in what Libyans can buy with their oil revenues has been less dramatic.

In any event, Qaddafi poured much of the money into public works programs and importing consumer goods. Prices of these goods to Libyans were standardized at cost. Personal savings over \$3,410 were nationalized, and laws were passed against owning more than one home. Idris's aristocracy was effectively wiped out.

"The money from oil," that same European ambassador told the *Monitor*, "really does trickle all the way down the ladder."

## Still a dependent economy

U.S. imperialism dislikes Qaddafi because:

- His government demands — and gets — from imperialism a bigger share of Libya's oil wealth.

- He opposes most aspects of imperialist foreign policy.

- The Arab masses view Libya's economic successes and defiance of imperialism as something of an example.

- His regime has begun to develop an eco-

nomical and military relationship with the Soviet Union.

In the year he has been in office, U.S. President Ronald Reagan has accused the Qaddafi government of everything from shooting Anwar el-Sadat to trying to take over most of North Africa. At the same time, Reagan's administration has begun to wield some of imperialism's economic weapons against Libya. This puts the country in a dangerous position, because its economy depends on imperialism.

The Libyan economy is not regulated through centralized planning. The government's share of banking is only 51 percent, and private merchants still own a good piece of foreign trade. Behind the wall of imports and oil revenues, the country remains underdeveloped. There is no manufacturing to speak of; agriculture is limited by the fact that most of Libya is not arable.

Libya's prosperity rests entirely on oil, and the Libyan oil industry rests largely on imperialism.

The government's 51 percent partnership in oil extends only to drilling and extracting operations. A U.S. corporation — often the partner in the drilling venture — buys the crude and thereafter controls its transportation, refining, and marketing.

U.S. corporations provide 70 percent of the technology and expertise for drilling operations. Libya is a major purchaser (\$59 million in 1980) of U.S. oil-field equipment. Capitalist firms also supply most of the equipment, and about 800,000 technicians and laborers for Libyan development projects: a \$1 billion petrochemicals plant, a \$2 billion industrial complex, and so on.

Likewise, a \$7 billion water pipeline — part of the regime's program to boost agriculture — depends heavily on U.S. technology and advisers.

So if the U.S. corporations pulled out tomorrow, it would cripple the Libyan economy.

Finally, Washington's stated policy of doing away with the Qaddafi government has forced Libya to commit large sums to its defense: \$12 billion in the last five years. There is no Libyan arms industry, so the expenditure only drains resources.

## Putting the squeeze on Libya

Since 1961, Libyan oil reserves have been depleted by one-third. Furthermore, most of the machinery and other materials necessary for the country's development must be imported from the imperialist nations. The high cost of these goods means the government must get the best price it can now for its oil.



Low-sulfur, high-quality Libyan crude is the most expensive in the world. Its current \$37.50-a-barrel asking price is \$.75 more than the going rate. But the price also reflects pressure from — and Libya's dependency on — the imperialist corporations and the world market they control: it is \$3.50 a barrel less than the Libyans were getting in November 1981.

With the U.S. and West European economies headed into a recession in late 1981, there was more oil on the market than could be sold at the current price. There was an "oil glut."

Production of Libyan oil fell from 1.8 million barrels a day in January 1981 to 600,000 in September. Revenues dropped from \$23 billion in 1980 to \$12 billion in 1981, barely enough to meet the country's annual development budget. A ceiling was put on state expenditures, and there was speculation the import of consumer goods would be cut. Libya's \$62 billion, five-year development plan was put under review.

In the first week of November, Libya was forced to lower its price from \$41 a barrel to \$37.50, with additional "discounts" bringing the price to \$35.25. By December, production had risen to 1.3 million barrels a day.

The oil companies looked for more concessions. "If the contract terms aren't sufficiently lucrative," said the *Wall Street Journal* prior to the negotiation of 1982 contracts, "the companies may prefer to gradually phase out their Libyan operations."

#### American pullout

The Reagan administration wanted more, too. In May, it began telling the 2,500 Americans in Libya to get out. About 1,000 did. The move was mainly political, designed to create the impression that Americans there were in some danger from fanatical Libyans. But its secondary effect was to remove U.S. advisors — mostly oil technicians — from the Libyan economy.

In November, Exxon shut down production and pulled out its people. Mobil stopped production shortly thereafter.

U.S. propaganda got more feverish later that month, with the accusation that Qaddafi had dispatched "hit squads" to assassinate Reagan and other U.S. officials. On December 10, Reagan ordered remaining U.S. personnel out of Libya.

The oil companies did not especially like this. They were making good money out of Libya, and their people did not feel in any particular danger. Most, in fact, liked the place. But Reagan's appeal to the oil giants was blunt: put U.S. policy above your own narrow profit interests. The companies went along. Americans began leaving Libya.

Again, the move was of primarily propaganda value. But the *Wall Street Journal* noted it would also "deny Libya the skills of American technicians."

The *Journal* added, "Oil executives say that most companies should be able to transfer or hire enough non-American technicians to

maintain near-normal production in the oil fields."

The impact of the pullout was limited by the fact that the U.S. firms employ many West Europeans, and the West European governments would not throw in with Reagan. The threat, though, was implicit: the U.S. corporations, and their technicians of whatever nationality, might someday leave Libya altogether.

Reacting to this threat, Libyan Minister of Petroleum Abdel-Salam Zagaar declared the regime would shut down the oil fields if replacements were not found for the U.S. advisers. Said another Libyan official to a U.S. oil executive, "You are not going to leave us without any skills."

#### The effect of a U.S. boycott

Reagan, meanwhile, considered his next step. The administration, reported *Time* in its December 21 issue, "will almost certainly order an end to all American purchases of Libyan oil. That move might be combined with new restrictions on the export of U.S. products like machinery to Libya."

The problem right now with a U.S. boycott of Libyan oil is that most West European governments would not go along with that, either. Libyan imports account for 3 percent of U.S. oil consumption. In a period of "glut," this is expendable. The Europeans, on the other hand, have little oil of their own and depend much more on Libya.

So, although a U.S. boycott would immediately knock out 40 percent of Libya's oil exports, Qaddafi could turn around and, as one European oilman put it, "sell all he wants" to Western Europe.

"We would cry uncle before they did," agreed a former diplomat and oil executive.

Even Reagan conceded any boycott "would have to be worldwide. No one country could affect [Libya] by having a boycott." The suggestive tone of this was lost on no one.

#### The confrontation

As a boy, Qaddafi would listen to radio broadcasts by the late Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Today, he has tried to apply Nasser's economic model of private sector combined with massive state intervention, and Nasser's radical Arab nationalism, to Libya.

Economically, Qaddafi has succeeded to an extent Nasser never could have. He has the oil money Nasser never had, and fewer people to spend it on (3 million, against Egypt's population of 42 million).

Like Nasser, Qaddafi espouses a political theory advocating a "third way" between imperialism and socialist revolution. He explicitly rejects Marxism.

Within Libya, Qaddafi's regime has strictly controlled the extent and objectives of working-class mobilization, preventing Libya from taking the next steps required in the struggle to break the grip of imperialism on its economy. It is not a workers and farmers government that has broken decisively with the bourgeoisie, and

it has not uprooted the capitalist system.

At the same time, the search for economic independence from imperialism has led Qaddafi down the road of confrontation with imperialism. From the time he set foot on this road in 1970, when he closed the U.S. air base at Wheelus, Qaddafi has become increasingly more outspoken in his opposition to imperialism.

In the Middle East, he backs the Palestine Liberation Organization. He supported the Iranian people in their revolt against the shah and in subsequent conflicts with imperialism. (In fact, a month after the seizure of the U.S. embassy in Iran, Libyans attacked and burned the U.S. embassy in Tripoli.) Qaddafi has extended assistance to the revolutionary government on the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada.

This, in turn, as brought an increasingly sharp response from imperialism. Since 1977, the latter's intelligence agencies have made a project of trying to overthrow Qaddafi. A more open provocation was the shooting down of two Libyan planes over the Gulf of Sidra in August 1981.

Its anti-imperialist stance and the consumer goods it delivers have gained the regime popularity with Libyans. This is a weapon Qaddafi holds as he confronts U.S. attempts to sabotage the Libyan economy and government.

Qaddafi is despised by most Arab regimes. Yet the sentiments of their own populations forced these regimes into near-unanimous condemnation of the United States after the Gulf of Sidra incident.

And this gets to yet another factor that weighs in the confrontation. The world simply is not the same for imperialism as it once was.

Twenty years ago, Qaddafi's is the sort of regime the CIA would have overthrown more easily. But the relationship of forces in the world today has turned against imperialism. In the wake of the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, the confidence and combativity of the world's workers and peasants have grown. Successful revolutions in Iran, Nicaragua, and Grenada, the continuing success of the Cuban revolution — these have further weakened imperialism's hold on the world.

All this, along with the opposition to war among American workers, is an obstacle to any plans imperialism has for undoing Qaddafi.

Writing from Tripoli, John Cooley, a correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* and bitter enemy of the Libyan government, relates the following story:

"When stranded in downtown Tripoli without a taxi at night, I was driven seven miles to his hotel by the director of Tripoli's newest hospital. The hospital director did not inquire as to my mission or nationality — he was simply helping a foreigner in need. The hospital, however, was plastered with posters showing the letters U.S.A. in the shape of a revolver pointed at Libya."

It is the obligation of American workers to see that the trigger on that revolver is never pulled. □

# Demonstrations defy martial law

*'We do not think Solidarity is finished'*

By Ernest Harsch

Hundreds of Poles took to the streets of Poznan, in western Poland, on February 13 to protest the beginning of the third month of martial law.

According to a Warsaw radio account, the demonstrators gathered in Adam Mickiewicz Square, a popular site for protest rallies. In the middle of the square is a monument to the scores of workers killed by police and troops during the 1956 Poznan uprising; and it was there that more than 200,000 Poles rallied in June 1981 to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the uprising, an action organized by the Solidarity union movement.

The government radio account charged that the protesters had been "provoked by pamphlets urging them to assemble." In an apparent reference to antigovernment slogans, it said that "hostile shouts were heard."

## Show of force

To put down the demonstration, police moved in and arrested at least 194 persons. All movie theaters and other places of public entertainment were closed down, as were all gas stations. Private cars were barred from the roads.

There had been calls for similar demonstrations in Warsaw, but a large police and military show of force and stepped-up document and automobile checks appeared to have headed off any large-scale displays of resistance in the capital.

The government later admitted that during the two-day sweep in Warsaw and other cities, which was dubbed "Operation Calm," the police had detained 3,500 persons for questioning, given court summonses to 4,000, and fined 7,000. Altogether, 145,000 Poles were found to have violated one or another of the martial law regulations. Compliance with the regulations, the official news agency commented, was "not too good."

The Poznan demonstration was just one more reminder that the martial law administration of Gen Wojciech Jaruzelski is still far from its goal of stifling opposition to bureaucratic rule.

Just two weeks earlier, on January 30, thousands demonstrated in the northern port city of Gdansk to protest sharp hikes in the prices of food and other consumer items. Around the same time, students at the Polytechnical University in Wroclaw, in southwestern Poland, demonstrated for two successive nights, singing songs and chanting political slogans.

At the Swidnik helicopter factory near Lublin, in eastern Poland, employees staged a mass rally in February in which workers who belonged to the ruling Polish United Workers

Party (PUWP) threw their membership cards into a symbolic coffin. The helicopter factory has long been a stronghold of Solidarity. In July 1980, it was one of the first large enterprises in the country to be occupied by its workers; several key leaders of that strike were then members of the PUWP.

The only response of the government, which still claims to speak in the name of the workers, has been repression. Besides all the restrictions of martial law — bans on strikes and demonstrations, the suspension of Solidarity's activities and the detention of thousands of its top leaders, strict controls on travel and communications — the authorities have been staging trials of union activists and strike organizers across the country.

## Stiff prison terms

At the end of these summary trials, workers are being sentenced to stiff prison terms. On February 10, for instance, four coal miners in Katowice drew jail terms of between three and four years. Several days earlier in Gdynia, just north of Gdansk, Wladyslaw Trzcinski, an associate of Solidarity Chairman Lech Walesa, was sentenced to nine years in prison.

This repression, however, has not been able to still the spirit of resistance. Even in the courtrooms continued support for Solidarity has been expressed by defendants and defense lawyers. At a trial of a Solidarity organizer from the large Ursus tractor factory outside Warsaw, some 200 spectators burst into the Polish national anthem while the verdict was being read.

Military officials have acknowledged that detained unionists have also been defiant. Col. Czeslaw Glowacki, the commander of the Ila-wa detention center near Olsztyn, in northeastern Poland, was quoted in the official newspaper *Gazeta Olsztynska* as complaining of "instances of arrogance and stubbornness" among the detainees, and actions like "singing songs of such content that one could be put on trial."

Some of them are, in fact, convinced that after the internment they will be able to operate as before," Glowacki said.

Union activists who have evaded arrest have lost little time in trying to reorganize Solidarity. They have set up resistance committees in factories and cities around the country. Because of the conditions of repression, these committees, known as Social Resistance Circles—Solidarity (KOSS), do not carry out their activities in public; they are organized as a network of overlapping cells, each involving no more than five persons.

To combat the government's censorship and propaganda, these committees are publishing a stream of uncensored bulletins, leaflets, and

statements. Among the more regular bulletins are *Tygodnik Wojenny* (State of War Weekly), *Nowa Agencja Informacyjna* (New Information Bureau), *Wiadomosc* (The News), *Komentarz Biezacy* (Running Commentary), *Z Dnia na Dzień* (From Day to Day), and *Solidarnosc Walczaca* (Fighting Solidarity).

Statements by various Solidarity leaders have urged workers to contribute money for the families of prisoners or for those unionists who have been thrown out of their jobs, to circulate information about cases of repression or acts of resistance, and to organize work slowdowns.

"Let them arrest us for striking," a statement by former Solidarity vice-chairman Bogdan Lis said, "let them put the whole nation behind bars, in concentration camps, or wherever. They cannot; they are in no position to do so."

Others called on members of the PUWP to resign from the party in protest.

## Appeal to troops

Several appealed to troops and police not to fight against the workers. Zbigniew Bujak, the head of Solidarity's Warsaw regional chapter, told them to "listen to the voice of your conscience, and follow it rather than the orders you are given."

"Become our allies," appealed the Solidarity Interfactory Strike Committee in Gdansk. "Do not let the career officers treat you as blind instruments. Do not passively participate in measures against strikers and democratic oppositionists."

Another Solidarity statement categorically rejected the use of terrorism. This was in reply to recent government statements accusing activists of terrorism, both to portray their struggle as that of a handful of isolated individuals, and to set the basis for further repression.

In fact, however, the response of Solidarity members has been extremely disciplined, despite all the provocations they have been subjected to.

In an attempt to reinforce its claim that Poland was getting back to normal, the government took a group of foreign journalists to the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk.

Many workers were indeed back at their jobs, but as one worker said in reply to a question about work slowdowns, "We could certainly be working harder and faster."

"People here do not feel defeated yet," another said. "We do not think Solidarity is finished."

A slogan chalked on a metal gate summed up the feelings of many workers throughout Poland: "The winter is yours, but the spring will be ours." It was signed, "Solidarity." □

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