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Nicaragua Bracing for Invasion **STOP REAGAN'S WAR MOVES!**



Lou Howort/Militant

Protest actions in the U.S. and other countries are crucial to stopping Reagan's war plans against Central America.

Speech by Pacific Island Leader

**For an Independent and
Nuclear-Free Pacific**

USA

**What Program Can Halt
Threat of Nuclear War?**

Stop U.S. war moves!

By Will Reissner

The Reagan administration is planning an invasion of Nicaragua in the very near future, charged Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto at a March 19 press conference in Managua.

"We no longer say an invasion is possible, nor even probable, but rather we're convinced that the decision has been taken and they're just awaiting a propitious moment," D'Escoto added.

The danger of a U.S.-sponsored invasion of Nicaragua comes in the context of the Reagan administration's desperate attempts to stem the tide of revolutionary struggles in Central America. Following on the heels of the Sandinista triumph over Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza in 1979, leftist guerrillas in El Salvador are now winning their war against that country's bloody junta.

In Guatemala, insurgent forces are also growing in strength and have developed a strong base among that country's Indian majority.

Going to 'source'

The U.S. State Department refuses to admit that the rebellions in Central America are a reaction to the brutal exploitation of the workers and peasants by local ruling classes. Instead, Washington charges that the revolutionary struggles are organized and controlled from Nicaragua and Cuba. Secretary of State Alexander Haig has repeatedly threatened to go to the "source" in fighting the rebellions.

The revolutionary government of Nicaragua has responded to the U.S. war threats by calling on the United Nations to hold a special Security Council meeting to discuss the situation in Central America.

Daniel Ortega Saavedra, a member of the ruling Junta of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua, sent a letter to UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar calling attention to "the increasingly evident danger of a large-scale military intervention by the armed forces of the United States."

Ortega's letter also pointed to the possibility of attacks on Nicaragua by "paramilitary groups supported and encouraged by Washington."

Diplomatic campaign

Ortega and other leaders of the Nicaraguan government met with Fidel Castro in Havana on March 17 to discuss the U.S. military threat to the Caribbean region.

Nicaraguan diplomats have also conferred in recent days with the foreign ministers of Canada and Mexico and with Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. representative to the United Nations. The Nicaraguans have repeatedly called for talks with Washington to reduce the level of tension

in the region.

On the military level, Nicaragua's armed forces and people's militia have been placed on a full alert and preparations are being made for resistance against any invasion (see article on page 244).

It is no secret that the Reagan administration wants to crush the revolutionary government established in Nicaragua by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

Washington's war plans

A March 10 article in the *Washington Post* detailed a \$19 million plan by the Central Intelligence Agency to destabilize the Nicaraguan government and to organize and arm counter-revolutionary troops in neighboring Honduras. This force is being organized with help from other Latin American governments, such as the military regime of Argentina.

High officials of the Reagan administration have acknowledged that the details in the *Washington Post* article are correct. But the plans go beyond what was reported. As Senator Barry Goldwater said of the article, "they didn't have everything, but everything they had is true."

In fact, the Senate and House Intelligence committees were informed in detail last year of the administration's secret war plans against Nicaragua.

The plan is already being implemented. This is apparent from the fact that the number of U.S. military advisers in Honduras has been secretly expanded from 14 last September to nearly 100 today. Among the U.S. personnel are Special Forces (Green Beret) instructors in counterinsurgency, sabotage, and irregular warfare.

Direct military aid to the Honduran government has also been increased and plans are in the works to expand air bases in that country "for possible use by United States tactical fighter planes," according to a report by Bernard Gwertzman in the March 20 *New York Times*.

The Pentagon is also planning to establish a military base on San Andrés island off the coast of Nicaragua.

But Washington's war moves against Nicaragua have gone beyond the planning stage. On March 15 two strategic bridges near the Honduran border were blown up by counter-revolutionary forces. Two days later, three Nicaraguan soldiers were killed in a clash with a column of eighty counterrevolutionaries inside Nicaragua.

For months, supporters of former dictator Somoza have been carrying out attacks on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region from bases in Honduras.

Officials in Managua have also pointed to recent attacks on Nicaraguan vessels in the

Gulf of Fonseca by Salvadoran and Honduran naval patrol boats as provocations. These are intended to draw a Nicaraguan response that would create "the necessary conditions to justify a foreign intervention against Nicaragua," the Sandinistas say.

Other moves against Nicaragua in recent months include attempts to blow up the country's major oil refinery, a terrorist attempt to destroy an AeroNica jet in Mexico City, a bomb explosion that killed three airport workers in Managua, overflights of Nicaragua by U.S. spy planes, and provocative joint U.S.-Honduran maneuvers near the Nicaraguan border.

Other U.S. clients in the region, besides Honduras, are being enlisted in the campaign against Nicaragua. On March 17, the president of Colombia called for the establishment of an inter-American naval force to blockade alleged arms shipments to El Salvador from Cuba and Nicaragua. President Julio César Turbay Ayala called on the Organization of American States (OAS) to set up such a force.

It should be recalled that in 1965, when President Lyndon Johnson sent U.S. troops to intervene in the Dominican Republic's civil war, the OAS agreed after the fact to designate the U.S. troops as an Inter-American Force.

But as the Reagan administration and its regional allies step up their counterrevolutionary pressures against Nicaragua, the situation of the rightist regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala is slipping badly.

Junta murders journalists

The international image of the bloody Salvadoran junta suffered another blow with the March 17 murder of four Dutch journalists by the junta's military.

The Salvadoran government, backed up by the U.S. embassy, claims that the four journalists were killed during a firefight between government troops and guerrillas, with whom the four were allegedly traveling. But Loren Jenkins reports in the March 20 *Washington Post* that three of the four were repeatedly shot in the face and the fourth died of wounds to the throat and chest.

"Such precise injuries, medical sources here said, are too neat to have resulted from a random firefight between the Army and the guerrillas," according to Jenkins.

Furthermore, the journalists were already under surveillance by Salvadoran authorities, and had been interrogated on March 11 by the Salvadoran Treasury Police, a notoriously brutal branch of the security forces.

At a news conference in the Dutch capital, Foreign Minister Max Van Der Stoel indicated that he believed the four journalists had been murdered. "When people are shot in cold blood," he noted grimly, "it is a very, very serious matter."

On March 19, several thousand people in Amsterdam took part in a torchlight march to protest the murder of the journalists. A special focus of the demonstration was the U.S. consulate in Amsterdam.

The murder of the journalists was not an isolated incident. On the same day they were killed, a rightist murder squad in El Salvador issued a written death threat against thirty-four other international journalists in the country.

Journalists have become a special target of the Salvadoran regime, which cannot stand the light of publicity. On-the-scene reporting has exposed the murderous record of the government, and trips by journalists into areas held by the Salvadoran guerrillas have shown that the insurgents are an indigenous movement with strong local roots, which cuts across the propaganda campaign describing them as directed and controlled from Nicaragua and Cuba.

Rebels gaining in El Salvador

By all accounts, the junta is losing the civil war in El Salvador. The March 22 issue of *Time* magazine acknowledges that "the government, for all the apparent power it still retains, seems to be losing in the struggle to retain the loyalty of the people." *Time* adds that "the rebels are becoming increasingly bold. Their morale is clearly improving, while the soldiers' is declining, a major problem facing the army."

The Reagan administration's response to the junta's deteriorating situation has been to boost U.S. military and economic aid. On March 17, Reagan asked Congress to approve \$128 million in emergency economic aid to El Salvador, which is 25 percent higher than the amount he had asked for less than a month earlier.

It is also becoming clear to Washington that the March 28 elections in El Salvador will not enhance the junta's international image nor make U.S. intervention there more palatable to the American people.

Guatemalan election fiasco

A similarly designed election in neighboring Guatemala on March 7 was so obviously rigged by the military that the defeated parties — all of them rightist — formed a coalition to protest the fraud.

Undaunted by the protest, the Guatemalan military regime hastily reconvened the lame-duck congress five days early to certify the election results, and then immediately burned the ballots so there could be no recount.

Describing the election results as a "fiasco," *Time* magazine dolefully noted that "so ended, in chaos, the electoral exercise that the Reagan Administration had hoped would restore some democratic legitimacy to the embattled, authoritarian Guatemalan government."

Despite its own record, the Guatemalan regime is sending a large group of observers to testify to the "fairness" of the Salvadoran elections! But it is not likely that the Guatemalan observers will have the effect on U.S. public opinion that Reagan is hoping for.

The murder of the Dutch journalists and the electoral farce in Guatemala came at a time when Reagan's war moves in Central America are already facing massive opposition from working people inside the United States.

The American people are overwhelmingly opposed to U.S. involvement in El Salvador, as shown by a New York Times-CBS News poll published on March 21. When asked what Washington should do in El Salvador, 63 percent responded "Stay out." Only 6 percent favored use of U.S. troops, and only 16 percent approved sending economic and military aid to the junta.

This antiwar sentiment will be expressed in demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and other cities on March 27, as well as in protests that weekend in Britain, Canada, Denmark, and other countries.

The importance of building the movement

against U.S. intervention was stressed by Arnaldo Ramos, U.S. representative of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador. In an interview in the March 23 *Village Voice*, published in New York, Ramos stated: "I'm positive this war is going to be won in the U.S. Just by traveling around the country, in small towns, you find that not just the traditional left is involved, but the clergy, union members, and just plain middle-class people. And it's not just because of the memory of Vietnam. More and more people are aware that the foreign and domestic policies of this administration are linked, that money being wasted in El Salvador is being taken from social programs." □

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Country prepares for invasion

Massive mobilization answers U.S. war moves

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA — Nicaragua is mobilizing to defend its revolution against further blows from the United States.

In the space of only four days, Reagan's threats have been backed up by the bombing of two bridges near the Honduran border, an attack on two fishing vessels in Nicaraguan territorial waters, and the killing of three soldiers in a clash with a counterrevolutionary band.

This is obviously just the beginning, and from factories to farms, the entire working population is preparing to assure defense of the country and continued production of the essentials of life under conditions of war.

Hundreds of meetings have been held at workplaces throughout the country to discuss the gravity of the situation and the immediate measures that need to be taken. One of these meetings, held in Managua on March 17, brought together representatives of every single union in the city. Similar gatherings have taken place in other areas.

Emergency networks of defense, produc-

tion, food distribution, price control, information, health and sanitation, and construction are being set into place.

There is wide popular support for this decisive response to the U.S.-backed attacks, including for the measures in the decree establishing a state of emergency in the country March 15.

"The situation in the country is tending rapidly toward a situation of war," explained Lucío Jiménez, secretary general of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST).

"The workers have been asking for such a decree for some time, because while we were raising production, the bourgeoisie was echoing whatever the imperialists said. With the decree a blow can be struck against the agents of Yankee imperialism in Nicaragua, and we are demanding that it be applied against them."

On the legal front, the government decreed a suspension of the constitution, suspended news broadcasts on capitalist-owned radio stations, and ordered pre-publication review of all newspapers and periodicals. Also suspended

was the broadcast of "opinion programs of political parties and all other organizations."

These measures are to remain in force for thirty days, at which time they may be renewed if deemed necessary.

Massive response to militia appeal

Response to appeals for militia volunteers has been massive. Eighteen thousand members of the Sandinista Youth alone have enrolled.

Here in Managua, thousands have turned out three nights a week for training in each of the several centers.

In Matagalpa, a city of 40,000 to the north, 2,500 volunteered March 16. After several hours of evening training, the new recruits held a march through the main street of the city in answer to Reagan. In Juigalpa, a city to the east, a similar demonstration was held the same night after the evening's training.

In León, a city of 250,000, five centers of militia training were required to accommodate all the volunteers.

In addition to joining the militias, the people

Government's declaration on state of emergency

[The following is the text of the emergency decree issued by the Nicaraguan government March 15. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Whereas: (1) The plans of aggression directed against our country are increasingly assuming more concrete forms and are intended to disturb the peace in our country, to destroy our system of production and our country's physical infrastructure, to prepare an escalation of counterrevolutionary military attacks, and consequently replace people's power with a Somoza-style regime.

(2) In the past few weeks there have been significant revelations about the existence of undercover plans, directed by the U.S. secret police in complicity with bands of Somozaist ex-National Guards and counterrevolutionary groups based in Miami and Honduras. All this has been done with the help of several Latin American military regimes. These plans include:

(a) The training of an international mercenary force to be located in Honduran territory, military attacks, sabotage, and terrorist attacks in Nicaragua.

(b) The financing of considerable numbers of counterrevolutionary bands and paramili-

tary groups, originating in various Latin American countries, as well as of rightist political organizations and unions inside Nicaragua, to participate in economic and political destabilization, and to prepare for armed aggression.

(3) These plans have already had concrete results, such as the bombing Sunday, March 14, of the bridge over the Río Negro, and the highway that leads to the El Guasaule border post in the province of Chinandega, and the partial destruction of the bridge entering Ocotal over the highway leading to the Las Manos border post in the province of Nueva Segovia. These actions were carried out by criminals based in Honduras. The bombing of the bridges coincided with a sinister plan — which, according to the U.S. media, had already been approved [by the U.S. government] — to destroy and block the highways inside Nicaragua that are allegedly being used to transport arms to El Salvador. This is nothing but a pretext to attack the heroic Nicaraguan people.

(4) Additional criminal plans were aborted, such as the attempted bombing of the national cement factory and oil refinery. Others, which were in fact carried out, such as the bombing of an AeroNica plane in Mexico City and another bomb explosion in Sandino Airport in Managua, confirm these plans.

(5) It is the duty of the revolutionary government and of the entire country to turn our entire moral, political, social, economic, and human energies toward defense of our homeland and revolution, to stop these acts of terror and destabilization once and for all. The sole purpose of these acts is to rob our working people of their revolutionary victory and the right they won with blood and heroism to build a new society in peace, free of poverty and oppression.

Therefore, using its power, [the Junta of National Reconstruction] decrees:

Article 1. Suspension throughout the country of rights and guarantees contained in Decree Number 52 of August 21, 1979, with the exception of the second clause of article 49 of the decree. [For the full text of Decree Number 52, "Statute on the Rights of Nicaraguans," see *Intercontinental Press*, September 10, 1979, page 851.]

Article 2. Suspension of rights and guarantees is for a thirty-day period, renewable in accordance with the circumstances that prevail in the country.

Article 3. This law abolishes Decree Number 812 of the Emergency Economic and Social Law and will take effect the moment of its publication in any means of collective communication, later publication in the *Official Daily Gazette* notwithstanding.

of Nicaragua are contributing whatever skills they have to the defense of the revolution.

Doctors and nurses are being organized into medical brigades to assure battlefield care and general medical care for the population under conditions of war.

A brigade of engineers and geologists is being formed to aid the population in constructing bomb shelters.

And in a country where the battle for culture and literacy remains one of the highest priorities, special brigades of artists, performers, teachers, and journalists have been formed to ensure support to the means of communication, accurate news and historical accounts, and mobile cultural events.

Organizing food supplies

Special attention has been paid to the critical task of guaranteeing continued supply and distribution of food.

"If we don't assure our people *gallo pinto*,* especially those on the frontline, it will be a disaster. Hunger, not the enemy's bullets, will defeat us." These were the words of caution of Narciso González, president of the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG) following a national emergency meeting of the organization March 17. The meeting was held to discuss precautionary measures that are already being taken to assure food supplies as well as to work out plans for provisioning the cities during an invasion.

The National Executive Committee of the Rural Workers Association (ATC) met the same day to discuss how branches of the ATC would ensure continued agricultural production, particularly of such major items as coffee, cotton, rice, and beef.

Established at the same time were plans for vigilance committees of ATC members to prevent sabotage of crops and machinery, and attacks by counterrevolutionary bands.

Special attention has also been paid to distribution of food once it has reached the cities.

In the large central markets where most food is sold, a major effort has been made to enroll individual market-stall proprietors in the militia and vigilance committees, and in some cases to fortify the markets against military attack.

Trenches have been dug at the Roberto Huembes outdoor market in Managua, where two-thirds of the proprietors have already joined the militia or the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS).

Price-watch committees have also been established to ensure that no one takes advantage of the heightened tension to artificially hike food prices.

In Managua's Eastern Market, thirty-four CDSs are already on duty for precisely this purpose. In the large supermarkets, the supermarket workers' union is fulfilling the same task.

All of these steps are proceeding calmly, in

*Literally, "spotted rooster," a popular Nicaraguan term for rice and beans.



Arnold Weissberg/IFP

Demonstration in Managua February 21, the day after bomb exploded at Sandino Airport.

'The revolution has the right to protect itself'

MANAGUA — All the steps being taken to protect Nicaragua from U.S. attacks are being carried out under the general framework of the state of emergency declared March 15.

This decree has been slandered in the imperialist press as "the end of democratic rights" in Nicaragua. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The real threat to democratic rights in Nicaragua comes from the U.S. ruling class, which wants to replace the revolutionary government with a Guatemala- or El Salvador-style dictatorship.

"There is not a single individual or collective right that is not threatened by the evidence of foreign aggression," an article on the editorial page of the Sandinista daily *Barricada* pointed out March 17. In this situation, what the state of emergency does is "give priority to the most cherished of human rights — the right to life."

The decree, *Barricada* continued, "has nothing whatever in common with the superficially similar measures taken in other countries for exactly the opposite reason — to oppress and repress their people. . . ."

"In revolutionary Nicaragua, the government declared a state of emergency because the situation created in our country by the

aggressive plans of imperialism is precisely an emergency.

"This is not a question of semantics, but of an essential difference in content. . . ."

An editorial in the same issue of *Barricada* explained that by "channeling all the energy of the people toward defense," the state of emergency has made it possible "to take the political initiative against the aggressors."

As for the measures taken in regard to the press and radio, Junta of National Reconstruction member Sergio Ramírez explained their aim in his March 17 television speech.

The threat of aggression, he said, requires assuring "the public is correctly informed about the likelihood of attacks, the actions that are to be taken for defense, and how production is to be organized.

"These measures were adopted to prevent production from being interrupted by phony news reports and rumors."

Supreme Court Justice Rodolfo Robelo summed things up this way: "Just as a human being has the right to physical existence and to self-defense when this is under attack — so too the revolution has the right to protect itself."

— Michael Baumann

a highly organized way.

The watchword was given by Junta of National Reconstruction member Sergio Ramírez, in a nationally televised speech March 17.

Tens of thousands join militia

By Antígona Martínez

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — As I approached the huge group of people standing in and around the auditorium, the day after the bombing, I could already hear the chants, clapping, and singing of some very excited young people, all students of the UNAN, Nicaragua's national university.

When I got a bit closer I was buttonholed by a young *compañero* out of breath and talking very fast.

"*Compañera*, today is the day, you've got to sign up for the militias.

"It's our duty as revolutionary youth to defend the country and the revolution.

"The imperialists are getting prepared; we have to also, so please sign up right away."

When I told him I had already signed up, he seemed a bit disappointed, but he moved on to the person standing next to me.

The recruitment rally at the university was very spirited. When Commander Dora María Téllez, a national leader of the Sandinista Front, asked the crowd of students if they were willing to defend the country even with their lives, there was only one unanimous, "Sí!"

Commander Téllez said to the crowd, "We are capable of multiplying up to infinity; if they put one foot in Central America, we will know how to defeat them.

"They can come in, but they will never get out."

After her speech, the music, and an announcement that the long-awaited shipment of the new notebooks were now ready for sale,

Tardencillas gets hero's welcome

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — A virtual sea of clenched fists greeted nineteen-year-old Orlando Tardencillas here at Augusto César Sandino Airport March 15. Tardencillas was brought to Washington last week to testify that Nicaraguans and Cubans were intervening in El Salvador, as a pretext for U.S. intervention. He stupified the State Department when, at the risk of death, he exposed Reagan's lies before network cameras.

The modest hero told thousands of Sandinista youth who rallied to welcome him home, "I wasn't doing anything special, just my revolutionary duty."

Evidently, the United States has not yet learned, after decades of trying, that there is a whole country here full of good Sandinistas like Tardencillas, and nobody — but nobody — can stop them.

"Defense is not solely a military matter; it also requires production, work, and above all order and discipline. That is what the country needs at this time."

And that is what it is getting. □

we were organized into our different *pelotones* (militia units), ready to receive our first training session.

My group had some 150 people — about half men and half women. We formed three rows and began marching and running. It was a total distance of about two miles. For not one yard of those two miles did we stop chanting or

slow down. And when we began to get a little tired, we chanted even louder. Things like "People, army, unity — Guarantee of our victory," "On our feet or dead, but never on our knees," and "If the Yankees intervene, the militias will stop them."

The chanting kept the spirit up. We didn't realize how tired we were and how much we were sweating until the end of the two-mile run.

As we went through the neighborhoods, people came out of their homes to see us; this group of young people, some still carrying their school books and out of breath, but still with very enthusiastic chants.

I could not help but think that with so much energy and conviction, there is not an army in the world that could defeat the Nicaraguan people. □

'We have to produce technicians with a new mentality'

SÉBACO — The first graduation ceremony was held here at the Luis Hernández Aguilar School for Agricultural Mechanics February 27 in this valley where agriculture is expanding rapidly. The school is one of nine set up last year by the revolutionary government to train tractor drivers.

The twenty-three students, whose average age is twenty-one, were selected on the basis of their political awareness, work habits, and backing from the mass organizations they belong to — such as the Sandinista Defense Committees, the Sandinista Youth, or trade unions.

About 70 percent of the students had been unskilled agricultural workers. The other 30 percent had experience driving light trucks and a couple had some experience working with tractors. Some had two years of education and others, three.

During the four-month course, the students worked from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., taking up such subjects as mathematics, tractor driving, the theory and practice of tractors and agricultural implements, and simple chemistry and metallurgy.

They also studied agrarian politics, which involved discussing land reform, the revolution, and the role of the unions. A Spanish course using the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) daily *Barriada* as a text improved their reading and writing.

The school's director, Hector Artola, addressed the proud graduates and their families.

Artola described some of the obstacles the students had faced: "When we first started the class, we didn't have water or electricity or even a single tractor. We didn't even have books. But today we have all those things."

Job prospects for these graduates are immediate. Nicaragua is expecting more than 1,000 tractors from the Soviet Union and there still are not enough trained drivers. More than half the class is going to work in lands formerly owned by the Somozaists, lands that are now nationalized.

There will be nothing ordinary about the work, as Henry Siqueira from the Ministry of Agricultural Development's Matagalpa office pointed out. "We have to be ready to defend our revolution. We have a commitment to all people who are struggling — to the 30,000 disappeared in Argentina, to the thousands and thousands murdered in El Salvador and Guatemala. This is a commitment we all have.

"We have to produce technicians with a new mentality. That's why we also study politics and economics. We can't have new tractors without having a new kind of human being."

— Jane Harris



Jane Harris/IP

Director Hector Artola (left) congratulates student.

The elections nobody believes in

Growing demoralization among partisans of junta

By Jean-Pierre Beauvais

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

* * *

SAN SALVADOR — The welcome in San Salvador's ultramodern airport is abrupt and unexpected, but quite revealing. "You're French? What are you going to do here? The Communists rule your country, right? If you're here to write the same crap as the others, all these American journalists who land here, you'd do better to go back right away . . ."

He is quite nervous, this officer who gives the passports a second check. Apparently he has no confidence in the lesser officials of the immigration service. The incoherent, aggressive tone of his remarks is not just theatrics. True, he wants to make you nervous. But mainly he expresses his own nervousness.

It is the anxiety of someone who is identified with an institution that increasingly seems to have lost the battle. It is the anxiety of someone who knows this and cannot admit it.

We were to run into several others like him in this city under siege.

Meanwhile, the repression continues. Blind repression. Carried out as an example. To terrorize.

Every morning, amid the indifference produced by fear and by the commonplace character of it all, volunteers from the humanitarian organizations and the archdiocese go through the poor neighborhoods. They are looking for the bodies of victims dumped by the "death squads" during their nightly rounds.

The members of these death squads are having an increasingly difficult time hiding the fact that they are members of the National Guard or the army's security services. Every day, dozens of new bodies are added to the total found during these macabre collections.

End of an era

There is the barbarism. And there are the immense fortunes, the people of privilege entrenched in the luxurious neighborhoods of Lomas Verdes or San Benito.

There is also the mass of the petty-bourgeoisie, who desperately cling to the idea that they are "successful" because they serve the rich or live off their crumbs.

Many have already left. Others are making their plans. The classified advertisements in the daily press are more credible and more re-

vealing than the communiqués issued by the military junta: the columns are filled with shady ads promising "quick issuance of passport, American visa, and travel arrangements in complete security."

This whole little world is characterized by skepticism and fatalism. It is expressed in the rush to consume, in the packed restaurants, in the crowded discothèques.

Meanwhile, a few hundred yards away "their" thugs are killing in the shadows. Meanwhile, less than forty kilometers away on the slopes of the Guazapa volcano, "their" army is stumbling and falling in its attempt to dislodge the revolutionaries from the mountain.

The atmosphere in the privileged ghettos of this city is somewhat analogous to the atmosphere in the spring of 1944 in the well-to-do neighborhoods of Paris, or in 1961 in the elegant districts of Algiers.

It is the last gasp and, already for some, the desire to forget. It is the last gasp of a class and its lackeys who know that their country and their capital will soon have a rendezvous with history that they cannot do much about.

Why hold the elections?

In this context, the question is posed: why hold the March 28 elections? There is already a total dichotomy between the importance that Washington places on the elections, the amount it has staked on them, and the real situ-

Amsterdam: Central America solidarity rally draws 10,000

AMSTERDAM — More than 10,000 demonstrated here February 27 against imperialist intervention in Central America. It was the largest such action to date.

Initiated by committees in solidarity with El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, the demonstration won the support of the FNV, the general trade-union confederation in the Netherlands, which organized union members to participate and sent a representative to address the rally. Union activists from the ADM-NSM shipyard mobilized for the demonstration. They put out a pamphlet calling for solidarity with the FMLN and urging all trade unionists to become active in the antiwar movement.

The slogans of the action were: "Against U.S. Intervention in Central America"; "U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua"; and "For Victory of the FDR-FMLN."

ation here. Why even talk about them?

"The game is being played out, or will be played out, somewhere else, on another playing field," we were told by a young lawyer linked to one of El Salvador's famous fourteen families, who divide up most of this country's wealth among themselves.

And he added: "If the elections really take place, they will only cause us additional problems. Look how the campaign divides us, while the communists [meaning the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN)] are more united than ever. The solution, if there is one, is not electoral but military. In fact, Reagan wants to hold them so he will have fewer problems with his senators."

A different concern is expressed by the owner of a small chain of stores, who is a member of the local chamber of commerce and a convinced Christian Democrat, a man who respects José Napoleón Duarte as "a courageous man held prisoner by the military."

His concern is especially significant: "In a half-century, we have never had a democratic election. We've only had elections that were rigged by the military or stolen by them at the last minute. So to talk about free elections today, to talk of them as expressing the people's will, as establishing democratic legitimacy when the guerrillas control a good one-third of the country, with the civil war raging everywhere, and with the army controlling the slightest movement in the capital, is a complete fraud."

Junta's failure, guerrilla offensive

In fact, when the U.S. embassy and the junta decided to organize these elections, they had a plan that seemed coherent. That was last year, shortly after the relative failure of the general offensive launched by the organizations carrying out the armed struggle.

The military thought that a victory was at hand. Their analysis was that the revolutionaries were "losing their base of social support."

The elections, it was hoped, would politically isolate the FMLN. At the same time, it was decided to create a highly trained airborne unit, the sinister Atlacatl Brigade, which could deal decisive blows to the guerrillas, even in its most remote strongholds.

But the new offensive by the revolutionaries, which has developed with growing strength since August-September 1981, made a mockery of these plans. Despite a temporary weakening of their structures in the capital, the FMLN's "base of social support" broadened considerably in the country as a whole.

The zones over which the FMLN exercises

stable and permanent control have dramatically grown, while its military activities have increased in scope and importance.

One of many symbols of this situation was the pitiful state of the Atlacatl Brigade's troops in recent days as they returned to their base (which had been the country's only teacher training school and — like the national university — has been closed for nearly a year and a half).

These troops, who were supposed to deal decisive blows to the guerrillas, had been forced onto the defensive, and then had to carry out a sudden withdrawal after suffering heavy losses around the Guazapa volcano, which as we said is less than 40 kilometers from the capital.

Logically, this rapid change in the situation, this evolution in the relationship of forces should have led to the cancellation or indefinite postponement of the elections, since it had become obvious that they could no longer fulfill the function initially projected for them.

Division of reactionary forces

However, the international use that the United States had already made of the elections (they were to have provided proof of the junta's legitimacy against the FDR-FMLN), and the splintering of the bourgeois forces in the pre-election period, meant that the political price of a cancellation would be very high.

The crisis in the bourgeois reactionary forces, the divisions and growing confrontations

in their ranks, show that they totally lack any perspectives. In addition to Duarte's Christian Democrats, there are five other parties in the race, all to the right of that formation. The most significant are:

- General [José Alberto] Medrano's Popular Orientation Party (POP). Medrano was formerly head of the National Guard and founder of the paramilitary organization ORDEN, which has a fascist-like ideology. ORDEN is responsible for many massacres of the population in the countryside.

- The National Conciliation Party (PCN), which was the official party under the preceding dictatorships. In this capacity, it was the instrument for the massive traditional vote frauds. The PCN candidates have a simple program: place full confidence in the present strongman of the army, General José Guillermo García. In other words, get rid of Duarte.

- Major [Roberto] D'Aubuisson's Nationalist Republican Alliance. D'Aubuisson was thrown out of the army for his extremism and his brutal methods! Openly fascist and a notorious psychopath, he willingly explains that if solving El Salvador's problems requires the massacre of a large portion of its population, he would not hesitate. "Hesitation would be criminal," he asserts.

For the most part, the election campaigns of all these "defenders of Christian and Western values against the Marxist threat" are being waged through paid political advertisements in the newspapers, on radio, and on television. Even Duarte does not dare to organize real campaign meetings for "reasons of safety." In his statements, Duarte appears to be totally on the defensive against his opponents, largely

limiting himself to stating that what has been done for the past two years should be continued.

Shaken general staff

And standing "above the parties" there is the pulsating message that the military high command broadcasts several times an hour on all the stations: "The armed forces are the guarantee of the expression of the people's sovereign will." But even the most experienced ballot-box stuffers and election-fraud organizers have already stated that "no more than 30 percent of the people" will take part in the voting.

What impact has the political splintering of the reactionary forces had inside the army? What impact does the growing fatalism and cynicism of the ruling class have on the officers who defend the bourgeoisie's interests, suffering very heavy losses in the process?

These are essential questions that will determine how and at what pace the situation evolves here in the short run. In addition to the developments in the field, this impact is now of major concern to the growing number of military "advisers" sent from Washington under various guises.

At the general staff level, the differences and tensions are virtually out in the open. Some want to continue to put forward the Christian Democrats and Duarte and go ahead with the elections. Others are avowed and unavowed partisans of D'Aubuisson and other fascist-like formations. Then there are an apparently increased number who want to put an immediate stop to the "sterile and useless electoral farce."

But, on a deeper level, there are growing signs that segments of the military are beginning to fall apart. □

Grenadian leader calls for solidarity with El Salvador

ST. GEORGE'S — Citing the example of the anti-Vietnam-war movement, Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop has made a direct appeal to American workers to stop Washington's war moves against El Salvador.

The "tremendous force" of American working people, Bishop said, is "the key factor" in ending Washington's aggression.

The prime minister's remarks came at a news conference March 13 wrapping up the celebration of the third anniversary of the Grenada revolution.

Bishop called for "marches, rallies, and organized protests to get the message to Reagan that [working people] are not prepared to die for Reagan and his boys and that [working people] are not prepared to die in any more wars."

He pointed to a report he heard of a recent demonstration of 15,000 in Surinam as an example of how "world public opinion must be fully mobilized" against Washington's efforts.

Bishop also called for "organized solidarity with Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada."

New attack on Iranian socialists

On March 16 representatives of the Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office in Iran began confiscating copies of *Kargar*, newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE), from newsstands in Tehran. The confiscations occurred despite the fact that the government has issued no statement revoking *Kargar's* legal status.

The HKE supports the Iranian revolution and has been active in opposing imperialist attacks on Iran.

Armed men came to the shop where *Kargar* is printed on March 15 and arrested the printer, Mohammed Bagher Falsafi. His whereabouts are unknown. Falsafi has been a member of the Iranian Trotskyist movement for ten years.

The previous issue of *Kargar* had contained an extensive interview with HKE leader Bahram Ali Atai, who had just been released from Evin Prison. In the interview, Atai reported that secret executions had been carried out at the prison. He said torture was practiced, including hanging people from the ceiling with only their toes touching the floor. Atai and other prisoners were whipped on the feet, he said.

This issue of *Kargar* sold out on the newsstands. The French daily *Le Monde* reported on the Atai interview on March 13.

The HKE has filed a lawsuit calling for a halt to torture, illegal detentions, and executions. The confiscated *Kargar* issue reported on this lawsuit and on harassment of the HKE by the authorities.

Those who support the Iranian revolution and defend it against the attacks of imperialism should send telegrams calling for Falsafi's release to Hojatolislam Mousavi Tabrizi, Prosecutor General, Revolutionary Courts, Tehran, Iran. Copies should be sent to *Jomhuri-e-Eslami*, Tehran, Iran. □

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An exile returns home after ten years

Despite everything, the obstacles are being overcome

By Pham Quoc Thai

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

* * *

I left Vietnam in 1971, when I was seventeen years old. I had won a four-year scholarship to the State University of New York at Plattsburg, in upstate New York.

Even had I known then that Plattsburg is a lot closer to the North Pole than to my hometown of Nah Trang, I would have considered myself fortunate — four years of study abroad would keep me out of the South Vietnamese Army, out of a war I could not really understand except to think that it might go on forever.

At that time, I had only a vague feeling that the excuses that the Saigon regime and its American patrons gave for prolonging this terrible conflict were “fishy.” People in my hometown could not speak freely about their feelings for fear of Thieu’s secret police. The South Vietnamese press and radio were government-censored, of course, and our only television station was the Americans’ Armed Forces Network.

All that I knew for certain was that the hordes of American soldiers and marines who cluttered the lovely beaches of my hometown, along with their hired Vietnamese “girlfriends” and their limitless stockpiles of beer, did not treat me and my fellow Vietnamese as friends, allies, or even equals. They despised us openly, and we despised them covertly.

Easier to see the truth

America was full of surprises.

First of all, there was the awful homesickness, made worse because only the African students at Plattsburg could understand what I meant by “warm.” There were no other Vietnamese there.

Then there was the relentless barrage of stories in the American media about the war in my country, what it was doing to my land and to my people. It was easier to see the truth about the war from the United States than from Nha Trang. I was appalled and bitter and helpless to change anything, but I at least knew which side I was on.

In 1975, the society I had been trained to serve collapsed like a house of cards. I was stranded in a country that I could less than ever consider as a possible “home.” Among Vietnamese “refugees,” “émigrés,” and “immigrants,” I felt like an involuntary exile.

At first, I had hoped that the U.S. government would come to terms with reality and es-

tablish normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. But official U.S. government policy remained — and remains — hostile toward my country.

Nevertheless, the Vietnamese government gave me permission in 1981 to return to my country for a two-month visit, along with my American fiancée, Anna Bradley. From the start, the Vietnamese government officials were sympathetic to my desire to return home; the problems and obstacles came from the other side.

This surprised me a little. In the past, Vietnam defeated both France and Japan, but these countries very quickly established diplomatic and trade relations with my country. The U.S. government has found excuse after excuse not to do so. A poll of the American people taken just after the war showed that most of them favored not only recognition of Vietnam, but American aid for postwar reconstruction. The U.S. government has ignored the sentiments of its own people so consistently that I wonder how Ford, Carter, and Reagan can claim to “represent” them.

Returning home

Anna was supposed to leave New York ahead of me and pick up our visas at the Vietnamese embassy in Bangkok, Thailand. From there, we were supposed to meet and fly on to Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) together. At the last moment, Pan American Airlines told me that the Thai government, an American client state, would not allow me even to change planes in Bangkok. I had to fly via Air France, which has a weekly direct flight from Paris to Ho Chi Minh City. It has a stopover in Bangkok, but I would not have to leave the plane.

Anna would arrive in Vietnam a week before I could join her, a situation that only increased my nervousness and anticipation.

My flight to Paris and then on to Vietnam took four days. It was an exhausting trip. I could not sleep because of my excitement and anxieties, the change in time zones, and the noise of aircraft engines. But as the plane lifted off from Bangkok, my anxiety subsided and the excitement grew.

I could soon see a familiar landscape through the window. As the plane made its final descent toward Ho Chi Minh City, the tropical vegetation, the Saigon River, the rice paddies — images buried inside me for ten long years — appeared and disappeared through the cloud cover of the early rainy season, giving me back my full energy. It was like waking up to a summer day after a long hibernation.

I could not believe I had actually landed in

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, my beloved country. Standing in the aisle, waiting for the plane to roll to a complete stop, I bubbled over with joy. As the door of the plane swung open, Vietnamese voices from the runway assured me that I was home. When I walked out the door, that familiar heat wrapped itself around me as if to welcome me.

In Ho Chi Minh City

After checking through Vietnamese customs, I was greeted by three friendly Vietnamese officials from the Viet Kieu (Overseas Vietnamese) Committee of Ho Chi Minh City; they would help me throughout my stay. Anna joined me after a big “Hi!” with a burst of joy in her voice.

The Viet Kieu drove us to the Ben Thanh Hotel, formerly the “Rex” and a hangout for American GIs. We were in the heart of Saigon, only a couple of blocks from the Ben Thanh Market, the docks, the Catholic cathedral. The streets were much cleaner than I remembered, and the traffic signs were no longer in English. There were no beer cans piled in the gutters, or arrogant American soldiers swaggering through the markets and loitering on the corners.

During our stay in Ho Chi Minh City, we visited the No. 2 Children’s Hospital. It is a very special hospital that receives patients under fifteen years of age from the city and from outlying districts as far away as Vung Tau (twenty-eight miles away). It also conducts research to help improve the nutrition of children, given the scarcities still facing Vietnam. We visited twenty-eight severely malnourished children there, mostly infants whose mothers could not nurse them.

One aspect of the U.S. trade ban against Vietnam is the “milk embargo.” Washington has also pressured the European Common Market countries to halt shipments of surplus milk to Vietnam. As a result, substitutes for mothers’ milk are very hard to get in Vietnam. Nutritionists at the hospital are researching ways to replace milk protein with soy protein in infant formula, even as they care for these withered little victims of “superpower” politics.

While in Ho Chi Minh City, we also visited the Sinco Sewing Machine Works, the War Museum, the Fine Arts Museum, and many friends and relatives of friends. We could go wherever we wished, and no one accompanied us.

I felt very self-conscious, wandering through the streets with Anna, who was obviously not Vietnamese. Her reddish hair and blue eyes drew crowds of curious children,

certain that she must be a Russian woman. I would tell them that she was an American, but they could not believe it.

Finally, Anna would try saying, "Hello, how are you?" in English. Those who had studied English in school would be convinced. None of these kids knew any of the pidgin English, or the vividly profane "American" vocabulary of the Saigon street kids that I remembered; this was a whole new generation of children. In Hanoi, the children were just as interested in Anna, but much more polite; only one or two dared to come up and touch her long bright hair.

Attitude toward foreigners

The way the Vietnamese people interacted with foreigners filled me with pride. They dealt with Anna on a friendly, curious, and equal basis. They behaved as if they were saying, "We own the place now." They are indeed its masters.

During the U.S. war, I felt like a foreigner in my own country. I saw my people suffer, without recourse, from the arrogant behavior of American soldiers and officials. I was ashamed to see Vietnamese hustling to gratify every whim and desire of loutish GIs with money to spend.

Yet, during our stay in Ho Chi Minh City, our journey to Nha Trang, Da Nang, Hue, and our final week in Hanoi, I sensed no hostility toward my fiancée. When people found out that Anna was an American, they were pleased — and a little surprised — that an American could, or would, come to Vietnam, now that it is a socialist country.

I pressed a neighbor of my family in Nha Trang about the reason for this rather remarkable attitude. "Well, she is *your* fiancée, after all," he replied, teasing me. But he was serious when he said, "We know that the American people and the American government are different things. We know there are progressive Americans, so don't worry about her!"

During my two months in Vietnam, I did not see many foreigners. Previously, the Americans' olive-drab uniforms crowded cafés, beaches, bars, cinemas, stores . . . Now, here and there, one sees a knot of Russians, Cubans, or East Europeans; but almost all of them look like civilians, and maybe a third of them are women.

I was surprised that the largest group of foreigners we saw was Kampuchean. Aside from the Khmer students staying over in Hanoi before being flown out to study in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe, there were Kampuchean truck convoys on Highway One, full of provisions or passengers. The little Vietnamese kids playing by the roadside would spot the Khmer writing on the trucks and yell "Kam-pu-che-a! Kam-pu-che-a!" clapping their hands and cheering as the Kampucheans applauded in response.

I was amazed, remembering how bitter my fellow South Vietnamese had been following the massacres of Vietnamese citizens of Cambodia in 1970 by the rightist, U.S.-backed Lon



Anna Bradley

Author (right) at Sinco Sewing Machine factory.

Nol regime. I was able to talk to the Khmer students in Saigon and Hanoi in my inadequate French, but when some Kampuchean truck drivers came into my father's shop in Nha Trang to buy soccer balls, we had to communicate with gestures and smiles. I was told that when Kampucheans want to travel north and south in Kampuchea, they find it easier to go east into Vietnam, then use our paved highways to go north or south; and finally back west. This is a roundabout way, but their own roads are still hopeless quagmires during the rainy season.

Soviet bases?

As long as I am on the subject of foreigners in Vietnam, I should say that the stories about "Soviet bases" in Vietnam are lies. We passed through the coastal town of Cam Ranh, and my home town is only about six miles away. We saw no Russians in either place, no Russian ships in Cam Ranh Bay, or from the shore; and no special precautions were taken to keep us from seeing Russians. When Cam Ranh was a big American naval base, it would have been impossible to conceal the Americans, even if the effort had been made.

We also used the airfield at Da Nang to fly to Hanoi. We watched MIGs take off on training flights for a couple of hours, but the ground crews, pilots, and everybody on base were Vietnamese. Anna told me that when she flew from Bangkok to Hong Kong during her return flight, the Pan Am pilot advised the passengers

to look to their left for a great view of Da Nang and the Da Nang Air Base. So where are these "Soviet bases" supposed to be? Why hasn't anyone come up with photographs of them?

'Prosperity' and poverty

Of course, Ho Chi Minh City did not look as "prosperous" as I remembered Saigon, despite its hustle and bustle. Before, there were more cars and motorcycles. Gasoline used to be cheap, and consumer goods were easily imported from abroad. The fashions were the same as in New York, the car models the same as Detroit. But it was an artificial "prosperity," underwritten by the Americans and their money.

People have had a hard time adjusting to Vietnam's present "real" poverty. Vietnam never had to produce what it consumed before. Now it must, and the progress is slow.

Before, many Saigonese, many Vietnamese, could immerse themselves in that consumer-oriented, not producer-oriented, society and forget that others of their countrymen were being killed and maimed every day, while still others were being herded into "strategic hamlets" or Saigon's reeking slums. Now the Saigonese complain that they must share poverty.

But Vietnam's hardships are, indeed, shared. The poorest are not so far from the richest. In Vietnam, I did not hear people say, "I am poor." They said, "Vietnam is poor."

Gasoline was in critically short supply, \$3 a liter for state agencies, \$9 for private pur-

chases. People used bicycles, the "cyclos" (pedicabs) or got around on foot.

On the other hand, we did not see outright misery. Beggars were no more numerous than in New York City, and a phenomenon such as the South Bronx, with its acres of rubble, would be unthinkable in Vietnam — even in *bombed* Vietnam. Hanoi looks remarkably intact. A neighborhood flattened in 1971 is, to all appearances, whole and thriving. The only outward signs of the devastation are the construction dates proudly molded in concrete over the front doors; none predate 1973.

I had been prepared for much worse, from the American media and from the accounts of the "refugees" I had talked to. It is true that Vietnam's visions of postwar peace and

prosperity have been cruelly dimmed by the attitude of the U.S. government since 1975, by the conflict with Pol Pot's Kampuchea, and, most of all, by the policies of China. The years 1978 and 1979 were particularly hard ones for Vietnam, the years when the cutoff of Chinese aid and trade had its most destructive impact. And the unnecessary privation and suffering caused by the aid and trade embargo engineered by Washington were evident everywhere.

Somehow, however, the Vietnamese have adapted to their straitened circumstances, and, virtually alone, have begun to overcome the obstacles facing them. My visit to my native land, despite everything, was a heartening experience. □

Angola

South African terror raid

Washington gives the green light

By Ernest Harsch

Encouraged by the increasingly warm ties between racist South Africa and the Reagan administration, troops of the apartheid regime again struck into Angola on March 13.

According to the South African authorities, the troops were dropped by helicopter into the Cambeno Valley, fourteen miles inside Angola, where they stayed for several days. They claim to have killed 200 guerrillas of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), which is fighting for the independence of Namibia.

Every time the white supremacist South African regime has conducted an attack into Angola, it has claimed that its targets were purely military. But most of the time they are actually Namibian refugee camps or Angolan villages.

This latest intervention in Angola comes just two weeks after the White House announced that it was lifting earlier restrictions on American sales to the South African police and military.

Following the attack, the Reagan administration refused to specifically condemn it. Instead, the State Department declared, "We continue to deplore any escalation of violence in that region from any quarter."

When Namibian refugees are gunned down or Angolan villages bombed, when Angola's sovereignty is repeatedly violated, Washington's response is to place equal blame on the victims — while systematically increasing its own ties with the South African aggressors and blocking any attempts to impose United Nations-sponsored sanctions against them in retaliation for their barbaric attacks.

This U.S. policy can only be taken in Pretoria as a green light for its murderous assaults against neighboring countries.

In Namibia, whose people are conducting a

struggle for freedom from South African rule, the apartheid authorities have launched a massive terror campaign. This has been particularly brutal in the more heavily populated northern regions near the Angolan border. South African troops have driven some 50,000 Namibians out of their homes there, closed down schools, and massacred villagers thought to be sympathetic to SWAPO.

Because the Angolan government has given sanctuary to Namibian refugees and freedom fighters, and because it backs SWAPO's struggle, the South African forces have not stopped at the border.

Ever since the defeat of the first South Afri-

can invasion of Angola in 1975-76 — when Cuban troops helped the Angolan government forces drive the invaders back — Pretoria has been conducting an undeclared war against Angola.

Its troops and planes have systematically struck into Angola, often hundreds of miles deep, to bomb factories, bridges, roads, villages, livestock herds, and other targets. Thousands have been killed and tens of thousands made homeless.

According to a report prepared by a fact-finding mission of the European Economic Community, in 1981 alone South African forces carried out 50 bombing operations, 53 troop landings by helicopter and 4 by parachute, and 34 ground attacks. This is in addition to 1,617 spy flights over Angola, and South African assistance to terrorist bands belonging to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), a proimperialist group that is fighting to overthrow the Angolan government.

The unit that carried out the attack in the Cambeno Valley was from the South African Thirty-second Battalion, which is particularly known for its terrorist actions. It is recruited primarily from among former members of the proimperialist Angolan National Liberation Front (FNLA), and is officered by whites, including mercenaries.

A white deserter from the battalion last year described its methods of operation in southern Angola: "Our main job is to take an area and clear it. We sweep through it and we kill everything in front of us, cattle, goats, people, everything. . . ."

"Sometimes we take locals for questioning. It's rough. We just beat them, cut them, burn them. As soon as we're finished with them, we kill them."

These are the forces that the Reagan administration is allied with. □

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Massive antinuclear sentiment surfaces

What program can avert threat of atomic war?

By David Frankel

Millions of people around the world sense that the U.S. rulers are hurtling toward war. They see the Pentagon setting up new bases in the Caribbean and the Middle East; they see the CIA organizing counterrevolutionary armies in Central America and against the Iranian revolution; and they see the Reagan administration raising military spending to unheard-of heights.

Meanwhile, the strident propaganda campaign against Cuba and Nicaragua continues without letup, as do the moves toward deeper intervention in El Salvador.

In this context, concern about the threat of nuclear war is growing. Millions have taken to the streets in Western Europe to protest plans of the NATO alliance to expand its nuclear arsenal. Similar sentiment is now being expressed in the United States.

More than half a million people in California have signed a petition to put the nuclear arms issue on the state ballot in the November 1982 election. The referendum advocates a mutual U.S.-Soviet freeze on the production, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons.

Similar measures have already been passed in parts of Massachusetts and Colorado, and referendum initiatives have been launched in Michigan, New Jersey, and Delaware.

Resolutions along the same lines were approved by 159 town meetings in Vermont during the first week in March and rejected by only 21. On March 9 resolutions urging a nuclear weapons freeze were also approved by twenty-six towns in New Hampshire.

'Thunder before a storm'

The U.S. rulers are not happy about these developments. "What was once a well-defined dispute among specialists is increasingly becoming the subject of popular conflict," Joseph Kraft complained in the March 11 *Washington Post*. "When spring comes, and the weather turns fine, this country will probably witness the kind of mass protests against nuclear weapons that have already taken place in Europe."

A similar view was taken by *New York Times* columnist James Reston, who compared the activity around the nuclear arms issue in the United States to "the vague rumblings of distant thunder before a storm."

Reston argued March 7 that "control of nuclear weapons is too complicated and dangerous to be decided in New England town meetings or in popular petitions to the California Legislature."

If he has his way, it will be left to Reagan

and the highly qualified specialists who brought us the war in Vietnam.

Both Reston and Kraft, recognizing the massive popular sentiment against the nuclear arms race, urged Reagan to walk softly. As Kraft put it, "the administration would be well advised to co-opt, rather than oppose, the anti-nuclear weapons movement now shaping up."

This advice is already being followed by many Democratic and Republican Party politicians.

Leopards changing their spots?

On March 10, a resolution on the nuclear arms issue was introduced in both houses of the U.S. Congress. The resolution, along the same lines as the California referendum, has gained the support of about 150 legislators.

Although the resolution was quickly attacked by the Reagan administration and hailed by many on the left, including the U.S. Communist Party, it raised some obvious questions.

Just three months ago, the Senate passed Reagan's military budget by a vote of 93 to 4, and the House of Representatives voted for it by 334 to 84. That budget included funds for the MX missile, Cruise and Trident missiles, neutron bombs, and all the other nuclear weapons programs Reagan had requested.

Are the sponsors of the resolution for a freeze on nuclear weapons now against these programs that many of them voted for? Have the leopards changed their spots?

A quick look at what the proposed legislation actually says reveals why it has gained such broad endorsement, both in Congress and among such pillars of the ruling class as former CIA Director William Colby; former presidential adviser Averell Harriman; and former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union and former chairman of IBM, Thomas J. Watson Jr.

What the resolution says

The resolution calls on the U.S. and Soviet governments to "pursue a complete halt to the nuclear arms race." It demands that they "decide when and how to achieve a mutual and verifiable freeze on the testing, production and further deployment" of nuclear weapons.

Reagan, of course, says he is pursuing a halt to the arms race. But the vague wording of the resolution, which commits the government to nothing, is the least of its problems.

Millions of people around the world have become convinced that the U.S. government's drive to develop and deploy new nuclear weapons is a threat to all humanity. Yet the resolution leaves the question of "when and how to

achieve" a freeze on nuclear weapons up to the government that is responsible for the threat in the first place.

This brings us to another fundamental issue which the movement against nuclear weapons in the United States must face if it is to have any real impact. That is the question of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Washington seeks to justify its nuclear arsenal by claiming it is necessary for the defense of the United States against Soviet aggression. But the fact is that never in its entire history has the United States faced any military threat from the USSR. The threats have all come from Washington.

War against Russian revolution

When the workers and peasants took governmental power in Russia in November 1917, the new revolutionary regime did not pose the slightest military threat to the United States or to any other country.

Russia at that time was a backward agricultural country. After more than three years of World War I, the Russian economy had been devastated and the country had suffered millions of casualties.

The very first action of the Bolsheviks was to call for an end to the war that was devastating Europe and to publish all the secret annexationist agreements of the Tsarist regime.

But by December 1917, one month after the revolution, President Woodrow Wilson had already begun to secretly finance the formation of counterrevolutionary armies and to set up an espionage apparatus to prepare for more open intervention.

Seven thousand U.S. troops arrived in Siberia in August 1918, remaining on Russian soil for a year and a half. They were part of a much larger foreign intervention, involving more than 300,000 troops from France and Britain alone.

It is not surprising that the imperialist powers reacted to the Russian revolution with fury. They were in the midst of a bloody war over markets, sources of raw materials, and colonial possessions. Then, at one stroke, the victorious revolution ripped a large sector of the world market out of their grip.

Furthermore, the establishment of a workers and farmers government in Russia was an inspiration to the masses in the rebellious colonies and oppressed nations throughout the world, as well as to the workers in the imperialist countries.

Even after their direct military intervention failed, the imperialist powers continued an economic blockade of the Soviet Union. Washington did not grant diplomatic recogni-



Aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Constellation* off of Vietnam in 1971. Washington considered using nuclear weapons in both Korea and Vietnam.

tion to the Soviet government until 1933.

Meanwhile, the USSR was confronted with the rising menace of fascism. In June 1941, the German imperialist army invaded the Soviet Union.

The cold war

Military necessity forced the U.S. and British rulers into a wartime alliance with the Soviet government. But it was only seven months after the end of World War II that British ex-Prime Minister Winston Churchill ushered in the cold war with his famous "iron curtain" speech.

It was claimed that the Soviet Union was an expansionist power that was seeking to conquer the world, beginning with Europe. This charge was used to foster a witch-hunt inside the United States and as justification for launching a huge arms program. It became the stated goal of U.S. foreign policy to "roll back communism."

The United States came out of World War II with its productive apparatus more than doubled, with a monopoly on the atomic bomb, and with its cities and population virtually untouched.

Compare this with the situation in the Soviet Union. To begin with, the country had lost at least 20 million dead — 10 percent of its entire population! Furthermore, the most heavily industrialized areas of the country had been devastated.

The Soviet Union was not in a position to launch any war of conquest. It desperately wanted peace. Between 1945 and 1948, the Soviet armed forces were reduced from 11.5 million to less than 3 million.

U.S. policymakers were well aware of all this. But they were trying to prepare U.S.

working people for wars against the colonial revolution that had begun to sweep across Africa and Asia. And they also intended to strike directly at the USSR in hopes of restoring capitalism there.

What prevented this perspective from being realized was the explosion of the first Soviet atomic bomb in September 1949, and the victory of the Chinese revolution later that year.

Nevertheless, U.S. troops were sent in to fight full-scale colonial wars in Korea and Vietnam, and to carry out dozens of smaller interventions against countries from the Dominican Republic to Lebanon.

There is no mystery about what caused these interventions. The imperialist rulers are driven by their endless search for profits to seek out new markets, new areas of investment, new sources of cheap labor and raw materials. U.S. corporations invest in Jamaican bauxite mines, copper mines in Zaïre and Chile, rubber plantations in Malaysia, Middle Eastern oil, and Bolivian tin.

And the need to defend these sources of profit against social revolution leads the imperialist government to intervene around the world, as it is now doing in Central America.

The nuclear arms issue

Militarism and war are the necessary result of monopoly capitalism. And its nuclear buildup is one more expression of the imperialist war drive. It was Washington that produced:

- the first atomic bomb in 1945;
- the first intercontinental bomber in 1948;
- the first hydrogen bomb in 1954;
- the first nuclear submarine in 1954;
- the first submarine-launched ballistic missile in 1960;
- the first multiple independently targeted warhead (MIRV) in 1970.

And the Pentagon is now in the process of producing and deploying the first Cruise missiles.

Since it is the U.S. rulers who are responsible for the nuclear threat, the demand to end it must be directed against them. That is why it is necessary to call for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, abstract talk about peace and arms control while ignoring the threat of a real shooting war does not advance the cause of peace.

Arms control negotiations between Washington and Moscow have been going on for decades now. The U.S. rulers use such negotiations as cover for continuing to escalate their nuclear buildup.

Resolutions and referenda calling for negotiations for a "nuclear freeze" do nothing to change this situation. Arms control agreements have never helped to avert war.

Such agreements were in existence before both World War I and II, but the results were less than satisfactory.

Right now, any serious fight against the nuclear danger must include opposition to Reagan's moves toward war in Central America. It is precisely during wartime that there is the greatest danger of nuclear weapons actually being used. In fact, U.S. policymakers considered using nuclear weapons in both Korea and Vietnam.

A working-class solution

Ultimately, the only way that humanity can eliminate the danger of nuclear war is for the working class and its allies to disarm the imperialist warmakers. The capitalist rulers will never voluntarily disarm themselves.

In the process of mobilizing the working class and its allies in the struggle for a workers and farmers government that would finally disarm the capitalists, the workers movement has to take part in every immediate struggle against war and militarism.

The working class has its own program for arms control — not a cent for the imperialist war machine!

We should demand not only a freeze on the building of new weapons, but the scrapping of the existing nuclear weapons in the U.S. arsenal, which can already destroy all life on earth many times over.

Such demands must be tied to opposition to imperialist intervention around the world. There can be no peace as long as the U.S. rulers violate the right of self-determination of countries from Iran to El Salvador. Defense of the conquests of the workers and farmers in other countries is part of the fight for peace. In this context, it is also necessary to oppose the imperialist draft and the presence of U.S. military bases throughout the world.

It could be argued that such a sweeping program is not realistic. But if the perspective of the workers and farmers establishing their own government to reconstruct society on new foundations is unrealistic, so is the survival of humanity. □

The fight for a nuclear-free Pacific

Speech by ambassador from Vanuatu

[The following speech by Barak Sope was the opening address to the South Pacific International Conference of Students "For a nuclear-free and independent Pacific." (See box.) Sope is the roving ambassador for the Republic of Vanuatu and a longstanding leader of the Vanua-aku Pati, which led the struggle for independence there. The text of the speech is taken from the March issue of *Socialist Action Review*, a supplement to the New Zealand fortnightly *Socialist Action*, published in Auckland.]

* * *

Here are some of my thoughts on our struggle for a nuclear-free and independent Pacific.

I feel that the honour of being asked to speak here is not due to my own efforts, but rather a recognition of the efforts of the people and government of Vanuatu. They have been very outspoken on this issue.

In fact, you could say that Vanuatu's position on a nuclear-free and independent Pacific

is as clear and as strong as it is different from the position of countries like France, Japan, the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

Very simply, Vanuatu supports the declaration of a nuclear-free zone in the Pacific, and it supports all the independence struggles of Pacific Island peoples whether they be in New Caledonia, West Papua, East Timor or French Polynesia. Furthermore, I think this will be a crucial point for your discussions this week.

Continuation of colonialism

Vanuatu believes very strongly that the political independence of all Pacific peoples is fundamental to the attaining of a nuclear-free Pacific. The Pacific will be nuclear-free when it is free from colonialism.

Let there be no mistake! We are talking about the one issue at this conference — the continuation of colonialism in our region. The fact that 19th century colonialism has given way in some areas to 20th century nuclear colonialism only makes our struggle more ur-

gent, not different.

We in Vanuatu see this quite clearly. In the past the colonialists wanted our labour, so they kidnapped us to work in the sugar and nickel industries [in Australia and New Caledonia]. Then they wanted our land, so they stole it for their plantations. Now they want our sea for the dumping of nuclear waste, testing of nuclear missiles and passage of nuclear submarines.

The Trident submarine, soon to be launched into our waters by the United States, may be a far cry from a blackbirding vessel [for kidnapping slave labour], but to us they are both ships from the same old fleet.

'Time to wake up'

This is why Vanuatu has been very active at the meeting of the Commonwealth, the South Pacific Forum, the United Nations and the South Pacific Commission in opposing not nuclear activities, but nuclear colonialism in the Pacific.

At the opening of this year's South Pacific Commission conference in Port Vila, for example, our Prime Minister Father Walter Lini declared:

"In a world and at a time where and when confidence is at a premium, we should be bolder in establishing confidence in ourselves, in our peoples' abilities, and what it is possible for us to achieve for ourselves. After slumbering in the embrace of external influence for so long, it is time for us to wake up and reassert ourselves.

"The Pacific remains one of the last regions of the world where the heavy hand of colonialism continues to reign. . . . This Commission could be a determining factor. With courage and resolution, it must see to it that this remnant of the past is lifted from our ocean for the long reality. Until all of us in the Pacific are free, then none of us are free.

"Past conferences of the South Pacific Commission have shelved the equally important issue of nuclear activity in the region. This issue can no longer be kept on the back burner of our collective conscience. It is pure and it is simple. It is a matter of life and death that our Pacific ocean be declared a nuclear-free zone.

"Testing of any kind must be outlawed, as must the dumping of nuclear waste, the firing of nuclear devices and the passage of submarines or overflying aircraft carrying them.

"On this crucial issue there can be no compromise, no retreat. It is the very worst extension of colonialism — detonating of deadly weapons by others on our doorstep, instead of their own. If we continue to deny ourselves any decision on this matter, our children of to-

'For a Pacific without oppression'

The South Pacific International Conference of Students "For a nuclear-free and independent Pacific" was held in Suva, Fiji, from December 14-20, 1981. It was attended by seventy delegates from organizations in the Pacific and Asia.

Among the groups represented were liberation movements in French Polynesia and New Caledonia, in U.S.-ruled Micronesia, and in other areas, as well as the Fiji Trade Union Congress and various student organizations.

The conference voted to "see as a priority the struggle for independence being waged by the Kanak people of New Caledonia."

According to a report on the conference by Janet Röth in the February 5 issue of *Socialist Action*:

"Just prior to the conference starting, the French government had exploded several underground bombs on Mururoa atoll. Delegates condemned these tests and called for their immediate end.

"Darlene Keju from the Marshall Islands in Micronesia was able to describe very graphically to the conference the terrible effects that such nuclear testing has. The United States exploded 66 bombs in the

Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958.

"Darlene herself has four tumours as a result of these tests, while her fellow islanders have had even more horrific experiences.

"For example, babies have been born like lumps of shapeless and transparent jelly — the only indication that they were living beings was their heartbeat.

"The Marshallese are dying out slowly,' she said. 'I want to make sure the Tahitians know about these things. . . . The purpose of this conference is to make sure people know we will not allow it to happen again.'

"Roman Bedor of Belau, also in Micronesia, explained the steps taken by the people of his country to prevent the U.S. government using the islands however it wished. After much opposition from the US, Belau has adopted a nuclear-free constitution and is now working towards independence from America on the basis of this constitution."

As Barak Sope explained, the struggle for a nuclear-free Pacific cannot be won without fighting the imperialist domination of the area — without fighting for a Pacific without oppression.

morrow will condemn us. And it will be a condemnation we have deserved."

Nuclear-free Pacific

As we have already made our position clear in other world forums, I would now like to reiterate Vanuatu's position on the concept of a nuclear-free zone.

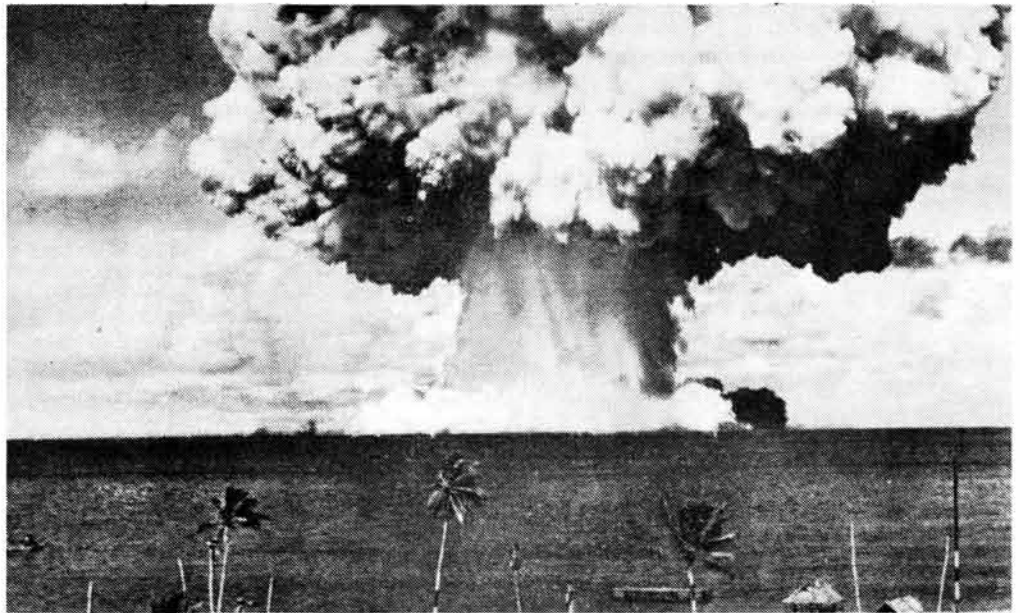
We view a nuclear-free zone as prohibiting:

- all tests of nuclear explosive devices, including those described as peaceful;
- all nuclear weapons testing facilities;
- all testing of nuclear weapons delivery systems and vehicles;
- all storage, transit, deployment or any other form or presence of nuclear weapons on land, aircraft, ships, or submarines within the zone;
- all the bases carrying out command control, communication, surveillance, navigation and any other function which aids the performance of a nuclear weapon delivery system;
- all nuclear-powered reactors, all nuclear-powered satellites, surface and subsurface vessels, and all transit, storage and dumping of radioactive material, irrespective of whether it complies with the London dumping convention or any set of similar conditions;
- uranium mining, processing and transport.

I repeat our dedication to continuing to fight for these aims. The threat to the continued viability of the Pacific environment makes it impractical for Pacific island countries to observe anything less than a nuclear-free zone.

There were indications of this at the recent South Pacific Forum meeting. The Prime Minister of Tuvalu mentioned how his country and Vanuatu had already been jeopardised by the testing of a missile in the ocean between the two countries.

The Prime Minister of Papua Niu Guinea



U.S. atomic bomb test over Bikini atoll.

expressed his concern that United States B52 aircraft were flying over Papua Niu Guinea airspace. These aircraft are regularly armed with nuclear weapons.

The launching of the Trident submarine, with its 24 missiles each carrying 17 warheads, only highlights the problems the Pacific Islands are now facing.

Vanuatu recognises the difficulties a nuclear-free zone poses for Pacific rim countries such as Australia, with bilateral obligations. On the other hand, Vanuatu urges Pacific rim countries to recognise in turn that Vanuatu cannot accept the policies of any outside power

which may prejudice its environment, safety or integrity. In our view this would only be accepting the continuation of colonialism in the region.

Throughout the Pacific, the oppression of the indigenous people is directly linked to the nuclear industry. French colonialism in the Pacific, for example, was escalated in the 1960s when the independence of Algeria forced France to relocate its nuclear testing facilities from the Sahara to French Polynesia.

Micronesians and Polynesians continue to suffer from the US nuclear imperialism in their countries, and lately the Micronesians have

The new government in Vanuatu

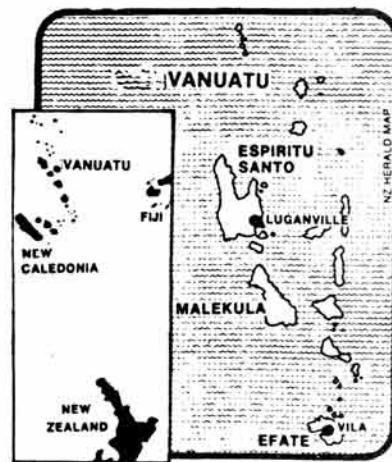
On July 30, 1980, the former Pacific islands of the New Hebrides became the independent nation of Vanuatu.

For the previous 75 years Vanuatu had been a joint colony of Britain and France. Under their rule there existed side by side two education systems, two official languages, two currencies, two judicial systems, and two separate colonial governments — one British, one French.

The struggle for independence was led by the Vanua-aku Pati (Party), formed in 1971. In preindependence elections in 1977 the party won the overwhelming majority of votes, despite the opposition of Britain and France.

Horrified by the election results the colonial powers moved to severely restrict the right of the Vanua-aku Pati to govern and to block further steps towards independence.

In response, the party established the Peoples Provisional Government, and be-



gan organising people's parliaments throughout all the villages to begin taking over the country.

These moves, combined with international pressure, forced the British and French to agree to set July 30, 1980, as the date for independence. But on May 28 of that year a last-ditch effort was made to prevent the independence celebrations from going ahead.

Backed by the French government, a group of right-wing American businessmen and local French plantation owners organized a revolt on Vanuatu's largest island, Espiritu Santo. But the revolt had almost no popular support among the Ni Vanuatu (the Vanuatu people), and was put down several months later with the aid of troops from Papua Niu Guinea.

Since it came to power the new government of Vanuatu has taken a consistent stand in support of liberation movements in the region, and in support of a nuclear-free and independent Pacific.

— from 'Socialist Action'

faced a new nuclear threat from the Japanese.

Vanuatu and Tuvalu have watched helplessly as a Chinese missile tumbles out of the sky, and into the water between their two countries. Australian aborigines continue their struggle against the dangers of uranium mining.

However, we must not lose sight of these two areas which are not presently subject to the nuclear menace, but which are embroiled in a protracted people's war. I refer to West Papua and East Timor.

There are others in this region who would have us believe that East Timor and West Papua are dead issues. But Vanuatu knows that while many thousands are indeed dead, the independence struggle being waged in those two countries is very much alive, and it is very much in need of our support.

I am proud to say that Vanuatu has not retreated from its position of support for the armed struggle for independence in East Timor and West Papua. Nor has it remained silent at a time when the silence on these two issues in the Pacific is deafening.

Vanuatu recently co-sponsored a United Nations resolution condemning Indonesian aggression in East Timor, and calling for the implementation of procedures to give the country its rightful independence.

It may be said that the genocidal war that is happening in East Timor is not typical of what is happening in the Pacific today. But you only have to travel a little further east to West Papua to find the same war being repeated on a smaller but no less brutal scale.

A little further east again we find New Caledonia, where the struggle against racist brutality and fascism continues to reach new heights. A little to the north of course is my country, Vanuatu, only now recovering from an armed rebellion, fostered by foreign forces and subdued with the help of Papua New Guinea troops.

Further north is Micronesia, a nuclear playground for the United States, which Japan wants to turn into a nuclear sewer. To the east again there is French Polynesia, a super-radioactive sore refusing all efforts to heal.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the other side of the Pacific. Let's face the other way from the sunshine of real estate brochures and advertisements for package tours. It is a Pacific darkened by war, by oppression and nuclear contamination. It is hardly the *Balikai* that all tourists see. But it is the Pacific of our experience, seen through our own eyes.

That is the last comment I wish to make, Mr. Chairman. The struggle for a nuclear and oppression-free Pacific is, for many of us, not just another cause that we might or might not care to support. It is a way of life. In fact, I would like to see it as the Pacific way.

But to see as the Pacific way the heroic resistance of the Fretilin guerrillas, the West Papua freedom fighters and the Kanak independentists may appear to some as too radical a redefinition of our Pacific identity. Perhaps a blasphemy against the Pacific ideal. But this is no more or less than the challenge we must accept, if we are to be victorious in our struggle for an independent and nuclear-free Pacific. □

Grenada

How revolution transformed a union

'Working class must be involved in politics'

By Pat Kane

ST. GEORGE'S — Four hundred members of the Technical and Allied Workers Union (TAWU) attended the union's Twenty-fourth Annual General Meeting, held here on February 27. The TAWU is made up of telephone and electricity workers, workers from the Central Water Commission, truck drivers, transport workers, mechanics, coast guards, and postal workers. It has 1,000 members.

Only 105 workers attended last year's meeting. The rise in attendance this year is due to the new dynamic leadership elected since the March 13, 1979, revolution that overthrew dictator Eric Gairy.

The meeting, which began with a short Christian prayer, was lively, and the business was conducted in such a way as to ensure the maximum participation of those members present. They heard a report from the general secretary, held elections for the union's Management Committee, heard a report by the president, and inspected the union's finances. They had a general session for members to raise any business. After each report, there was time for full discussion.

Written copies of the general secretary's report were circulated to the members. The report gave details of all the work of the union over the last year, including details of all wage agreements negotiated by the union and organizational and administrative details.

The highlight of the day was the election to the union's Management Committee. Before the elections began, the general secretary, who is not a full-time official, explained why he wanted to resign from the post. He found it difficult to carry out his responsibilities to the full.

Jim Wardally, the union's president, then thanked him for his service to the union, and congratulated him for his honesty in coming forward to point out that the work was too much for him. The members gave him a huge ovation.

Contrast this with the power plots, clique fights, and maneuvering that exist in unions with procapitalist leaderships. Here, if you are elected, it is to serve your members. This spirit of collaboration through joint work, honestly carried out, dominated the whole election procedure.

The TAWU is not large, by the standards of Britain or the United States. But no matter what the size, there can be no democratic elections without democratic participation. Small unions can be bureaucratic, just like large ones, as the period under Gairy showed. Democratizing the unions has led to their growth.

The main election was for the post of first vice-president. At the beginning, one comrade proposed that the outgoing vice-president be returned to office unopposed. "That's against our rules," said Wardally. "Every post must be elected by vote of our members."

There were two candidates, both local workers, Carlton Cadore and Chester Humphrey. A worker from St. Andrew's parish explained to me that it was not a competition, but it was to get the best comrade for the job. Humphrey was elected, and then Cadore was immediately elected second vice-president.

The procedure for the ballot was completely democratic. Every member received a ballot form, which they filled out. This was then collected and handed by the tellers to the stage. Each form was recorded, inspected by each candidate, and then inspected again by Frederick Grant, a trustee of the union.

What it used to be like

It was not always like this in the TAWU. Grant, a founder of the union and a telephone worker, explained what it was like in "Gairy days."

Our organization was not very democratic in those days. Our Management Committee was a bit weak then. Now it's different. It's active, which makes the members want to attend and so get active themselves.

In those days the Man Com ran the union for the members. We had no participation in the running of the union's affairs, just two salaried officers who did almost everything, particularly the negotiations. Our officers might complete the negotiations, and not tell the workers. Things began to deteriorate very badly.

It left a lot of power in the hands of the old leadership, and they began to abuse that power. We even

had an organizer working for our union but being paid by the American Institute for Free Labor Development [a CIA front] — and his salary came through the Caribbean Congress of Labor. They were his bosses over there in America, not us union members here in Grenada.

You could see how dangerous this was, and the members didn't even know about it, they were kept in the dark. We only found this out after the revolution, and it took the revolution to tell us.

He [the organizer] was working in the interests of those who paid him. He started to divide the unions by poaching members. But after we found out about him, and realized that he was a CIA front man, he soon had to vacate his job.

Most of our members welcomed the revolution, except the president, who left a week after. Our workers helped on March 13, giving the comrades telephone service, and we tracked some of Gairy's ministers down by phone, and used our own cars to bring them into custody.

That involvement by the most militant workers in the revolution was later the basis for the election of a new, militant, and revolutionary leadership of the union.

Now all the facts of the union are placed before the members. Also the union's financial accounts were audited independently and published for their inspection.

Revolution inspires workers

This union is growing with the revolution — it has grown by 60 percent since 1979. This is a direct result of its revolutionary leadership, who base themselves on an educated and active membership. At the end of the election procedure, every member of the Management Committee appeared on the stage and pledged that he or she would work hard and selflessly for the union.

Women and youth are fully represented on the new committee. The new general secretary is a woman, Jenny James, and this reflects the growing involvement of women as shop stewards and union activists.

During the president's report, Jim Wardally briefly outlined the relationship of the revolution to trade unionism.

"The success of our union cannot be seen in isolation from the revolutionary process taking place today, including the economic benefits brought to [our people]. Fourteen laws have been passed that benefit the workers.

"The point has to be made that it is a political decision to pass laws. While these decisions are being made, we have sisters and brothers, even in our own union, who are saying that trade unionism does not involve politics.

"Now that line is being carried by those who peddle the line of the capitalists. Now the capitalists understand that *they* should be involved in politics. So must the working class be involved in politics, in order to protect their own interests. So those who argue that the union is above politics don't know the facts of life."

No pressure from government

The revolutionary government plays its part in fully involving the unions in the running of the country. This is a partnership, and it is a



Pat Kane/IP

"Every post must be elected by vote of our members."

voluntary agreement. There are no laws that require the unions to participate in this process.

Many of the TAWU's members work for the government. Frederick Grant explains:

"The union is free from any government interference. We have negotiations with the government, and we threatened to strike in the Central Water Commission a few months ago.

"In the old days we would have been threatened — starting with the president — if we had decided to strike. In fact the PRG [Peo-

ple's Revolutionary Government] are very reasonable to negotiate with. In Gairy's days you wouldn't find that. He would cut off negotiations and you had to accept it or be threatened with death."

The union is self-financing, elects its own leaders, and runs its own branches. The union is now led by revolutionaries, who are members or supporters of the New Jewel Movement, Grenada's revolutionary party. They ensure, through the free flow of information and discussion, that the union is involved in all aspects of the revolutionary process. □

New asphalt plant opens

An example of Cuba's internationalist aid

By Pat Kane

ST. GEORGE'S — Last year, Vincent Tulloch, writing in the right-wing Jamaican *Daily Gleaner*, forecast that there would be no third anniversary of the Grenada revolution. Not only was he wrong, but the last year has seen the strengthening of the mass organizations, the creation of a strong militia, and the start of serious economic expansion.

One example of Grenada's economic progress came on March 5 with the opening of the Amando Ramón Quintana stone-crushing and asphalt plant. Quintana was an internationalist worker from Cuba who died in an industrial accident while carrying out voluntary work on a Sunday. The decision of the Grenadian government to name this plant after him is a tribute not only to Quintana's sacrifice, but to every Cuban internationalist who has died in the fight for freedom and liberation.

The plant is central to the island's development plans. Presently it produces asphalt for the runway of the new international airport, but it will also be able to produce asphalt for the island's new roads, and the road repair program.

Speaking at the rally, which was held at the

plant and was packed with Grenadian and Cuban workers, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop commented that it reminded him "what three years of true internationalism and fraternal assistance from Cuba means."

Bishop also announced plans for a prefabricated concrete building plant, which is another gift from the people of Cuba. This will be able to produce 300,000 units per year, which can provide up to 500 houses. The plant is to be named the "Sandino Plant," after the Nicaraguan revolutionary leader.

Cuban Ambassador Julian Rizo also spoke. "Ramon was one of those anonymous internationalist workers who left his beloved home to come and build the airport," he said.

Rizo explained that the new asphalt plant "will help build highways, so that the country's farmers will be able to transport their produce to the market or the docks."

The construction work on the plant took less than a year, and it now employs sixty-one Grenadians and fifty-two Cubans.

A Grenadian worker told me, "This is what Cuban's bring, aid so that we can build our country. What do you think American soldiers

will bring when they come? Books and free milk for our children? No, brother, they will only bring guns and death for our people."

With Cuban aid, given free, without strings,

the Grenadian people will be able to build a strong economic base that will enable them to better withstand the military and economic aggression of U.S. imperialism. □

Nicaragua

Farmers form cooperatives

'Raise production — defend the revolution'

By Jane Harris and Antígona Martínez

CHAGÜITILLO — "The land should be everybody's property and benefit all of society." "Raise production — that's how we'll defend the revolution." These were two of the many banners that greeted us as we arrived here February 24 at an open-air meeting of agricultural cooperatives affiliated with the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG).

Cooperativistas (co-op members) from the Sébaco and Pantasma valleys drew together, with government help, more than 200 small and medium farmers to exchange experiences and learn more about forming cooperatives.

Francisco Franco, director of the regional agrarian reform council, described to the crowd the lot of small farmers before the revolution:

"The support that the Somozaists gave to the small farmers was insignificant compared to what they produced. That sector, the small farmers, has traditionally produced the largest percentage of basic foodstuffs like rice, beans, and corn. They did this without any support from the state. Because before the revolution, the state knew that it was not in their interest for the small producer to develop his production, because if he did, it would raise his level of consciousness and he'd be more likely to look for a better way of life."

'Make this land productive'

Franco went on to describe the role the small and medium producers can play in defending the revolution. "There are two ways imperialism intervenes. One is militarily, as it is doing on our northern border. The other is to sabotage production, as the big producers who refuse to produce are doing.

"The agrarian reform will only support those producers that we see are willing to cooperate with the revolution, by continuing to produce. Those who don't are in one way or another playing a role in imperialism's strategy. We would rather have that land in the hands of peasants who will produce.

"In view of the fact that a large sector is not producing, it is up to us, up to *you*, *compañeros*. Make this land productive. Make sure we have the basic grains. Be more efficient in raising the level of production and in correcting our mistakes. Because this is the only way that we will be able to consolidate our revolution."

After we heard from two presidents of nearby cooperatives, and several talented guitarists, all 200 of us piled into four trucks and headed for fields operated by the Leonel Valdivia Cooperative. (Leonel Valdivia is a martyr of the Sandinista revolution whose father was a founding member of the cooperative.)

Tomatoes, cabbage, chilies, onions, citrus, maize, and beans line the 140 manzanas (1 manzana = 1.73 acres) shared by the thirty-six cooperative members and their families.

In touring the land, the cooperativistas drew our attention to the importance of the soybean crop. As part of an experimental project, twenty-five manzanas of soy have been planted in the Sébaco valley to provide seeds to plant this May. A *compañera* explained that one pound of soybeans can produce three liters of milk-substitute. Seventy-five food products can be derived from soy. It is extremely nutritious as well as inexpensive.

An older cooperativista told us that one of their goals is to try to keep consumer prices down. The cooperatives hope to sell their crops to a state agency which would guarantee them a fair price and give the consumer a fair price, also.

Questions and answers

Following lunch and entertainment, we gathered together for a question-and-answer period. The *compañeros* raised some practical points.

"If I join, how will I get to work?"

"What help will I get from the agrarian reform agencies?"

"How do I join?"

The cooperativistas explained that the agrarian reform agencies are doing all that they can to ensure transportation, to relocate those producers and their families who live in isolated parts of the country or perhaps have poor land.

As for membership, the requirements are that one be a small or medium producer, be eighteen years old (or fourteen if independent of one's parents), have no debts to the bank or the state, and have two recommendations from other small or medium producers.

On the way home, in the back of a pickup truck, we spoke with a small farmer who lived in such an isolated part of the country that he did not find about the revolution until it was over. "What do you think of the revolution?" we asked him.

"I still don't really know much about it," he admitted. "But I can tell you one thing for sure. This revolution is for poor people." □



Farmers at February 24 meeting in Chagüitillo.

Jane Harris/IP

Church hierarchy attacks government

Bishops echo imperialist slanders

By Arnold Weissberg

MANAGUA — The Catholic church hierarchy in Nicaragua has taken a further step toward open collaboration with the enemies of the revolution by falsely accusing the Sandinista government of violating the human rights of Miskitu Indians on the country's Atlantic Coast.

The government was forced to relocate Indians living along the Río Coco, the border with Honduras, because Somozaist counterrevolutionaries based in that country had created a climate of terror along the river.

However, in a statement released by the Council of Bishops February 18, the savage murders of Nicaraguan soldiers and more than forty civilians at the hands of the terrorists was reduced to "the death of many militia members and soldiers of the Sandinista People's Army, along with the death of their political adversaries and also of some uninvolved citizens."

The bishops described the terrorist actions as merely "the events that have occurred in the Río Coco area."

'Disrespect for human dignity'

Although none of the seven signers of the statement had visited the region since the resettlement, they asserted — incorrectly — that there had been a "forced march" and "deaths under circumstances that bring to mind the dramatic situations in which neighboring peoples live" — a clear reference to the bloodsoaked regimes of El Salvador and Guatemala.

The bishops went on to claim there was "a situation of disrespect for human dignity and violations of human rights" in the government's handling of the matter.

The bishops' statement echoed the chief themes taken up by the U.S. government in its attacks on Nicaragua, and for that reason caused a storm of protest here.

Speaking February 21 to a crowd of 50,000 people gathered to welcome Mexican President José López Portillo, Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the Junta of National Reconstruction, denounced those "who defend those Somozaist criminals, with pronouncements issued in the name of God and the church. They call 'political adversaries' the people who last night killed four* humble workers at the airport, they accuse us of violating human rights."

Ortega went on, "will the bishop of Managua come here to visit the remains of the brothers who were killed last night? Will the bishops



OBANDO Y BRAVO

come to visit these dead, these sons of the people?

"The real Christians are the literacy crusade volunteers who have been killed, the teachers, the peasants, the soldiers, the militia members. . . . The real Christians are the comrades killed yesterday by the bomb in the airport, the comrades who have died fighting the criminal Somozaist bands. . . ."

Government denounces bishops

A few days later, the Junta of National Reconstruction issued a statement strongly criticizing the bishops' stand. Although the bishops have been in open sympathy with counterrevolutionary forces for some time, this was the first time the government felt compelled to criticize them publicly.

The junta expressed regret that the bishops had not first made use of the normal channels of communication with the government to express their concerns. Further, the junta pointed out, the bishops had twice turned down invitations to visit the new Miskitu communities.

(Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo admitted in his February 23 sermon that the bishops knew little about the Atlantic Coast, but that they had based their statements on "reliable sources." He added that the statement by the Council of Bishops referred only to the move, not to conditions at the new communities.)

The government's statement noted that the

bishops' declaration had "an obvious political character, not the character of a pastoral message," and seemed designed to undercut the efforts at national unity the government had undertaken as a means of defending Nicaragua against the escalating U.S. threats.

Further, said the junta, the bishops' statement echoed charges made by the Somozaist Fifteenth of September radio station in Honduras, charges that were printed in the February 17 U.S. embassy bulletin in Managua.

The bishops, the junta explained, had "neither mentioned nor condemned the climate of terror that has been created" in the Atlantic Coast. Nor had they mentioned the Miskitu communities' food shortages and illnesses caused by terrorist control of river access to their traditional homelands.

The junta denied the bishops' assertions that old people, the sick, and children had been forced to march long distances, explaining that people unable to make the hike were carried by helicopter, and pointed out that there had not been a single casualty.

The junta concluded by calling on the Vatican to send a special representative to Nicaragua to discuss the hierarchy's relationship with the government, and by reaffirming the government's commitment to religious freedom for all Nicaraguans.

Protests backing government pour in

Protests against the Conference of Bishops statement poured in from priests, religious organizations, and grass-roots Christian communities.

Capuchin priest Agustín Zambola, one of the priests who denounced Somoza's 1975 massacres of Atlantic Coast peasants, declared that "the move was to save [the Miskitus'] lives." Zambola, himself an Atlantic Coast native, said he was "surprised and saddened" by the bishops' attitude. "They didn't mention that the Miskitus were being terrorized by the counterrevolutionaries," he said.

Meanwhile, the Nicaraguan Confederation of Priests and Nuns (CONFER) characterized the Miskitus' relocation as "necessary and positive." CONFER said the bishops, by calling the Somozaist terrorists "political adversaries, legitimize the activities of those who commit atrocious crimes against the frontier population."

Father Juan Ramón Moreno, president of CONFER, said that the government's actions "reaffirmed the defense of the Miskitus' human rights — in this case, their lives."

Protests also came from leaders of the People's Social Christian Party (PPSC), the Inde-

*It was later learned that three persons had been killed.

pendent Liberal Party (PLI), and from the Rev. José Miguel Torres, head of Nicaragua's Ecumenical Center. Reverend Torres called the bishops' statement "a political message which helps legitimize the aggressions against our country. The bishops must undertake a self-correction."

Deep divisions within the church

The Nicaraguan Catholic church is deeply divided along class lines. The massive popular insurrection that overthrew the Somoza dictatorship enjoyed the support and assistance of scores of priests and nuns who, because they lived as their parishioners did, came to believe that Christians should help in establishing social justice on earth.

Together with the grass-roots Catholic organizations, these revolutionary priests and nuns constitute what has become known here

as the "people's church."

On the other side is the church hierarchy, which has become one of the main political focuses for opposition to the revolution. Although the U.S. government has systematically cut off aid to Nicaragua, at least \$375,000 has been funneled to the archbishop's office through the Agency for International Development, Washington's foreign aid arm. And the reactionary daily *La Prensa* has rallied to the hierarchy, declaring the bishops to be beyond criticism.

Ongoing conflict

Last June, the bishops demanded the resignation of three priests holding government posts (the minister of culture, the foreign minister, and the minister of social welfare), and one holding a responsible FSLN position. The hierarchy was forced to back down in the face

of massive protests from Catholics.

Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo has deliberately sought to remove revolutionary-minded priests and nuns from their longtime parish posts. This policy has also drawn strong protests from grass-roots religious organizations. Late last year another such series of transfers began, provoking a round of requests to the archbishop for discussions.

When this was ignored, the community groups began to organize open-ended prayer and reflection meetings in churches around Managua and other cities — measures that were slandered as "takeovers" by the rightists.

Obando y Bravo finally consented to meet with some representatives, just at the time the bishops' Atlantic Coast statement came out. The community representatives called the meeting fruitless. □

Middle East

Imperialist powers set up Sinai force

New Zealand government agrees to send troops

By Elaine Edwards

[The following article is abridged from the February 19 issue of the New Zealand fortnightly *Socialist Action*, published in Auckland.]

* * *

The Muldoon government has announced that it will definitely send New Zealand troops to take part in the United States' Sinai military force. This force is part of the US and other imperialist governments' stepped-up war moves against the people of the Middle East.

Among the other imperialist powers taking part in the force are Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Australia.

The Israeli government did not approve European participation in the force at first, because these countries called for Palestinian involvement in negotiations. However this was cleared up once the European governments agreed to Israeli terms, and the Israeli cabinet gave the go ahead for the force on January 31.

The Sinai is part of the Arab territory which Israel invaded and has occupied since 1967. The stated purpose of the 2,500-strong force is to monitor the withdrawal of Israeli troops from this occupied territory by April 26. However, although it is called a "peace-keeping" force, in reality it is the opposite.

'Nothing gained'

The Australian Labour Party's spokesman on foreign affairs, Lionel Bowen, pointed this out when condemning his country's participation in the force.

"Nothing will be gained for peace in the

Middle East by the cosmetic gesture of committing our fellows to the Sinai force and endangering their lives," Bowen said.

"It is quite unreal to expect that the force will help the peace process when nothing has been done about the Palestinian problem.

"The decision to commit troops has been made by the United States and Israel. Israel has regarded US participation as vital because, in the event of a major threat, the force could be

turned into a rapid deployment force."

Although the New Zealand contingent will be relatively small, this does not lessen its importance. As with New Zealand's involvement in the Vietnam war, the real significance of the contingent is political, not military.

It gives credibility to the pretence that the force will be, as Muldoon described it, "both balanced and multi-national." It helps provide international cover and active backing for the



Members of the U.S. Eighty-second Airborne Division arrived in the Sinai March 17.

stepped-up aggression in the Middle East by the imperialist powers, led by the US government.

Direct U.S. presence

Since the downfall of the shah of Iran in 1979, US imperialism has realised that it cannot rely on local tyrants alone to hold back the people of the Middle East from fighting for their freedom from imperialist domination.

Its overriding concern has been to get a direct US military presence in the region. The Sinai force will be the first time that US armed forces have had a permanent presence on Middle East soil for more than a decade.

Essential also for gaining this presence is securing military bases from which the American Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) can operate on a permanent basis.

The RDF involves a pool of 200,000 troops from four army and marine divisions, including the 82nd Airborne; five air force fighter wings; three aircraft-carrier battle groups; several B-52 squadrons; and AWACS aircraft.

The US government buildup has been accompanied by an escalation of pressures, threats and outright military moves against regimes in the region that are viewed as obstacles to US plans.

The principal targets have been the Khomeini government in Iran and the regime of Col. Muammar el-Gaddafi in Libya. The first has based itself on the masses in resisting the threats and pressures of imperialism, while Gaddafi's regime has given support to anti-imperialist struggles in many parts of the world.

Along with these actions, the US government has strengthened its collaboration with the Zionist regime in Israel, which plays a special role in trying to halt revolutionary developments in the Middle East.

The central target of the Zionist regime remains the Palestinian liberation movement.

War of aggression

As well as smashing the Palestinian resistance, the Israeli rulers want a new war of aggression against Lebanon, Syria and the other Arab states that have rejected the Camp David accords of 1978.

They hope a victory in this will alleviate the deepening economic crisis inside Israel, gain them fresh markets and areas of investment, and reduce the political and military pressure they feel from the Arab regimes.

The Camp David accords (under which the Sinai force is to be set up), by securing Israel's southern border with Egypt, allows the Zionist regime greater freedom to attack its other Arab neighbours and the Palestinian forces.

The Israeli annexation of occupied Syrian territory in the Golan Heights late last year was evidence of this.

Palestinian leaders and the majority of Arab nations have opposed the Camp David accords and the Sinai force. The New Zealand government's backing of such war moves in the Middle East should be condemned. □

Australian troops out of Sinai!

[The following editorial appeared in the March 10 issue of the Australian socialist weekly *Direct Action*.]

* * *

Australian airforce personnel have now taken up their position on the Sinai Peninsula as part of the US-dominated military force that is supposed to police the return of the area to Egypt.

However, the real role of the force in protecting the interests of Israel is becoming clearer every day.

Based on the Camp David accords, which justify the denial of self-determination to the Palestinian people, the force aims to secure Israel's southern border and thus free its forces for further aggression against its other Arab neighbors, as well as providing the US with a direct military presence in the Middle East.

Moreover, Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai is being used as a public-relations cover for its intransigent denial of even limited rights to the Palestinian populations of the West Bank and Gaza Strip areas. The so-called stage two of the Camp David accords, discussions between Israel and Egypt over limited "autonomy" for Palestinians in the areas, has now all but irretrievably broken down.

Nowhere did Israel show its intentions more clearly than in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The region was formally annexed by Israel late last year.

These facts were driven home in a report from Jerusalem that appeared in the March 9 *Australian*. It said:

"Troops fired shots and launched tear gas grenades when young demonstrators clashed today with Israeli soldiers in the Jordan West Bank towns of Ramallah and Nablus which were at a standstill from a strike in schools, shops and transport.

"The outbreak coincided with fears of a new Israeli strike against Palestinian guerrilla bases in Lebanon.

"On the West Bank troops made mass arrests and ordered shopkeepers to open up. In Nablus soldiers welded up the metal shutters of shopkeepers who refused to open."

The report in the *Australian*, a newspaper which is a firm supporter of Israel, was also forced to admit that the Israeli army "brutally repulsed students" protesting the February 16 closure of the Palestinian Bir Zeit University.

The protests were linked to Israel's establishment of a "civilian administration" to replace the military governorship of the West Bank. Headed by the same person who led the old military administration, so-called civilian rule doesn't reflect a weakening of Israel's resolve to maintain control of the area. On the contrary, Palestinians see the move as a step by Israel toward formal annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

So much for the "autonomy" promised the Palestinians when Egypt and Israel signed the



Graham Foster/Direct Action

Sydney, November 1981.

Camp David accords!

The fake peacekeeping force that is now positioned on the Sinai Peninsula has the role of reinforcing this whole process.

Australian troops should be pulled out immediately. □

New Zealand solidarity with Grenada

Young revolutionaries in New Zealand have launched a campaign of political and material assistance to the people of Grenada.

The campaign, which aims to raise \$1,000 for Grenada, is being carried out by the Young Socialists, the youth organization of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International. It began on March 13, the third anniversary of the Grenada revolution.

In a March 1 news release Manuele Lasalo, national coordinator of the Young Socialists, explained:

"We think that Reagan's attacks against Grenada will back-fire when rebel youth learn that Grenada is the first revolution in a Black, English-speaking country — a revolution where Rastas are involved in the struggle, and that Grenada is one of the strongest opponents in the Commonwealth to New Zealand's sporting links with South Africa.

"Grenada's small size makes it very vulnerable to the military might of the United States, but its small size also means that any contribution we make can make a difference. Our campaign will be providing practical assistance through raising a thousand dollars from the rebel youth of New Zealand to the revolutionary youth of Grenada."

Conditions under the dictatorship

Interview with revolutionary leader

[The following interview with a Turkish Trotskyist leader, G. Gansever, is from the January 28 issue of *Was Tun*, the weekly paper of the International Marxist Group (IGM), the West German section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *International Viewpoint*.]

* * *

Question. Since September 12, for the third time in the last twenty years, a military regime is in power in Turkey. On May 27, 1960, the military overthrew the bankrupt Bayar-Menderes government. On March 12, 1971, the commanders of the army, air force, and navy forced the resignation of the Demirel government. Their objective, they declared, was to put an end to "chaos and anarchy in the country and to carry out the reforms overdue." For 500 days, a junta of generals headed by Kenan Evren has held the reins of government. Is the present junta any different from its predecessors?

Answer. A close look shows no class differences between the three putsches, although the whole Turkish left and so-called democratic public opinion regards the May 27, 1960, coup as progressive.

There are, however, differences of another sort. Since the workers movement has developed, the same forces have reacted differently. In 1960, the resistance of the farmers and of the workers was under the control of the Democratic Party (DP) and the Republican People's Party (CHP). These parties dominated the political stage.

The consciousness of the masses and the line they followed were largely determined by these bourgeois currents. It was not until later — as a result of growing industrialization — that a differentiation took place. As soon as the workers' movement came onto the political stage, the reaction of the military became harder and more brutal.

Q. What are the underlying reasons for the coup d'etat?

A. The previous putsches followed severe economic crises. The first two, in 1960 and 1971, brought a certain economic recovery, which, however, did not go above the level reached before the coup.

Thus, the 1977-78 gross national product (GNP) fell back to the level of 1968. According to the figures published by the Turkish statistical bureau, there has been a certain improvement, since GNP has risen to the level of 1978. But still, after almost fifteen years, it has only come back up to the level of 1968.

Junta admits torture deaths

Turkey's military regime admitted March 16 that at least fifteen people have died under torture since the September 12, 1980, military coup. The admission came in response to a report by Amnesty International that at least seventy people had been tortured to death in the junta's prisons.

Since the military coup, more than 100,000 opponents of the regime have been jailed.

Q. What are the Evren junta's objectives? What has it achieved?

A. Its primary objective was to restore "law and order" in the country. To a certain extent, it has achieved that. There are 150,000 political prisoners. One hundred and fifty persons have died under torture. Amnesty International talks about seventy cases where it can be proven that people were tortured to death.

In so-called raids, 600 persons have been shot. Three thousand people have been condemned to death. One hundred and fifty have already been executed. The rightist terror that ravaged the country before September 12 has been replaced by a legalized state terror.

It must be made clear whom this terror is aimed at. The target is not some "democratic left," as you often hear in the West. This terror is aimed against the entire workers movement, against every current in it, and against the oppressed Kurdish nation. Some 90 percent of its victims come from the politically active left in the workers movement.

All parties have been banned, along with the independent unions grouped in the Revolutionary Workers Trade Union Confederation (DISK). The DISK leadership is now being tried in a military court, and some of the points in the indictment indicate that they could face the death penalty.

The other confederation, the Turkish Trade Union Confederation (Turk Is), is still legal.

Youth and farmers organizations have been banned. The CHP, which is close to the international Social Democracy, has also been banned. Its chairman, Bulent Ecevit, has had to serve a four-month prison sentence.

Q. Does that mean that the junta is ruling without any base in the population?

A. Unlike what happened after the 1971 putsch, the military have left certain bourgeois associations untouched. All the so-called progressive forces are trying to take the regime's

Kemalist propaganda seriously and to show that Kemalism* should not be applied the way the government is doing it but some other way.

While the revolutionary left has been suppressed, and the working class has been terrorized, the right wing of the CHP has been able to put its views forward. These people publish a weekly called *Arayis*. The obvious objective of this tactic is to channel the protests through this layer of bourgeois intellectuals.

Q. What sort of protests are there? Is there resistance?

A. The open resistance has been broken. But there is a certain restlessness, a certain antagonism to the regime. For example, I have a letter here from the chief of a village near the city of Konya that was written to *Arayis*. Freely translated, it says: "Don't serve the interests of the rich. It is important to give more space to the country people and their problems, the people who can't get credit, who can't get hospital beds, who have no chance to get work."

This letter was written quite recently. If a village elder dares to write a letter like this, he is risking quite a lot.

Q. The complaints in this letter take us back to the objectives of the military junta. What sort of economic policy has it undertaken and what results has it registered up till now?

A. After "fighting terrorism," the junta's second objective was to reorient the country's economy massively toward export. So, what have the results been? According to the official figures, exports in the first nine months of 1980 increased by a half billion dollars over the same period of 1979, reaching a total of \$2.25 billion. In 1981, they continued to rise, reaching roughly \$3.5 billion. In recent months, the papers have been saying that this increase is a great success.

However, if you compare the export totals with those for imports, you will see that the latter have also risen sharply. The total has gone from \$4 billion to \$5.2 billion in 1980, and currently to \$7.1 billion. The foreign trade deficit has gone from \$2.3 billion in 1979 to \$3 billion in 1980, to \$3.6 billion in 1981.

These figures tell the real story about the so-called "restoration of economic health." This becomes still clearer, when you see that ex-

*Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was the leader of the revolution of 1919, which followed the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and consolidated the modern Turkish state. As president of Turkey from 1923 to 1938, Ataturk carried out a program of capitalist modernization.

ports rose by 48 percent more than imports in 1981, but despite that the foreign trade deficit increased.

Obviously, the increased exports were "bought" by lowering prices. The Turkish business press is complaining that Turkish export commodities are being sold at a loss. The profits of the traders, however, are being supported by state subsidies. This is a policy that was practiced back in the 1950s.

It is also interesting to look at the structure of imports, since it is claimed that Turkey's industrial production has risen. Some 91 percent of imports consist of raw materials and semi-manufactures. This figure has remained constant for a long time. Has Turkey become a country that imports raw materials in order to transform them into industrial commodities? The fact is that Turkish industry has concentrated on manufacturing, in particular light manufacturing. Thus, plastic containers are produced from imported raw materials by imported machines with imported chemical equipment. This is also true for fertilizers, a very important sector, although the raw materials could be obtained in the country. So, dependency on the West is growing.

Q. So, the general's economic conceptions don't differ from Demirel's — are they just being applied more ruthlessly?

A. What has changed is the direction of the exports. A growing percentage is going to the Near and Middle East, to the countries Turkey gets its oil from (Libya, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia). In 1979, 49 percent of all Turkish exports were still going to countries of the European Economic Community.

In mid-November, the economics minister, Turgut Ozal, said that 44 percent of total exports were going to the Arab countries. However, all our experience shows that the junta's economic policy is not really leading the country out of dependency and want.

The combination of precapitalist and semi-capitalist modes of production with an advanced capitalist industry that only complements the industry and markets of the dominant capitalist countries of the West remains an insurmountable obstacle.

The junta has no program for land reform. The farmers as a group have gotten nothing from the putsch. Workers' wages have been cut and frozen.

The burden of military expenditure is increasing. Under such conditions, how can a process of economic growth be launched that could overcome the worst poverty?

Q. Can you give some concrete examples of this?

A. Let's take agriculture. It still produces two-thirds of exports. Forty-five to fifty million people are still being fed, without any immediate danger of famine. For the future, I think that the situation in agriculture presents the biggest dangers for a new economic collapse.

For example, the fertilizer factories have in-

creased their capacity by 40%. But since fertilizer prices have increased by more than 1,000% in the last two years, the use of fertilizer has declined by 50%. The prices of insecticides have increased by 50%. Consumption has dropped by 30%. The price of livestock feeds has risen by 600%. The result is that 60% of the chicken industry has gone bankrupt.

In 1969, a tractor cost a half million Turkish lira. Today the cost is one and a half million. The result is that five-billion-lira worth of agricultural machinery remains unused in the storehouses of the Turkish Institute for Agricultural Development.

The junta claims that it is promoting the middle classes. In fact, the freeing of interest rates in June 1980 touched off a galloping expropriation of small property owners. The interest rate shot up from 12% to 70%, and so-called pirate bankers offer up to 140%.

A lot of small property owners, but also clerks and officials, sold their modest possessions in the hope of profiting from the high interest rates. About 160 billion lira were deposited, of which not an inconsiderable part came from Turkish workers abroad. A lot of civil servants have placed their pension checks with the bankers.

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A growing number of these bankers are going bankrupt or disappearing. About 25 billion lira has already disappeared into the pockets of such reckless speculators and absconding bankers.

The material situation of the workers is still worse. Monthly wages range between 10,000 and 20,000 lira. You cannot rent any place for less than 8,000 to 10,000 per month. A kilo of coffee costs 1,000 lira; a kilo of butter, 500 lira.

Q. In the first weeks and months after the putsch, the West European governments and NATO provided political cover for the dictatorship, claiming that it was a necessary precondition for a "return to democracy." They are still supporting the generals and torturers and covering up for them. At the same time, recently, they have been weeping crocodile tears over the fate of the Polish workers. Nothing more is being said about a return to democracy. Was the junta able to gain a certain credibility in the eye of the population by its "democratization plans"?

A. The calling of a handpicked "Consultative Assembly" last fall had a certain effect, because these liberal "Kemalist" intellectuals, including circles of the CHP, played a role in this and developed a discussion around it. The assembly declared that it would consult the "social groups and organizations" in order to draw up a new constitution. This is still going on.

Representatives of the banned bourgeois parties that are not going to be consulted have raised their "protest" only because they say there is no democracy if they are not involved.

Around the end of 1982, a referendum is supposed to be held on the constitution and after that there are supposed to be elections for a new parliament. But before all that takes place, all the important laws — the new laws regulating political parties, trade unions, elections, and parliament, etc. — are going to be decreed by the junta.

We have seen the same sort of trickery in other parts of the world before.

Q. What possibilities do you see for resistance?

A. Despite the torture and the indescribable conditions, the prisons today are centers of the resistance. The vanguard of the workers movement confined there is struggling to hold out and to achieve political clarity in preparation for a new upsurge of class struggle. For these militants, international solidarity is essential.

Outside the prisons, all forms of legal and illegal struggle that have shown their effectiveness are being considered. It is of decisive importance to systematically exploit all the possibilities that remain in the unions. The masses of former DISK members, deprived of their leaders, are supposed to be "transferred" to Turk Is. We have to be on the lookout for the smallest openings to do revolutionary work in this area. □

Jaruzelski's stubborn 'genie'

Regime fails to tame workers movement

By Ernest Harsch

"If the lid is opened, the genie will jump out. But if we keep it shut, the bottle may explode."

That is the dilemma facing the martial law regime of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, as described in a recent article by government spokesperson Jerzy Urban.

In other words, more than three months after Jaruzelski's December 13 declaration of a state of war, the Solidarity union movement — the "genie" — is still a significant force to be reckoned with, one that has maintained its wide support among Polish working people.

Jaruzelski and the other bureaucrats who rule Poland fear that if martial law is lifted, workers will be emboldened to resume their massive struggle for workers democracy. On the other hand, the authorities are also aware that martial law by itself cannot make the genie go away, and could simply lead to a further sharpening of social tensions.

The pressures bearing down on the regime were evident at the February 24-25 Central Committee plenum of the ruling Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), the first since martial law was declared. Jaruzelski rebuked the ultra-Stalinist wing of the party, which has been pressing for even harsher repressive policies. But he also insisted that martial law would remain in effect, blaming its continuation on "tensions, acts of extravagance and poster campaigns" — that is, the workers' resistance.

Jaruzelski floats 'union' scheme

In an effort to undercut this resistance, Jaruzelski and other officials have repeatedly claimed that they favor the restoration of full trade-union rights. In his Central Committee speech, for instance, Jaruzelski maintained that "powerful, independent, and self-governed unions" could help manage the country, as long as they "absolutely respect the system's socialist principles."

In its nearly one and a half years of open existence, Solidarity did just that. The authorities, however, equate respect for "socialist principles" with respect for their own undemocratic methods and material privileges. Since Solidarity challenged bureaucratic rule, it was branded "antisocialist."

Just what Jaruzelski had in mind when he spoke about "self-governed unions" was spelled out a few days before the opening of the plenum. A special government committee, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski, released a "discussion document" on the future role of trade unions in Poland.

The right to strike would be recognized, but only in a restricted form. "Territorial structures" would not be allowed, a reference to the

way Solidarity was organized geographically, involving all workers in a general union rather than dividing them up by industry or occupation.

According to the document, the "organizational principles, structure and practical functioning of the trade unions must guarantee that they will remain just a trade union, without any ambitions to play the role of a political party."

While Solidarity was not a political party, neither did it confine itself to shop-floor issues. It addressed all the key social, economic, and political questions affecting working people in Poland. That is something the authorities are violently opposed to.

Zbigniew Bujak, a top Solidarity leader who has managed to evade arrest, termed the government's trade-union proposals "unacceptable" in a message to foreign journalists dated February 24.

"The government is imposing its own concept of trade unions onto society," Bujak said. "They want trade unions subjected to the Communist Party. Such a union structure and the scope of its proposed responsibilities excludes outright the possibility of independent activity."

Bujak's rejection of the regime's phony trade-union schemes is universal among Solidarity leaders, both among those in detention and at liberty. Not one prominent leader has thus far come forward to support them, despite the enormous pressures they face.

Trials and fabrications

Unsuccessful in winning over any significant collaborators, Jaruzelski has continued to rely on repression in the hopes of breaking or wearing down the workers' opposition.

Of the thousands of unionists, student leaders, political activists, and intellectuals picked up in the weeks immediately following the declaration of martial law, the regime acknowledges that more than 4,000 are still in internment camps around the country, being held without charge. In addition, according to an Interior Ministry official, 1,650 had been brought to trial as of March 1 for violations of the martial-law regulations, including organizing strikes or demonstrations.

A virulent slander campaign is under way against some of those interned, as a possible prelude to their being brought to trial. The official news media has singled out such prominent figures as Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, and Bronislaw Geremek, at times using some of the foulest anti-Semitic invective.

Especially ominous have been the regime's attempts to portray opponents of the bureaucracy as "terrorists." It claimed, for instance, that an underground group was behind the kill-

ing of a policeman.

Solidarity leaders, however, have made their rejection of terrorist methods absolutely clear, urging their followers to avoid any acts of resistance that could lead to bloodshed and to avoid police attempts to provoke them.

One Solidarity leaflet, issued in Krakow, warned, "Based on fabrications about terrorism, the authorities may attempt — through their own terrorist actions — to eliminate some Solidarity activists."

Since February, there have been a number of open displays of opposition to the regime, including street demonstrations in Gdansk and Poznan, a workers rally in Swidnik, and student actions in Krakow and Wroclaw.

On March 13, to mark the third month of martial law, some 100 Solidarity activists in Warsaw staged vocal protest in the Grand Opera house against a singer accused of collaborating with the authorities.

Since all street demonstrations are outlawed under martial law, the country's churches have become frequent sites for the expression of opposition views.

On February 18, for instance, some 1,500 students gathered for a mass in Warsaw to mark the first anniversary of the official registration of the Independent Students Association (NZS), which has since been banned by the authorities. On March 14, in one of the largest public assemblies since martial law was declared, more than 20,000 people rallied outside a church in the Warsaw suburb of Ursus. At it, Archbishop Jozef Glemp called for the release of Solidarity Chairman Lech Walesa and other detained activists.

Leaflets and bulletins are being distributed throughout the country. Although the authorities have been able to suppress a few of them, others have sprung up.

At the PUWP Central Committee plenum, one member from the Silesian coal mining region, Zbigniew Hanff, complained that many antigovernment leaflets were still being distributed. "Enough of this," he insisted.

Foreign journalists who visited the Wujek coal mine in Katowice — where nine miners were killed by police in December — were able to talk to some of the workers.

"If Solidarity is restored, everybody will join it," one miner said. "But if they try to replace it with an official Communist-dominated union, then we have all agreed that we will have nothing to do with it." □

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