

# INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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## Reagan's Caribbean 'Aid' Plan: Cover for U.S. Intervention in El Salvador



Part of demonstration of 5,000 in New York, February 20.

Lou Howort/Militant

**Washington's New  
Anticommunist Campaign  
on Afghanistan**

**U.S. Big Lie on  
Treatment of  
Miskitus in Nicaragua**

***Guatemalan Revolutionaries Unite***

# Reagan's smokescreen for El Salvador intervention

By Harry Ring

President Ronald Reagan's February 24 speech to the Organization of American States (OAS) promised a program of U.S. economic development for the impoverished nations of the Caribbean and Central America. But even the promise was weaker than dishwasher.

Reagan also made more attacks on Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada. They were falsely accused of precisely the kind of imperialist intervention in Central America and the Caribbean that Washington is guilty of.

The speech likewise reflected the strong public pressure Reagan is under not to intervene militarily in El Salvador.

The March 1 issue of *Newsweek* reported on a Gallup poll that found 54 percent of Americans think Washington should "stay completely out" of the situation in El Salvador, 89 percent oppose sending U.S. troops there, and 44 percent think it "very likely" El Salvador could turn into another Vietnam (see p. 174).

In a crooked plan to placate this deep sentiment, Reagan asserted in his speech that Washington "will not . . . follow Cuba's lead in attempting to solve human problems by brute force."

But brute force, of course, is exactly what Washington and its military hirelings in the Salvadoran government are using on the insurgent people of that country.

And brute force is what Washington is threatening to unleash against the peoples and governments of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada.

## Warships and NATO maneuvers

The same day Reagan gave his speech, the U.S. Defense Department announced that an American destroyer had been stationed off the Pacific coast of Nicaragua and El Salvador for the past two months, ostensibly to conduct electronic surveillance.

Pentagon officials said that the 7,800-ton *Deyo*, which had been stationed off the Gulf of Fonseca between El Salvador and Nicaragua, had returned to its U.S. home port that day, and was relieved by the *Caron*.

The area plied by the warships is well within Nicaragua's territorial waters.

The seriousness of Reagan's moves have also been underlined by the scheduling of major North Atlantic Treaty Organization military maneuvers in the Gulf of Mexico. Slated for March 8-18, they will involve twenty-eight warships and about eighty aircraft, mostly operating from airfields in the United States. Ships from five countries are to be involved, according to White House officials: the United States, Britain, West Germany, Canada, and the Netherlands.

According to a report in the February 21 *Miami Herald*, these NATO exercises are intended as a "message" to Cuba.

"What Washington and the Europeans want the Cubans to know, according to administration officials, is that the waters of the Gulf and the Caribbean are considered vital lifelines to the West. The exercises are meant to say that the West intends to defend them if necessary with all of its resources," reported correspondent James McCartney.

Even more ominously, McCartney continued, "Although officials won't say so openly, the naval exercises probably are also intended to convey still another message: that a naval blockade of Cuba is not beyond imagination."

## 'Good Neighbor'

As a cover for such direct military moves — the real heart of U.S. policy toward the region — Reagan promised greater economic development.

The countries of the Caribbean and Central America, Reagan confirmed, are suffering "economic disaster." But, he assured, this will now be remedied. The big fix will come from the "magic of the marketplace."

Reagan is not the first U.S. president to announce a plan for bettering the lives of the people south of the border.

During the 1930s, Franklin Roosevelt offered Latin America a "Good Neighbor" policy. The net result: more poverty, more dictators, more U.S. military bases.

In 1962, as part of the drive to contain the Cuban revolution, John Kennedy proclaimed an "Alliance for Progress," which would eliminate poverty in Latin America — also via the "free enterprise" system.

Like the Good Neighbor policy, the Alliance is now forgotten. Only the poverty and oppression remain.

Now we have Reagan's program for "aid, trade, and investment."

He said he will ask Congress to approve a twelve-year program permitting duty-free imports from Caribbean and Central American countries. This will supposedly give them a competitive edge in the U.S. market. Textile and apparel imports would be excluded from the plan.

The March 1 *Newsweek* advised that "there may be less to the package than meets the eye."

"About 87 percent of all goods imported from the Caribbean basin already enter America duty-free," the magazine explained. Textiles make up an additional 4 or 5 percent.

That means only 8 percent of imports would benefit from the Reagan plan.

Little wonder he judiciously cautioned his OAS audience that "the impact will develop slowly."

## 'Lies, cynicism and threats'

Reagan's claim about the root source of the strife in El Salvador and Guatemala was as false as could be.

Without offering a shred of evidence, he repeated the claim that Cuba, backed by the Soviet Union, was funneling arms into El Salvador and Guatemala through a complicit Nicaragua.

Nobody has produced any Soviet arms in these countries. And no one has spotted any Cuban military advisers.

But Washington ships a steady flow of arms into El Salvador. And the presence of its military advisers is known to the world.

No one has proven the rebels guilty of terrorism against the Salvadoran people. But in the past year alone, reports Amnesty International, more than 12,000 noncombatants were murdered by the Washington-backed government.

A day after Reagan's OAS speech, the Cuban government responded. Radio Havana called the speech "a mixture of lies, cynicism and threats" and termed the total amount of economic aid offered by Reagan "ridiculous."

"In truth, the so-called aid is only an attempt to end the economic deterioration and political loss of prestige of the OAS, an organization subordinate to U.S. imperialist interests," the radio said.

The Cuban news agency Prensa Latina said the U.S. plan was an attempt to involve the countries of the region in the politics of cold war and was meant to assert economic domination over them, according to an Associated Press dispatch. Prensa Latina added that the proposal was a new attempt to isolate Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada from the rest of Latin America.

## Rio Treaty

A particularly ominous note in Reagan's speech was his reference to the 1947 Rio Treaty, signed by Washington and twenty Latin American nations. Under the treaty, "an armed attack by any state against an American state shall be considered an attack against all the American states."

"Let our friends and our adversaries understand," Reagan warned, "that we will do whatever is prudent and necessary to ensure the peace and security of the Caribbean area."

In 1965, when President Lyndon Johnson dispatched 23,000 Marines to thwart a popular rebellion in the Dominican Republic, he invoked the cover of the Rio Treaty.

Reagan would love to use a similar manufactured pretext for direct military intervention in Central America. But the obstacles are far greater.

His speech comes at a moment when opposition to his El Salvador policy is escalating in this country and internationally. Meanwhile, the regime in El Salvador is hanging on by its

fingernails.

The situation there and at home has reached the point where significant dissension on how to proceed is developing within U.S. ruling circles.

The extent of popular opposition is reflected in the sharply critical stand taken by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, which has demanded a halt to military aid to the junta.

Internationally, support for Reagan's policy has been faring no better.

Of the sixty countries invited to send observers to help legitimize the Salvadoran junta's phony elections, all but a handful have said, "No thanks."

The only European government to accept so far is the right-wing Margaret Thatcher administration in London. Public declinations have been made by the Brazilian and Canadian governments.

Even the Chinese government, which in recent years has supported many U.S. foreign policy moves, has lashed out at Reagan's policy in El Salvador. In a series of press commentaries, it has accused U.S.-backed Salvadoran troops of "slaughtering" civilians, and warned that Washington could face "another Vietnam" in El Salvador.

#### Help from Argentina

Because of the difficulties facing U.S. intervention in El Salvador and the extent of the insurgency there, the Salvadoran junta has been casting about for assistance from other countries as well. It has found a receptive ear in the brutal Argentine military junta.

On February 24, Argentine Army Chief of Staff Antonio Vaquero said that the junta "would give all possible assistance" to its Salvadoran counterpart. He was speaking during a visit by Col. Rafael Flores Lima, the Salvadoran chief of staff.

Meanwhile, no one seriously expects that the slated March 28 rigged elections in El Salvador, which Reagan saluted, will contribute anything to improving the junta's image at home or abroad.

Of the eight right-wing parties contesting for seats in the constituent assembly, which will also select a new junta, the leading challenger to President José Napoleón Duarte's Christian Democrats is reportedly the Nationalist Republican Alliance. This is led by Roberto d'Aubuisson, a cashiered army officer and head of the paramilitary death squads.

Robert White, former U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, described d'Aubuisson as a "pathological killer." White said there was "compelling evidence" that d'Aubuisson ordered the March 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, who was gunned down at his pulpit.

In his campaign, d'Aubuisson promises to "exterminate" the guerrillas by massive use of napalm. "We don't believe the army needs controlling," a campaign aide said. "Civilians will be killed. War has always been that way."

The Salvadoran rebels, in the meantime,

have been extending their influence among the country's population. They have created embryos of genuine popular government in areas they control.

#### Schools and clinics

Correspondent Warren Hoge reported in the February 22 *New York Times* on his visit to the town of Palo Grande, part of the Guazapa zone, controlled by the rebel forces. Five thousand people live in the zone, 2,500 of them in Palo Grande.

There is already a rudimentary network of schools and clinics. Some 600 children attend eighteen schools in two sessions. Their studies include Spanish, mathematics, social studies, science, and history.

There is a clinic in each of six subzones, and a four-bed hospital in Palo Grande.

Fields of tomatoes, cabbage, yucca, and sorghum are being cultivated by local cooperatives.

Local assemblies elect three-member

courts.

The Guazapa zone is not in some remote part of the country. Palo Grande is but twenty-five miles from the capital city of San Salvador.

Combine such developments in El Salvador with the opposition in the United States, and one can get an idea of the depth of Reagan's troubles.

State Department mail is running twenty-to-one against El Salvador policy. Responding to this, Secretary of State Alexander Haig has arrogantly declared that the administration does not intend to conduct its affairs on the basis of "the lowest common denominator of national mood."

That is pretty much what Nixon said when he was trying to hang onto Vietnam. But the power of the liberation movement there, coupled with the massive outpouring of anti-war sentiment at home, drove him out anyway.

The same can be done in El Salvador. □

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**Editor:** Steve Clark.

**Contributing Editors:** Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

**Managing Editor:** David Frankel.

**Editorial Staff:** Sue Hagen, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.

**Business Manager:** Sandi Sherman.

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# Reagan's big lie vs. Sandinistas

## What the facts show about treatment of Miskitu Indians

By Fred Murphy  
and Arnold Weissberg

In order to cover up its own involvement in a terrorist campaign against Nicaragua, the Reagan administration has launched a series of slanders against the Sandinista government here.

The slanders, which include charges of "genocidal actions" against Indians in Nicaragua, were launched shortly after the *Washington Post* revealed on February 14 that President Reagan had "authorized a broad program of U.S. planning and action in war-torn Central America, including the encouragement of political and paramilitary operations by other governments against the Cuban presence in Nicaragua. . . ."

Part of the plan, the *Post* said, involves a \$19 million project proposed by the CIA "to build a broad political opposition to the Sandinista rule in Nicaragua, and to create 'action teams' for paramilitary, political operations and intelligence-gathering in Nicaragua and elsewhere."

Among the governments thought to be collaborating with Washington in this project, the *Post* said, are those of Honduras and Argentina. The *Post* continued:

"It could not be learned whether the CIA proposal has been approved and implemented. Reliable sources, however, said that U.S.-backed activities aimed at Nicaragua have been started along the Honduran-Nicaraguan border within the last three months.

"These U.S. activities, according to one report, have been limited initially to advising and supporting a force made up largely of anti-Sandinista exiles in Honduras in a position to harass the Nicaraguan regime. The activities are reported to have been stepped up in recent weeks to match increasing military action by guerrillas in nearby El Salvador."

When asked about the existence of such a "secret plan" at his February 18 news conference, Reagan replied, "I can't answer your question."

### Turn victims into criminals

While refusing to deny U.S. involvement in the mounting terrorism by counterrevolutionary exiles operating from bases in southern Honduras, the Reagan administration has campaigned to turn the victims into the criminals.

In his February 24 speech to the Organization of American States (OAS), Reagan charged that the "Nicaraguan government even admits the forced relocation of about 8,500 Miskitu Indians, and we have clear evidence that since late 1981 many Indian communities

have been burned to the ground and men, women and children killed."

When Secretary of State Alexander Haig addressed the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO labor federation on February 19, he claimed the Sandinista regime was committing "the most atrocious genocidal actions . . . against Indians on their east coast."

And in a February 16 letter to Nicaragua's new ambassador in Washington, Reagan protested that "we see the rights of your citizens . . . especially the Miskito Indians of the East Coast, increasingly abridged."

The administration's charges came after a series of articles and editorials on the same theme had appeared in major U.S. newspapers. On February 7 the *Washington Post* deplored "an apparent violation of human rights of breathtaking dimensions" in Nicaragua. The *Post* editors spoke of "a grievous calamity" in which soldiers trucked away "20 whole villages" of Indians.

The February 12 *Wall Street Journal* carried an editorial on the same theme, pointing to "Sandinist efforts to herd [Indians] into concentration camps." And a front-page headline in the February 21 *Miami Herald* claimed that "Indian unrest sours the Nicaraguan revolution."

What is behind these grave charges?

### Revolution aids Indians

From the outset of the revolution, the Nicaraguan government has devoted major resources to improving living conditions and fostering economic development in the long-neglected Atlantic Coast region. The northern part of this area is inhabited largely by Miskitu Indians, who throughout this century suffered racial discrimination and economic exploitation at the hands of the foreign mining and lumber companies that were granted lucrative concessions by the Somoza dictatorship.

Among the measures taken by the Sandinista government have been the nationalization of the gold mines in the Atlantic Coast region and improvements in wages and working conditions there; a literacy campaign conducted in both Spanish and the native Indian languages of Miskitu and Sumo; and financial credit and improved prices and marketing facilities for the area's small farmers. Work has begun on an all-weather highway that would link the region to the more developed areas of western Nicaragua for the first time.

In August of last year, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and the Government of National Reconstruction issued a "Declaration of Principles on Indian Commun-

ities." It guaranteed the peoples of the Atlantic Coast the right to their own cultures, the right to organize their communities as they see fit, and the right to participate fully in the political, economic, and cultural life of the country.

But the situation in the Atlantic Coast region has posed some especially difficult problems for the Sandinistas. Owing to the area's isolation from the rest of Nicaragua and to the cultural separation of its inhabitants from the country's Spanish-speaking majority, the FSLN never developed a popular base there. The mass struggle against Somoza and the National Guard was waged almost entirely in the cities and countryside of the country's western third.

"The revolutionary war never reached the Atlantic Coast," FSLN leader Manuel Calderón told *Intercontinental Press* in May 1981.<sup>1</sup> "If you haven't lived through the war, if you haven't experienced the difficulty of this struggle, then how are you going to know the revolution except through its accomplishments? And here, frankly, the revolution has not accomplished great things because we just haven't been able to."

Calderón, military commander for the northern half of the region, pointed to the immense difficulties the Sandinistas had to face with regard to transportation, communications, and political relations with the area's peoples.

The FSLN had encouraged the Indian communities to organize themselves into a formation known as MISURASATA.<sup>2</sup> It was hoped that this would become a prorevolution mass organization analogous to the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS) or the Nicaraguan Women's Association (AMNLAE), for example. MISURASATA was given representation in the government's highest legislative body, the Council of State, and the FSLN sought to collaborate with it in governing the Atlantic Coast and improving conditions there.

### Fagoth — Somozaist agent

But the majority of the leaders of MISURASATA turned out to be enemies of the FSLN and the revolution.

A search of Somoza's secret police files revealed that the organization's central figure, Steadman Fagoth, had been in the pay of the dictatorship as an informer. In February 1981, Fagoth and other MISURASATA leaders were

1. For full text of interview with Calderon, see *Intercontinental Press*, June 29, 1981, p. 684.

2. Miskitus, Sumos, Ramas, Sandinistas Takanka (Miskitus, Sumos, Ramas, and Sandinistas United).

arrested and charged with planning an armed separatist movement on the Atlantic Coast, in collaboration with Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen in Honduras.

When security forces tried to arrest one of Fagoth's collaborators at a church in the coastal town of Prinzapolka on February 22, 1981, a clash ensued in which four soldiers and four local residents lost their lives.

The arrests and the Prinzapolka events were seized upon by local counterrevolutionaries on the coast and by Somozaist radio stations in southern Honduras. These forces sought to foster discontent among the Miskitus, encourage emigration to Honduras, and create a mass base for counterrevolution in Nicaragua.

In an effort at reconciliation, the Sandinistas released Fagoth in May 1981, on the understanding that he would encourage other MISURASATA leaders to cooperate with the FSLN and then leave the country to study abroad. Instead, Fagoth returned to the Atlantic Coast, assembled some 3,000 Miskitus, and crossed the Río Coco River into Honduras. From there, he immediately began making broadcasts in Spanish and Miskitu on the Somozaist radio stations attacking "the Sandino-Communist government."

The initial response of the other MISURASATA leaders was to take their distance from Fagoth and appeal to the peoples of the Atlantic Coast not to respond to "the counterrevolution, which has been trying to disorient and sow fear among the Indians." But within months these leaders also crossed into Honduras. What remained of the organization inside Nicaragua was dissolved. Fagoth and the other leaders reconstituted it as a counterrevolutionary group in Honduras under the name MISURATA (the word "Sandinista" having been dropped from the full name).

Further evidence of Fagoth's close ties to the Somozaists and to their patrons in the Honduran armed forces came in late December 1981 when a Honduran army plane crashed at Puerto Lempira, just across the border from the Atlantic Coast region of Nicaragua. On the plane, among others, were Fagoth, a Honduran major, and thirteen Honduran soldiers.

According to a report from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, by *New York Times* correspondent Alan Riding, Fagoth has been "cooperating with other exile groups, which provided military training for Miskito refugees encamped near Puerto Lempira, and he sought contact with United States officials in Miami and Washington. . . ."

"The United States has been eager to use the conflict to accuse the Nicaraguans of rights violations. Americans have visited the Honduran post in Puerto Lempira and established contact with Mr. Fagoth and other exiles" (*New York Times*, February 21).

Fagoth has been touring the United States at the invitation of the Inter-American Security Council, a right-wing think-tank with close ties to the Reagan administration. Speaking before a Senate appropriations subcommittee February 25, he claimed that Miskitus were

being "murdered, burned and buried alive" by the Sandinistas.

The Nicaraguan embassy in Washington has sent a note to the State Department protesting the active promotion of Fagoth's tour by government officials. A week earlier, a staff member in the office of Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, called at least one reporter to arrange a meeting with Fagoth.

#### **Terror on the Río Coco**

The Somozaists and other counterrevolutionary exiles have always viewed the Atlantic Coast region, with its long and inaccessible border along the Río Coco, as a special target. Attacks across the river escalated sharply last November. The main victims were the Miskitu communities.

From November to January, the Somozaists conducted a reign of terror along the Río Coco. Some forty-five civilians and an equal number of Sandinista soldiers were killed. Some of these were kidnapped and carried into Honduras and tortured to death. A number of women were raped. Constant sniper attacks from the Honduran side of the river made life unbearable in the Miskitu communities. Transportation was disrupted, provoking food shortages. The terrorists also carried out raids on government installations, stealing cash, food, vehicles, boats, and other equipment earmarked for use by the Miskitus.

Faced with these mounting attacks and growing evidence that they formed part of a larger counterrevolutionary plan involving the CIA and the Honduran armed forces, the Nicaraguan government decided to carry out an emergency evacuation of the Río Coco communities. In early February, some 8,500 Miskitus and other residents of the border villages were transported south to a new settlement near the mining town of La Rosita. The name of the new settlement, which encompasses three communities and 53,000 hectares (1 hectare = 2.47 acres) of farmland, is "Tasba Pry" — Miskitu for "free land."

Because of the emergency nature of the evacuation, life in Tasba Pry is difficult. The Miskitus are living in tents, although new housing is already under construction. Some people were not happy about leaving their traditional homes, but most have accepted the evacuation as necessary in light of the terror they had been subjected to by the counterrevolutionaries.

#### **'Most peaceful place'**

Gabriel Bert Wilson, one of the new arrivals at Tasba Pry, described to reporters the fate of his brother, who was kidnapped by the Somozaists:

"They took him to the other side [of the Río Coco] and to this day I know nothing about him. They were always threatening us. They would take a group of us to the other side and only two or three of us would come back.

"Over there," Wilson said, "they tell you that over here we are killed and tortured. That is a lie. Let the whole world know that this is

the most peaceful place for the Miskitus, right here in Tasba Pry."

The Río Coco area is badly flooded annually, and access with emergency food and medical assistance was sometimes almost impossible. Communities there were without electricity or running water.

By contrast, Tasba Pry already enjoys a range of social services. Ten teachers are holding classes in Miskitu and Spanish for nearly 700 young people. Arrivals in the new community were immediately inoculated against polio, diphtheria, measles, and malaria. During the first month, more than 3,000 persons were attended by physicians and more than 100 by dentists, many for the first time in their lives.

The new settlement's lands will be used for cattle grazing, and for crops such as corn, beans, rice, and bananas — the traditional products of Miskitu agriculture. The government has sent a task force of more than forty technicians to help with agriculture, construction, and health care.

Statements by those who have visited the new settlement totally contradict the claims in the U.S. news media that Tasba Pry is a "concentration camp."

Rev. José Miguel Torres, a Baptist pastor and head of Nicaragua's Ecumenical Center, traveled to Tasba Pry as part of a delegation of religious leaders. "People are in very good spirits," Torres told *Intercontinental Press*. He described a group of twenty young people there who have already organized a theater troupe and are planning to tour the country and perform.

"Parents say that what makes them happy is that their children are out of the war zone near the river," Torres said. "Now they feel more secure, now that there is peace and calm. I got the impression of hope and optimism."

Among the first to visit Tasba Pry were former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and *New York Times* editorial board member Roger Wilkins. The February 17 *Washington Post* summarized Wilkins's remarks to reporters after returning from Nicaragua as follows:

"Wilkins, saying he does not support such resettlement, also reported that the Nicaraguan government is 'doing everything it can' to care for the inhabitants. The Indian reaction, he said, is 'quite mixed,' with some Indians complaining that they were required to walk about 60 miles from their old homes to the new camps and were not permitted to bring possessions."

#### **'U.S. has no moral authority'**

In January, leaders of the American Indian Movement (AIM) of the United States toured the Atlantic Coast region of Nicaragua as guests of the Sandinista government. AIM leader Vernon Bellecourt (Waubun-Inini) declared at a January 24 forum in St. Paul, Minnesota, that AIM is an "open and vocal supporter of the Nicaraguan revolution."

Bellecourt pointed to the "dirty hands" of



the U.S. government in the attempts to manipulate the Indian peoples of Nicaragua. "U.S.-CIA counterrevolutionary activity is causing severe problems for these people," he said, "as was the case of the Hmong tribal peoples of Laos during the Vietnam era."

Speaking of Washington's propaganda campaign, Rev. Miguel Torres told *Intercontinental Press*, "The question of the Miskitus is suddenly on the lips of all the reactionaries — in Nicaragua and internationally — who are trying to discredit the revolution. It is striking that all these people who are so critical of us have not uttered a single word about the murders of our militia members or soldiers. Instead, they try to cook up a scandal about supposed con-

centration camps."

Torres continued, "the U.S. government has no moral authority at all to talk about the rights of minorities. Look at what is left of the Indians in the United States. Look at the other minorities. They have been victims of discrimination that is hard to believe — even criminal." □

## United States

# Thousands protest Reagan's war moves

## 'U.S. out of El Salvador!'

By Will Reissner

Arnaldo Ramos, U.S. representative of El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), greeted a spirited crowd of 5,000 antiwar demonstrators in New York City on February 20 with the message that "the spirit of Vietnam is breathing once again in the streets of American cities. The spring offensive has begun."

The demonstration, organized by the New York Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), was organized to publicize a national march against U.S. intervention in El Salvador to be held in Washington, D.C., on March 27.

The Washington demonstration has been called by a broad coalition of solidarity, Black, women's rights, and antiwar groups. The sponsoring organizations agreed on the following slogans for the march:

- Stop the U.S. war in El Salvador.
- Fund human needs, not massacres in El Salvador. Stop the U.S. military buildup.
- Self-determination for the people of Central America and of all oppressed nations. No more Vietnams.
- Stop the Reagan administration's oppression at home and intervention in the Third World.
- No to the draft. No to racism. No to sexism.

The "spring offensive" that Ramos referred to is well under way, with building actions for March 27 taking place all over the country.

According to a Gallup poll conducted for *Newsweek* magazine in mid-February, 89 percent of those polled oppose sending U.S. troops to El Salvador, 60 percent oppose sending military supplies, and 54 percent are against sending military advisers.

Seventy-four percent felt it was "very likely" or "fairly likely" that U.S. involvement in El Salvador "could turn into a situation like Vietnam."

When asked if the U.S. should "help the current government in El Salvador or stay completely out of the situation," 54 percent favored staying completely out.

The movement against U.S. intervention in



Demonstration of 4,000 met Reagan in Bloomington, Minnesota, on February 8.

El Salvador is already gaining strength among groups that generally supported U.S. involvement in Vietnam. For example, the hierarchy of the AFL-CIO union federation under George Meany strongly supported U.S. policy in Vietnam; but current federation President Lane Kirkland — while failing to initiate any concrete actions against Reagan's El Salvador policy — has nevertheless put the 15-million-member organization on record against the "injection" of U.S. troops into El Salvador.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has become a strong opponent of the Reagan administration's policies in El Salvador, opposing all forms of military aid to that country.

In early February President Reagan made a political speaking trip to Minnesota, Iowa, and Indiana. Reagan was met at each stop by demonstrators protesting his economic programs, budget proposals, and El Salvador policies.

Trade unionists who had mobilized to protest Reagan's economic policies quickly took up chants aimed against U.S. intervention in El Salvador as well.

On February 15, a group of actors and film makers, headed by Screen Actors Guild Presi-

dent Ed Asner, presented a \$25,000 check to the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador for medical supplies. The group hopes to raise \$1 million.

The Atlanta chapter of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) issued a statement condemning the training of Salvadoran troops in the United States:

"We recognize that the driving force towards all U.S.-backed wars is greed — the desire to make greater profits for those who own the majority of the wealth in this country. Therefore, Black people working in the mills, shops, and factories have nothing to gain from the brutal murders of workers in other countries like El Salvador. . . ."

"The National Black Independent Political Party says: Stop the training of Salvadoran troops, no more bombs, no more wars, U.S. out of El Salvador."

As Arnaldo Ramos pointed out at the February 20 demonstration in New York, antiwar forces in the United States have the potential to "make this spring offensive the last spring offensive in Central America; and to make this summer a summer of victory for the Salvadoran people and the American people." □

# Workers and youth don uniforms

*Thousands ready to defend revolution from attack*

By Pat Kane

ST. GEORGE'S — Thousands of Grenadians have taken part in the Third Julian Fedon National Maneuver. The maneuver includes all of this Caribbean island's revolutionary armed forces — the army, police, and militia.

All across the island, workers, teachers, youth, and women have been leaving their homes to spend three days and two nights in the bush and along the island's beaches to help prepare their defense of the revolution. If imperialism or its paid mercenaries ever attempt to invade Grenada, they will meet the might of the armed people of Grenada.

The mobilizations for the maneuver have been extensive. Over the last three weekends, local detachments of the volunteer militia have been involved in route marches. Mini-maneuvers have taken place across the island. Trucks that normally carry "Carib" beer are carrying armed militia units this weekend.

All the mass organizations have been involved in the preparations for this maneuver. Union, women's, and youth meetings have discussed their involvement. Radio Free Grenada (RFG) has had daily reports to inform Grenadians of the mobilizations. For the last two weeks, special parish council meetings have been held to discuss the island's economy. All these meetings have had reports on the maneuver. "Maneuver fever" is how RFG describes the enthusiastic response to these exercises.

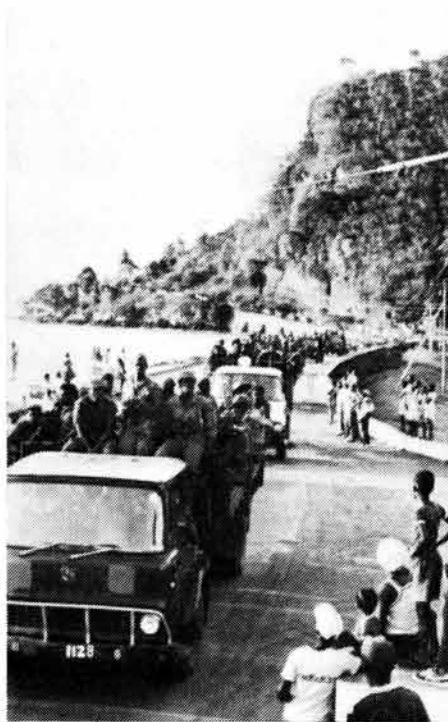
## 'Imperialism never rests'

At the South St. George's Zonal Parish Council meeting, Campbell McBarnet, a member of the Central Committee of the ruling New Jewel Movement (NJM), told the two hundred people present that the reason for these maneuvers was because imperialism was against the kind of example that Grenada was providing to the rest of the Caribbean.

"Imperialism never rests," he said, "and the fact of the matter is that we must show that we are always on our guard, and prepared to defend our homeland. If our revolution is not able to defend itself, then this revolution is no revolution at all.

"This is one of the important things that we have to always keep in mind: While it is important to ensure that more and more benefits can come to our people, it is also important that we keep in our heads that if we are not able to defend our revolution, then the benefits that have come to our people over the past few years will be no more in the coming years. So all of us must be involved in the upcoming maneuver."

The maneuver is part of the celebrations for the third anniversary of the March 13, 1979,



Pat Kane/IF

Troop and militia column during Julian Fedon National Maneuver.

revolution that toppled the proimperialist dictator Eric Gairy. Gairy now lives in San Diego, California.

## Spirit of Fedon

This exercise is named after Julian Fedon, a truly remarkable planter who was Grenada's first revolutionary leader. He led a rebellion against British colonialism in 1795. Fedon was inspired by the Haitian revolution — led by the "Black Jacobin" Toussaint L'Ouverture — and the French revolution. Fedon was won to the French revolution and its principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, especially after the decrees of 1792 that "people of colour and free Negroes in the colonies ought to enjoy an equality of political rights with the white."

Gairy tried to distort the history of this fine revolutionist, to cover up for the pro-British stance of his regime. He portrayed Fedon as a rich planter, making an alliance with the French for his own interests. While Fedon was a small plantation owner, his mother had been a slave, and he himself was Black. He made an alliance with the French against British despotism. He was finally defeated by overwhelming odds, but only after his forces had won control of 90 percent of the island.

The spirit of Fedon is now remembered and lives in the revolutionary militia of modern Grenada. His example inspires a new generation of Grenadian revolutionaries to stand firm against the armed might of U.S. imperialism, which surrounds this tiny island.

## 'Maneuver never over'

After the three-day maneuver, a huge motorcade travelled through the island to the capital, St. George's.

Along the Carenage, the capital's inner harbor, the tired soldiers gathered to hear speeches by members of the Political Bureau of the NJM, and an address by Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, who is also commander and chief of the armed forces.

While waiting for the rally to start, Radio Free Grenada's small bus parked next to me. Out came the technicians, announcers, and reporters for RFG to cover the rally. I have watched the same procedure dozens of times, except this time the RFG staff were dressed in muddy uniforms and were all carrying submachine guns. I met tired trade-union leaders, local youth, and workers from the state administration, all dressed in battle uniform and with their guns across their shoulders.

The maneuver was a defensive one. Over the weekend Grenadians practiced the defense of key installations and received arms training.

A young soldier, who was lying on the ground exhausted, could only tell me, "Maneuver? Maneuver never over."

The armed forces here are young, and becoming more experienced with every maneuver, militia day, and training exercise. They are ready to fight to defend their country, and the achievements of their revolution.

These people are enthusiastic, which is more than can be said for the hundreds of thousands of American youths now being forced to register for the draft in the United States.

— February 22, 1982

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# Winning farm workers to the revolution

## Interview with president of agricultural workers union

[The following is an interview with Fitzroy Bain, the president of the Agricultural and General Workers Union (AGWU) on the Caribbean island of Grenada. The AGWU was formed following the March 13, 1979, overthrow of the dictator Eric Gairy by the revolutionary New Jewel Movement. It now has a membership of 2,300 agricultural workers, in a country of 110,000 people.

[The interview was obtained on February 4 in St. George's, Grenada, by *Intercontinental Press* correspondent Pat Kane and by Nancy Walker and Ned Dmytryshyn, woodworkers from Vancouver, Canada, who are members of the International Woodworkers of America and of the New Democratic Party, Canada's labor party.]

\* \* \*

*Question. Can you explain the conditions of agricultural workers under Gairy?*

*Answer.* In 1951, Gairy found a situation in the country, an objective situation, of poor facilities and bad conditions and wages. The working people at that time were exploited. They had no say in the affairs of the country. They were totally left out of the government in terms of what was done. The agricultural workers were the worst off.

So Gairy found that his greatest strength was amongst agricultural workers, because he really began taking up their problems. In 1951, he was working in their interests. So he became popular and very strong amongst them.

But what showed itself afterwards was that while Gairy was able to win the support of these workers, he also began taking bribes from the people he started out fighting against, the exploiting class of that time — the plantocracy and capitalists. He sold out the struggle he began in 1951. He resorted to tomfoolery, bribery, and brambling. So while Gairy started along the right path, he soon deviated from it.

Gairy became one of the biggest capitalists in the country. At the time of the revolution, when we looked at the amount of Gairy's assets, he owned quite a number of resorts and estates, apart from having a huge bank account.

The irony of it all is that the agricultural workers always remembered him for his struggles in 1951, the fact that he was able to get increased wages for them. They saw him as their ideal, the man who fought for them. Therefore it was very difficult to erase Gairy from their minds, regardless of what he did afterwards. No matter how much he sold out their struggles, they always remembered him as the man who took them from nothing in 1951 to the

very little that they had.

So we found a situation at the time of the revolution in which the agricultural workers were his stronghold. It was not easy for us to convince them that we had good intentions toward them.

*Q. Before the revolution, how many agricultural workers were there?*

A. I would say that in the 1950s, there were around 5,000 to 8,000. It then decreased drastically under Gairy, because he destroyed agriculture, and with it the workers. At the present time there are no more than 4,000.

It was very difficult to convince the workers that we had good intentions. So it meant that we had to bring them benefits, and we had to show results, rather than talk. They would measure us by what we could achieve, rather than what we said we could achieve.

After the revolution we started as the Agricultural Workers Council (AWC). It was not a union as such. It was small to begin with, not many, about five or seven. We tried to visit every estate around the country, meeting with the workers, trying to show them that although Gairy had a government which they supported, and a government that should have done a lot for them, they were still the poorest people in the country. Their houses were still the worst, their children still were the least educated, they had the least facilities in terms of water and electricity, and just about everything. We were able to expose why this was so.

We started introducing a number of programs for them. First of all, the House Repair Program (HRP). We told them we would work along with the government to ensure that we could bring this assistance. One of the worst problems was their housing, which was in a dilapidated state, and much too small for the families.

Some were skeptical of our promises. They were told by certain people, who at that time were trying to reorganize the Gairyites, "Don't worry about the revolution. And don't worry about the AWC. They're trying to fool you. They'll never bring houses to you." In a sense, they strengthened our cause by saying so, because when we started to bring materials, the workers were able to see that our side of the story was manifesting itself, and that we were not brambling. I would say that the HRP was one of the main ways that we were able to organize them.

*Q. This was financed by the government?*

A. Yes. We told the workers of the great

importance of the relationship between government and trade unions. From the very first day, when we started the AWC, we told them that our path would be a revolutionary trade union, not a union of the past that works only on the economic side of life, but one that looks at the whole social, political, and all-round being of the worker. We do not believe that a trade union is one that goes every three years, and asks for higher wages, and you do not keep up with the cost of living or solve the workers' daily problems — their children's education and things like that.

They were able to see, through the HRP, that we were really getting to them, we were really interested. We gradually began winning the support of these workers.

When we found out that quite a number of them had become interested in what we were saying, we moved to a higher level by organizing the Agricultural and General Workers Union (AGWU). We started holding polls on the estates, asking them to vote whether they were in favor of joining the union or not. We started to get maximum results. The majority of workers in all cases voted to be in this union.

They saw not only the HRP, but that we also took part in the free milk program. As a union, we believe that this is also our work, to ensure that it reaches them. Milk is a very important part in the diet, and in particular for agricultural workers who could not afford to buy milk. They saw this as yet another way of assisting them directly. As we moved to organize these benefits, it strengthened the union.

*Q. Were most of the agricultural workers in the past nonunionized?*

A. Well, they were in Gairy's Grenada Mental and Manual Workers Union.

*Q. How big was that?*

A. It comprised all the agricultural workers at that time. I do not know the exact number, because Gairy did not have any records about numbers or money collected. But we estimate about 5,000.

Gradually, as we started organizing the different estates, the AGWU started growing. The workers began to have some respect for the union, and we started drawing up a draft constitution.

We then started negotiating around twenty-eight points for the agricultural workers. Many things were lacking in the workplaces. Agricultural workers were paid less than the minimum wage, but Gairy had not cared about



that. Some employers had escaped paying these workers because they had a close relationship with Gairy.

They disguised this by putting workers in what they called "big gangs" and "small gangs." They said that after a man worked for ten years, he became weak, so he had to go in to a small gang, because he could not produce as much. Most of the people in the small gangs were either people who got injured, or were just weak through old age. Instead of getting a pension, they were put in this gang and paid less.

Sick leave was another factor. You had to be lucky to get it. Overtime was worked just about every day, with no extra pay. Now they work eight hours a day, Monday to Friday.

Amenities like water and toilet facilities were absent. We would ask, "Where are the toilets," and the worker would point to the estate, meaning that anywhere around was his toilet. When it was time to eat, the workers had to sit anywhere, or in a shed with manure. We told them, "How can you be sitting in a shed, while the employer is sitting at the table like a human being? You're human beings too." We could not see them sitting down amongst the manure without doing something.

We began to expose these conditions, and to show them who was responsible for the situation, to show them why it was important for them to understand their rights and the part they play in production, their importance in the economy.

Their status now has to rise through the revolution. They have to become the forefront of this revolution because they are in the motor of the economy. And their conditions just cannot remain like they were.

*Q. Are there women in the union?*

A. Yes, they are 40-50 percent of the union. They have equal pay. That is one of the benefits we negotiated, but we have to struggle in some places. Where there is equal work, there is equal pay. There are a number of jobs that we consider to be equal in labor and skills.

*Q. How do you fight for your twenty-eight demands?*

A. Based on these points, and many others, we started negotiating. We believe that in an enterprise, the workers must be given priority. They are the ones who put out their labor to make profits. We showed them that most of the employers do not work, they are absentees, and they draw a huge sum of money from the estates. This money is based on the fact that they are simply the owner. But they do not work, so they do not know the problems on the estate. We think those who work must be able to share in the profits together with the employer.

The workers saw this as something that no one could really be against. It was simply: we produce. There is a profit. We do not want all, but for the first time let us have a portion of it. On the government farms, one-third is distrib-



FITZROY BAIN

Pat Kane/IP

uted in cash to the workers, one-third goes for developing the farm, and one-third goes to the government. However, the private employers have failed to see this as something which is important for the workers and are definitely against profit sharing.

But profit sharing has drawn the workers tremendously closer to the revolution, because they understand it now. In the beginning it was a little difficult. They could not envisage ever having a say in the workplace. We have been setting up committees to monitor production, so that the workers can have weekly reports on production. The government farms have started it off, but we are now moving it to the private ones.

The enterprise is the business of the worker, and he has an incentive to produce more. We are insisting that the private employers invest also in the development of the estate. In the past, profits went abroad.

*Q. Do you have any laws which make estate managers release financial reports to the union?*

A. Yes, at the end of each year. But we are also thinking of monitoring their production. We could well be given figures at the end of each year showing a huge loss, and if we do not have anything to compare them to, we have no case. But if we have all the figures, we can make an argument out of it.

It is important to monitor. Sometimes there can be genuine mistakes. On one government farm, through laziness, they left out \$4,000. By monitoring, we were able to spot that. So it helps to check the accounts.

*Q. How many farms are private?*

A. First of all, the government has twenty-three, and there are twenty-five private farms in excess of 100 acres. There are around eighty very small employers.

*Q. Has there been any dialogue between the government and the union around the introduction of new laws?*

A. Yes, we have People's Law 29, which stipulates that an employer has to negotiate with a union that has legal rights. This helps us, because in the past there were examples of employers who would not negotiate regardless of us having a majority in the workplace.

We are now working on compensation laws, and there are laws which allow workers to join a union of their choice. The law which prevented workers from striking, the Essential Services Law, has been revoked. This gives the workers greater freedom to take part in industrial action.

*Q. What has happened recently in negotiations with the private estate owners?*

A. At the present time, the main issue is profit sharing. In May last year we started negotiations, but they broke down on profit sharing. We reached agreement on twenty-seven of our twenty-eight points, but we have had many struggles to get them implemented. One of the points that they agreed on was payment for public holidays. We had to call a number of strikes to get the payment. In other words, they sat with us and agreed, but when the time came to pay, they failed. So we had to take strike action.

The point I'm making is that although they agreed to twenty-seven points, it has taken a lot of struggle to get them. So it took us some time to settle down to the question of profit sharing as such. When we wanted to meet them in December, they told us they were busy. They said they would like to meet after January 15, and we agreed on the 19th. They did not turn up, so I contacted them again, and we arranged another time.

Our negotiating team was there, but after two hours, they still did not turn up, so we decided on full industrial action. We gave them a deadline in which to meet, and since that time they have been in constant touch with us. They said that there were communications setbacks.

We want to settle the matter once and for all. We will insist that the principle is agreed to. We do not expect them to share a loss with the workers. It is the profits that we want them to share. So we are looking for some fruits to give our workers added incentive in this year of economic construction. □

# The Reagan budget: billions for war

## Pentagon plans new counterrevolutionary interventions

By Will Reissner

In the midst of a serious recession, potentially the worst since the 1930s, President Reagan's proposed 1983 budget contains ever deeper cuts in federal social spending while boosting the Pentagon's arms budget by more than 19 percent over 1982 levels. The increases in arms spending will result in a record budget deficit.

For fiscal 1983, which begins in October, Reagan wants to spend at least \$216 billion on the military, with authority to fund new weapons that could bring the spending to \$257.5 billion. An additional \$5.5 billion for nuclear weapons will be charged to the Department of Energy rather than the Pentagon.

In fact, over the next five years the White House wants to spend \$1.64 trillion (\$1.64 million million) on the military. That comes to over \$7,100 for every man, woman, and child now living in the United States.

Weapons purchases under the Reagan plan will rise even faster than during the peak of the Vietnam War. The White House claims that the huge increases are needed to "catch up with the Russians." But retired Admiral Gene La Rocque, now with the Center for Defense Information, points out the real relationship between U.S. and Soviet forces:

Our submarines carry 5,000 nuclear weapons — 3,000 of which are always aimed and ready to fire at the U.S.S.R. The Soviets keep 400 nuclear weapons at sea, ready to fire at the U.S.

The United States has 410 strategic bombers, compared to the Soviets' 145. More than half of the Soviet bombers are still propeller-driven.

We have *always* had more strategic nuclear weapons than the Soviets. Today we can explode 12,000 nuclear weapons on the Soviet Union, while they can explode 7,000 on us.

The United States will build 17,000 new nuclear weapons in the 1980s, if we continue to move forward with current plans for the MX, Cruise, Trident, Pershing II, and other weapons.

Furthermore, White House propaganda notwithstanding, the United States and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) consistently outspend the Soviets and their Warsaw Pact allies. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the United States and NATO outspent the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact by more than \$300 billion in the past decade.

The aim of Reagan's war budget is not, as claimed, to catch up with an illusory Soviet threat. The real aim is to bolster the Pentagon's ability to intervene militarily around the world — and especially in Central America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East — in defense of the interests of U.S. corporations.

In recent months Reagan administration figures have repeatedly stated publicly that they are drawing up contingency plans to invade or blockade Cuba, and that they will "do whatever is necessary" to prevent the overthrow of the bloody junta ruling El Salvador. Reagan has also vowed to defend the Saudi Arabian monarchy against revolution.

Reagan's 1983 Pentagon budget shows that these statements are deadly serious. By far the largest spending increases are earmarked for building up nonnuclear intervention forces such as the 110,000-member Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) and the U.S. Navy.

The Rapid Deployment Force, set up by President Carter, draws on troops and facilities from the army, navy, air force, and marines and is designed to be airlifted anywhere in the world, meeting up with equipment prepositioned at sites close to the likely scenes of interventions.

The RDF has already carried out practice invasions of Central America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. A permanent base for the force has been built on the British-ruled island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, where freighters loaded with tanks, artillery, ammunition, fuel, water, and other equipment and supplies are permanently anchored, ready to sail for the Persian Gulf at a moment's notice.

Other RDF facilities near the Persian Gulf are being built in Oman, Kenya, Somalia, and Egypt.

The Pentagon plans to spend at least \$11 billion on new equipment for the Rapid Deployment Force in 1983 alone. This includes new

air transport planes, tanker planes to allow them to reach any place in the world without having to land to refuel, more prepositioned equipment, and additional cargo ships to carry that equipment.

### Role of Rapid Deployment Force

The Reagan administration describes the RDF's main role as blocking Soviet aggression. That is simply propaganda aimed at making the force more palatable to American public opinion.

When military specialists write for themselves, they make no bones about the real target of the RDF. For example, Assistant Secretary of Defense Francis West, worrying that the RDF's equipment might not be sufficient for its mission, notes that "as the Iranian seizure of the U.S. embassy too graphically illustrated to the world, *Third World nations* are not awed by American power and will be quite prepared and able to fight the RDF when it lands." (Emphasis added.)

### 600-ship Navy

Crucial to the Pentagon's drive to improve its ability to intervene around the world is a vast ship-building program for the U.S. Navy. Some \$88 billion of the 1983 budget (up from \$41.7 billion in 1979) is earmarked for the Navy, to expand it from about 475 ships at present to more than 600 by the end of the decade. All told, some \$96 billion is to be spent on a five-year ship-building program.

The Navy plans to build two additional bat-

## Social spending takes it on chin

In releasing his proposed 1983 budget to Congress, President Reagan noted with satisfaction how that body had already cut the growth of social programs by \$41 billion for the next three years.

Among the congressional cuts that Reagan lauded were the elimination of the \$4 billion CETA program to establish public sector jobs, and tightened eligibility standards for recipients of food stamps and student loans. Congress even saved money by eliminating the twice-yearly cost-of-living pension adjustments for federal government employees.

Reagan then went on to propose a new round of further cuts for 1983. These include cuts in Medicaid (down \$1 billion), food stamps (down \$902 million), an as-

sortment of welfare programs (down \$2.4 billion), housing subsidies (down \$3 billion), and job training programs (down \$2.1 billion).

At a time when unemployment is more than 10 million and rising, Reagan's budget includes no measures to provide jobs.

The administration is also proposing to virtually halt the construction of any new public housing.

At the same time, the 1983 budget provides huge tax cuts and giveaways for the rich. The income tax rates of the wealthiest Americans will drop from a maximum of 70 percent to 50 percent. Reagan's budget also gives them substantial tax cuts on capital gains, and important new areas of investment that are sheltered from taxation.



tle groups around new nuclear aircraft carriers, at a cost of \$17 billion per group, bringing the number of carrier battle groups in the U.S. fleet to fifteen.

Additional battle groups will also be built around two World War II battleships, to be re-commissioned at a cost of \$761 million.

As Secretary of the Navy John Lehman explains, a 600-ship fleet organized around fifteen carrier groups could deal "simultaneously with conflicts in the Far East, Near East, Persian Gulf, Indian Ocean, the oil lifelines around Africa to the United States and Europe, the Mediterranean, North Atlantic, Caribbean and Eastern Pacific" (*Washington Post*, February 7).

When plans to refurbish the battleships U.S.S. *Iowa* and U.S.S. *New Jersey* were first announced a year ago, Richard Halloran reported in the February 28, 1981, *New York Times* that "the Marine Corps is particularly eager to have them back to provide bombardment for amphibious assaults."

Navy Secretary Lehman also pointed out that the reactivated battleships would be well suited to "fighting within the narrow confines of the Persian Gulf" (*Wall Street Journal*, March 4, 1981).

Both battleships have been used in past interventions in the semicolonial world. The *Iowa* and *New Jersey* were brought out of storage for the Korean War, and the *New Jersey* was again reactivated for the Vietnam War, during which it sat off the North Vietnamese coast, out of range of coastal batteries, and pounded away with its long-range guns.

The battleships are now to be refitted with up to 320 Cruise missiles, with a range of 1,500 miles.

#### More missiles

In addition to the sharp increases in spending for the RDF and the U.S. Navy, Reagan's 1983 arms budget will boost spending on nuclear weapons and delivery systems by almost \$7 billion from the current fiscal year. Four weapons systems are receiving special emphasis.

The MX missile will "give the United States the ability, for the first time, to threaten all of the Soviet Union's land-based missiles," the August 11, 1980, *New York Times* noted.

Armed with ten independently targeted nuclear warheads, and with a range of over 6,000 miles, the MX could knock out the most strongly reinforced Soviet missile silos.

The submarine-launched Trident II missile, employing a new and extremely accurate guidance system and with a range of up to 7,500 miles, is the *first* sea-based missile with the accuracy needed to destroy small military targets. The Pentagon plans to deploy thirteen Ohio-class nuclear submarines, each containing twenty-four Trident missile tubes.

A third new weapons system, the Cruise missile, can be launched from land, ships, submarines, and airplanes. It is so small and flies so low that it is virtually impossible to detect

by radar. In addition, once launched, the Cruise can continually change direction to avoid obstacles while skimming along barely above treetop level.

It is extremely cheap as such weapons go, and the Pentagon plans to produce 4,000 to 5,000 Cruise missiles.

A fourth system, the Pershing II, is a highly accurate land-based missile carrying a cluster of warheads. NATO plans to deploy 572 U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe in 1983. From bases in West Germany, the Pershing II could reach Soviet targets in *as little as five minutes*, compared to thirty or more minutes for a missile launched from the U.S.

The Pentagon is also going ahead with a new nuclear bomber, the B-1, and is working on the "Stealth" bomber, so called because it would be invisible to Soviet radar.

Why are U.S. policymakers pushing ahead with these first-strike weapons? Not to launch a nuclear war against the USSR. They know that would be suicidal. But these doomsday

weapons have a very practical purpose, which is directly tied to the immediate plans of U.S. rulers for Central America, the Caribbean, and other areas.

The Pentagon wants overwhelming nuclear superiority as a club to be used to prevent the Soviets from coming to the aid of any victim of a U.S. intervention.

But Reagan's policies face strong opposition both in the United States and around the world. In Europe a massive movement has developed against NATO's plan to deploy U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles on Western European soil next year. Whether that decision can be implemented is now an open question.

In the United States, too, there is tremendous opposition to U.S. involvement in El Salvador, showing that the "Vietnam syndrome" is far from dead. On March 27 national demonstrations against U.S. intervention in El Salvador will take place in Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; Oakland; and Seattle. And on June 12 a national demonstration for disarmament will be held in New York. □

## Why imperialists are doing it

President Reagan's own Council of Economic Advisers has warned that the sharp increase in Pentagon spending over the next half decade will have "adverse economic effects," including a "substantial transfer of resources in the durables sector to defense production," and may cause "crowding out of private investment."

The Joint Economic Subcommittee of the U.S. Congress released a staff report showing that the buildup "is so rapid it will undermine both our economic and military goals if it is not slowed down."

Despite these warnings, and despite the gigantic budget deficits the arms spending will produce, the U.S. rulers are determined to push the Pentagon spending program through, whatever cosmetic changes they may adopt.

The reason can be seen in a brief survey of U.S. imperialism's deteriorating position since the end of the Vietnam War.

By its very nature, imperialism needs to be able to intervene militarily around the world to protect the far-flung economic investments of the giant corporations. But because of opposition from American working people, Washington has been unable to intervene abroad with large numbers of troops since the Vietnam War.

When Washington was forced to withdraw from Vietnam, it was also forced to rely more heavily on its smaller imperialist allies (like Israel and South Africa) and proimperialist dictatorships in semicolonial countries (such as Brazil, Iran, South Viet-

nam, South Korea, and Egypt) to defend imperialist interests in their areas.

But the would-be defenders of imperialist interests in the semicolonial world have themselves proven to be very unstable. Since 1975 a number of these regimes have been overthrown or severely rocked by unrest.

In 1975 the South Vietnamese dictatorship collapsed. That same year, a U.S.-backed South African invasion of newly independent Angola was stopped cold by Cuban troops coming to Angola's aid.

The following year the South African regime was shaken by the uprisings in Soweto.

The shah of Iran, who proclaimed himself policeman of the Middle East, was himself overthrown in 1979. That same year Anastasio Somoza was overthrown by the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, without the Pentagon being able to intervene to prop him up.

The Saudi Arabian monarchy was also shaken to the core in 1979 by a revolt that was finally put down with French military help.

In May 1980 the South Korean military regime was rocked by the mass uprising in Kwangju province.

Today we are witnessing a rising tide of insurgency in El Salvador and Guatemala.

These events have added urgency to what the imperialists have always known — to defend their worldwide economic and political domination, they must be able to send U.S. troops to intervene directly.



# CP backs 'anti-Reagan' Democrats

*For reduction in war budget, not elimination*

By Harry Ring

[The following article appeared in the March 5 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

An editorial in the February 11 *Daily World* offered some ideas on fighting the new Reagan budget. The *Daily World* reflects the views of the U.S. Communist Party (CP).

The CP's proposal comes down to supporting any Democratic Party politician who asserts opposition to Reagan's economic program.

Right now that would include quite a few.

The editorial lays out the CP's yardstick for measuring which Democrats to support. It proposes a platform of rescinding recent tax giveaways to big business and gaining unspecified reductions in workers' taxes, plus a bill to extend jobless compensation for workers whose benefits are exhausted.

The paper also calls for "drastic slashing of the military budget."

What is "drastic"?

In a January 21 statement, Gus Hall, CP general secretary, said there should be "a \$100 billion slash in the military budget."

Hall also insisted on "a timetable [!] to restore all cuts in social programs and add needed new ones." He offered no schedule for his "timetable."

Of course, any government reduction in military expenses would be welcome. But the issue is, what should Marxists advocate?

## 'Not a penny'

The CP's line flies in the face of the traditional Marxist attitude toward imperialist mil-

itary programs and budgets, summarized by Lenin in the classic phrase, "not a penny, not a man" for the imperialist war machine.

As in all major capitalist countries, the U.S. "defense" budget is an imperialist military budget. To the extent that it has anything to do with "defense," it is defense of capitalist profits.

The arms and aircraft now being poured into El Salvador are intended to make Central America "safe" for imperialist exploitation.

Similarly, the billions of "defense" dollars — and untold blood — poured into Vietnam had nothing to do with the defense of the American people.

The same goes for the earlier U.S. aggression in Korea, as well as the imperialist World Wars I and II.

We wonder how CP General Secretary Gus Hall would respond if a reporter asked him, "OK, you favor doing away with \$100 billion of the projected \$257.5 billion arms budget. What would you cut and what would you keep?"

Would he reply, "Well, we shouldn't be sending all those helicopters to El Salvador, and we don't need all those troops in West Germany. We could do with less nuclear warheads in Europe and stop building the MX missile."

That would leave intact tens of thousands of U.S. troops stationed around the world; massive nuclear and chemical weapons stockpiles; and the biggest fleet of destroyers, nuclear submarines, and bomber jets in the world.

## Supporting Democrats

In reality, the Communist Party's program on the arms budget is barely distinguishable from that of many liberal capitalist politicians. With good reason.

The CP's agenda — extending jobless pay, making taxes more equitable, and reducing arms spending — is tailored to the capitalist candidates it wants to back in the 1982 congressional and state elections. As the *Daily World* editorial declares, "Those politicians such as the members of the [Congressional] Black Caucus who support such an agenda should be supported."

The terse call for backing "anti-Reagan" Democrats is what is behind the modesty of the CP demands. If you are going to support Democrats, you cannot demand very much. They never have, and never will, support demands that meet the fundamental needs of working people.

Yet the Communist Party is determined to

be even more active in supporting liberal capitalist politicians.

Recently Gus Hall made a report on this to the Communist Party Central Committee. It was published in the *Daily World* last December 17.

Hall declared that for the CP, all problems of political tactics "must now be synchronized with the overall objective of defeating Reagan and all the Reaganite politicians."

He added, "We will be working with all kinds of people. . . ."

That is true.

With working-class anger against unemployment and the threat of war mounting swiftly, even the most right-wing Democrats will try to exploit anti-Reagan sentiment.

In his Central Committee report, Hall even cautions against the party running its own candidates where they might take a few votes from Democrats.

"In the 1982 elections," he warns, "we must keep in mind the overall challenge of the moment, and therefore we must consider the question of whether Communists should run even more carefully than we have done in the past. We must be careful not to appear in any way to be dividing the unity against the Reagan forces."

## Bipartisan offensive

It is a lie to suggest, as the Communist Party does, that the present ferocious attacks on working people are simply the result of one evil man in the White House, or one probusiness party in power.

We surely have that. But the policies of "Reaganism" stem from a capitalist system that is afflicted by deep crisis, a crisis that the ruling class can only hope to ameliorate by taking the cost out of the hides of working people.

That is the function of the capitalist government under which we live. And that government includes not one party, but two. The Democrats are totally complicit in Reagan's offensive. They have to be. Like the Republicans, they are controlled by a capitalist class whose very survival demands continuing, accelerating prosecution of the antilabor drive.

If that drive is to be turned back, a new government is needed — a government that represents the interests of workers and farmers as militantly as the present capitalist government represents the interests of the banks and big corporations.

It will take a workers government to initiate a massive public works program to provide jobs; guarantee a decent level of food, clothing, and shelter for everyone; and end race and

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sex discrimination. Only such a government can end imperialist wars and extend the hand of friendship to workers and farmers around the world.

Such a program is not simply a "good" or "preferred" thing. Increasingly, it becomes a matter of survival. Nothing less will resolve the capitalist crisis.

Does anyone really believe that the Democratic Party can bring us a centimeter closer to that kind of government, that kind of program?

## Reagan's offensive and labor

### *How should unions respond?*

[The following editorial appeared in the February 26 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

Shortly after President Reagan announced his new budget — proposing new cuts in food stamps, services for children, education, and health care, while boosting arms spending by as much as \$74 billion — the AFL-CIO [the U.S. labor federation] executive council began meeting in Bal Harbour, Florida.

As the labor officials met, newspapers across the country headlined the story that Reagan was considering the use of U.S. troops in order to save the El Salvador junta.

Meanwhile, the Ford Motor Company negotiated a tentative pact ripping up the United Auto Workers contract and replacing it with a new one taking back holidays, cutting pay, and further weakening the UAW.

The first action of the AFL-CIO leadership meeting was to approve an alternative budget proposal to Reagan's. The AFL-CIO plan focuses on the crisis of unemployment and the brutality of newly announced cuts in funds for human needs. It urges an immediate program to create jobs, noting that "the real unemployment rate is 12 percent."

At a news conference February 15 to announce the plan, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland said the burden of the new war budget falls "squarely on the backs of working Americans and the poor."

Kirkland's statement reflects the outrage millions feel as they watch hospitals and schools closing down while helicopters and fighter planes are sent to the dictatorship in El Salvador.

But Kirkland said nothing about the deepening U.S. involvement in the El Salvador war. Instead, he reaffirmed the union body's support for a "strong national defense," arguing that increased war expenditures could be financed by jacking up income taxes. Corporations, he suggested, should be required to pay a third of the tax surcharge, leaving working people to pay the rest.

The AFL-CIO's answer to Reagan shows how out of touch it is with the sentiments and needs of the millions of workers it represents.

No, what is urgently needed is for working people to break the two-party stranglehold. We must begin building a labor party based on the unions that will champion the struggles of all the oppressed and lead the fight for a workers government.

The Communist Party decision to step up its vote-hustling for the Democrats is particularly reprehensible today, when the need and prospects for independent working-class political action are greater than ever. □

Its alternative budget even accepts the massive cutbacks imposed last fall, stating only that the "second-round budget cuts must be blocked."

What should labor's response be to Reagan's latest moves?

First of all, it should be in the forefront of organizing opposition to the war course the Reagan administration is on in Central America and the Caribbean. The "national defense" Kirkland refers to — defense of U.S. corporate investments there — has nothing to do with defending the interests of workers and farmers in this country or Latin America.

The union movement should help build the protests demanding no aid to the Salvador junta, no training of its troops on U.S. soil, no U.S. "advisers" helping the junta in its war against the Salvadoran people.

To provide funds for the millions of jobs the AFL-CIO admits are needed, the place to start is with the war budget — not hiking taxes even higher for working people.

A real program for jobs means a massive public works program to build socially necessary schools, hospitals, child-care centers, and public transportation. It also means a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work, unemployment benefits at union scale for as long as a worker is out of a job, and protection and expansion of affirmative action programs.

Fighting for such demands requires a struggle on the part of the labor movement. But the AFL-CIO leadership has no intention of that. Instead, they propose a "Solidarity Day II" next November, where workers would go to the polls to elect Democrats.

The AFL-CIO's statement on the budget claims the problems we face today began when Reagan took office. "The Republican Administration cannot blame anyone else for this recession," it says.

This cover-up for the Democrats gets to the heart of the crisis the labor movement is in today. The war-austerity offensive emanating from Washington is a bipartisan one. It is not a policy of parties fundamentally, but the policy of a class — the capitalist class of bankers, corporation heads, and landlords.

As long as the AFL-CIO keeps itself tied to

the Democratic and Republican parties that serve this class, it can only make more and more concessions to the ruling class's campaign to drive down living standards in order to raise profits.

The truth is that the labor movement must break with the Democratic Party as well as the Republican Party in order to make the kind of response needed to combat imperialist war, layoffs, and the devastating social cuts Reagan is proposing.

What is needed is not a Democratic government to replace the Republicans, but a workers government, one based on meeting the needs of all the oppressed and exploited in this country.

The unions need their own political party to advance the fight for such a government, a labor party that would mobilize the workers, farmers, Blacks, Latinos, women, and other victims of the capitalist offensive.

Resistance to that offensive is growing in this country. It is shown by the deep opposition to U.S. intervention in El Salvador, and by the lack of workers' enthusiasm for the anticommunist crusade around Poland orchestrated by Reagan with the AFL-CIO's help. Rank-and-file auto workers' rejection of the General Motors takeback contract is another sign of resistance.

If even one union were to take the initiative and run candidates in next fall's elections against the Democrats and Republicans, it would be a powerful example. It would stimulate interest in many other unions and get a broad discussion going in the labor movement about the need for independent working-class political action. □

### **Peking rejects U.S. call for sanctions against Poland**

The Chinese government, despite pleas from the Reagan administration, has refused to condemn the declaration of martial law in Poland or join Washington's sanctions moves.

In January, Reagan sent Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs John Holdridge to Peking. According to Holdridge's later testimony before a closed session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the trip had two purposes: to win Chinese acceptance of continued U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, and to persuade Peking to publicly criticize the Soviet and Polish governments.

Rather than agreeing to any sanctions, Peking announced a 30 percent boost in its trade with Poland for this year. As the reactionary Chinese policy toward Vietnam makes clear, what was involved in this action was not a rejection of cooperation with imperialism against other workers states.

According to a report in the January 31 *New York Times*, "Mr. Holdridge . . . said the Chinese leaders made clear that they would not encourage any labor union — an allusion to Solidarity, the independent Polish union — to stand up against its government as they did not wish to see the same thing happen in China."

# 'We will not give up the struggle'

*Polish unionists vow to fight martial law*

[We are reprinting below a selection of uncensored leaflets, bulletins, and statements that are being circulated in Poland by Solidarity union activists and other opponents of the martial law administration. They have been taken from the New York Polish-language daily *Nowy Dziennik*, which obtained them from the New York Committee in Support of Solidarity. The translations are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Bogdan Lis was a leader of the August 1980 occupation strike at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. He was a vice-chairman of Solidarity during the first year of its existence, and was elected to the union's National Committee (KK) during its September-October 1981 national congress. He was also a member of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP, the Communist Party), until he was expelled in October 1981 for his Solidarity activities. Following the December 13 declaration of martial law, he managed to evade arrest and go into hiding. Lis has continued to organize resistance to the martial law regime, and the following is the text of an appeal that he issued.*

Compatriots!

Once again we have a bloody December. It has come exactly on the eleventh anniversary of the December 1970 events.<sup>1</sup> Just like eleven years ago, our colleagues, brothers, fathers, and mothers are beating their arms to keep warm.<sup>2</sup> Just like then, the authorities are acting "for the good of the Polish nation." According to the government propaganda, it is necessary to exterminate a section of society so that peace can reign in the country and so that people can feel secure. They kill the most courageous: the dead do not disturb the peace and quiet of the Central Committee offices.

That is true. But it is also true that the nation cannot be ruled against its will.

Just as they are now settling accounts with the Gierek team, so the time will come when those who currently govern will also face their reckoning. History is relentless. Let the rulers of this country know that someday their names will go down in the history books alongside those of Pol Pot, Pinochet, and Franco.

The Polish nation is patient. But when the time comes to struggle, there is no power that can turn it back from its chosen path.

The government's propaganda proclaims

1. In December 1970, scores of strikers in Gdansk, Gdynia, and Szczecin were killed by riot police.

2. An apparent reference to the many workers who were fired from their jobs after the 1970 strikes.



BOGDAN LIS

that through the liquidation of civil rights and freedoms we will move toward democracy. We know this type of democracy; we have had to deal with it for thirty-five years.

Remembering the years 1945-48, we can notice a peculiar resemblance between the eradication of social organizations and initiatives during that period and the actions being carried out today. We can also guess that after the purge of the PUWP's activists and the party's own subordination of all other organizations and the liquidation of those that do not submit, the church will be next. That is indeed how this road toward democracy and reform looks. That was what the eradication of civil rights and freedoms in the Polish People's Republic meant in the past.

For thirty-five years we have been heading in this way toward prosperity, toward this "so that Poland can stand strong and people can live in comfort."

We cannot and will not give up the struggle for a better tomorrow. This struggle must be carried out in a decisive, but also sensible, way. Let us not bare our breasts to the bullets of the enemy. There are other ways to fight, longer to be sure, demanding courage and sacrifice, but more effective and not as conducive to tragedy and death. That method is to refuse to work.

Let them arrest us for striking, let them put

the whole nation behind bars, in concentration camps, or wherever. They cannot; they are in no position to do so. In this way, the course of the struggle must end in our victory.

We demand freedom for all those arrested and an end to the state of war. Only then will it be possible to speak of normalization. Only after these conditions are met will we resume work.

*The following is the text of a leaflet signed by the Interfactory Strike Committee (MKS) of Solidarity in Gdansk.*

Members of the Citizens' Militia [the regular police] and the Security Service!

You must decide whether you are with the nation or whether you serve the discredited group that is ready to commit any crime to retain its power and privileges.

Solidarity is the advocate of change and speaks for the whole nation. Solidarity was not leading Poland toward an economic and political crisis, toward the edge of catastrophe.<sup>3</sup> We are for order and reason under conditions of democracy, freedom, and the rule of law.

Become our allies. Do not let the career officers treat you as blind instruments. Do not passively participate in measures against strikers and democratic oppositionists. Remember that your actions could be a prelude to foreign intervention.

*The following is part of a New Year's message by Zbigniew Bujak, a member of Solidarity's National Committee and the chairman of the powerful Solidarity chapter in the Warsaw region. Bujak is one of the most prominent activists in the movement to reorganize Solidarity and build resistance to the martial-law administration.*

As one of the last Solidarity leaders to remain outside the walls of the prisons and internment camps, I wish to thank you for everything you have been able to accomplish at this time — for all the generosity and support we have received, despite the high price you have often had to pay.

I send my greetings to those who have been detained for building Solidarity. May you persevere and fortify yourselves, as well as maintain and strengthen the consciousness that was born together with Solidarity.

I send my greetings to those who have so far chosen to accompany and strengthen us, and who are essential if we are to act together and

3. Accusations made against Solidarity by Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski when he declared martial law on December 13, 1981.



move forward, despite difficulties, reverses, and persecution.

I send my greetings to the families of massacred workers, who have never received compensation for their pain and injury; and to those who — for demanding human respect and observance of people's rights — have had to leave Poland so as not to pay with their lives.

I wish soldiers and officers of the Polish army, and policemen as well, to carefully listen to the voice of your conscience, and follow it rather than the orders you are given. Do not willingly let yourselves be forced to commit fratricide, even if you must pay the highest price.

I wish everyone fulfillment of the greatest of our hopes over the past year and a half, a hope that shines before us constantly, despite all the obstacles we have to overcome — independence. It is a hope that can still be attained only through Solidarity.

*The following leaflet was issued in the name of the Social Resistance Circles-Solidarity (KOSS).*

If you do not want to surrender or resign yourself to the terror, then you should now join in setting up a KOSS. Look around among your relatives, friends, and co-workers. Get to know who among them thinks and feels like you do, and propose that they form a KOSS. But be careful: people known for their oppositional activities, who are under surveillance by the Security Service, or who are involved in other clandestine work cannot be organizers of a KOSS.

A KOSS should not include more than five close and trusted people. A KOSS is a clandestine cell of social resistance. It obtains, duplicates, and distributes independent publications. It collects and disseminates information about events and cases of repression. It organizes support for victims of repression and their families. It collects money for such support, for publications, and for other organizational work.

Each member of a KOSS should in turn set up another KOSS, with the newly formed cell acting independently and in complete secrecy, maintaining contact with the mother cell only through the person who founded it. This founding member will transmit instructions on common action, funds, materials, etc., thus achieving cooperation among the individual cells.

Our aim is to cover the entire society with these KOSS cells. We should utilize our acquaintances and family ties. We should act decisively, courageously, and sensibly.

Solidarity was, is, and will be everywhere.

*The following is a protest statement smuggled out of the Bialoleka internment camp near Warsaw, where many top Solidarity leaders are being held. The statement appeared in the January 3 issue of "Wiadomosc" (News), a Solidarity bulletin published in the Warsaw region.*

Except for the right to lie in bed for days on end, our status is no different from that of convicts. Therefore, we demand:

First, the adoption of humane regulations, including the recognition of prisoners' self-government, a policy of open wards, the right to collective study, frequent family visits, and improved living and sanitary conditions.

Second, freedom for the old, the very young, and the ill.

Third, improved medical care.

Fourth, visits by Catholic church representatives.

Beginning January 4, we will undertake an indefinite hunger strike. During the period of the hunger strike we will not leave our cells.

*Bogdan Borusewicz is a leader of Solidarity in the Gdansk region. He was also a member of the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) until its dissolution in 1981 and was an editor of the KOR bulletin "Robotnik" (The Worker). He had earlier been active in the Founding Committee of the Baltic Coast Free Trade Unions, one of the predecessors of Solidarity. He signed the following "appeal to Polish society" on behalf of "a group of members of Solidarity, the NZS [Independent Students Association], and independent publishing houses."*

By proclaiming a state of war in the absence of any outside threat, the junta of General Jaruzelski has declared war against its own society. It is aiming to liquidate Solidarity and push back democratic change. After the treacherous arrests of our leaders, the group of generals think that the intimidated masses of workers will be in no position to defend their rights in an independent way.

That is why the present situation obliges every Pole to resist. Each of us must refuse to participate in the subjugation of ourselves and others. If we do not do this, if we do not defend the imprisoned leaders, we will lose the historical opportunity given to us in August [1980].

Remember that we are confronted with an army coup d'etat; all of its orders are illegal.

1. It is not necessary to sign militarization orders.

2. It is not necessary to ask permission to travel (beyond the region where you live).

3. Do not hide your membership in Solidarity; wear Solidarity buttons and emblems.

4. As a sign of protest, members of the PUWP should give back their membership cards. Remaining in that organization any longer could involve being mobilized to support the police forces.

5. It is necessary to talk to soldiers and policemen. They must be informed that following orders does not free them from the weight of punishment (as in the Nuremberg trials).

6. Each of us is obliged to help victims of repression and their families, giving refuge and material assistance. Important moral support can also be given by visiting these families.

7. Leaflets should be duplicated and distrib-

uted in any way possible; they should be posted on the gates of houses and factories. Write slogans on the walls.

In the factories, it is necessary to:

- Destroy the membership lists of union activists and divide up the union's property for safekeeping.

- Continue to collect union dues, using them for victims of the repression and their families.

- Draw up reports on people who have been arrested, with details of their case, their factory and home address, and their place of imprisonment. With this aim, it is also necessary to collect information from families of people who have not reported for work. Similarly, people who have been thrown out of work for their union activities must be taken care of.

- Maintain records on people who victimize union activists, with their addresses and workplaces.

- Disseminate brief accounts (based on the last two points above), through leaflets that have been written by hand, typed, duplicated, photocopied, etc. The originals of handwritten or typed leaflets should be destroyed; only copies should be preserved. Aside from information about repression and people thrown out of their jobs, it is necessary to write in these leaflets about events in the factories, the regions, and the country.

- In situations where occupation strikes are not possible, we should resort to "Italian strikes," which involve only pretending to work, carelessly implementing instructions, and scrupulously complying with health and safety rules. The directors are in no position to post police in every workplace. This is our strong advantage, and we must use it to the maximum: *Poles have not worked and will not work under the barrel of a gun.*

- In case of an occupation strike, only two demands need to be raised: freedom for arrested union activists and supporters, and an end to the illegal state of war.

Remember that under the state of war there can be no return to the situation before December 13. Either Solidarity will cease to exist and there will be no democracy and economic reform, or we force the generals to return to the barracks.

It would be a disgrace to Polish society if it allowed itself to be subjugated by its own army. It is a disgrace to the army to subjugate its own nation.

A group of several thousand people cannot win a war against a society of 35 million. We do not accept this government, which has stained its hands in blood. □

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# Guatemalan revolutionaries unite

*Excerpts from founding statement of URNG*

[The four main organizations engaged in armed struggle against the dictatorship of Gen. Romeo Lucas García in Guatemala announced on February 8 that they have formed a coalition. The name of the new organization is the Guatemala National Revolutionary Union (URNG). It is made up of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EPG), the Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), and the Leadership Nucleus of the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT).

[We have translated and are reprinting below major excerpts from the final section of the URNG's founding document, entitled "Principal Points for the Program of the Revolutionary, Patriotic, Popular, and Democratic Government.]

\* \* \*

*I. The revolution will put a complete end to repression against the people, and will guarantee to its citizens life and peace, which are the supreme human rights.*

The revolution will put an end to repression against the people and will eliminate once and for all the political regime that has asserted its right to murder its opponents in order to keep itself in power. Since 1954, the government of the big, wealthy, and repressive exploiters has deprived tens of thousands of Guatemalans of their lives for political reasons. For the revolution, that bloodshed represents a commitment to freedom, peace, and respect for life.

*II. The revolution will lay the basis for solving the fundamental needs of the great majority of the people, putting an end to the economic and political domination of the big, wealthy, and repressive foreigners and Guatemalans who rule the country.*

The principal cause of our people's poverty is the economic and political domination of the big, wealthy, and repressive foreigners and Guatemalans who rule our country. The revolution will put an end to that domination and will guarantee that the product of the labor of all will benefit those who produce the wealth through their creative efforts.

The property of the big, wealthy, repressive ones will pass into the hands of the revolutionary government, which will ensure that this wealth is utilized to solve the needs of the working people. The revolution will assure the implementation of a true agrarian reform, distributing land to those who work it in an individual, cooperative, or collective way.

The revolution will guarantee the existence of small and medium agrarian holdings, and will distribute to those who work it the land now held by the top military chiefs and by the

corrupt, avaricious, and repressive officials and businessmen. The revolution will guarantee small and medium commercial property, and will encourage the creation and development of the national industry that Guatemala needs in order to progress.

The revolution will guarantee effective control over prices so as to benefit the great majority, and will guarantee by law adequate wages for all rural and urban workers. Power in the hands of the people will be the basis for solving the big problems of health care, housing, and illiteracy that the immense majority of the Guatemalan people suffer.

*III. The revolution will guarantee equality between Indians and ladinos,\* putting an end to cultural oppression and discrimination.*

Domination by those with great wealth is the principal cause of the cultural oppression and discrimination that Guatemala's Indian population suffers. To put an end to cultural oppression and discrimination, it is first necessary that the Indian population, as a fundamental part of the Guatemalan people, participate in political power.

Participation by the Indian population in political power, together with the ladino population, will enable us to solve the big necessities of land, jobs, wages, health care, housing, and general welfare that the Indian population now confronts. Meeting these needs is the first condition for achieving equality between the Indian and ladino populations.

The second condition for guaranteeing such equality is respecting Indian culture and recognizing the Indian population's right to maintain its identity. Development of a culture that regains and integrates our people's historical roots is one of the principle objectives of the revolution. Indians and ladinos in power will freely determine the future character of Guatemala.

*IV. The revolution will guarantee the creation of a new society in which all the patriotic, democratic, and popular sectors will be represented in the government.*

The revolution will guarantee the creation of a new society in which all the patriotic, democratic, and popular sectors will be represented in the government. The revolution will respect the right of the people to elect their local, municipal, and national authorities. All citizens who are able and willing to contribute their labor, knowledge or capital to the task of lifting Guatemala out of poverty, backwardness, and dependence will have a place in the new soci-

\*Ladino is the term used in Guatemala for those of Spanish or mixed descent.

ety. The patriotic businessmen who are willing to contribute in achieving this great goal will enjoy full guarantees, on the sole condition that they respect the interests of working people.

The revolution will guarantee freedom of political association, freedom of expression, and freedom of religious belief to enable all citizens to contribute to the building of the new society. The revolution will judge severely all the recalcitrant repressive enemies, and the clique of top military chiefs and their accomplices, who are the ones who have organized and carried out the repression against the people. The revolution will be flexible in judging those who have received orders to repress the people, and will take into account those who have refused to carry out such orders.

The revolution will put an end to forcible and discriminatory recruitment for military service. In the new revolutionary people's army that the people of Guatemala will build in order to guarantee their security and the defense of the country, there will be a place for all those patriotic officers and soldiers who have not stained their hands with the blood of the people.

In the new society women will enjoy equal rights with men, insofar as they share with men the equal and even greater responsibilities of parenthood. Children and the elderly will enjoy the protection they merit owing to the contributions they will make or have made to the production of social wealth.

The revolution recognizes Christians as one of the pillars of the new society, inasmuch as their beliefs and faith have been put at the service of the freedom of all Guatemalans.

*V. The revolution will guarantee a policy of nonalignment and international cooperation, which the poor countries need in order to develop in today's world, on the basis of the self-determination of peoples.*

Nonalignment toward the great powers and international cooperation are a necessity in today's complex and interdependent world. Foreign investment is necessary for poor countries, and must be carried out on the basis of respect for the national sovereignty of each country, taking into account the needs of the poor and a reasonable rate of profit for capital investments of other countries. Political stability in each country is indispensable for this. Without political stability there can be no international cooperation. International cooperation is possible despite the ideology or political character of a regime, so long as the self-determination of each people is respected.

Build the revolutionary unity of the entire people of Guatemala!

Develop revolutionary people's war!

Down with the repressive, discriminatory, oppressive, and exploitative regime!

Take power and install a democratic, popular, patriotic, revolutionary government!

With iron will, our people will die before accepting slavery!



# Reagan whips up anticommunist campaign

## Increases aid to Pakistani junta

By Margaret Jayko

[The following article appeared in the March 5 issue of the U.S. socialist newsweekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

The U.S. government is once again stepping up its propaganda campaign around Afghanistan, this time as part of its anticommunist crusade around Poland.

Washington is using the events in these two countries to justify its own accelerating militarization drive. At the moment the heart of this drive is the stepped-up moves to crush the struggling people of El Salvador.

In his state of the union address, President Ronald Reagan announced, "private American groups have taken the lead in making January 30 a day of solidarity with the people of Poland — so, too, the European Parliament has called for March 21 to be an international day of support for Afghanistan. Well, I urge all peace-loving peoples to join together on those days, to raise their voices, to speak and pray for freedom."

In December, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling for March 21, Afghanistan's New Year's Day, to be observed internationally as Afghanistan Day.

In this country, a joint congressional resolution was submitted on February 2 to the House of Representatives that asks "the President to issue a proclamation designating March 21, 1982, as 'Afghanistan Day,'" and calls "upon the people of the United States to observe such day with appropriate ceremonies and activities."

### Bipartisan policy

The resolution was sponsored by seventy-seven representatives, and State Department spokesperson Phillip Covington told this reporter that he expects there will be no opposition to the bill. Like the cutbacks in social services, it is a bipartisan cause.

A similar resolution in the Senate complains that "the valiant Afghan resistance against Soviet aggression has not received the level of moral support and material assistance from the free world which such resistance deserves and requires."

It ends with a thinly veiled call for even more U.S. aid to the right-wing guerrillas in Afghanistan.

The House resolution is expected to be adopted on or before February 24, at which time organizing for activities in this country is slated to get under way.

Responding to a request for further informa-



tion on these activities, Covington referred this reporter to Rosanne Klass, director of the New York-based Afghanistan Information Center. Klass's columns on Afghanistan in the *New York Times* have been some of the most anti-communist and prowar. Her central theme is to urge Washington to do more to aid right-wing guerrillas fighting in Afghanistan.

Covington said that the State Department is very much behind Afghanistan Day, as they are "anything that draws attention to this issue," because it is good for "America's national and humanitarian interests."

### More grist for anticommunist mill

Why is Washington so interested in doing "anything" to draw attention to Afghanistan now?

When the Soviet Union's troops entered Afghanistan in December 1979, President Carter seized the opportunity to carry out an anti-communist propaganda campaign. He campaigned for greater military spending, more military bases in the Indian Ocean, renewed registration for the military draft, a boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow, and a grain embargo and other economic sanctions against the Soviet Union.

Long before Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, the CIA was aiding rightist guerrilla groups that were fighting against the regime in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. Then when Soviet troops entered the country, Washington increased this aid. According to the July 18, 1981, issue of *The New Republic* magazine, "In the hours after the Soviets crossed the Afghan border, the president told a meeting of the National Security Council that the United States had 'a moral obligation' to help arm the resistance." The CIA proposed a plan to the Senate for getting more effective weapons into their hands, which was passed without a murmur.

The main goal of this campaign was to gain support for Washington's militarization drive, partly by grinding out a massive amount of anti-Soviet propaganda. Carter may also have thought it would serve as a diversionary ploy to draw our attention away from the attacks on our rights and living standards that his administration was carrying out.

Though the rulers gave it their best shot, the results were less than they hoped for.

The Olympic boycott was largely a failure.

Under pressure from outraged farmers in this country, Reagan was forced to call off the grain embargo last April.

The government was successful in reimposing draft registration. However, hundreds of thousands of young men have not registered.

And while the imperialist campaign to tar the image of socialism by equating it with the reactionary policies of the Soviet bureaucracy chalked up some points, the antiwar sentiment in this country is still strong.

### Double standard

Secretary of State Alexander Haig complained last August about the failure of the administration's Afghanistan campaign to elicit much enthusiasm.

"Many leading citizens and groups seem to have fallen victim to an insidious double standard," he said.

"During the Vietnam War, tens of thousands of persons filled the streets and squares of the world to defend the North Vietnamese and Vietcong," he continued, but "no such growing moral outrage seems to be present" against the actions of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

So the rulers dropped Afghanistan for a while.

But today, the big-business-run government and media are having a field day of anti-communist and prowar propaganda in response to the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy's criminal suppression of Solidarity's struggle for democracy and economic justice.

Washington figures that this is a good time to try and get more mileage out of Afghanistan by linking it with Poland.

On December 26, 1981, the State Department made public its balance sheet of the two years since the Soviet troops intervened in Afghanistan.

### Increased U.S. aid to rightists

Reagan took the opportunity to release his own written statement the next day.

"Just as in Poland [where] we see the use of intimidation and indirect use of power to sub-



jugate a neighboring people," he stated, "in Afghanistan we see direct aggression in violation of the United Nations charter and other principles governing the conduct among nations."

Then he struck an ominous note, "As long as the Soviet Union occupies Afghanistan in defiance of the international community, the heroic Afghan resistance will continue and the United States will support the cause of a free Afghanistan."

This echoes Reagan's statement in an interview with *ABC News* on March 8, 1981, that he "would consider supplying American weapons to the Afghan rebels."

The fact is, however, that Washington has been supplying them all along.

Last September, the late Egyptian dictator, Anwar el-Sadat, confirmed in a television interview that the U.S. government had been buying Soviet-made weapons in Egypt and sending them to the rightist insurgents in Afghanistan.

The Reagan administration has since reviewed the level of military aid committed under Carter and has ordered this clandestine operation expanded.

#### 'Effective example'

According to a December 4 article by William Beecher in the *Boston Globe*, the U.S. National Security Council has kept Afghanistan in mind while thinking about what to do to push back the revolutionary struggles in the Caribbean and Central America.

Beecher was a Pentagon official during the Carter administration. He wrote, "while no one will talk about the details of covert activities" in the Caribbean and Central America, some officials did give an "effective example of low-profile activity" of the kind the National Security Council decided to carry out. The example cited was "the covert supply of anti-aircraft and antitank missiles to Moslem insurgents in Afghanistan."

#### U.S. to double chemical weapons

The Defense Department plans to double the amount to be spent in the next year on chemical and biological weapons — including a new lethal nerve gas. It justifies this by using the discredited charge that the Soviet government has used chemical weapons in Afghanistan, Laos, and Kampuchea.

In November 1981, the "yellow rain" issue was examined by a United Nations panel of experts who reported that "there was no conclusive evidence to support United States charges that Soviet-made chemical and biological weapons had been used in Laos, Cambodia [Kampuchea], and Afghanistan." Nevertheless, the UN General Assembly voted on December 9 that the panel should continue its investigation.

#### Labor bureaucrats fall in line

The U.S. trade-union officialdom is among the most vocal supporters of Washington's reactionary campaign around both Poland and Afghanistan.



Guerrilla forces in Afghanistan.

In February 1980, the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO [the U.S. trade-union federation] issued a statement entitled "The Soviet Challenge." It begins, "The Soviet invasion and subjugation of Afghanistan poses the greatest threat to the free world since the end of World War II."

The statement slavishly repeated all the imperialists' lies about "Soviet expansionism." It endorsed Carter's threats of using military force in the Persian Gulf region to protect the "vital interests" of U.S. corporations.

The labor tops used Afghanistan to oppose the call for unilateral disarmament of the imperialist powers, calling it a "Soviet inspired campaign." And the AFL-CIO Executive Council endorsed the reimposition of draft registration.

According to someone the *Militant* spoke with at the AFL-CIO national headquarters in Washington, D.C., at this point they are not supporting any actions on the March 21 Afghanistan Day. He explained that if Reagan initiated them, that would insure the AFL-CIO's nonparticipation. He said the union federation did not want to be involved with any administration effort on this.

But this did not stop AFL-CIO officials on Poland. They actively participated in the administration's reactionary "Let Poland be Poland" television extravaganza on January 31.

#### CIA-front groups

*8 Days* magazine, published in Britain, reported in its October 1981 issue the widely accepted fact that "Solidarity [with Afghanistan] groups in the West are largely CIA or European intelligence agency fronts."

In the latter half of last year, two demonstra-

tions that occurred in this country showed the political dynamic of the "Afghanistan solidarity movement," such as it is. The *New York Times* covered both.

This is how it described a September 22 action: "About 125 Afghan nationalists tried to storm the front gate of the United Nations today to protest the speech by Andrei A. Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister.

"The demonstrators, some of them wielding knives and clubs with nails, tried to climb over the cement wall and iron fence surrounding the complex to cut down the Soviet flag."

None were arrested.

The *Times* also reported on a December 27 demonstration at the Soviet embassy in Washington, D.C. That is the same day Reagan made his Afghanistan statement mentioned previously. Twenty demonstrators tried to rush the cops. Yet only one was arrested, on charges of disorderly conduct.

This slap on the wrist contrasts sharply with what the cops would have done if, instead of anticommunist actions, these had been union pickets, demonstrators for Black rights, or protesters against U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

According to the May-July 1981 issue of *CounterSpy*, "One of the U.S. organizations that is openly collecting money for the Afghan rebels is the Boulder, Colorado-based Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund, which was started by *Soldier of Fortune* (SoF) magazine. . . .

"The Fund's advertisement . . . reads 'Buy a Bullet, Zap a Russian Invader.'"

It is this kind of right-wing scum that feels most drawn to the government's reactionary Afghanistan campaign.

#### Arming Pakistan to the teeth

The imperialists are also using Afghanistan to justify their massive military aid to the dictatorship of General Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan.

At the end of last year, Congress endorsed a military and economic package to Pakistan of \$3.2 billion over a six-year period. The first part of the package was approved by Congress in November with the sale of forty F-16 attack aircraft to Pakistan.

According to the December 11 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*: "The U.S.-Pakistan relationship will now move into a second, and much more critical and delicate phase. The crucial, and so far publicly unspoken, element in the developing relations is the strategic quid pro quo which the Reagan administration is expecting in return for its assistance and its now unambiguous backing of the Zia regime."

What is this key element that is so hush-hush?

According to the February 24 issue of *The New Republic*, "The Pentagon's goal is the use of Pakistani ports and airfields for the Rapid Deployment Force."

Up to now, the Pakistani government has resisted this proposal, due to the substantial anti-imperialist sentiment in the country.

Washington's fairy tale that it is fighting for

"democracy" and against "totalitarianism" was exposed, once again, in January when Amnesty International issued a report on the marked rise in the arrest, torture, and murder of political prisoners under the Zia regime in Pakistan.

According to the January 15 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "The picture of the Pakistani Government that emerges from the document is that of an administration terrorising its own people while protesting at the same time against brutalities in neighboring Afghanistan."

Dictator Zia says he cannot hold elections because of "possible subversion" due to the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

And the Pakistani government was the chief architect of the third and latest proimperialist resolution, passed in the UN General Assembly in November 1981, condemning Soviet troops in Afghanistan. These U.S. resolutions only serve to provide ammunition for Washington's anticommunist campaign around Afghanistan.

### Mitterrand jumps on bandwagon

But Washington is not the only imperialist power that has stepped up its propaganda. It was the imperialist governments in Western Europe, through the European Parliament, that declared March 21 Afghanistan Day.

In the February 12 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, there is a report from Peshawar, Pakistan, about a meeting between Régis Debray, a foreign relations adviser for French President François Mitterrand, and leaders of the six main Afghanistan resistance groups based in Pakistan and Pakistani government officials.

Debray also visited one of the Afghan refugee camps near Peshawar, where he pledged "France's solidarity" and promised that France would not "forget the fundamental violation of peoples' rights that the Soviet intervention constitutes."

The refugees asked Debray for modern arms. Debray responded by saying he would refer their request to Mitterrand.

This follows on the heels of a January 20 demonstration in Paris to demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

In an ad for the demonstration which appeared in the January 9 issue of *Le Monde*, it says that the Soviet intervention has been condemned "by all those who reject the idea that the destiny of peoples can be imposed by one superpower, whichever it might be."

This reactionary ad is signed by three major trade-union federations, the ruling Socialist Party, several left groups, and a number of left-wing intellectuals.

### Victim of imperialism

What is the situation in Afghanistan?

The explanation for the upheaval in Afghanistan, like those in Iran, El Salvador, and other semicolonial countries, lies in the grinding poverty, enforced backwardness, and brutal inequality that is the legacy of imperialist oppression.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries

in the world. The great majority of the population lives in the countryside, where most people own little or no land and a few rich landlords own a lot.

### 1978 coup

In 1978, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), a pro-Moscow party, carried out a popular coup.

It purged most of the generals in the army. It released more than 12,000 political prisoners and burned police files. It promised many reforms, which initially won it the cautious support of the masses.

The cornerstone of the PDPA's proposed social program was a land reform. But they did not involve the masses, as is being done today by the Nicaraguan and Grenadian governments. Mass organizations of the oppressed that could be drawn into discussing and implementing the proposed social reforms did not exist. Instead of encouraging the formation of such organizations and politically winning the masses to their proposals, the PDPA government used bureaucratic methods to carry out their plans.

Dr. Abdul Ghafar Lakanwal, a member of the current revolutionary council in Afghanistan and president of the Agricultural Cooperatives' Union, explained what went wrong with the land reform in the November 22, 1981, issue of the British daily, *The Guardian*. "It [the PDPA government] took away land," he admitted, "but left the water rights in landlords' hands. It gave peasants no tools or credit. Peasants must feel that a land reform gives them more profit than the previous system. Unfortunately no one started by explaining this to them. The counterrevolution gained more from the land reform than we did."

The violent resistance to the government's measures, spearheaded by the landlords, moneylenders, merchants, opium smugglers, and other mainstays of the old social order, was met by the PDPA with stepped-up repressive measures, some of which were directed against peasants as well.

This forced-march approach, combined with increasing factional violence — including assassinations and jailings — within the ruling PDPA, eroded the popular sympathy the regime had when it first took power. The April 1978 coup brought Noor Mohammad Taraki to power. After Taraki was killed in September 1979 in a shoot-out, his prime minister, Hafizullah Amin, became president. Amin was killed in December 1979, when the Soviet troops helped install Babrak Karmal as president.

Washington was bitterly hostile to the PDPA regime right from the start. The U.S. government immediately cut off all economic aid to Afghanistan. The CIA began probing counterrevolutionary forces that could be used against the Kabul regime.

### Moscow's role

All along, Moscow's role had been to try to stabilize the situation. It sent millions of rubles

and thousands of Russian advisers to Afghanistan. Rather than aiding a popular government against counterrevolutionary forces, they were propping up a government whose support was rapidly eroding.

Sending in tens of thousands of Soviet troops in December 1979 only made the situation worse, and ignited national antagonisms. The Soviet troops have been forced to take on greater and greater responsibilities for the fighting as the desertions from the Afghan army have multiplied.

### Two years later

In the two years since Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, the process of alienation of the masses from the government has deepened.

The intervention of Soviet troops has served as a brake on advancing the reforms promised by the PDPA and initially welcomed by large numbers of toilers. It has not inspired the oppressed to wage a determined struggle against the landlords and other oppressors in the country. Instead, the Kremlin's policies have served to convince growing numbers of Afghan workers and peasants that they would be better off not having Soviet troops occupying their country and to participate in the struggle against that occupation.

Instead of advancing policies in the interests of the oppressed class, the Soviet-backed regime of President Babrak Karmal is seeking to strengthen its position by reaching out to landlords, clergy, and tribal leaders. To this end the regime has retreated significantly on its stance toward land reform.

According to a report from Jonathan Steele, datelined Kabul, that appeared in the November 13, 1981, issue of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "Government officials admit that land reform is operating in only one-quarter of the country's districts and that half the schools are closed."

In August of last year, Michael Kaufman reported in the *New York Times* that "a decision was made last week to strike down key provisions of the land program. . . ."

These changes include:

- Allowing religious leaders and army officers to hold more than the fifteen-acre limit of land. The same goes for landowners who agree to mechanize and to sell their crops to the state.

- Tribal leaders who side with the government will be able to maintain unlimited acreage.

- Refugees that had their land confiscated, who agree to return, will get their land back.

- Landless peasants whose sons have volunteered for service on the government side are to be given priority in land distribution.

The government is trying a face-lifting operation by setting up a 940-member Fatherland Front as a consultative body. The aim is to involve tribal leaders, religious leaders, and representatives from the "business community," unions, women, youth, and other organizations.

Though supporters of the government call



this front a "constituent assembly," it is a far cry from the necessary, democratically elected decision-making body that is needed. This is how it was described to Jonathan Steele by Vasily Sovronchuk, the senior Soviet consultant to the Afghan Foreign Ministry. "The National Fatherland Front is there for people who support the revolution or are neutral. If people repent and recognize the goals of the revolution, of course they can be brought in. But to expect anything else is rather naïve politically."

On the diplomatic front, the Kabul regime is trying to get talks going with Pakistan and Iran about the resistance, the Afghan refugees, and the Soviet troops.

### Disintegration of Afghan army

The Afghan army has shrunk through desertions from an estimated 80,000 troops in 1978, to its current size of somewhere around 30,000. This is despite the relatively high rate of pay that soldiers receive.

Last July, the U.S. press reported the following story. This account is taken from the July 23 issue of the *Washington Post*. "At least 30 cadets from a military high school were killed last week when they participated in a major assault by Soviet and Afghan troops on rebels operating within 10 miles of the capital of Kabul."

This use of partially trained high school cadets led to protests from the parents. This incident is an indication of the inability of the government to muster enough regular army forces to fight the resistance. The article also reported that "Kabul's boys' schools are practically deserted because parents are hiding their sons to keep them from military service."

On September 7 of last year, the Afghan government announced that all former servicemen under the age of thirty-five who left military service before December 1979 had to report for reinduction.

This was met with a series of protest demonstrations in Kabul, as well as an exodus from the city of eligible men.

This caused the government to back down on that draft call.

In the months before the conscription plan was announced, there was an increase — according to an August 20, 1981, article in the *New York Times* — of forced inductions of Afghan youth into the army by dragooning them off the streets.

In January of this year, apparently to avoid a repeat of the opposition that developed to the previous draft announcement, hundreds of Afghan youth were rounded up in an unannounced move and sent to be processed for the military draft.

The combined Afghan and Soviet armies are only large enough to control the country's major cities and supply routes. At present, operations outside the cities are mostly limited to air strikes and an occasional large-scale offensive, followed by a return to bases.

President Karmal was forced to concede that the insurgency is still strong and appealed to

citizens to help crush it. This is a departure from the usual government attempts to downplay the scope of the resistance.

And journalists who have visited Kabul report on the fighting that takes place in the villages surrounding the city on a daily basis.

### The resistance

Aernout van Lynden wrote an article in the August 15, 1981, *Washington Post* after spending two and a half months traveling in Afghanistan with the resistance.

He described meeting resistance supporters who retain their jobs in the government and their façade as supporters of the Karmal regime in order to be in the best position to carry out assassinations and sabotage. This is a phenomenon mentioned in many other accounts, as well.

Lynden writes, "These urban guerrillas live a schizophrenic existence. All the men I stayed with are employed by one of the ministries during the day, but during the late afternoons and evenings their energy is expended precisely against the government that pays their salaries."

Although he does not ever say so explicitly, it seems likely that many of the officials involved in this network are former members of the Khalq (masses) faction of the ruling PDPA, the faction that both Taraki and Amin belonged to. Many Khalq members were purged from the government apparatus when Karmal — a member of the Parcham (flag) faction — came to power.

Many Khalq members have joined rebel groups. The resistance is broader than the original landlord-usurer-backed opposition to the land reform in the countryside. It now also includes substantial opposition in the cities, including among sectors of the population that once were a base of support for the PDPA.

The guerrilla groups that are based in Pakistan, however, tend to be the most proimperialist, and are the biggest recipients of the massive amounts of money, arms, and other aid that comes from the governments of Western Europe, the United States, and others. Pakistan serves as the conduit for the aid, and the refugee camps often serve as rebel bases. Recent reports say that the guerrillas that operate out of Pakistan are better armed than previously, which coincides with Washington's pledge to increase military aid.

Some of these groups go back to 1973, when they opposed the overthrow of the Afghan monarchy. These rebels are not the courageous heroes that Reagan and the press make them out to be.

Journalist Olivier Roy testified after a visit to Afghanistan, "I have seen these commandos work more against the rest of the Afghan population than against the Russians" (*Dissent*, Summer, 1981).

The Afghan-based guerrilla groups tend to have a different political character than those based in Pakistan. The most intense resistance within Afghanistan comes from the Nuristani and Hazara peoples.

The rebel groups are fractured along tribal, family, geographical, and political lines. Fierce fighting takes place among the different guerrilla groups.

All attempts by the guerrillas to unite — both Pakistan-based and Afghanistan-based — have been unsuccessful.

Clearly, tremendous amounts of Soviet money and troops have not been able to stabilize the situation. A war still rages, which the Kabul regime, backed by the Soviet Union, is no closer to winning today than they were two years ago. Millions of Afghans are refugees in Pakistan, Iran, and other countries.

### No support to imperialist campaign

But working people in this country must firmly *oppose* any campaign by the hypocrites in the White House to support the right-wing Afghan guerrillas and to whip up an anticommunist, prowar atmosphere.

Washington, Wall Street, and the Pentagon do not have the interests of the Afghan workers and peasants at heart when they dish out millions of dollars in aid to the reactionary guerrillas.

Washington wants to use Afghanistan, as well as Poland, to convince working people that capitalism is the best system in the world, and that communism is our biggest enemy.

They want working people to feel like they have interests in common with the bosses, so that they will be more willing to accept the rulers' war plans and austerity drive. They want to mask the fact that working people's interests are diametrically opposed to those of the bosses and their government.

That is why the support given to Washington's phony Poland "solidarity" campaign by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, and their anticommunist line on Afghanistan, *weakens* the unions in this country. It makes it *easier* for the employers and their government to wage war in El Salvador and at home. Every time the unions line up with the rulers on political, social, and economic questions, workers lose and the capitalists win.

The unions, in alliance with the Black and Latino communities, women, and youth, must actively counter the imperialists' campaign with one of their own.

One that demands a halt to spending our tax dollars to back landlords and dope pushers in Afghanistan, and bloody dictators in Pakistan and El Salvador.

Working people should demand aid, not embargoes for Afghanistan, Poland, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

Working people in the United States need our own foreign policy. One that is guided by opposition to the U.S. rulers and solidarity with our brothers and sisters in other countries. □

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# Afghanistan after two years of war

## Resistance groups gain ground

By Michel Lequenne

[The following article appeared in the February 12 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*].

\* \* \*

What is the situation in Afghanistan after more than two years of occupation and general warfare throughout its territory?

Today we no longer need to do what we did in 1980 — assess from afar the reports furnished by “generally well-informed circles.” An increasing number of observers are able to go there. In general, they only visit one province, or perhaps two. But by cross-checking reports we are able to get a clear look at the most important problems.

The Russian intervention force, about 100,000 men, patrols a few cities and only controls the major arteries of communication during the day, and only with large numbers of armored cars. They suffer relatively large losses in matériel and men in relation to the total numbers involved.

### Russian defeat

Compared to the earlier situation, including the situation that existed at the end of the hated Amin regime, this is a clear setback. There is no longer the shadow of an Afghan state outside the fortified offices in Kabul.

There is, furthermore, virtually no more Afghan army, despite recruitment down to the age of fourteen. These troops, ravaged by massive desertions, are so unreliable and so uncombative that they are no longer given heavy weapons, starting with bazookas, so that the

resistance fighters will not get hold of them.

In Nimruz (on the southwestern border with Iran), eighty border posts have been taken by the partisans, the early ones with some weapons, the later ones with loudspeakers, which is reminiscent of the Vietnamese tactic.

### State of the resistance

The resistance remains heterogeneous. But all reports confirm that it seems to be simultaneously going through a process of polarization and of organization. Polarization, in that the counterposition between the fundamentalist currents and those who could be more generally considered nationalists is becoming increasingly violent and is moving to armed struggle, creating a sort of second front within the war against the occupier.

In immense central Hazarajat, where the population is of the Shi'ite persuasion and

## For 'political and material support to Afghan resistance'

[The following appeared in a box with the above article on Afghanistan in the February 12 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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*The Movement to Support the Resistance of the Afghan People (MSRA), whose bulletin "Afghanistan in Struggle" is the best source of current information on Afghanistan, held its general assembly on November 29, 1981, at the end of which the following program was put forward and adopted.*

The occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops continues. It flouts Afghanistan's sovereignty and violates the right of the Afghan people to freely determine their future. We refuse to be reduced to silence by the false counterposition: "Either you are on the USSR's side, or you are on the USA's side." Without ceasing to denounce U.S. interventions in the world, we condemn the invasion of Afghanistan and we demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

The USSR is imposing by force a regime that in no way corresponds to the aspirations of the Afghan people. In the context of rivalry between the great powers, its intervention worsens the dangers weighing on world peace and on the independence of all the peoples of that region.

By resisting this aggression, the Afghan people are fighting for their survival and to be masters of their own destiny.

The MSRA declares its solidarity with all the Afghan resistance fighters in their battle for the independence of their country. The MSRA supports all those in Afghanistan who contribute to the development of the struggle for national liberation.

Far from being, as some would like us to believe, a pro-Western plot or a feudal rebellion led by religious fundamentalists, this resistance is a national and people's resistance which involves a broad range of social and political forces.

The Afghan patriots know that their unity is a decisive factor for their victory over the Soviet occupier. The MSRA supports all the resistance parties and fronts that, with different outlooks, demonstrate their desire to unite to drive out the occupier, and it denounces the acts of intolerance by the fundamentalist forces. The MSRA feels a special closeness to the Afghan forces that have an attachment to social emancipation, and who see democracy as the precondition for the exercise of the Afghan people's right to control their own future.

The MSRA supports all the initiatives that aim for a political resolution of the Afghan problem on the following bases:

- recognition of the resistance as sole representative of the Afghan people,

- complete withdrawal of Soviet troops,
- guarantees of the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of Afghanistan,
- guarantees of the real exercise of the Afghan people's right to freely decide their own future.

The MSRA will align itself with any initiatives the French government might take along these lines. The MSRA demands that the government now support the Afghan resistance diplomatically and materially.

The MSRA provides its political and material support to the Afghan people's resistance along these lines:

- political: by ongoing and precise reporting, by demonstrations, by activity alongside democratic forces and governmental bodies, by contributing to international support demonstrations;
- material: by expressing our adherence to the Afghan cause materially through collecting and delivering to the fronts in the interior [of Afghanistan] all the resources that are useful for the development of the Afghan people's liberation struggle. The support will be developed in special cooperation with organizations and movements that have a humanitarian goal.

This support must be protracted: spurred by our activity and by that of all the democratic forces, it must root itself among the French people in order to contribute to developing greater breadth to the support to the Afghan people and to the struggle for peace.

Khomeini is admired as chief of the Iranian revolution, but where the mullahs do not have the authority they do in Iran, the independent Bahsud Front — a federation of politico-military committees — has had armed confrontations with Akbani, who is governor of the province on behalf of the autonomous government of Hazarajat.

And according to Hervé Barre, who reports these happenings, the relationship of forces between the “liberal-democratic” and “fundamentalist” currents is tending to turn in favor of the former.

The confrontations are much worse where there are the forces of the Hezb-i Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. In the Panjsher, an operation in which forces were grouping for a large attack on a Russian garrison was sabotaged by a Hezb-i Islami attack on the rear of the sector that was unguarded, forcing the breakup of the commandos who were supposed to have been brought together.

But such a situation, which could seem the most negative, actually provides the basis for a great advance in political consciousness, and spurs the organization and coordination of the nonfundamentalist forces.

Although it is difficult to generalize, it can be said that the opposition by the totality of the Afghan people to the occupation means the resistance must economically and socially organize the population of each province or sector that it controls. And this does not take place without democratization, the appearance of committees, elimination of large landowners in favor of collectives, and division of labor between production and armed struggle.

The consciousness of the relationship of forces brings with it consciousness that the struggle will be long. As a result the leaders of the resistance are organizing for a long haul. Everything is being reorganized, including the education of the children. This has special bearing on the phenomenon that we have already noted, which is that the intellectuals have been joining and continue to join the fronts. This is an unexpected and decisive phenomenon.

When the PDPA [People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan] was moving toward power, and then took it, the intelligentsia turned toward it and expected it to carry out the big indispensable reforms. The Russian occupation and the generalized repression have reduced the PDPA to a skeleton of its former self, and the spontaneous and peasant resistance movements have become this intelligentsia's most solid hope. The Afghan revolution can be forged in this fusion.

We are not there yet of course, and — with the distressing attitude of the big forces of the world workers movement, with the weakness of those who support the Afghan resistance — the initial coordination between the fronts is presently being carried out to the benefit of the “bourgeois” parties in Peshawar. But we can legitimately view this situation as a stage, and one that is very reversible.

There are also other situations. The Nimruz

Front, which looks to the authority of a society of ulemas [Muslim theologians] whose leadership is located in Iran, calls itself nationalist and anti-imperialist and rejects not only the USSR and the USA, but also China, whose alliance with the Americans it denounces.

Finally, through various sources, the resistance is now better armed, even if it remains insufficiently armed.

The problem of weapons is reminiscent in all aspects of the situation in the war in Vietnam, although with a certain reversal in the participants. Just as the USSR never provided the Vietnamese with the planes, rockets, and sophisticated weapons (which it gave so generously to Egypt) that would have permitted them to finish off the U.S. army three times faster, so too the imperialists will not arm the Afghan resistance with the means to throw the Russians out of their country.

But as in Vietnam, the situation of occupation troops in a country where an entire people surrounds them with hatred — and even more so than in Vietnam because this involves soldiers of an army that still believes itself to be “red” and “soviet” — leads the occupation troops to become demoralized, and they show it, particularly by selling military matériel and

gasoline to buy food, watches, jeans, and embroidered coats.

Their commanders compensate for this rot, as in Vietnam, by carrying out an increasingly terrorist war: high altitude bombing, fragmentation bombs, blind destruction of villages. Just recently, Doctors Without Borders denounced the systematic bombardment of their hospitals.

#### What perspectives?

There is certainly no short-term solution. But the experience of counterrevolutionary wars for more than thirty years now, and especially — again — the experience of Vietnam, abundantly proves that the most formidable material forces cannot prevail over an entire people, however miserable their weapons. Armand Gatti expressed this perfectly in the assurance that a board with nails in it could destroy a computer.

What will go rotten in Afghanistan is the Soviet army.

The bureaucracy, which has just made “order reign in Warsaw,” is in the process of undergoing a creeping defeat in Afghanistan. It would be superficial to underestimate the importance of this. □

## Belgian LRT explains its position

### *Supports march for withdrawal of Soviet troops*

#### By Frank Slegers

[The following article is reprinted from the January 22, 1982, issue of *La Gauche*, the French-language weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers League (LRT), the Belgian section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.

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At the time of the invasion by Russian troops in Afghanistan, the Fourth International and the LRT came out strongly against that intervention. This invasion has nothing to do with the struggle for socialism. It was only a maneuver by the bureaucratic clique in power in the Soviet Union to defend its own interests. The goal of the operation: to maintain Afghanistan in their sphere of influence.

We have already explained in *La Gauche* in the past why the Soviet invasion, far from serving the cause of socialism, instead is a serious blow to workers struggles throughout the world.

The invasion trampled underfoot the democratic and nationalist sentiments of the peoples of Afghanistan, and therefore strengthened anti-Communist sentiments. And not only in Afghanistan, but in the whole region (Iran!). Throughout the world, the idea of socialism is cheapened because socialism is associated with military dictatorship, the destruction of democratic rights, the negation of the right to self-determination.

Result: Western imperialism's militarist offensive is facilitated.

#### LRT changes its point of view

Nonetheless, in the beginning the LRT was not for the withdrawal of Russian troops, and for the good reason that reactionary forces were in the majority within the Afghan resistance. On this point our organization changed its point of view in May 1981. We developed this at considerable length in our issue number 35 of last year.\*

We came to the conclusion that the longer

\*The introduction to the document referred to here, which appeared in the September 17, 1981, issue of *La Gauche*, presents the following explanation for the LRT's change in line:

“The International Executive Committee (IEC — a type of International Central Committee) of the Fourth International met in May 1981. Among the points on its agenda was an evaluation of the situation in Afghanistan since January 1980. At that time, following the invasion of Russian troops in that country, the Fourth International, through its day-to-day leadership (the United Secretariat), of course condemned that invasion, but was opposed to the slogan of an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops. A minority of the United Secretariat leadership, however, supported the opposite point of view.

“Following true democratic centralism, the Fourth International put this majority line into practice, while continuing the political discussion, including public discussion in the journals of the International. This debate has now led to a change in the political

the withdrawal of Russian troops was delayed, the more the work of the reactionaries, Afghan and international, was facilitated. The emergence and growth of an anti-imperialist, democratic, and socialist force in the Afghan resistance and among the ethnic minorities would be hindered.

#### Support progressive forces in resistance

The progressive forces, however, are well represented in the struggle against the Soviet invasion. There is the SAMA, the People's Organization for the Liberation of the Peoples of Afghanistan. This organization does not simply fight against the Russian military occupation, but its program also contains a series of progressive points, such as a radical land reform and measures to fight against the oppression of women (like the possibility for girls to receive an education). There are also many progressive forces that supported the regime before the Soviet intervention, and who have since joined the resistance.

The problem is that the largest segment of the resistance is based on the old social structures: the clans, the tribes.

But we should not view them as identical with the reactionary faction of the resistance, whose headquarters are outside Afghanistan, in Peshawar, Pakistan. These people began their resistance, not against the Russian invasion, but long before December 1979 against all progressive change and all modernization of the old social relations.

#### Karmal regime no longer has social base

The policy of the Karmal regime, which was put in the saddle by Soviet troops, has nothing to do with a socialist policy. On the contrary, the Karmal regime aims to revive the economy, like a common bourgeois government, by giving advantages to the merchants and small capitalists, by furnishing cheap credit, by lowering tariffs, by returning several dozen import firms to private hands. In the meantime, the perspective of an agrarian reform has disappeared far below the horizon.

The Karmal regime no longer has a social base. The whole population has turned against the Soviet occupation. The only hope for the progressive forces therefore rests in strengthening the socialist and progressive current that exists in the resistance.

That is why the LRT opts for the camp of struggle against the Soviet intervention. The LRT supports the progressive forces in the re-

line of our organization.

"At the IEC meeting, two reports were presented: one defended the old majority position (it was rejected by a vote of 24 to 9, with 6 abstentions); the other proposed a change in orientation and was adopted by a vote of 20 to 13, with 6 abstentions.

"These two reports had been discussed in all the sections of the Fourth International. The Political Bureau of the LRT adopted the point of view of the IEC majority. In addition it adopted a political statement that tries to be more specific about where, in its opinion, the changes in analysis and line have taken place. This statement is complementary to the IEC resolution, upon which it is based."

## 400 in torchlight march

The following article appeared in the January 29, 1982, issue of *La Gauche*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.

\* \* \*

Last Saturday about 400 people took part in Brussels in a torchlight march for Afghanistan. They demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, freedom for the Afghan people, and expressed their opposition to any foreign intervention in Afghanistan. It was not possible to participate with a banner favoring support to the progressive forces resisting the USSR's intervention.

The 400 participants in this torchlight march were primarily members and sympathizers of the Belgian Party of Labor (PTB), with smaller groups from the MCP, Pax Christi, For Socialism (PLS), a delegation from the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions in Uccle, Karel Van Miert [the head of the Socialist Party in Flanders] by himself, etc. There was also a group with slogans in support of Solidarity in Poland.

The LRT was also represented by two dozen comrades and a banner: "Support to the progressive forces of the resistance." The LRT had signed the demonstration's platform, but we felt it important to take our distance from the reactionary segment of the resistance in Peshawar (Pakistan) by clearly stressing support to the progressive wing of the resistance.

But this was not to the liking of the organizations that called on the BSR [Special

Investigation Bureau — a police unit] to throw us out of the demonstration. Our support to the progressive forces of the resistance was not allowed. This was a very strange attitude, especially since other slogans that were not part of the platform were allowed (which was, moreover, correct, since otherwise the group supporting Solidarity would also have been ejected from the demonstration).

In fact, this was a very instructive incident since it shows where things lead when you do not examine the struggle from the focus of the class struggle but from the predominant focus of the struggle for national independence against "Soviet imperialism."\*

The position the PTB takes on the question of Afghanistan is an extension in its attitude toward the question of Poland (attempts to give priority to Polish national independence in place of solidarity with Solidarity), and on the question of Central America (where the PTB only joined the solidarity movement after two and a half years, and then only with hesitations, because this solidarity movement does not limit itself to the question of national independence but is unequivocally on the side of the progressive resistance in Central America).

— Frank Slegers

\*According to a report in the February 12 issue of *La Gauche*, one of the slogans of the demonstration was "Soviet imperialism is the same thing as slavery."

sistance. It flows from this that we continue to oppose any attempt by imperialism to use this gift from the bureaucratic clique as a pretext to remilitarize its own side (think of the missiles!).

#### We demonstrate . . . with reservations

For this reason, we will participate in the January 23 Afghanistan demonstration, but we regret the presence in this demonstration of forces that have nothing to do with the workers movement and the left. We particularly regret that the platform of the demonstration does not explicitly support the progressive forces in the resistance, and that it does not explicitly take its distance from the reactionary forces in Afghanistan, for whom the struggle against the Russian occupation is only the continuation of a very old reactionary struggle against all progressive reform.

Therefore the LRT supports the demonstration, but with reservations. And we will demonstrate with our own slogans and our own banners. We call on all the progressive forces to support the demonstration in this manner, and only in this manner. □

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# HKE rally celebrates revolution

*Demands release of imprisoned militant Bahram Atai*

By David Frankel

An important victory was scored by the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) of Iran February 18 when it held a successful public meeting in Tehran celebrating the third anniversary of the Iranian revolution.

The meeting had originally been set for the afternoon of February 11, but a half hour before it was scheduled to begin, several police cars arrived. Organizers were told that the Ministry of the Interior had sent the police, and that permission from the ministry was required if the meeting was to proceed.

According to Iranian law, indoor meetings do not need any permit. Nevertheless, a delegation went to the ministry, after receiving assurances by phone from three vice-ministers that permission would be granted. When the delegation arrived at the ministry, however, these officials were nowhere to be found. The meeting had to be postponed.

## Ongoing harassment

Forcing the postponement of the February 11 meeting was only one more step in an ongoing policy of harassment and intimidation carried out by the government. Workers' leaders and political activists who support the revolution and defend it against imperialism, but who do not agree with the policies of the regime, have been subjected to arbitrary arrest, imprisonment without charges, loss of employment, and even execution.

On February 7, for example, two HKE members were kidnapped from the party's print shop by three armed men. The two were taken to the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office in Tehran and held overnight. One of the HKE members was beaten.

Even more serious is the case of Bahram Ali Atai, an HKE leader who was arrested in Tehran on December 11. Atai was distributing leaflets at the February prayer meeting in the capital when he was detained. He was taken to the Central Islamic Revolutionary Committee and held for several hours, then released and told to come back the next day.

When he returned, Atai was again arrested. He has been held since then in Tehran's Evin Prison. No charges against Atai have been filed, and his family has been repeatedly told that he will be released. Nevertheless, he still remains in prison.

Atai is a former worker at the Iran National automobile factory. He fought at the front against the Iraqi invasion in a military unit formed by Iran National workers, and was fired after his return. At the time of his arrest, he was distributing leaflets calling for the reinstatement of workers like himself at Iran National and other plants.

Although the measures taken against others on the left have frequently been harsher than those used against the HKE, the HKE and the Workers Unity Party (HVK), two of the organizations in Iran affiliated to the Fourth International, are the only ones that have carried out public campaigns against arbitrary violations of democratic rights.

Such a campaign was successful in winning the release of the prominent poet and writer Reza Baraheni in January. Baraheni had been held without charges for a total of eighty-four days.

A similar campaign has been launched to secure Atai's release. Those who support and defend the Iranian revolution against the attacks of imperialism should send telegrams calling for Atai's release to Hojatolislam Mousavi Tabrizi, Prosecutor General, Islamic Revolutionary Courts, Tehran, Iran. Copies should be sent to *Kargar*, P.O. Box 43-174, Postal Area 14, Tehran, Iran.

## A successful meeting

Despite the repressive actions carried out by the government, the possibilities for fruitful political activity in Iran are increasing. This was shown by the fact that the government felt it necessary to eventually authorize the HKE meeting on the anniversary of the revolution.

Some 300 people turned out for the February 18 meeting, according to a report from the HKE. These included workers from Iran National, the General Motors plant in Tehran, the Ray-o-Vac factory there, and others.

A banner at the front of the hall demanded "Free Bahram Ali Atai, anti-imperialist fight-

er," and a new brochure on Atai's case was handed out. About \$150 worth of books and literature was sold, including several copies of Leon Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, which has just been published in Farsi.

Speaking at the meeting where Mahmoud Enayat and Shams al-Ahmad, two prominent Iranian writers who were active in the struggle against the shah's dictatorship and who spoke out against the recent imprisonment of Baraheni.

Also on the platform were two workers fired for their political activity — Mustafa Seifabadi and Rezvan Roushenas.

Seifabadi, who spent six months fighting at the war front, was fired from his job at the Doopar pharmaceuticals factory in Tehran when he returned. He discussed Atai's case and pointed to the need for workers to organize against the sabotage of the economy and the war effort by capitalists and managers who oppose the mobilization of the workers.

## Role of women

Roushenas described how she was fired from her job in a textile factory because she organized women for military training and other activities. She spoke of the role of women in the struggle against the shah, and called for eliminating obstacles to the organization and mobilization of women in the ongoing struggle against imperialism.

HKE leader Babak Zahraie drew a balance sheet of the past three years of the revolution. He declared that the revolution has led to the weakening of the landlords and capitalists, to a weakening of the capitalist state apparatus and bureaucracy.

"The first three years," he said, "have been years in which the masses have gained in consciousness and organization." He pointed to the goal of "driving the capitalists out of the government and establishing the first workers and farmers government in the Middle East." □

## Gisela Scholtz, 1935-1982

[The following obituary is scheduled to appear in the March 8 issue of the French-language fortnightly *Imprecor*, published in Paris.]

\* \* \*

Our comrade Gisela Scholtz died on February 14 in Paris. Her comrades and friends deeply regret her premature demise and the loss of a courageous and devoted activist.

Comrade Gisela was born in 1935 in Germany; her youth was difficult due to the hardships of the war. She was involved in the struggle of the student movement in its heyday and was active in the SDS [German Socialist Students Union]. Thereafter she joined the Fourth International, fulfilling her tasks both in the Belgian section — of which she was a central leader for several

years — and on the international level. In April 1969 she was a delegate for the Belgian section to the Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International.

Gisela Scholtz was active and appreciated in her professional field as a researcher and journalist. She worked on German television for a period and was involved in several films for it, including a remarkable one on the children of Belfast, Northern Ireland, a city ravaged by endemic civil strife.

Her comrades and friends mourn with her family and companion Ernest Mandel. They will not forget her. They will remember her contribution to the struggle for the renewal of the workers movement and the building of a revolutionary International.