

# INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

combined  
with **inprecor**

Vol. 20, No. 20

May 31, 1982

USA \$1.25

UK 50p

## Thatcher and Reagan Invade Argentina

# Stop the Imperialist Slaughter!



Socialist Challenge

May Day demonstration in Manchester, England, was one of many opposing war against Argentina. International labor movement has a big stake in stopping this imperialist aggression.

## May Day Speech by Tomás Borge

## Role of Workers in Nicaraguan Revolution

## U.S. presses Salvador War

By Ernest Harsch

Although it has dropped from the headlines, the war being waged against the people of El Salvador is still very much under way — and becoming even more brutal. Since the March 28 electoral farce in that country, the U.S.-backed armed forces have butchered several hundred people.

Yet this war is receiving scant attention in the big-business press in the United States.

Some commentaries have ascribed this to the outbreak of fighting over the Malvinas Islands, taking the absurd position that it is impossible to cover more than one Latin American "hot spot" at a time. But an article in the May 17 *Newsweek* acknowledged, "In fact, many news organizations had decided to end their on-the-spot coverage of El Salvador even before the Falklands blew up."

The explanation for this move is simply that the latest news from El Salvador is the kind on which the capitalist press would prefer to remain silent.

### Smokescreen for intervention

This news blackout comes at a time when the U.S. government is moving to step up its intervention in El Salvador even more.

The Reagan administration has asked Congress to approve \$60 million in military aid to the Salvadoran government for the fiscal year beginning October 1. The House Foreign Affairs Committee overwhelmingly approved the request on May 12, voting down several motions to limit or halt such aid.

Another \$128 million in economic assistance has been requested for El Salvador.

Moreover, according to a dispatch from San Salvador in the May 8 *Los Angeles Times*, "the

United States plans to increase the Salvadoran fleet of UH-1H 'Huey' helicopters from the present 17 to 40 by the end of 1984, informed sources say.

"In addition, the sources said, a deal is being put together to provide El Salvador with about 12 airplanes — C-123 cargo planes, O-2 spotter aircraft and A-37 counterinsurgency jets — by the year's end."

One indication of how much the Pentagon is helping to direct the Salvadoran regime's counterinsurgency efforts came to light in early May when a group of senators asked the Defense Department for a secret report on the military situation in El Salvador. The report was drawn up by Brig. Gen. Fred Woerner, who headed a seven-member military team that spent eight weeks working on the study in close collaboration with the Salvadoran military command.

The May 5 *Miami Herald* reported, "According to sources who have seen the report, it is basically a set of goals developed by the U.S. military for the Salvadoran military leaders to deal with the leftist guerrillas they are fighting."

Because of widespread antiwar sentiment in the United States, the Reagan administration is having big political difficulties in pushing ahead with such interventionist moves. Prominent news articles on massacres by Salvadoran government troops would not help.

The blanket of silence that has been thrown over the brutalities of the Salvadoran regime is designed to allay domestic concern about the situation in El Salvador and provide cover for Washington's next moves.

While the White House and capitalist press in the United States look the other way, El

Salvador's army and death squads have been busy.

According to information in the Salvadoran press cited by Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, at least 353 Salvadoran civilians were killed in April alone, and another 82 were kidnapped. None had been involved in military clashes in which guerrillas were present.

Noting the increase in violence since the elections, the archbishop declared, "I think that there are elements in the regime that favor this."

He also reported that some 100 children had died of hunger after they fled a recent government military operation.

Among those killed during April, there was an increase in the number who had been decapitated or whose bodies showed signs of torture.

In early May, peasants reported finding six decapitated bodies outside Moncagua, 80 miles east of San Salvador, and four mutilated heads in nearby Papalón.

From May 2 to May 6, according to the guerrilla station Radio Venceremos, government troops killed 52 peasants in a sweep through five hamlets along the Lempa River 50 miles east of the capital. Some of those killed were elderly, and some were burned alive in their huts.

On May 13, eight youths in San Salvador were kidnapped. The next day their bodies were found lying on a road. They had been shot at point-blank range. When parents of the eight visited Archbishop Rivera y Damas, they accused troops from the army garrison in the neighborhood of San Carlos of the killings.

### Army suffers heavy losses

The Salvadoran government troops, so effective in killing unarmed civilians, have proved less successful in encounters with fighters of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

On April 25, some 4,000 government troops, including paratroop, infantry, and artil-

## Our Nicaragua coverage — it costs money

*Intercontinental Press* is the only English-language weekly in the world with a full-time bureau in Managua. The appearance in this issue of the complete text of the May Day speech given by Sandinista leader Tomás Borge is typical of the thorough, up-to-date coverage of the Nicaraguan revolution that is provided by *IP*.

Whether it is a new outbreak of attacks by counterrevolutionary gangs on the Honduran border, the distribution of confiscated land to peasant cooperatives at Chagüitillo, or the latest political events in Managua, our correspondents are on the scene. The interviews, feature stories, speeches, and news articles that have appeared in *IP* over the past three years represent a unique

chronicle of the Nicaraguan revolution.

With the decision of the Sandinista leadership to publicly declare the socialist objectives of the Nicaraguan revolution, the political process there has entered a new phase. Readers of *IP* will be able to follow the ongoing transformation of Nicaraguan society step-by-step.

The stakes are high. The establishment of a workers and farmers government in Nicaragua, the civil war in El Salvador and the struggle in Guatemala, and the undeclared war mounted by U.S. imperialism throughout the region has placed Central America at the heart of world politics. That was what was behind our decision to set up and maintain the Managua bureau.

But it costs money to provide the kind of coverage that *IP* readers have come to expect. Articles must often be phoned into New York from Managua. Travel costs continue to mount. And, even without the added expenses incurred as a result of maintaining the Managua bureau, the fact is that subscriptions to *IP* and single copy sales do not generate enough income to cover our operating costs.

We are appealing to readers of *IP* to help us through financial contributions. Please send whatever you can afford — all contributions, no matter what the amount, will be greatly appreciated. Send donations to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

lery companies, launched "Operation Torola" against FMLN positions in the eastern province of Morazán. Among the government forces were troops from the 957-member Ramón Bellosillo Battalion, who recently returned to El Salvador after three months of training in the United States.

By the time the army ended the operation, it had suffered heavy losses. The FMLN reported inflicting 166 casualties on the troops, and capturing large quantities of arms and ammunition. One of the commanders of the operation told Salvadoran newspapers that the losses on the government side were "numerous."

On May 5, the regime launched another offensive in Usulután province, code named "Operation Dueñas," which lasted five days. Again the FMLN reported inflicting heavy losses on the government troops.

The fighting in April appears to have been particularly heavy. According to the April 26-May 2 issue of *El Salvador Proceso*, a news bulletin of the Documentation and Information Center of the Central American University in San Salvador, "Local newspapers have reported the confirmed deaths of 230 military and paramilitary troops in April. This is the highest number that has been reported in the press in the last two years."

#### Image problems in San Salvador

The failure of the Salvadoran military to hold its own against the liberation forces underlines the urgency, from the perspective of the American imperialists, to step in more directly to prop up the regime.

But this has been made more politically difficult by the gains of the ultrarightist parties in the March 28 elections.

In an effort to give the regime a more "reformist" image — and thus dampen some of the opposition to U.S. aid to it — Washington had hoped for a victory by the Christian Democratic Party.

It did not turn out that way. The parties identified most closely with the ultraright and the oligarchy won 60 percent of the seats in the new Constituent Assembly, and chose Roberto D'Aubuisson, the head of the death squads, as the assembly president.

Concerned that direct rule by D'Aubuisson and his allies would evoke still greater opposition in the United States to aiding the regime, the White House stepped in to engineer the selection of Alvaro Magaña as president of the country. The U.S. press has tried to portray Magaña, a bank executive, as a "moderate."

But the course followed by the new government promises to be if anything even more bloody than that of its predecessor. In one of his first proclamations, Magaña categorically ruled out any negotiations with the FMLN. On the question of human rights violations by government forces, he declared, "The day that we succeed in a pacification of the type I hope for, the problem of human rights will end."

On May 18, the Constituent Assembly decided to scrap even the pretense of reform. It

voted by 37-18 to suspend the U.S.-prompted land reform scheme, which, despite its totally fraudulent nature, had been trumpeted by Washington as "proof" that the Salvadoran authorities were concerned about bettering the lot of the peasant masses.

While embarrassed by such moves, Washington has no intention of abandoning the regime in San Salvador. So instead it is on a public relations campaign to present the regime in a more favorable light — including D'Aubuisson himself. The press blackout is part of this.

Appearing before a congressional committee in early May, Secretary of State Alexander Haig claimed that the new government was

"broadly based." He maintained, "It is pledged to reform and is avid in the search for peace."

When Haig talks about the "search for peace," it means only one thing — more war.

According to a statement issued in May by the Mexican representatives of the FMLN and Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador, "The danger of a massive intervention still exists, and becomes even more necessary for imperialism as the crisis of the Salvadoran regime deepens."

That makes it equally necessary for opponents of U.S. intervention in Central America to continue mobilizing against Washington's aggressive moves against the Salvadoran people. □

---

## IN THIS ISSUE

---

Closing News Date: May 24, 1982

ARGENTINA	460	Imperialists escalate war — by Fred Murphy
	462	Reagan steps up support for Britain
BRITAIN	461	Demonstrations oppose war
PUERTO RICO	463	Wide protest hits police attack — by Roberto Kopec
IRAN	464	U.S. worries over war victories — by Suzanne Haig and Fred Murphy
JAPAN	466	Rulers push militarization drive
ANGOLA	467	Masses mobilize to defend gains — by Ernest Harsch
POLAND	480	Workers strike against regime — by Ernest Harsch
DOCUMENTS	471	Role of workers in Nicaraguan revolution — May Day speech by Commander Tomás Borge
NEWS ANALYSIS	458	U.S. presses Salvador war — by Ernest Harsch

---

Intercontinental Press (ISSN 0162-5594).  
Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Published in New York each Monday except the first in January and the third and fourth in August. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

**Editor:** Steve Clark.  
**Contributing Editors:** Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.  
**Managing Editor:** David Frankel.  
**Editorial Staff:** Sue Hagen, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.  
**Business Manager:** Sandi Sherman.

Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, Black, and women's liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

**To Subscribe:** For one-year subscription in the U.S. or Canada send \$35.00 (41.00 Canadian dollars) to Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Write for rates for first class and airmail; or telephone: (212) 929-6933.

For air-speeded subscriptions to Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box K208, Haymarket 2000. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 8852, Auckland.

For airmail subscriptions to Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe send \$50 for one year; \$25 for six months. Write for subscription rates to all other countries.

Subscription correspondence should be addressed to Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.



# Imperialists escalate war

## U.S. increases aid as British run into problems

By Fred Murphy

By launching a full-scale invasion of the Malvinas Islands on May 20, the British imperialists have again raised the stakes in their war against Argentina.

The British rulers had hoped for a quick retreat by the Argentine regime in face of intense military, economic, and diplomatic pressure. Instead, confronted at home with massive expressions of anti-imperialist sentiment, the junta stood firm on its demand that London give up its 149-year-old colonial rule over the Malvinas Islands.

As a result, the conflict has escalated into a major confrontation between semicolonial Latin America and the imperialist powers.

"Continental solidarity has taken firm hold around the contention that a rich European nation is punishing a poor Latin one," a *New York Times* dispatch from Brazil said May 22.

Demonstrations in solidarity with Argentina have taken place in various Latin American countries, including a march of some 200,000 persons in Lima, Peru, on May 12. Latin American federations of banking and communications workers have called for boycotts of British business. The revolutionary governments of Cuba and Nicaragua have declared their solidarity with the Argentine people and have even offered to provide military aid if requested.

### Expanded U.S. intervention

The escalating conflict brings with it expanded U.S. intervention on the side of London. "If the United States commitments to Britain mean anything," *New York Times* columnist James Reston said May 23, "they mean that the United States will not stand aside and allow the British forces to be defeated."

Washington is already providing London with a staging area on Ascension Island in the mid-Atlantic, logistics and intelligence support, KC-135 tanker aircraft with U.S. pilots, and possibly advanced naval reconnaissance planes, also U.S.-piloted (see page 462). A list of additional weapons and equipment that has been drawn up by the Pentagon for rapid shipment to Ascension Island includes surface-to-air missiles, land-based radar, portable fuel tanks for fighter jets, ammunition, and engineering equipment, the *New York Times* reported May 21.

White House press representative Larry Speakes has tried to play down the U.S. role. "Let me emphasize that there will be no involvement whatsoever of United States military personnel in the conflict in the South Atlantic," Speakes told reporters May 21. His-



THATCHER

tory has shown that such disclaimers are often the prelude to precisely such an involvement.

The U.S. imperialists are looking out for their own interests by backing up their allies in Britain. They want to help London "teach a lesson" to the oppressed peoples throughout the semicolonial world. They want to demonstrate to working people in the United States and Western Europe that military might will be used abroad to defend imperialist interests, even in defiance of massive antiwar sentiment.

The task is turning out to be not as easy as Reagan and Thatcher had hoped. The British Defense Ministry has already admitted the loss of two warships and severe damage to a third, the downing of at least four Harrier jet fighters and nine helicopters, and the death of 70 personnel. While the British forces have succeeded in establishing a beachhead on the Malvinas, they have yet to confront the main contingent of Argentine ground troops.

### Conventional arms buildup

Imperialist politicians and military figures are using the South Atlantic conflict to press their propaganda for a major buildup in conventional military forces. *New York Times* military analyst Drew Middleton pointed April 30 to some of the "lessons" NATO officials are drawing from the war:

Officials at NATO headquarters in Brussels and at the Defense Ministry [in London] say similar situations could demand that the United States or France make commitments outside Western Europe. . . .

The diversion of much of the British armed forces creates a serious situation, alliance planners agreed. But more frightening prospects for them are outbreaks of limited wars in Southwest Asia, Africa or

Southeast Asia. In some cases, they say, these would demand American or British intervention.

U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger has made this point explicitly to his West European counterparts, the *New York Times* reported May 16.

"Mr. Weinberger, the officials said, has been pointing to the crisis in the South Atlantic to reinforce the Administration's contention that members of the North Atlantic alliance have interests outside the boundaries of NATO and must be ready to send forces to protect those interests."

U.S. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Thomas Hayward criticized the British government May 20 for its "significant error in judgment" in cutting back the size of the Royal Navy in recent years. Hayward said London should have sent an even bigger task force to the South Atlantic.

According to the May 22 *New York Times*, Hayward "suggested that he would have deployed a battle group of at least two, and probably three, nuclear-powered aircraft carriers with nearly 300 high-performance attack planes aboard. They would have been guarded by cruisers, destroyers, frigates and submarines, with the battle group including a Marine amphibious force of 20,000 troops."

Operations of this scope are not the fantasies of a few overheated members of the Pentagon's general staff who long for the days before the anti-Vietnam War movement changed the face of U.S. politics. They are central to Washington's plans for halting the spread of anti-imperialist and revolutionary struggles in Central America, the Middle East, southern Africa, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere.

Thatcher's war against Argentina has become a crucial test of the imperialists' ability to carry out such foreign interventions. In the midst of a deep economic crisis that has brought massive unemployment and mounting social discontent and political radicalization, Thatcher has sent thousands of working-class youth to face possible death in an imperialist war.

### Opposition in Britain

Thatcher has managed to get away with this so far because the leaders of the British Labour Party have criminally defaulted on their elementary duty to oppose a war that can only bring further hardship to British workers. Despite this, there are growing signs of opposition to the war inside the working class in Britain.

On May 19, for example, the annual conference of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) voted to demand the recall of the British fleet from the South Atlantic. The *Times* of London described this as "a further demonstration of the British trade union movement's hostility to the Government's handling of the Falklands Islands crisis."

ASLEF General Secretary Ray Buckton told the *Times*, "Delegates continually stressed the fact that the over-riding need was for the pro-

motion of world peace which should not be lost sight of in waves of national fervour."

The rail workers' resolution comes from a union that has been engaged in a struggle with the Tory government over wages. It indicates the anger in the working class over Thatcher's readiness to spend billions on war while denying the most basic needs of working people. Opposition to the war has also come from coal miners' leader Arthur Scargill, the Liverpool Trades Council, the Fire Brigades Union, and others.

Reflecting this growing rejection of Thatcher's war by the trade unions are the representatives of the left wing of the Labour Party led by member of Parliament Tony Benn. Thirty-three Labour MPs voted against a motion to support Thatcher's policies that was presented May 20. Three of these were front-bench leaders of the Labour Party not previously identified with the left wing, whom Foot and Healey are now threatening to remove.

Thus the image of near-unanimous support in Britain for the war against Argentina that the imperialist news media has presented is false. But because of the Tories' jingoistic campaign and the default of the Labour Party's top leadership, "the fears and reservations of many Britons about this war have not even been articulated, let alone debated," British journalist John Pilger wrote in the May 21 *New York Times*.

"The danger for Mrs. Thatcher and her war party," Pilger said, "is that public support is likely to be withdrawn suddenly when the British body-bags start to come home in ever-increasing numbers."

#### Danger of escalation

Moreover, the war could escalate still further. The *Washington Post* noted May 22 that Argentine air raids "could tempt London to bomb airfields on the Argentine mainland to try to reduce the threat to the limited number of ships the British can deploy to the South Atlantic." The defense ministers of Venezuela and Peru have both vowed to mobilize military support to Argentina in the event of attacks on the Latin American mainland.

The imperialists recognize how high the stakes have become. Raising the specter of a British defeat, U.S. Navy Secretary John Lehman warned May 20, "I believe it could rank with the fall of the shah of Iran if it goes on, in terms of the damage to the military security of the free world. It can only benefit the adversaries of the free world and it can do — and it will do — enormous damage to American security interests."

On May 23, Secretary of State Alexander Haig reiterated Washington's support to London's demand that Argentina surrender the Malvinas. According to the May 24 *New York Times*, Haig rejected calls for a cease-fire and "stressed that the United States agreed with Britain in opposing a halt in the fighting unless it was accompanied by Argentine agreement to withdraw from the islands." □

## Britain

# Demonstrations oppose war

## 'We are at war with Mrs. Thatcher'

More than 8,000 people turned out in London May 23 to demonstrate against the imperialist war in the Malvinas. During the demonstration, police broadcast warnings to the marchers not to chant "provocative slogans." They threatened to arrest those they deemed provocative for "breach of the peace!"

Despite such intimidation, the demonstration went ahead as planned. Tony Benn, the leader of the Labour Party's left wing, told the crowd at Trafalgar Square that their action, and others like it taking place around the country, were "an antidote to the poison of nationalism and hate released in our society by the war."

Rafael Runco, who spent five and a half years in jail as a political prisoner in Argentina, declared that "the British government is playing the game of the dictatorship by continuing the war." He pointed out that the sooner the British fleet is withdrawn, the quicker the Argentine workers would be able to settle with the junta.

Other speakers at the demonstration included Fire Brigades President Bill Dean and Tobacco Workers Union General Secretary Terry Marsland.

In Edinburgh, hospital worker Kevin Holmes — a supporter of the weekly newspaper *Socialist Challenge* — told 2,000 antiwar demonstrators: "We are not at war with the Argentine people. We are at war with Mrs.

Thatcher. This is the war we should all be fighting."

Holmes appealed for support to the national industrial action for higher wages now being organized by health service workers in Britain.

According to *Socialist Challenge* reporter Alan Freeman, both the health workers and rail workers have come under attack for carrying out strikes during the war. They have been accused of "treachery" by the Tory press.

Freeman told *Intercontinental Press* in a telephone interview May 24 that demonstrations over the weekend also took place in Glasgow, where 1,500 turned out, and in Manchester, Leeds, and Nottingham, each of which saw protests of about 500. These actions, along with the one in London, were the biggest yet in opposition to the war on Argentina.

Dick Withecombe, a representative of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and a *Socialist Challenge* supporter, told the demonstrators in Manchester that the soldiers and sailors in the South Atlantic are "losing their lives in a war of hypocrisy, lies, and bloodshed." That is a view that more and more working people in Britain are beginning to share. □

You won't miss a single issue if you subscribe.



G. Cookson/Socialist Challenge

Part of antiwar demonstration of 1,500 that took place in London April 25.



# Reagan steps up support for British

## U.S. labor's stake in stopping war

[The following editorial appeared in the May 28 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

American labor has a huge stake in stopping the war being waged against Argentina over the Malvinas Islands. This is not just the British government's war: the Reagan administration is a full partner to Margaret Thatcher's dirty colonial aggression.

The Pentagon, White House, and State Department have clamped a lid of secrecy on U.S. military involvement in the war against Argentina. Nevertheless, the *Miami Herald* has reported that:

- U.S. spy satellites are providing Britain with top-secret military intelligence on Argentine movements.

- British Vulcan bombers have carried out raids over the Malvinas flying from U.S. airfields on Ascension Island with U.S. fuel.

- The U.S. naval base on that island has become the forward supply point, training ground, and staging area of the Royal Navy task force.

- Britain requested a KC-135 tanker plane on loan from the United States. "There are unconfirmed reports that more than one was supplied," reports the *Herald*.

- Two E2C U.S. Navy Hawkeye planes recently left the Miami area suddenly, and government spokesmen refused to say where they were going. If the Hawkeyes went to the South Atlantic, their U.S. crews went with them, since British pilots are not trained for the planes.

Describing this "web of military intrigue," the *Herald's* executive editor, John McMullan, asked the obvious question in a column May 16: "Is Ronald Reagan getting us into [an] undeclared war?"

McMullan reminded readers how the Vietnam War began. "What started as a handful of advisers under Dwight Eisenhower and grew to 16,000 under John Kennedy, became an army of 453,000 under LBJ [Lyndon Johnson]."

On May 9, *New York Times* columnist James Reston reported Washington is ready "to intervene militarily, if necessary, to avoid destruction of the British navy."

Thatcher and Reagan have cloaked their war in the garb of defending "democracy." On May 19, as her commandos prepared their bloody invasion of Argentine territory, Thatcher piously declared: "It is Britain who stands up for democracy. It is Britain who stands up for the international rule of law."

And she added, "It is Britain that says, 'enough is enough, this must be made to stop.'"

What must be "made to stop" — what is a violation of the international rule of *imperialist* law — is the idea that people in a semicolonial country can stand up to the richest nations in the world and attempt to reclaim what is rightfully theirs.

The British and U.S. rulers intend to teach working people a lesson in Argentina.

They want the toilers of oppressed nations like Argentina to know that their struggle for freedom from imperialist exploitation and domination will be met with deadly force.

They want working people in the United States and Britain to accept the fact that they are the people who will be imperialism's cannon fodder in these wars. And that the same kind of war will be waged against them at home, to drive down their living standards in order to increase profits.

The naked force Thatcher has unleashed in the South Atlantic is exactly what Reagan would like to send against the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean. Faced with opposition in this country, the U.S. rulers have had to begin their war in the region in secret. *But the new Vietnam has begun.*

The United States is at war not only in El Salvador. For months U.S.-trained counter-revolutionary bands have launched murderous raids into Nicaragua, taking lives and destroying vital installations. This war has received virtually no coverage in the major media. No Democratic or Republican politician has spoken out against it.

Alarmed by the bellicose statements of the Reagan administration, on June 12 thousands of working people will rally for peace and against nuclear weapons in front of the United Nations and in other cities.

But for this outcry for peace to be effective, it must focus on the real shooting wars Washington is carrying out.

Press reports say the British armada near the Malvinas is carrying nuclear weapons and is authorized to use them if faced with "grave circumstances." This underscores the fact that the fight against the nuclear threat cannot be separated from the fight against the real wars where Washington and its allies can use nuclear bombs.

The task facing U.S. labor and antiwar activists is to sound the alarm and explain the stakes involved in the wars Reagan has dragged us into in Central America and the South Atlantic. The activities leading up to June 12 provide a good opportunity to explain

that the fight for peace in the United States starts with opposition to the wars our government is waging right now. □

### German socialists explain position on Malvinas crisis

The "Selections From the Left" column in the May 3 issue of *Intercontinental Press* carried an excerpt from an article in the German Trotskyist fortnightly *Was Tun*. The selection, from the April 15 issue of *Was Tun*, was incorrectly described as an editorial. It was actually an article signed by the initials W.W.

An article by *Was Tun* editor Winfried Wolf in the May 13 issue of that newspaper takes a different position than the article in the April 15 *Was Tun*. Under the headline, "Nationalism is not the same as chauvinism," Wolf explains that the issue in the Malvinas crisis "is a question of the greatest old colonial power still defending today the remnants of this colonial empire."

Wolf adds: "We not only take Argentina's side politically in its claim to the Malvinas — we also back Argentina in the war against Great Britain, even if we condemn the way in which it was started by the junta in Buenos Aires as military adventurism. . . ."

"In Argentina, nationalism has a dual role. Without a doubt, the torture-generals have launched this conflict in order to distract attention from internal political and economic difficulties. . . . On the other side, the nationalism of the Argentine masses expresses the consciousness of a people held in a semicolonial condition and their struggle against imperialist oppression and exploitation. This progressive thrust of Argentine nationalism deserves our support; it is all too easily overlooked by the left in imperialist countries, or equated with reactionary chauvinism."

The article is accompanied by a box explaining that it reflects the results of a discussion within the leadership of the International Marxist Group, the German section of the Fourth International. □

**This Publication  
is available in Microform.**

**University Microfilms  
International**

300 North Zeeb Road, Dept. P.R., Ann Arbor MI 48106

# Wide protest hits police attack

*Villa Sin Miedo residents brutally evicted*

By Roberto Kopec

In an action that has provoked protests throughout Puerto Rico, several hundred paramilitary cops raided the Villa Sin Miedo (Town Without Fear) settlement near San Juan on May 18. The police brutally evicted the inhabitants and set fire to most of the wooden dwellings where more than 200 families had been living.

Several persons were injured in the police attack, among them a 5-year-old girl whose arm was fractured, and an 11-year-old girl who was hit in the eye with a billy club. Others suffered gunshot wounds.

One policeman was killed — apparently by one of the trigger-happy cops participating in the attack. The settlers were not armed, and he was shot point-blank through a bullet-proof vest. A leader of the Villa, José Vellón Lauriano, now hospitalized with wounds in the legs and hands after being severely beaten by the cops, was charged with killing the policeman.

About 15 people were arrested. Six student activists who were supporters of the settlers had their bail set at \$1.5 million each. They were charged with possession of arms.

Villa Sin Miedo was founded about a year and a half ago on government land that until then was only being used as grazing land for 35 cows. From the beginning the government of Puerto Rico opposed the settlement, arguing that it was illegal and "violated the right of private property."

Denied any government aid and placed un-

der constant threat of eviction and continuous harassment by cops and undercover agents, the Villa residents developed their community, building roads, a schoolhouse, a church, a park, and a collectively cultivated field.

They have won the support of broad sectors of the Puerto Rican people, including the labor and student movements.

After having been forced out of their homes, some 300 Villa residents started a march towards Governor Carlos Romero Barceló's residence in San Juan, a distance of 20 miles. Barceló had authorized the cops' action. On the way the marchers were joined by cars and trucks whose drivers offered to take them. A spontaneous caravan was formed.

When the demonstrators reached the Capitol, which is on the way to the governor's residence, they staged a rally. Invited in by a representative from the Popular Democratic Party (PDP), one of the two main capitalist parties in Puerto Rico, demonstrators entered the Capitol, occupying some of its halls. The Villa residents demanded that their land be returned to them and that all those arrested be set free.

Support for the residents and condemnations of the government's move in evicting them has been expressed by several unions, including the Teamsters and the Electrical and Water Workers Union (UTIER). Support has also come from student organizations at the University of Puerto Rico, several church groups, the

Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), and the Internationalist Workers League (LIT), an organization in solidarity with the Fourth International. □

## Correction

The article on Nicaraguan agriculture by Beverly Bernardo in the May 24 issue of *Intercontinental Press* appeared with two paragraphs out of order. The last part of the article, beginning on the top of page 451, should have read:

Counterrevolutionary bands financed by the CIA have been trying to disrupt the agrarian reform. Sandinistas working to bring these reforms to isolated areas of Nicaragua have been assassinated.

In the interview quoted earlier, Wheelock also noted that the counterrevolution has launched an ideological campaign to confuse people. They tell the people that MIDINRA is going to expropriate all privately owned land and turn Nicaragua into one giant state farm.

But the truth is a powerful weapon on the side of the Sandinistas. Before the revolution, more than 100,000 peasants (95 percent of the total agricultural producers) worked just 3 percent of the land. Somoza alone held one-quarter of Nicaragua's arable land. With the ongoing confiscation of big idle holdings and the turning over of these to farm cooperatives and to individual small farmers, such lopsided figures are being turned around.

Moreover, the Sandinistas are making it plain that they guarantee the right of the small farmers to keep their land, and are vigorously countering the slanders of the right wing. Ceremonies at which land titles are presented to cooperative members and small farmers are held continually in the Nicaraguan countryside.

Concrete financial and technical aid is also being provided. Since July 1979, credit to small farmers has increased by 600 percent. Preferential interest rates have been set for such loans.

These measures and the support they have gained from the workers and peasants show that Jaime Wheelock is right when he says that "Reagan fears the liberating character of our revolution."

For farmers in the imperialist countries thrown off their land or in fear of losing it to the banks, and for underpaid migrant agricultural laborers, Nicaragua shows the road forward. □

## Police threaten Puerto Rican socialists

On May 20, as he was driving on the Americas expressway in Puerto Rico, Pablo Soto, a leader of the Internationalist Workers League (LIT), was pulled over by an unmarked police car. Two plainclothes cops then began threatening him and questioning him about other members of the LIT, which has been active in support of the residents of Villa Sin Miedo.

When Soto refused to answer their questions, one of the plainclothesmen told him: "You're lucky about the time. If it was 8 o'clock in the morning we would kill you." Soto had been stopped in the evening when there was heavy traffic on the expressway.

When Soto demanded the right to have a lawyer present before he would answer any questions, one of the cops told him that "we don't believe in that right. Here there

are only three of us." The other added: "Next time I see you I'll put a bullet through your head."

According to Soto, "obviously this was a case of political persecution related to the Villa Sin Miedo events. Not only did they threaten me with death, but their mention of [LIT members] Alexis Irrizary and Lili-an Hadock means they were also threatened."

Soto warned that his organization would hold Puerto Rican Governor Carlos Romero Barceló responsible if any member of the LIT is murdered or "disappears," because Romero's incendiary speeches have set the stage for the death threats.

He added that the threats are aimed not just at the LIT, but at all proindependence and socialist activists, and at the residents of Villa Sin Miedo as well.

## Don't you know someone who should be reading *Intercontinental Press*?

Why not ask a friend, family member, or co-worker to subscribe?

For rates, see inside cover.

# U.S. worries over war victories

## *Iraqi regime faces military rout, Kurdish protests*

By Suzanne Haig  
and Fred Murphy

In a sustained offensive that began April 30, Iranian forces have driven Iraqi occupation troops out of most of the territory in Iran's Khuzestan province that was seized when the Iraqi regime launched its invasion of Iran in September 1980.

The offensive opened with a combined ground, sea, and air assault on Iraqi positions. Iranian troops set up three pontoon bridges and crossed the Karun River, cutting Iraqi supply lines in two. At the same time, other Iranian units crossed the Karkheh River to attack Iraqi troops outside the town of Susangird. And, further north, the Iraqis were pushed back nearly to the border from positions they had held near the city of Dezful.

The Iraqi occupiers were also forced to retreat from a 400-square-mile area southwest of Ahwaz, the capital of Khuzestan province. The main highway linking Ahwaz to the port city of Khorramshahr was retaken by the Iranian forces. By May 12, Iranian combat and armored units had reportedly pushed to within three miles of Khorramshahr, the last major Iraqi stronghold in Iran.

With Khorramshahr under siege by Iranian forces, a decisive battle appeared to be shaping up there.

### String of Iraqi defeats

Khorramshahr was seized by the Iraqis in the early days of the war. The fierce resistance its citizens put up to the Iraqi occupation led Iranians to rename it Khuninshahr, or "city of blood."

The Iraqi retreat in the first weeks of May was only the latest in a series of military setbacks for the Baghdad regime headed by President Saddam Hussein. These began last September when Iran's army broke the siege of Abadan, a key city just south of Khorramshahr. In November, the Iraqis were routed from the border town of Bostan and 70 adjacent villages. And in late March, with an offensive marking the Iranian New Year, combined army, Revolutionary Guard, and volunteer militia forces drove the Iraqi occupiers from an 860-square-mile area north of the current fighting.

Saddam Hussein's aim in invading Iran in September 1980 was to strike a blow against the Iranian revolution, because he feared its impact within Iraq. This was spelled out to *Wall Street Journal* correspondent Karen Elliott House in April by Hussein's deputy prime minister, Tareq Aziz. "We have to keep fighting, we have no choice," Aziz said. "Iraq is a



Iranian forces have retaken almost all of territory seized by Iraq at beginning of war.

dam. If the dam collapses then the Iranian flood will wash through the whole area."

The "Iranian flood" Aziz fears is the ongoing fight of the Iranian workers and peasants to defend and deepen their revolution. A key part of this is the mobilization for the war effort. Thousands of Iranian workers and youth are fighting at the front as part of the Mobilization Corps of the Oppressed (Baseej-e Mustazafin). Many more are taking part in support activities behind the lines.

In a letter published in the May 4 issue of the Iranian socialist newspaper *Hemmat* a reader reported a conversation with a woman who had been working as a volunteer at Shush, near Dezful:

"This sister talked about the high morale of the fighters, the active participation of women behind the lines, and the presence of very young people among the fighters. Of the women's activities, she said, 'The mobilization to send women is continuing. Some sisters could not go to the front, so they are working in the neighborhoods to gather material aid, weave clothing and bedding, and donate blood.'"

### Pro-U.S. regimes 'badly frightened'

The Iraqi regime's concerns at the regional impact of the Iranian revolution are fully shared by Washington and its local clients throughout the Middle East. According to the May 16 *New York Times*, "Virtually all the Arab governments with which the United States is on reasonably good terms are vitally interested in the survival of the Iraqi regime of President Saddam Hussein. They are badly

frightened by the prospect of an Iranian military victory, which could make Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution a force in neighboring countries."

Hussein's war has been largely bankrolled by the reactionary Saudi Arabian monarchy and by the rulers of Kuwait and some of the smaller princedoms around the Persian Gulf. In January, King Hussein of Jordan — a staunch U.S. ally — called for Arab "volunteers" to join the beleaguered Iraqis. According to the April 1 *Wall Street Journal*, the king has sent some 4,000 troops to Iraq.

More recently, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has come to Baghdad's assistance. "We sympathize with Iraq and will not hesitate to do whatever we can," Mubarak said in late March. According to the May 16 *New York Times*, Cairo "in recent weeks has stepped up its military assistance to Iraq, becoming that country's principal military partner." And the May 24 issue of *Time* magazine reports the following:

"Some diplomats believe that the unexpected strength shown by the Iraqi air force results from the presence of an estimated 60 Egyptian pilots now said to be flying Iraq's Soviet-made jet fighters. Egypt has supplied arms to the Iraqis for the past year, and was recently reported to have sent 400 soldiers as well. Now there are rumors that Egyptian troops in larger numbers will soon be on their way."

### U.S. 'neutral' — like in Malvinas

As for Washington itself, its formal diplomatic stance in the conflict has been "neutrality." But the U.S.-supplied Egyptian military has deepened its involvement on the side of Baghdad without any protest from the U.S. rulers.

In March, moreover, the Reagan administration formally removed Iraq from its list of countries alleged to support "international terrorism." This cleared the way for the Boeing Co. to sell the Iraqi regime five aircraft, delivery of which has already begun.

The imperialist news media have accused the Iranian government of both plotting a counterinvasion of Iraq and of inciting a sectarian revolt against Hussein by followers of the Shi'ite branch of the Muslim faith (who make up a majority in both Iraq and Iran). Iranian President Ali Khamenei rejected these charges in a speech in Tehran in March.

"Propaganda mouthpieces are trying to make the world, especially Arab countries, believe that Iranian forces are going to invade them," Khamenei said. "Our Muslim brethren in Iraq, both Shi'ite and Sunni, are supported



equally by us. But our support does not mean that we shall move our forces into Iraq. We are not foolishly over-ambitious, like the Ba'athists."

Iranian socialists report that a big debate is taking place in the news media and among soldiers and workers over whether carrying the war onto Iraqi territory would be the best way to defend the revolution.

#### 'Destabilizing influence'

It is clear that U.S. imperialism is deeply concerned over the latest round of Iranian victories in the war. Some of these concerns were outlined in an April 14 *New York Times* column by William Olson, a research associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) at Georgetown University in Washington. The CSIS is a think-tank founded by ex-CIA officials; it has close ties to the Reagan administration.

Olson presented his prognosis for the Persian Gulf region:

A victory [for Iran] would feed the Iranians' sense of moral superiority and make them a more destabilizing influence in the region. Though they are unlikely to launch major attacks on their neighbors, menacing gestures and aid to subversive forces could threaten regional security. . . .

For Iraq, defeat would mean wrenching self-criticism that could produce a coup against President Saddam Hussein or, conversely, a purge of the



Iraqi prisoners of war in Tehran.

army. Though it is unlikely that the Iranians could sustain a major offensive into Iraq, the consequences of an Iraqi defeat could mean years of political upheaval.

Olson's fears are already starting to materialize. Saddam Hussein is now facing a big rise in protests by the oppressed Kurdish nationality of northern Iraq. The Kurds make up one-quarter of the Iraqi population. Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, the Kurds fought an on-and-off civil war against the Iraqi government. They were only put down in 1975 after Hussein enlisted the help of the shah of Iran in closing the border between the two countries, and mobilized most of the Iraqi army against the Kurdish areas.

According to the May 15 *Le Monde*, the most recent Kurdish protests began April 24 when several thousand persons in the town of Qala-Diza tried to march in commemoration of a massacre perpetrated there in 1974. Iraqi security forces opened fire, killing nine persons.

#### Kurdish strikes and demonstrations

On April 25, *Le Monde* continued, "strikes and demonstrations spread through many towns of Kurdistan, including Halabjah, Penjwin, Ranya, Sulaimaniyah, Kirkuk, and, reportedly, Mosul, where the confrontations continued until May 13."

*Le Monde* described how the war has affected the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan:

## Appeal for release of Iranian socialists

Representatives of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) of Iran have been informed by an official of the Tehran Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office that a trial may be held on the cases of HKE leaders Bahram Ali Atai and Bagher Falsafi and on the legality of the HKE's weekly newspaper, *Kargar*.

Atai and Falsafi are partisans of the Iranian revolution who have been imprisoned without charges at Evin Prison since March. Atai was arrested three weeks after *Kargar* had published an extensive interview with him detailing the abuses he witnessed during a previous term of imprisonment at Evin.

Falsafi, who was responsible for printing *Kargar*, was jailed in the course of a wave of harassment against the newspaper by officials of the prosecutor's office. On March 26, that office ordered publication of *Kargar* suspended.

The official who spoke with HKE representatives on May 16 gave no date on which a trial might begin, nor has any formal notification of this been presented in writing.

Family members of Atai and Falsafi who have been allowed to visit the two HKE leaders at Evin Prison report that they are in

good spirits and have not been mistreated. In the interview with Atai that *Kargar* published, he had recounted cases of whippings, torture, secret executions, and other abuses by prison officials. Now, Atai's relatives report, the prison authorities are exercising caution in how they treat him.

On May 18, Falsafi was transferred to the part of Evin Prison known as the "Educational Center." Persons due to be released are often moved to this section, where prison conditions are better.

The HKE has been carrying out a campaign to secure the release of Atai and Falsafi, and to regain the right to publish *Kargar*. A pamphlet containing articles and documents on the cases has been widely distributed to workplaces, militia and Revolutionary Guard units, and other institutions. HKE leaders report that organized discussions on the case have taken place at some factories, such as the Iran Poplin textile plant outside Tehran, where 1,000 workers are employed.

The axis of the HKE's defense work is to explain how attacks on the democratic rights of working-class organizations and publications weaken the defense of the Iranian revolution against imperialism.

Attacks similar to those on the HKE have

been leveled against the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and the two tendencies of the majority faction of the Fedayan. All these groups have opposed the terrorist attacks that have been carried out against Iranian leaders. Yet the Tudeh Party's publications have been suspended, as has the newspaper of the Naghodar tendency of the Fedayan.

The Khast-Gar tendency of the Fedayan continues to publish its newspaper *Kar*, however. A recent issue of *Kar* reported that 12 members of the Khast-Gar tendency had been imprisoned. On May 18 Iranian socialists reported that 4 of these Fedayan activists have since been released.

Efforts by those who support the Iranian revolution and oppose imperialism's attacks on it can help to gain the release of Atai and Falsafi. Telegrams such as the following should be sent to Hojatolislam Mousavi Tabrizi, Prosecutor General, Islamic Revolutionary Courts, Tehran, Iran. Send copies to *Jomhuri-e Eslami*, Tehran, Iran.

"As a supporter of the Iranian revolution and opponent of the imperialist threats against it, I urge you to release the anti-shah, anti-imperialist fighters Bahram Ali Atai and Mohammed Bagher Falsafi, who are being held without charges at Evin Prison in Tehran."

Since the beginning of the Iraq-Iran war, Baghdad's security forces — the majority of which have been transferred to the front — have had a hard time controlling the situation in Kurdistan. . . . Despite the curfew imposed from sundown in certain towns, guerrilla attacks by various Kurdish organizations have multiplied. With the latest military reverses at the front, a dual process has come to light: on one hand, a letup in vigilance by the security forces, which, to safeguard their own future, have accepted tacit compromises with the Kurdish resistance. And on the other, immense audacity on the part of the population, who seem to no longer give credence to the dire threats of the Ba'athist regime.

Morale among Iraqi troops at the front is reported to be extremely low as a result of the recent Iranian victories. In the March-April fighting, Iraqi units surrendered en masse without a fight. According to a dispatch from the front by correspondent David Hirst of the London *Guardian*, Iraqi troops "evolved techniques of surrender which evaded the vigilance of Ba'ath party loyalists whose task it is to shoot would-be deserters from the rear."

Hirst also encountered members of an "Arab

brigade" — supposedly volunteers — among the prisoners of war captured by the Iranians. "They included two Lebanese Druzes, one of whom had been taken from a building site a week before, and the other as he arrived at Baghdad Airport. Darwich Shehadeh, who had received all of two days' military training, begged Lebanese cameramen to tell his family where his prized Iraqi 'work permit' had got him to."

At this point, the best outcome Hussein and his supporters in the war against Iran seem to be looking for is anything short of a smashing military defeat.

Citing "Western diplomats" in Baghdad, *New York Times* correspondent Henry Tanner reported from there May 10 that "A major question now is whether the Iraqi forces can make a controlled retreat with their strength intact, thus avoiding the impression of a military rout. The question is crucial, diplomats say, not only for the outcome of future negotiations but also for the prestige of President Saddam Hussein and the future of his regime." □

ize its units. Because of Wickham's support, crack paratroopers were sent into the city and they brutally attacked the people.

After Kwangju the Koreans drew lessons. There have been many statements that redefine the role of America in Korea. And in March some Korean groups set fire to the U.S. cultural center in Pusan.

Korea is a very sensitive part of the world, in a sphere of gravity of the United States, Japan, the Soviet Union, and China. The country is partitioned into two parts, and the Korean people have a deep desire to unify their country.

So any "emergency" that might arise would involve not only the Korean peninsula, but would have an impact on the whole area.

This would involve not just American interests, but also Japanese interests. The Japanese economic presence in South Korea is very heavy, and political involvement of Japan is also very close behind the new dictatorial regime.

Another aspect is that in the global American strategy the U.S. government has meted out a new role to the Japanese military. The American design is to transfer a part of its military forces stationed in Asia to the Middle East or Europe when crisis happens in those areas. The Japanese role is to cover such U.S. operations.

It is very difficult to describe that strategy to the Japanese people as something to defend Japan or even Japanese imperialism, let alone the Japanese people.

*Q. What is the concern for the Philippines?*

A. In the Philippines the armed struggle for national liberation has become the most advanced in all of Asia. The struggle of the Filipino people centering upon the New People's Army [NPA] seems to have reached such a stage that the Ferdinand Marcos government, backed by the United States, has started building strategic hamlets in Mindanao, according to recent reports.

The Moro army, which is a Muslim armed struggle, is also very advanced.

Some in the Philippines are anticipating American military intervention when their struggle reaches a certain stage.

Since the security treaty covers the Philippines, Japanese involvement is again automatic. Of course, Japanese capital is already there. It is very active in free trade zones, in investment in different enterprises, and in public investments. There is government money in the construction of dams, roads, ports, and free trade zones themselves.

But I expect that in the Philippines it will be mainly the Americans who try to control the situation in a bloody way. U.S. Vice-president George Bush went to the Philippines last year and made a statement praising Marcos for his great respect for parliamentary democracy and praising what is called normalization. Military aid to the Marcos government has been increased greatly since Carter's time.

So it is in this context that the militarization

---

## Japan

---

# Rulers push militarization drive

## *U.S. and Tokyo fear revolution in Korea, Philippines*

[The Asian-American Caucus for Disarmament is one of several groups in New York City preparing for the June 12 antiwar march at the United Nations during the Second Special Session on Disarmament. On May 8 the caucus sponsored a forum. One of the featured speakers was Muto Ichiyo, director of the Pacific-Asia Resources Center, which publishes *AMPO: Japan-Asia Quarterly Review*.\* This Tokyo-based journal carries extensive coverage on political developments in Asia.

[The day after the forum Muto gave Diane Wang the following interview on the militarization drive in Japan.]

\* \* \*

*Question. What is behind the current rearmament of Japan?*

*Answer.* Rearmament was done throughout the post-World War II years, but there is something special since 1978. Basically there are two factors at work.

One, Japan has become a big economic power, placing second in GNP next to the United States. Japan hopes to have its own imperialist superstructure, especially military, commensurate to the economic power it has.

But there is another factor, which is almost as important: American policy. The United

States hopes to supplement its declining economy by strengthening its military structure all over the world, in order to basically continue control of the most vulnerable parts of its empire — Central America, South Africa, the Middle East, the Philippines and Korea — all over.

But since this is happening because of the decline of American hegemony in general, it therefore has to force other countries to share what the Americans call the "military burden." That applies to Japan.

Therefore in 1978 the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty set up a joint security consultative council, where the uniformed officers and military leaders of both countries discuss their joint operational plans vis-à-vis a possible emergency situation in the Far East.

*Q. What would they consider an "emergency"?*

A. In the first place, it means suppression of possible revolutionary situations in the Korean peninsula.

In May 1980, some 800,000 Kwangju citizens made their historic uprising, spontaneously arming themselves. Out of the blood of the Kwangju citizens came the present regime. And this suppression by the Chun Doo Hwan regime was possible only with the strong backing of Gen. John Wickham, the head of the joint military command, without whose permission the South Korean army cannot mobil-

\*Subscriptions are \$12 a year, available from the Pacific-Asia Resources Center, P.O. Box 5250, Tokyo Int., Japan.



is proceeding.

*Q. What is the state of the antiwar movement in Japan?*

A. For many years we have had a very strong antiwar, peace movement. There is a history of it. The most recent explosion of antiwar, peace sentiment was during the Vietnam War. Many people — not only in traditional peace movements, but also a new radical wing — protested, particularly against the Japanese government's involvement on the side of the United States.

But after that came a downturn of the movement in general, although young workers did form antiwar youth committees. And there were committees for the farmers against the Narita [New Tokyo International] Airport, and numerous community groups fighting against nuclear power plants, or reckless "develop-

ment" projects — all these gathered strength. So it is not correct to say that everything vanished.

More recently, however, Kwangju, as well as the case of Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung, came as a great stimulus to the Japanese people. The Kim Dae Jung case was not just a matter of one Korean politician, because of the circumstances. He was kidnapped from a Japanese hotel in 1973 by KCIA agents. Therefore the government had to say something.

The arrest of Kim Dae Jung and the fear of a death sentence for him became a big political issue. The public reaction was also very strong. For some months all over Japan there were campaigns to help Kim Dae Jung and also to support the Kwangju uprising. A tremendous number of people donated money, and there were hunger strikes everywhere from 1980

through 1981.

Along with this, the rapid militarization caused alarm among different sectors of people, women in particular. A very active movement was started by women, getting thousands of women together to oppose war preparations.

The traditional peace movements and Sohyo — the biggest trade union federation, with 4.5 million members — felt they should also do something. So in March, in the context of the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament — and also receiving great stimulus from the European movement — a mobilization was made in Hiroshima.

In Japan the Liberal Democrats talk about "integrated security." But to call their strategy the means of defending the Japanese people is a fraud. I think that if this fraud is exposed we can have the same kind of movement as they have had in Europe. □

---

## Angola

---

# Masses mobilize to defend gains

*Spectacular growth of unions, women's groups, militias*

By Ernest Harsch

"We are millions — nobody can defeat millions!"

That slogan, on a banner carried at one of the many mass rallies that have been held across Angola in recent years, captures the determination of Angolan working people to defend their country from imperialist attack.

This readiness of Angolans to mobilize has been a major obstacle to the South African regime's drive to topple the Angolan government, a drive that is directly backed by Wash-

---

This is the second of three articles on Angola since the civil war. The first one examined the government's reconstruction efforts and new social programs, and the third will cover the imperialists' continued war of aggression against Angola.

---

ington. Whether by joining the militia, building trade unions, or teaching literacy classes, Angolans have shown that they are active participants in the country's defense and in the struggle against imperialist domination.

Workers, peasants, students, women, soldiers, young people, all have taken part in the mass rallies and demonstrations that have been held in every major city. Some of the most militant actions have come in response to the repeated South African attacks and in solidarity with the liberation struggles in South Africa and Namibia.

**'Racists out of our country'**

For example, a dispatch from the Angolan

capital in the July 3, 1980, London *Guardian* reported:

Truckloads of singing workers wound their way along the dirt roads of Luanda yesterday to the big open space near militia headquarters at Cazenga, a workers' suburb. The banners they carried denounced South African aggression. "Racists out of our country," one said. . . .

More than 100,000 working men and women turned out for the rally and cheered SWAPO [South West Africa People's Organisation] of Namibia and the African National Congress of South Africa. The atmosphere was defiant and there was applause when speakers referred to the long history of Angola's fight for independence and particularly to the name of Mandume, who raised battalion after battalion for 30 years at the turn of the century against Boers and Portuguese in the Kunene-Ovambo region near today's Namibia-Angola border.

Again, in September 1981, hundreds of thousands marched through Luanda to protest against a major South African invasion in the south. When Lt. Col. Evarista Domingos, a government minister and a leader of the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), spoke about the U.S. government's support for the apartheid regime, he was repeatedly interrupted by shouts of "Death to Reagan!"

All of these mobilizations, which are held frequently, are called by the Angolan government or the various mass organizations tied to the MPLA. Under sharp attack from the South African and American imperialists, the government has been impelled to lean on the Angolan masses for support, seeking to harness their strong anti-imperialist consciousness to the country's defense. To do this, it has initiat-

ed some important social measures, which have succeeded to an extent in increasing its popularity and in broadening its original base of support.

This relationship between the government and the masses has been complex and uneven, however, evolving during a period of almost constant warfare and foreign aggression.

### 1974-75 upsurge

When Portugal's African colonial empire began to collapse in 1974, the MPLA was in a tenuous position. It had been carrying out a guerrilla struggle since the early 1960s and had a network of underground activists in Luanda and a few other urban centers, but the sudden downfall of the Marcelo Caetano dictatorship in Portugal found the MPLA unprepared to quickly take advantage of the new opportunities for political work in the cities. Moreover, the MPLA faced stiff competition from its traditional rivals, the Angolan National Liberation Front (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA); and it was weakened by bitter internal disputes.

Under these circumstances, the urban workers and shantytown dwellers took the political initiative.

Within a month of the April 1974 coup in Portugal, thousands of Angolans took to the streets of Luanda and other cities to demand immediate independence. In July, the residents of Luanda's *musseques* (shantytowns) rose up in response to a series of vicious white settler attacks that had claimed many lives. They seized control of their neighborhoods and



formed armed self-defense groups. Black workers paralyzed the capital with a massive general strike on July 15, while tens of thousands demonstrated to protest the killings.

The Lisbon coup also touched off a strike wave that lasted more than a year. Railway workers, dockworkers in Luanda and Lobito, construction workers, and others walked off their jobs to demand higher pay and better working conditions. Although the urban working class was small and had almost no tradition of trade unionism, it was beginning to make its strength felt.

#### MPLA and urban masses

Many of these workers and urban poor tended to look toward the MPLA for political leadership, especially in such traditional MPLA strongholds as Luanda and Lobito. But they did not wait for the MPLA to act on their behalf. They began to throw up their own organizations, including rudimentary workers committees in the factories and neighborhood groups in the *musseques*. The latter were generally known as *poder popular* (people's power).

For the MPLA, this upsurge offered an opportunity to expand its urban base. When the Portuguese authorities finally allowed the MPLA to open offices in Luanda in late 1974, the nationalist organization quickly made contact with the *poder popular* groups. As the military skirmishing with the FNLA began to mount, the MPLA also helped arm them.

The strength of this mass movement was becoming more and more obvious. In January 1975, more than 100,000 people demonstrated in Luanda, chanting "Poder popular!" The same month, an assembly was held of representatives of the neighborhood committees in Luanda and other cities.

While speaking out in support of this movement (at a time when the FNLA was openly attacking it), the MPLA simultaneously sought to bring the various neighborhood and factory groups under its direct control. To a great extent, it relied on its extensive political influence in the capital to achieve this. But when necessary it also employed intimidation and force.

In early 1975, the MPLA participated in a short-lived coalition government with the FNLA, UNITA, and the Portuguese authorities. During that time, it actively sought to demobilize the workers movement. It supported efforts to break the massive strike wave. It backed a government decree militarizing workplaces — although the MPLA-affiliated National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA) openly participated in workers' demonstrations protesting the decree.

As the coalition government began to fall apart, however, and the fighting with the FNLA and UNITA escalated, the MPLA again sought to mobilize its supporters. The UNTA organized a mass rally and a general strike in the capital in May 1975. The armed *poder popular* groups played an important role in driving the rightist FNLA forces out of Luanda.

Later in the year, following the outbreak of full-scale civil war and the subsequent South African invasion, the MPLA moved to supplement its regular armed forces by establishing a volunteer militia, called the People's Defense Organization (ODP). Within several months it had recruited 36,000 members. Some of the most militant fighters in the ODP came out of the neighborhood and factory committees. They realized that a victory for the South African-FNLA-UNITA alliance would have been a major setback to Angola's struggle for national liberation and social progress.

During the course of the war, the MPLA brought the workers' and *poder popular* groups more closely under its control, arguing that the conditions of war demanded strict discipline. In the process, a number of the most militant activists in the committees, or those who criticized aspects of the MPLA's policies, were purged. Some were arrested by the MPLA's political police, the DISA (Angola Information and Security Directorate). They were accused of being "leftists." The newspaper *Poder Popular* was shut down.

While some of those active in the committees certainly had mistaken political ideas — including some who were hostile to the Cuban presence in Angola — the move to suppress discussion and debate within the neighborhood committees only ended up politically weakening them.

#### Coup attempt and purge

The committees were further weakened after the end of the war by the outbreak of a sharp factional dispute within the MPLA leadership. One wing, led by Interior Minister Nito Alves, attempted to use the *poder popular* groups as a lever against the central leadership headed by Agostinho Neto. In May 1977, after Alves was deposed and arrested, some of his followers attempted to overthrow the government. They received little popular support, and were quickly crushed.

Alves's followers, however, had held many influential positions in the government and the MPLA. After the coup attempt was put down, a wide purge of the MPLA and its affiliated organizations was launched. A number of the neighborhood committees were simply dissolved. The national leadership of the MPLA Youth and the ODP were dismissed. All trade union branches were suspended and the central leaders of the UNTA were ousted as part of a drive to "restructure" the union movement.

In June 1977, just a few weeks after the abortive coup, President Neto sharply spelled out the MPLA's attitude toward Angola's mass organizations.

"All mass bodies must be subordinate at all levels to MPLA bodies," he declared. "The Popular Bairro [Neighborhood] Committees, bodies which must be elected, should be subordinate to MPLA's orientation. It is the MPLA Action Committee in the Bairro that gives leadership. The Popular Committee puts policies into execution. There can be no parallel organisations within the country. Here in

Angola it is the MPLA that commands."

Under these guidelines, the mass organizations were gradually rebuilt. Although the MPLA leadership's efforts to maintain strict control over them tended to hinder the initiative of the ranks, these organizations are nevertheless playing an important role in Angola's social and political life. Hundreds of thousands of Angolans have joined them out of their desire to actively defend what they have won since independence and to try to advance their interests.

#### Unions grow

Some of the most significant gains have been in the trade unions. Despite the suspension of the union branches following the abortive coup, UNTA had begun to reorganize itself within a year or so, and quickly grew in numbers and organizational strength beyond anything Angolan workers had previously known.

By 1981, UNTA claimed about 90 percent of Angola's 500,000 wage earners.

The union is organized both by industry and by region. Municipal branches have been organized in every urban center where there are enough workers (83 cities by 1980). Some of the strongest unions are in the countryside, including the Agricultural and Livestock Workers Union and the Coffee Workers Union, which together have about 150,000 members.

The unions' main area of responsibility is within the factories and enterprises, to deal with workers' grievances and to try to improve working conditions. But they also play a broader social role. Distribution cooperatives, led by UNTA activists, help oversee the distribution of food, clothing, and household appliances in major urban centers.

Although the MPLA insists on providing the political direction for the union movement as a whole, it has at the same time been careful to allow the unions some room for independent action.

Speaking in October 1978, President Neto declared, "The union bodies cannot express only the wishes and views of MPLA members. The workers can freely discuss and consider the party's decisions, so that the party does not develop an overly theoretical or formalistic view of the practical problems facing the ranks."

The UNTA's statutes maintain that 85 percent of its leaders must be production workers and that no government official can hold a union post.

The unions have the right to propose new legislation, and to put forward candidates in elections. About one-fifth of the deputies in the National People's Assembly are UNTA members.

#### Conflicts with management

Within the factories, unionists often come into conflict with management personnel. Since most enterprises in Angola are now nationalized, this usually involves clashes with



Demonstration of the Angola Women's Organization (OMA). Since independence, women have made important gains and are playing an active role in the unions and militia.

government-appointed managers, who are often distrustful of the unions or try to reduce their role to simply that of disciplining the workers.

Theoretically, workers' representatives are supposed to take part in management committees in the state-owned enterprises. But out of 3,805 state-owned concerns in 1980, only 186 had set up such committees. According to an UNTA report, this meant that "the working class is only taking active part in management of 4.9% of companies which belong to the people."

Similarly, only a tiny minority of all factories have held production assemblies, in which workers can discuss various production problems. "From May 1979 to May 1980," UNTA reported, "more than 84,000 such assemblies should have been held. In fact only 2.4% took place." The main reason for this is that management has the sole power to convene the assemblies, and in general it fears giving the workers any say over production plans.

The managers' hostility to the workers' movement has not only made it more difficult for workers to exercise their rights, but has also obstructed Angola's economic development by leading to widespread mismanagement.

The UNTA has sharply condemned this. It declared in a May 1980 report, "We want to denounce once again one of the better-known habits of the reactionary petty bourgeoisie, sometimes ensconced in leading positions in the state apparatus, and who are trying to convince our leaders that it is the workers who are responsible for failure to carry out their economic guidelines. In this way they are trying to justify their own incompetence, their bureaucratic methods, their lack of authority, their

lack of initiative and dynamism and their failure to account for their activities."

#### Women step forward

Other mass organizations have also grown tremendously since independence.

The Angola Women's Organization (OMA) has played a crucial role in advancing the fight for women's rights. By 1979, the OMA had branches in all but one of Angola's provinces, and counted more than 330,000 members.

A number of the points in the OMA's program have been officially adopted since Angola won its independence: equal pay for equal work, special training to prepare women for the labor market, and the abolition of polygamy. Child-care facilities have been built in many factories, and women workers are given time off during working hours to breast-feed their children.

Angola's continued poverty, however, has been an obstacle to fully realizing the legal rights women have won, and the backward attitudes of managers in some enterprises have kept women out of certain job categories.

The struggle to overcome these limitations is part and parcel of the fight to free Angola of imperialist domination. Because of this, women have also become active in the trade unions, the army, and the militias.

Some of those in the leadership of the OMA came out of the guerrilla struggle against Portuguese rule. According to Maria Simão Paim, a truck driver who fought with the MPLA in the 1960s, "This involvement in the armed struggle showed me the extent of what we could do."

In the countryside, peasant farmers have been organizing associations and cooperatives

to defend their own particular interests. By 1981, so-called rural unions had been established on a provincial level in four of the most important agricultural regions: Malanje, Kwanza Sul, Uige, and Huila. The one in Huila alone had some 100,000 members.

#### 'The militia is everywhere'

The largest mass organization in Angola is the ODP, the militia. It now has some 1 million members, about one-fifth of whom are women.

The militia is comprised almost entirely of workers and peasants. About 75 percent of them are armed. It includes both full-time and part-time members. The ODP helps protect villages and farms in conjunction with the regular army, and defends factories against sabotage.

The size of the ODP — and the importance that the Angolan authorities accord to it — is a reflection of the very serious threat that Angola faces from the continual South African attacks. Even with the help of Cuban troops, the regular army is still unable to deal with this aggression on its own. Tapping the enormous energies of the population as a whole has been the only way to effectively hold back the South African threat.

Describing the efforts to combat the South African-backed UNITA guerrillas in central Angola, correspondent David Coetzee reported in the September 1980 issue of the London monthly *New African*, "The authorities seem . . . to have placed extensive trust in the local people by arming them: the militia is everywhere in evidence in the towns and the countryside — workers guarding their factories and armed peasants in the villages and on the state farms."

As in the case of the trade unions, some sectors of the state bureaucracy have proven hostile to the ODP as well. According to Captain Mukongo, an ODP political commissar, "In some factories and state-owned firms we still find certain company managers whose politics toward us are not very clear. We say they dislike our presence in the factory because we are actively sniffing out corruption and illegal sales of factory produce."

#### Prosocialist sentiments

The spectacular growth of these mass organizations is an expression of the continued vitality of the mass movement, eight years after the initial uprisings in Luanda's *musseques*.

The MPLA leaders tend to view the UNTA, ODP, OMA, and other organizations as transmission belts for carrying out their policies. But these bodies have at the same time served as platforms for criticism and have channeled popular demands and grievances upward. While the MPLA leadership has continually striven to keep the mass organizations under rein, its policies since independence have also shown its susceptibility to pressures from their ranks.

One reflection of this has been the MPLA's increasing use of socialist terminology. The



urban upsurges of 1974-75 greatly radicalized Angola's working people. Capitalism was identified with the old colonial order. Socialist ideas began to win a wider hearing. The arrival of thousands of Cuban internationalist fighters, teachers, doctors, and technicians aroused even more interest in and support for the principles of socialism. The thousands of Angolan youths who went to Cuba to study were able to see for themselves what a socialist revolution could accomplish.

Seeking to capitalize on this sentiment, the leadership of the MPLA announced that it was transforming the organization into a "vanguard party of the working class."

At a week-long congress in December 1977 — the first the group had ever held — it was formally renamed the MPLA-Party of Labor. It now claimed that it was a "Marxist-Leninist" party.

At the same time, the membership of the MPLA was drastically reduced through a process called "rectification," in order to weed out "careerists," "demagogues," and others considered unsuitable by the leadership. In 1981 it had some 30,000 members. Although the leadership made much of a campaign to bring more workers and peasants into the party, a majority were still professionals, white collar employees, or from the military.

The MPLA leaders now presented their policies as socialist. But they did not claim that Angola therefore had a workers government, even though the government is constitutionally subordinate to the MPLA.

Lúcio Lára, an MPLA Political Bureau member, declared in a 1978 interview, "In the present phase, one can say that the petty bourgeoisie, basically bureaucratic, still holds the reins of power. While it is true that part of this petty bourgeoisie serves as a brake and has tendencies to transform itself into a ruling class, another part, in contrast, fully identifies with the working class and the interests of the most exploited layers."

Essentially, the MPLA has established a radical nationalist government, one that is in sharp conflict with imperialism.

From Lára's own description, there are obviously different elements within it, some that seek to rely more on the mass organizations and others that are hostile to them and try to use their positions in the state apparatus for their own social advancement. These differences, among others, have contributed to the many internal conflicts within the government and the MPLA leadership itself.

### Easing of repression

Following the MPLA's first national congress, the government began easing up on some of its more repressive policies. In face of widespread criticisms of arbitrary arrests by the DISA — the security police — the agency was formally abolished in 1979.

Speaking at mass rallies in Luanda and in the provinces of Kwando-Kubango and Huila, President Neto explained that "the leadership of the state security police displayed hesita-

tions regarding our policy of clemency. . . . We received letters every week from people from all walks of life demanding explanations about their arrested relatives."

In November 1979, a commission was set up to investigate the "criminal behavior of certain elements of the security services."

The following year, more than a dozen political prisoners were released. They had all been arrested several years earlier for belonging to such illegal groups as the Angolan Communist Organization and the Joseph Stalin Cell.

Although a new Ministry of the Interior took over some of the functions of the former DISA, the scrapping of the agency nevertheless signaled a greater willingness to allow more open discussion and criticism.

Workers were still discouraged from striking, but the MPLA and UNTA leaderships relied largely on their political authority to dissuade them. The sending of police and troops against workers — as happened in 1975-76 — has generally not been repeated.

### 'Love of luxury and easy life'

In response to growing sentiment for some popular voice in the determining of government policies, the MPLA established the National People's Assembly, an elected legislative body, in 1980. (The government itself, however, was still appointed by the MPLA.)

Meetings were held in workplaces, neighborhoods, and villages at which candidates were nominated by the trade unions, mass organizations, and MPLA branches. Each candidate had to win approval at a meeting before he or she could stand for election. In the process, much criticism was leveled against government inefficiency, bureaucratism, and corruption.

When the selection process was completed, a single list of candidates was put forward for election to the National People's Assembly, which was formally installed on Nov. 11, 1980, the fifth anniversary of Angola's independence.

As more and more resentment and anger built up against mismanagement and persistent corruption among government and party officials, the MPLA leadership felt impelled to speak out more forcefully against these problems.

A May Day statement issued by the MPLA Political Bureau in 1979 declared, "Certain sectors of the petty bourgeoisie, taking advantage of the jobs they hold in the state administration and in some cases also in the party, are trying to use this position (obtained thanks to their technical and bureaucratic knowledge and sometimes thanks to clout or family ties) to further their own personal interests and their class interests."

It blasted these elements' "disdain for the working class, refusal to solve concrete problems of the masses, the love of luxury and the easy life, the spirit of ostentatiousness, negligence, political and economic corruption, opportunism, spreading of obscurantist and su-

perstitious concepts — in a word all the retrograde values of the enemy."

A year later, in May 1980, President José Eduardo dos Santos (who became president following Neto's death in September 1979), denounced the directors of state enterprises, some of whom "are more concerned about the jobs they have than about carrying the job out.

"Instead of hiring and promoting the most deserving, the most honest and the most hard-working, they hire and promote their friends from home or their relations, they allow themselves to be corrupted."

As a result, dos Santos continued, people in responsible positions "are losing their authority and respect."

Although numerous propaganda campaigns have been launched against this "counterrevolutionary bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie," many corrupt officials remain in positions of authority and economic mismanagement remains a persistent problem. The MPLA leadership admits this, but argues that the lack of enough skilled personnel and the pressures of the continual South African attacks in the south make it impossible to replace them.

At the same time, the workers themselves face serious obstacles in trying to deal with such problems on their own. The formal mechanisms that are supposed to allow workers to have some say in the running of the factories do not really function. And the close ties between the union leaderships and the governing party tend to inhibit direct action by the unions and restrict their role to that of pressuring the management.

Such obstacles, combined with the corruption and graft in official circles, act as a political brake on the struggles of Angolan working people. This has already led to some demoralization.

### Imperialist pressure

Notwithstanding all the domestic difficulties Angolan workers and peasants face in trying to push their struggle forward, they are confronted by an even greater external obstacle: the continued exploitation of Angola by imperialist concerns and the vicious war being waged against it by the powerful apartheid regime in South Africa, backed up by Washington.

These imperialist pressures, threats, and attacks make all of Angola's internal problems infinitely more difficult to solve. Production cannot be increased to meet all the population's needs when so many resources have to be poured into defense. Economic dislocations and mismanagement cannot be eliminated when in the south the economy itself is being systematically destroyed by South African bombers.

Despite this, Angolan working people have made important gains since the country won its independence more than six years ago. Defending those gains — and making new ones — means above all defeating the imperialist aggression.

[Next: *On the front line against imperialism.*]



# Role of workers in Nicaraguan revolution

## May Day speech by Commander Tomás Borge

[The following speech by Commander Tomás Borge Martínez, Nicaraguan minister of the interior and a leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), was delivered May 1 to a crowd of 100,000 people in Managua's Carlos Fonseca Plaza of the Revolution.

[The translation of Borge's speech was done for *Intercontinental Press* by Elisabeth Reimann.]

\* \* \*

When we came from the Plaza of the Nonaligned to the Carlos Fonseca Plaza of the Revolution, we marched for a good part of the way in the midst of the workers, and on the way we thought back a bit about our past. And we thought a bit about the symbolism involved in our coming over in the midst of our workers. We did not come at the head of the workers, we came in the midst of the workers, with the working class at the front of the march, heading north, but not toward the brutal and stormy north, but rather toward the north of the revolution.

But we were thinking of something else. The crowd was so compressed, the mass of workers was so compact and so combative that if Daniel [Ortega] and I had wanted to turn back — something that will never happen — this mass of workers would never have allowed us to take a step backward. [APPLAUSE]

When we went through the park that the revolution built, our hearts filled with tenderness as we recalled the death on one May 2 of this young boy who would go down in history as a true hero of the revolution, Luis Alfonso Velásquez. We recalled that during the month of May, while the traitor Moncada handed over the rifles of the liberal revolution, Augusto César Sandino told the Yankees "I neither sell myself nor surrender, I want free homeland or death."

We recalled that on a May 18, in 1895, Augusto César Sandino was born, and that on a May 19, in our sister land of Cuba, the apostle of that country's liberty, José Martí, was born.

We recalled that on a May 24, in Jinotega, Germán Pomares gave his generous and splendid life. We recall that in the Jacinto Hernández column of the Benjamín Zeledón Southern Front, Oscar Benavides gave his life, as did Iván Montenegro and that worker educated in Costa Rica, in the Costa Rican revolutionary movement, Adolfo García.

We also recalled that on the Southern Front, Víctor Tirado López, in the name of the National Directorate of the Sandinista Front, led the activities of this extremely important battle front, and among those who excelled there were Javier Pichardo, Richard Lugo, Emmet Lang, and Juan José Ubeda.

We recalled that in May Cornelio Hüeck was brought to justice by Commander "Ezequiel."

We recalled this whole glorious history of our people. We recalled when Daniel Ortega and Jaime Wheelock led the actions in the west, together with Dora María Téllez. When Luis Carrión, Bayardo Arce, and "Modesto" led the guerrilla columns in the north of the country. When Carlos Núñez, Joaquín Cuadra, and William Ramírez were fighting here in Managua. When Humberto Ortega, in Palo Alto, was using communications equipment to coordinate the activities of the different war fronts.

We recalled all this and reached the conclusion that this May Day, that the qualitative leaps that are taking place at this time in our revolution, would not have been possible without the sacrifice of Germán Pomares, without the sacrifice of Oscar Benavides, without the sacrifice of Iván Montenegro, without the sacrifice of Adolfo García, and without the selflessly spilled blood of Yelba Antúnez, a woman guerrilla who fell in the Jacinto Hernández column, and without the selflessly spilled blood of this boy martyr for whom our park is named, Luis Alfonso Velásquez.



Jane Harris/IP

Commander Tomás Borge (center) marching to rally site with Commander Daniel Ortega (right).

And we also asked ourselves, why have we come together this May Day?

This is not a May Day like any other. It is a May Day where there have been important qualitative leaps within the Nicaraguan revolutionary process. We have assembled not merely to speak of the struggle of Nicaraguan workers, but to draw lessons from this struggle. We have assembled to specify more exactly the role of the working class within the revolution.

The struggle of the working class has been long, complex, full of sacrifice and martyrdom. You, the workers, know very well the enormous difficulties that the working class has suffered, all the workers in general, all our people, in order to achieve their liberation. The struggle of the working class has been as long as its own history.

At what moment does the working class appear in the history of humanity? Because the working class has not existed always. When man appeared upon the earth, the scarcity of material resources, cultural poverty, the extraordinary limitations of that historical moment, forced man to live in a state of community, but one that was completely primitive; they produced no wealth for the sake of which some men would fight other men. When work tools were developed and men began to produce some wealth in excess of the bare needs of survival, some men enslaved other men, and for very many years there were masters and slaves. The slaves rebelled against the masters, and when slavery, in its fundamental form, disappeared, a new society emerged: the society of the great landowners. The society of kings, of barons, the lords who wielded power over life and death. This was called feudal society, just as the previous

society had been called slave society.

Little by little, within this feudal society, manufacturing production, mercantile production developed, and the foundations of what later would become great industry began to be built up. In order to enrich themselves, the owners of this new system of production, the owners of the factories, began to exploit the labor force capable of producing this wealth. This labor force was composed of the factory workers, that is to say, what is called the working class. There were great movements in Europe and the French Revolution is the climax of the revolution of the owners of these factories, the revolution of the bourgeoisie; and it is within bourgeois society, therefore, that the working class emerges, the most revolutionary class in history.

The bourgeoisie then gave rise to a society full of illusions and beautiful phrases. It spoke of liberty and fraternity. It gave rise to a bureaucracy, a police, and an army, which were presented as instruments serving society as a whole. But these illusions of all kinds — including the legal, moral and political illusions forged by the bourgeoisie — collapsed when confronted by the reality and by the essence of bourgeois

---

### **To defend the interests of the rich, the National Guard repressed the rural workers, urban workers, and peasants . . .**

---

exploitation. When in a bourgeois society, for instance, the workers ask for an improvement in their wages, when the peasants lay claim to the land, the police and the army of the bourgeoisie turn into instruments of repression.

You, workers of Nicaragua, saw it in daily practice during the bourgeois regime of Somozaism. When the workers rose up in strikes and marched in the streets demanding better living conditions, when the peasants energetically claimed the land, the National Guard, an instrument of the bourgeoisie, did not stop to ask whether the industrialist or the landowner affected by the workers' struggle was a Liberal or a Conservative, pro-Somoza or anti-Somoza, whether or not they belonged to the so-called opposition bourgeoisie. In order to defend the interests of the rich, the National Guard repressed the rural workers, the workers in the cities, and the peasants, even though these forces sometimes mistakenly tried to defend themselves against repression by declaring themselves to be Liberals and even Somozaists.

What does this prove? That the National Guard had a chief, Somoza, but that its job was to defend certain social classes, regardless of their political coloration or their religious beliefs; that is to say, it was at the service of the industrialists and the landowners.

What happens now? What is the difference between yesterday and today? Who are the ones who complain about the Sandinista People's Army (EPS), the Sandinista Police, the organs of State Security — apart from some justified complaints against isolated cases of abuse which, though less each day, unfortunately are still committed? Who are the ones who complain? Do you complain against our glorious EPS [SHOUTS OF "NO!"], against our ever more efficient Sandinista Police ["NO!"], against our self-sacrificing comrades from State Security? ["NO!"] Who are the ones who are complaining? [SHOUTS OF "THE BOURGEOISIE!"]

Is it the peasants and the workers? No. Those who complain are the ones who in the past had an unrestricted instrument for repressing workers and peasants; those who complain are the great landowners and the big industrialists and the tiny groups that still allow themselves to be confused by counterrevolutionary preaching. [APPLAUSE] And the reason is very simple. While yesterday the industrialists and the landowners had an army and a police like the National Guard and an Office of Security serving their interests, today the workers and the peasants, all the working people, the ordinary people of Nicaragua, have at their wholehearted service the Sandinista People's Army, the Sandinista Police, and the Organs of State Security. [APPLAUSE AND CHANTS OF "ONE SINGLE ARMY!"]

One would really have to be an idiot or a victim of delusion, or both things at once, to ask for the support of the people in order to give back

the lands that were taken away from the landowners, or to return the holdings that were confiscated from the Somozaists.

One would really have to be an idiot or an evil person, or both things at once, not to realize that our people have gained awareness of their real history, that our workers have gained awareness of the class they belong to.

Because the proletariat does not gain class consciousness spontaneously. The proletariat is, without a doubt, the most revolutionary class in history. But it gains this awareness only when it comes into intimate contact with revolutionary theory and practice. At certain stages, the working class may be confused by the illusions sown by bourgeois propaganda. The false bourgeois saying, the false bourgeois principle that all men are equal before bourgeois law, can only be refuted when it comes into conflict with practice and through the knowledge of revolutionary theory.

The working class, during its lengthy struggle, has learned and continues learning from its mistakes and its failures. During the development of its struggles it discovered new forms of political combat, forms that go much further than the just demands for more humane working hours, better wages, and better social conditions. Nevertheless, many times the working class has been guilty of economist errors, meaning that it has raised, as a final goal, the achievement of economic demands. In a society of exploitation, it is absolutely justified that the workers should struggle for economic demands; but it can never be correct that the workers should forget their political struggles and their political goals, even under a regime of exploitation.

In a society where, as in Nicaragua, the power of imperialism and of the bourgeoisie has been decapitated, it is correct that the workers should continue putting forward their economic demands. But to struggle for economic demands, and leave in a secondary place the consolidation of their political power as a social class, would mean going against common sense and against history.

This means that, at the present moment of our history, when the rule of bourgeois and imperialist exploitation has been eliminated forever in Nicaragua, the fundamental duty is and should be the consolidation of their power within the revolution.

A revolutionary process is made up of various phases. During the first phase of national liberation, which in Nicaragua was the war against the National Guard and the domination of the Somozaist bourgeoisie, the working class and the vanguard that represented its historical interests drew together other sectors and strata of society. At that moment it was correct to form a broad national unity to achieve a goal that was common to all our society: to get rid of a regime that was both criminal and ready to deliver our riches to foreign interests. And this regime was, at the

---

### **Our workers have gained awareness of the class they belong to . . .**

---

same time, a gigantic obstacle to the historical development of our country.

With the victory of the revolution, a new phase begins. It is still necessary to unite the widest possible strata of Nicaraguan society to confront the common enemy of all Nicaraguans, which is U.S. imperialism. This means that this new phase, after victory, puts the main emphasis on the defense of the nation, on the struggle to have our national sovereignty respected, on the right of self-determination and on the need to unite all Nicaraguan patriots to confront a huge and cruel enemy.

But in this new phase, serious internal contradictions begin to come to the surface, when the revolution is forced — by its own dynamic and to remain in harmony with the political, economic, and social principles that were its reason for being — to determine which social sectors shall be given priority within the revolutionary process. Our people already know who the privileged ones were yesterday, and our people already know which classes have priority today, for whom this revolution was made.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to maintain national unity with wide sectors of our society, including those sectors of the bourgeoisie who are ready to work in a common cause with the workers, in production and in





Part of the crowd at May Day rally in Managua.

Michael Baumann/IP

the defense of the sovereignty of our homeland.

This new phase, however, is extraordinarily complex, because on one side we have the interests of the workers and peasants, the backbone of the revolution. And on the other side there are those capitalist sectors that the revolution wants to keep on its side, even giving them economic incentives. But at the same time these sectors are torn apart by the dashing of their political hopes, and because the umbilical cord that ties them to imperialism, due to their anti-patriotic traditions, refuses to disappear.

But, is it possible that some industrial or capitalist sectors linked to agricultural production might be able to cut that umbilical cord? Is it possible that these social sectors might be capable of understanding that the guiding axis of the new society is the workers? Does the possibility exist that they might give up their political expectations and utilize their experience and capabilities to work for the benefit of production linked to development of the country as a whole?

Experience tells us that on one hand, a certain number of elements belonging to these social groups cannot resign themselves to the new reality, and that even within the revolution, there are those who believed that ultimately the dreams of the workers and peasants would end in a nightmare and the dreams of the bosses as a class would end in paradise.

Experience has also shown that there are capitalist sectors who are ready to work with the revolution, and that broad middle strata and the majority of small and medium agricultural producers have incorporated themselves into the revolutionary process.

Within the first group, there are those who had illusions about the nature of the revolution, but who eventually realized that the revolution was not made in order to satisfy their hunger for power, their poor and sad aspirations for power. Among them there are also those who were incapable of realizing that the real stars are not those sewn on uniforms but those that shine in the heavens.

It is no surprise, on the other hand, that some might have thought that this was not a true revolution; that the leaders are not at the service of the people, but rather that the people are at the service of the leaders. There was even one who thought that this was not a revolution but a movie studio, and who suddenly, amazed and furious, realized that this land of lakes and volcanoes is called Nicaragua and not Hollywood; that this is a people of lions, but the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lion has no business here.

I am going to tell you a story. Thousands of years ago, in ancient Greece, there was a temple called the temple of Diana, which was considered one of the seven wonders of the world. In that city there was a shepherd who decided one day to set fire to the temple in order to gain fame throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> The people, full of indignation, decided to expunge forever that shepherd's name. In spite of this, the shepherd's name became well known, but was associated forever with infamy.

Therefore, when they realized that the light in the eyes of the people is the shining light of the future, that the people love beauty and nobility and not makeup, that here the only movie heroes are the working masses . . . [APPLAUSE] Here the people are free to love their leaders, but we leaders of this revolution do not fight among ourselves over the love of the people. If there is to be any dispute — to put it some way — it is not about who is most loved, but who is most capable of loving. [APPLAUSE] When some individuals realized all that, they simply turned their back on the people and dug their own graves, so that today, on May Day, our working class with its powerful muscles, with its will of steel, with its unbreakable firmness, can fill them in with shovelfuls of soil, the shovelfuls of soil that are thrown on graves when the people decide

1. Borge uses the Spanish word *pastor*, an obvious allusion to Edén Pastora, a former guerrilla commander. On April 15 Pastora denounced the revolution from Costa Rica. In his press conference announcing the break, Pastora described himself as the "most loved of all the commanders."



to bury their traitors and their villains in silence and oblivion. [APPLAUSE]

We have frequently read the Bible and I must admit that it is one of the most beautiful books we have read. Nevertheless, I believe that the authors of the Bible made a mistake in including the name of Cain in its pages. If we ever write the history of the heroism of this people, I think we should not mention Cain.

There have been many great deeds in the grand and glorious history of our homeland. In all these great deeds, the protagonist was the Nicara-

---

## **The rule of bourgeois and imperialist exploitation has been eliminated forever in Nicaragua . . .**

---

guan people, and, of course, we shall not forget our heroes because that would not be right. But heroes are nothing more than the instrument of the masses to make history.

I could speak of many great deeds of our people. I could recall Juan Santamaría and we could bring to the ears of our people the name of Andrés Castro. It has always been right that we should mention those who, by means of their courage, knew, anonymously and without seeking the recognition of history, how to do great deeds that were not always portrayed in their true dimensions.

Who has heard boasts from our courageous police, who daily confront criminals? Who has ever heard a boast on the lips of our soldiers of the Sandinista People's Army, or of our heroic members of the militia, or of the brave and anonymous combatants of the revolutionary State Security — all of whom not only have the sense of honor and nobility to never surrender to the enemy, but also work heroically without a rest while the people sleep.

I would rather not even mention, because he may be present here, that young man who defied imperialism on its own soil.<sup>2</sup> But I should like to hear one single witness who ever heard him boasting of his feat. He has simply accepted it as part of his revolutionary duty and because he is aware that there are tens of thousands of young Nicaraguans who, like himself, are capable of adopting the same attitude when confronted with imperialism. [APPLAUSE]

Is there not even greater heroism in work? Heroes are the workers, who labor selflessly to increase production; heroes are the peasants, who under our pitiless sun now work not only for themselves but to satisfy the needs of the country. Heroes are the comrades who work until late at night; while the brightly lit windows of their offices fall like a weight upon their eyes. Prevailing against sleep and fatigue, they continue working to complete their jobs. Heroines are our women, who are not only exemplary in their self-sacrifice at work, besides taking care of all the tasks of the home, but have also known how to be part of the vanguard when it is time to defend the homeland. A heroine is a woman over there, the mother of our frontier guards who carried in her body the hero who gave his life for his country. [APPLAUSE]

Heroes are our people; a poor people, hounded by their economic limitations, bent under the weight of the inheritance from the past, yet who every day confront with incomparable valor that powerful, boastful, and criminal country whose imperialist government tries to make them knuckle under. And there is no possibility that this people, which is truly heroic, will ever surrender or sell itself.

Can there be a greater feat in this country than that carried out by Julio Buitrago when he not only confronted a cruel and criminal army, but also faced the eternal silence of death?

Can there be a more shining example than that given by the fighters of the Sandinista Front on December 27, 1974, when none of those men — including their chief, a member of the National Directorate of the

---

2. Orlando Tardencilla, a 19-year-old Nicaraguan captured fighting alongside the guerrillas in El Salvador, was brought to Washington to testify that Nicaraguans and Cubans were intervening in El Salvador. But at the State Department's March 12 press conference to air the charges, Tardencilla, risking return to El Salvador and certain death there, refuted Reagan's lies before the assembled press corps.

FSLN, Commander Eduardo Contreras — revealed their identity even though they were aware of the tremendous public recognition they would have received if they had torn the kerchiefs off their faces or posed for pictures on the stairs leading to an airplane? Can there be a more shining example of the meaning of revolutionary humility?

Who does not remember that it was torture and enemy repression, and not a hunger for the lights of movie cameras, that revealed the identity of those anonymous heroes? Who has not heard of the extraordinary modesty of those who carried out that and other feats, when they have expressed the collective nature of the actions in which they took part as combatants?

Where are the boasts? Has anyone ever seen it from a single one of the heroic border guards who in small combat units face the attacks of bands that are well organized and well armed by the imperialists?

Those are true heroes! Because they are the heroes of action, of action every day, of action 24 hours a day! Those are the true heroes! [APPLAUSE] Here they are, beside their people, the people they defend in the first line of fire. Here they are, without cheap cowboy posturing! Because they are not only the heroes of unequal combat, but the heroes of revolutionary simplicity, of revolutionary modesty, of revolutionary humility. Here are our true heroes! [APPLAUSE AND CHANTS OF "PEOPLE'S POWER"]

It is good to ask ourselves why we made this revolution.

To exalt individualism? To maintain the privileges of the past? To allow a system of exploitation to persist?

Because some people believed that here Somoza had been overthrown in order to maintain exploitation under a different facade, and then they wanted to call that change a "revolution."

But this revolution was made to enforce the values of the collectivity. To fight against the ideological and political contamination of the bourgeoisie and of imperialism, to struggle against the philosophy of the wolves, to put an end to the philosophy of the claw and the tooth.

This revolution was made, not to reaffirm the old society, but to create a new society. [APPLAUSE]

---

## **Heroes are the workers, who labor selflessly. Heroes are the peasants, working under the pitiless sun . . .**

---

Well now, this struggle, which is fundamentally a task of the working class, has special characteristics stemming from the economic, historical, and cultural conditions of Nicaragua.

When imperialism emerged as the highest stage of capitalism, a struggle for world markets was initiated by the large capitalist countries, and during that first division of the world, Nicaragua, together with other Latin American countries, suffered the terrible fate of falling into the hands of the U.S. imperialists. Our economy, therefore, developed as a dependent economy. This forced our people to struggle for their national liberation, and this struggle took on a specific form, which is nationalism.

This also explains why our country, ferociously subjected to the United States, never produced a true national bourgeoisie. The dominant force in our country was never the local bourgeoisie: it was imperialism, through its brutal local instruments. The development of Nicaragua took place through investments and loans administered by an overseer named Anastasio Somoza, as in the past there had been, to mention only a couple of examples, Chamorro and Moncada.

When Sandino's army of peasants and workers kicked the Yankee invaders out of our homeland, the astute invaders established a docile army which had the characteristics of an army of occupation, and which was the foundation not only of the Somoza dynasty but of the power of the oligarchy as a whole. That is why the struggle of our people took the form of a struggle against the Somozaist dictatorship, which was, in its essence, a struggle against imperialism. And through this dialectical link between national liberation and the anti-Somoza struggle victory was reached, a victory that took the *form* of the overthrow of the Somozaist tyranny, but whose *content* was a victory of national liberation.

Who was capable of deciphering this historical synthesis?

It was the Sandinista National Liberation Front, it was Sandinism that knew how to apply the theory of revolution to the concrete reality of Nicaragua.

Therefore, the Sandinista Front was the living instrument for the conquest of power by the workers, and the living instrument for the consolidation of the power of the workers.

What does this mean? Just like the human body needs vitamins and protein to nourish itself and develop, the Sandinista Front needs to draw its sustenance from the working class. The vitamins and protein of the Sandinista Front are the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, and the intellectuals, professionals, and other sectors of society who want to identify with the Sandinista People's Revolution, must identify with the interests of the workers and peasants. And the capitalists, regardless of their ideological conceptions of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, have to identify with the patriotism of the peasants and workers if they are to remain in Nicaragua.

The Sandinista Front is the vanguard of the revolution.

The Sandinista Front is the vanguard of all Nicaraguan patriots.

The Sandinista Front is the vanguard of national liberation.

The Sandinista Front is the vanguard of the workers and peasants, and is the vanguard of these social sectors, the Sandinista Front is the living instrument of the revolutionary classes, is the guide leading toward a new society. [APPLAUSE]

It knew how to interpret during the hours of violence, at the time of the guerrilla fighters of Coco and Bocay [Rivers] at the time of the guerrillas of Pancasán and Pila Grande, the guerrillas of Waslala, when the mighty river of insurrection flooded the cities, when the drums of Mo'nimbó sounded and the bursts of the machine guns riddled the assassins' lairs. At each and every moment it knew how to interpret the pulsebeat of history. It knew how to interpret, during the triumphant march to victory, the relationship of forces at every moment. It knew how to interpret, during the triumphant march to victory, the appropriate responses during this process of class struggle that has been sharpening for the last three years.

It had the wisdom and the courage to find the essence of the antagonistic contradictions between Nicaragua and U.S. imperialism. It knew, and it will know, the role of the revolutionary classes in the process of the political and economic transformations of Nicaragua. It knows the point when it is necessary to have qualitative changes, while always keeping its feet firmly on the ground, simultaneously bearing in mind our most beautiful dreams and reality, which is sometimes challenging, difficult, and terrible.

That is why the Sandinista Front is the vanguard of our people, that is why the Sandinista Front is the irreplaceable vanguard of the unity of the nation, a unity that must be based on the interests of the workers and on national patriotism.

But revolutionary power is only an instrument for accomplishing the achievements of the people. What are the achievements we have won so far, and what objective obstacles, for the time being, hold back the accomplishment of new achievements?

Before speaking of some concrete accomplishments of the revolution

---

## **It was the Sandinista National Liberation Front that knew how to apply the theory of revolution to the concrete reality of Nicaragua . . .**

---

during the brief historical period since the workers have begun their participation as the moving force of this process, we must refer with all frankness to the economic situation of our country. It can be said that our economy has been recovering, little by little, both from the destruction caused by the war and the Somozaist destruction and pillage, as well as from the decapitalization and pillage carried out by certain capitalist sectors after our victory. Nevertheless, this recovery has run head-on into a drop in the prices for our products, our agricultural exports,

and this has meant a reduction of the receipts of hard currency, that is to say, of dollars, for Nicaragua.

Why do the products that we sell abroad continually bring lower prices? Our workers must understand this problem clearly. There is a crisis in the world capitalist economy, and the Nicaraguan economy that we inherited from the past is still fundamentally oriented toward the capitalist markets. The logic of capitalism is cold and cruel. They buy from us at cheap prices, and the raw materials they buy from our poor countries are transformed through advanced technology and sold back to us at extremely high prices. There are other products, such as oil, whose prices have been raised excessively, and unfortunately our production, the electrical energy that we use, is intimately linked to oil.

But it isn't only oil. There are all our export products. Sugar, for instance, is down one-third from its price only a year ago. The price of cotton has dropped 20 percent, the price of beef is down, the price of gold is down, and the same has happened with the prices of other articles we normally export. This has meant, for Nicaragua, a drop in its income, this year alone, of \$110 million. We can add to that the antipatri-

---

## **This revolution was made to create a new society . . .**

---

otic decapitalization of many business enterprises; we can also add the denial of numerous credits, such as the criminal cutoff of the AID [Agency for International Development] credits for wheat purchases.

When we speak of hard currency, fundamentally we mean dollars. In other words, we have been seriously affected in our commercial trade with the capitalist countries and, above all, with the United States. We therefore have less hard currency at our disposal. And hard currency is required for medicines, many essential consumer goods, and the products that in technical terminology, are called inputs — such as fertilizer — which are used in the production of food, or in the production of clothing and shoes. All this means that to satisfy the demands of health and food and clothing a certain amount of hard currency is needed, and therefore the revolution is forced to give priority to the use of this hard currency for the benefit of the basic requirements of the people.

But however great our efforts to establish priorities, hard currency is still scarce, which opens up the possibility that we may have to stop importing some raw materials used in producing consumer goods that are not essential. This can have some consequences for workers. The workers will have to face this problem with wisdom and efficiency, as they must also face the limitations and injustices that are committed against them, the arrogance and misuse of power on the part of some government administrators, the corruption that prevails in some enterprises, the administrative disorder, excessive expense accounts, unjustified firings, the inconceivable fact that when some members of the militia come back from the border and return to work, they find a letter telling them they have lost their job. This even happened in some state-owned enterprises, as if there were not a law against this, as well as a moral obligation of elementary justice.

To face these problems — abuse of power, bureaucracy, the limited participation of workers in the enterprises — there is only one road: the unity of the working class.

There are some workers who believe that the main enemy of the working class is the bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie as a class has been mortally wounded in this country, and the dying have never been dangerous enemies. The main enemy of the working class is the division of the working class. However, the dying still have enough breath left to say, in a shaky voice, in the midst of their historical death agony, that the workers have the right to trade union freedom.

And what does this mean, trade union freedom? Trade union freedom means the division of the working class. I have often said that the bourgeoisie is united, and at this stage it is inconceivable that the united summits of the bourgeoisie should be calling for trade union freedom. What interest can the bourgeoisie have in trade union freedom? When have they ever cared about the workers? But what is still more inconceivable is that some small sectors of the working class, although they are a minority, should still lend an ear to these siren songs of the bourgeoisie.

True freedom for the unions means the freedom to defend the interests



of the working class. True freedom for the unions is expressed in the undeniable fact that after the victory, many more unions have formed than in all the previous history of our country. Freedom of unions to defend the interests of the bosses? [SHOUTS OF "NO!"] Freedom of unions to join the chorus of those who want to sell out our country? ["NO!"] Freedom of unions in the waiting rooms of the Yankee embassy? ["NO!"]

No. True union freedom to consolidate the role of the working class in the revolutionary process; true union freedom to defend, in the trenches of the homeland, the sovereignty of our country; true union freedom for defense against misuse of power, against bureaucracy, and against the injustices that still persist; true union freedom so that the workers participate in the process of production, which is the best school for the working class to understand the laws of economy and be able to control them.

True union freedom to defend the true interests of the nation, because the defense of this nation is fundamentally a task of the working class.

And as for the economic situation that our country faces, what can the workers do?

In the workplace, save hard currency in every possible way. We have heard of the creative efforts of many worker comrades who have managed to restore machinery that was at a standstill, because our lack of hard currency did not allow us to purchase spare parts. These workers, thanks to their ingenuity, managed to get this machinery working again, thus saving the country a lot of dollars. You can save hard currency by saving energy. You can save hard currency by saving containers. You can save hard currency by cutting the losses of materials, you can save hard currency by replacing imported articles, meaning articles purchased in other countries, with articles produced in Nicaragua.

It would be completely absurd for us to continue purchasing iodized salt, to mention just one example, iodized salt produced in the United States, having as we do the true capacity to produce enough salt for the entire country. The workers' initiatives are the only ones that can solve this problem, because the working class is the one that has direct contact with the processes of production.

Because it is the working class that generates production, it is the workers who know which part is lacking in a machine, or which machinery needs repairs.

With every bit of hard currency we save, with every dollar we save, we shall be defending the job of a comrade, of a brother worker, of a class brother.

This way, taking care of the machinery, saving materials, monitoring

---

**It is the working class that generates production, it is the workers who know which part is lacking in a machine, or which machinery needs repairs . . .**

---

the quality of production and also acquiring new technical skills, the workers will raise productivity, which means that they will produce more per workday. And the more we produce, the more we will be able to raise the standard of living to which men in a revolution are entitled.

Confronting the problem of prices also requires the initiative of the workers. The state has expended great efforts to keep the prices of essential products low, for instance subsidizing basic food items. But government efforts would be wasted if they were not supported by the vigilance of the workers in the fight against speculators, those who hoard goods and cause shortages in order to sell products at a higher price later. There are other ways to hold down price increases, and one way is the initiative of reusing containers to make costs cheaper. We are sure that the problems we are facing will, as always, stimulate the creativity of the masses, who will always find new initiatives to solve them.

The effort that our working class made during Holy Week [Easter Week], in spite of certain improvisations that occurred in some cases, was extraordinary and deserves highest praise. On that occasion, it was shown that the working class is capable of understanding the most difficult situations when the problems are explained, that the working class is capable of the greatest sacrifices as long as it is given a clear explana-

tion of the problems. It was shown that the working class is no longer susceptible to being confused by anybody and, as long as we are making acknowledgments, acknowledgments and thanks to all the workers, we should acknowledge here the valuable contribution of the working women of Nicaragua in production, in the defense of the economy and, above all, in the defense of the sovereignty of our homeland.

Our people are capable of great efforts. They have proved it and go on proving it every day in the struggle and at work. They are proving it, for example, with the volunteer brigades organized by Telcor, comrades who in the last few days have started laying the phone lines that will improve communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific in our country. [APPLAUSE]

Therefore, in spite of the enormous difficulties, we have advanced. Although we too are victims of the economic crisis of the world capital-

---

**Our revolution would be mean and petty, and would stop being a revolution, if it did not think in terms of solidarity with other brother peoples of the world . . .**

---

ist system, our conditions are infinitely better than those of other neighboring countries or other Latin American countries. Inflation, sharply rising unemployment, elimination of social programs have been the characteristics marking many countries, almost all Latin American countries, and even the United States, where arms spending, as we have said on other occasions, means the incredible amount of *\$1.5 trillion*. This has caused an inflationary process and a process of economic recession that has forced the U.S. government to make grave cuts in the programs benefiting children, invalids, and the poor in general.

We, on the contrary, have pressed forward with social programs. And even more important than the social programs the revolution has carried out so far are the vast projects that, in a planned manner, will be changing the structure of the Nicaraguan economy: the great projects in the sugar industry, the great power plants, which are no longer simply plans but have begun design and construction work. When we have activated all our productive possibilities and the great wealth that nature has given us, we will be independent, not only of the speculative ups and downs of the markets, not only of international financial pressures, but also of the obscene political pressures of the merchants of hatred, of those who traffic in our poverty and our backwardness.

Already the first steps are being taken in the construction of the hydroelectrical complex on the Yeye River. The geothermal plant at Momotombo is under way. And this is only the beginning of extremely important leaps in our economic development. When we look at the future, from the standpoint of our present poverty, from the standpoint of our present limitations, we feel the infinite joy of knowing that one day we will no longer be poor, and when that day comes, our hands shall be extended to aid those peoples who have not yet been able to leave poverty behind. [APPLAUSE]

Our workers must educate themselves in the idea that our revolution would be mean and petty, and would stop being a revolution, if it did not think in terms of solidarity with other brother peoples of the world. And that, even though we still have not left our backwardness and poverty completely behind, we must have, always present, an internationalist consciousness. We must be prepared to share our own poverty if necessary, whenever other hungry and ill-clothed peoples should need us. We, the Nicaraguan workers, will be the brothers of every worker on earth.

Just as we have now received thousands of doctors and teachers from Cuba and other countries, some of whom are also poor like us, so we have to be ready to give away, not whatever we have too much of, because that would be no sacrifice, but whatever is necessary to other peoples that may need it. [APPLAUSE]

People of Nicaragua, a people of solidarity by definition, by history, and by conscience. People of Nicaragua, a people of solidarity because they have learned to assimilate the teachings of their great heroes. Peo-



Michael Baumann/IF

ple of Nicaragua, a people of solidarity with the struggle of the Salvadorean. People of Nicaragua, a people who have known and know how to maintain, in spite of everything, their unconditional solidarity with Argentina in its confrontation with a colonial power, with the people of Argentina who were today attacked by British aircraft at Port Stanley in the Malvinas Islands. [APPLAUSE] A people of solidarity who know how to distinguish their friends from their enemies. A people of solidarity who know that today imperialism took off its mask, because instead of standing by Argentina, it stood by the side of the colonial power.

We, a small and poor country, do not stand by the side of the powerful. We stand by the side of our brother people of Latin America. [APPLAUSE] And this shows once more the need for the peoples of Latin America to unite to oppose those who, every day more obviously, are the enemies of our peoples.

Haig's declarations against Argentina are not Haig's declarations against Argentina. They are Haig's declarations against Latin America and against this Nicaraguan people which will demonstrate solidarity to the utmost, whatever the consequences. [APPLAUSE] A people that is in solidarity with other peoples, but that is also in solidarity with the future generations. Workers and peasants who voice solidarity internationally and solidarity at home. Every worker is the brother of every other worker. All workers are brothers of every worker, and all Nicaraguan workers are brothers of all of the workers of the world.

Therefore, this workers' revolution has projected not only programs for economic development, but ambitious and realistic social programs as well.

Within these programs, education and health have priority. The successes of the revolution in our educational system are already well known. It is enough to mention one example: in preschool education, enrollment jumped from 9,000 children before the triumph of the revolution to 41,215 in 1982. And this after Nicaragua [under Somoza] had been one of the countries most indifferent to primary, and therefore to

secondary and higher education. Beginning July 19 [1979], the numbers have grown; education in agricultural and cattle-raising technology has been intensified; so have industrial technical education, teacher training, commercial education, and special education. And all this without taking into account military and police technical training, which brings the total of those in our country who have received education to more than 1 million.

But the great fundamental educational undertakings in Nicaragua, such as the National Crusade for Literacy and Adult Education, have an importance that has not always been sufficiently stressed: that is, their success is due fundamentally to the participation of the people, to the support of the workers, a support both dynamic and full of historical vision.

Within a true revolution, this is to be expected. The strategic goals of education are a part of the strategic goals of the Sandinist People's Revolution, and their aim is to create a new society. The aim of education is to draw out the abilities, the energy, the best values of the people, so that they will gain awareness of their historical value, so that they will gain confidence in their endless capacity for transforming nature and for transforming society.

Our education aims to encourage collective participation, human solidarity, and the organizational capacity of the people. It is an education that proposes to carry to the highest levels the extraordinary intelligence of our people, so that they acquire the awareness and knowledge needed for the transformation of the productive structure, so that they become capable of forceful leaps ahead in economic development — and I am not going to refer to this, because our people already know all about it. I am only going to mention two things.

The first great battle we must fight during the next years, and in which the participation of our people is vital, is the battle for the fourth grade. Every child without a single exception, must as a minimum complete the fourth grade, as a first step, so that during the whole of the next decade, all Nicaraguans complete at the very least nine years of general basic education. The battle for the fourth grade is extraordinarily important for the revolution. If we do not win it, it means we have lost the battle against illiteracy.

When we say we shall fight the battle for the fourth grade, we are saying that all our people are going to make a joint effort and that we shall design a strategy to win it.

We must not permit our children to drop out of school. We must achieve this goal to avoid the return of the terrible evil of illiteracy. We are struggling for the future of the homeland, and not to do so would be to go against the very essence of our revolution. And in the meantime, it is essential to eliminate, from the roots up, the remnants of illiteracy,

---

**Today imperialism took off its mask, because instead of standing by Argentina, it stood by the side of the colonial power . . .**

---

and to consolidate popular adult education.

For popular adult education, from within the masses themselves there have come 24,000 popular educators, who voluntarily render this great service to the revolution, which means they work without receiving any payment or salary. I venture to say that this enormous vanguard contingent constitutes the foundation of Nicaragua's future education.

In the final analysis, the physical structures are not what matters, because we could build thousands upon thousands of schools, and not have any teachers; but we do have thousands and thousands of teachers. We could have no school builders, because the school is not the building but the teacher, and in the worst of cases we would give classes in homes in the community, in the factories, in military barracks, in the production units in the countryside, in all churches where that would be possible, and even under trees if necessary.

Some comrades from public education are mulling over the idea that the young people who are studying for a high school diploma should give six months of service in the area of adult education as a requirement



for graduation. This seems to us a magnificent idea. Within the area of education, logically the revolution gives priority, and will have to give even more priority in the future, to technical careers and to careers related to agriculture and cattle-raising, but there is one school that requires more attention immediately, and that is the school of medicine.

During the months of January and February alone, 42 doctors deserted, and besides these 42, another 48 have left the public clinics. This means that in two months, practically three doctors have left every two days. But maybe it is better that those health merchants should leave. [APPLAUSE] Those who write prescriptions to make money and not to cure the sick, those who were never disciples of Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, but rather were hypocrites who simulated a social service they were never ready to render.

Nevertheless, we must add that those who have stayed, many of them magnificent doctors, not only identify with the interests of the people in the hospitals and clinics, but have gone to suffer hardship in the wildest and most undeveloped areas of our country. Last night our comrade Lea [Guido, minister of health] was telling us that four medical brigades, composed of doctors and nurses, had gone to the Atlantic Coast to work in that area, traditionally our country's most backward and abandoned region.

Since July 19 [1979], 224 doctors and 1,862 paramedical personnel, all educated in a new mentality, have graduated. At this moment, 2,024 young people are studying medicine. These figures, though not to be

---

### **The first great battle we must fight during the next years is the battle for the fourth grade . . .**

---

scoffed at, are still insufficient for the enormous needs facing our country.

Between April 1981 and March 1982, over 6 million medical visits have taken place; more than 200,000 patients have entered hospitals; more than 100,000 children received treatments at the units for oral rehydration, and our children have received more than 3 million doses of vaccine.

I don't know how many pills have been consumed by our people, but I want to recall here what one day we said to a group of nurses, that a smile is worth more than a pill, and therefore I want to ask: of those 6 million medical visits, how many were offered with love? Of those 200,000 sick people who entered a hospital, how many were received and cared for with affection and respect? How many?

I don't have the figure about how many millions of dollars our medicines have cost — I think we have spent over \$50 million a year — but at this point I should like to ask our brothers, the hospital workers, and our comrades the doctors, how many dollars does it cost to give love to the sick? How much hard currency does Nicaragua have to spend to buy, in the hearts of the nurses, the smiles that our sick people need? [APPLAUSE] Our nurses, daughters of our people, have no smiles to sell, because they all, I am sure, are millionaires in their desire to serve the people, and they very well know that love has no price, and that from now onwards any patient that comes in will receive not only medical attention but also affection and human warmth.

To sum up, all our efforts are directed toward destroying the negative habits that are a part of the Somozaist inheritance, so that those habits enter a crisis simultaneously with the breakdown of imperialist domination in Central America. This domination started to break down when the Sandinist People's Revolution triumphed, and the process was speeded up with the development of revolutionary struggle in Central America.

Within this imperialist crisis, the U.S. government has frequently resorted to threatening words against Nicaragua. The imperialist expectations in El Salvador failed; in the Salvador voting process, victory did not go to those right-wing sectors best suited to the interests of the Reagan administration, which sought to exhibit to the world the electoral triumph of a political tendency under the guise of democracy. Victory went, as was to be expected given the intensification of the internal contradictions in that brother country, to the extreme right, headed by the

murderer of Monsignor [Archbishop Oscar] Romero, Roberto D'Aubuisson, who is much harder to defend before international public opinion. This made it very difficult for imperialism to implement a scenario of intervention to defend its odious counterpart, although deep down this is what imperialism wanted.

The European allies of the U.S. government would not look kindly upon a more open armed support for the most notorious chief of the murder gangs in El Salvador. The Guatemalan coup and the Honduran elections, regardless of their nature, did not help the openly interventionist policy of the United States. To this we should add our Government of National Reconstruction's diplomatic-political offensive in search of peace, which had its highest expression in the speech of Commander Daniel Ortega at the United Nations.

Equally, the Malvinas problem and the confrontation between a Latin American country and a colonialist power put the U.S. government in a difficult position, which will certainly have repercussions in the use of such instruments as the Rio Treaty, whose original goal was to implement the aggressive policies of imperialism against Latin America.

Exceptionally important was the audacious and determined mobilization of the Nicaraguan people in defense of our homeland. But does all this mean that the defeat, at the juncture, of imperialism's desire to carry out direct aggression against Central America, and against Nicaragua in particular, does this defeat mean it will abstain from aggression against our countries?

We reiterate our policy of peace toward the United States and our proposals to Honduras. This policy and these proposals reject the offensive and arrogant language that scarcely deigns to hide its aim of blocking any understanding.

But it is this arrogance I refer to. Nicaragua, they say, has become a threat to peace in Central America. This is a situation, they say, that they don't want and will not tolerate. What do they mean by that? That they neither want nor will tolerate . . . What are they going to do to us? More than they have done to us already? We are ready to receive not only their insolent blustering, we are ready to meet with them too, so they will know what we are going to do. [APPLAUSE]

But what is perhaps more important than that, because it is a truth already known by heart, is that this way of speaking to us is a concrete obstacle to our efforts for conciliation and peace between Central America and the United States. Between Nicaragua and the United States. We continue to be in favor of peace and negotiations. And it seems that for the time being the prospect of a direct U.S. intervention has been defeated by our people.

We initiated a diplomatic and political campaign in the world, which culminated in the speech of our brother Daniel to the Security Council of the United Nations. [APPLAUSE] Of course, we are still in favor of peace, but peace must begin with mutual respect, and not with insolent messages that injure our dignity. Although we have told you that apparently that prospect has been defeated, does this mean that imperialism has given up all ideas of direct aggression against Central America and Nicaragua? It does not mean this. It means that they have given up, for the moment, perhaps, on direct aggression. But we would be naïve dreamers, we would be stupid if we believed that imperialism had already given up on wiping out our revolution. Maybe for the time being — and I repeat, for the time being — imperialism considers direct aggression impossible, but it has not renounced aggression. What new forms is it using and will it use in the immediate future to attack us?

---

### **We would be naïve dreamers, we would be stupid if we believed that imperialism had already given up on wiping out our revolution . . .**

---

It is trying to even further develop the tactics of destabilization used against our revolution. Internal corrosion within the vanguard is one objective. It wants to sow mistrust and internal violence inside Nicaragua. To give priority to the technical capacity and firepower of the counter-revolutionary bands, especially in the northern areas of the country.

They propose to increase sabotage, assassination attempts, and other forms of terrorism. They will try to disorient the people, encouraging ideological confusion, manipulating the religious feelings of the Nicaraguan people, and exploiting the consequences of our economic difficulties. They will try to bring together all the representatives of counterrevolution and all elements who, in one way or another, have come into conflict with the working class and the revolutionary process.

All this explains why imperialism has used delaying tactics in nego-

---

## We are still in favor of peace, but peace must begin with mutual respect . . .

---

tiating with Nicaragua.

It is a kind of invasion using another type of soldier — the soldier of disorientation, the soldier of slander, the soldier of ideological confusion — with weapons as dangerous, and maybe more dangerous, than the members of the counterrevolutionary bands. It has been said in counterrevolutionary circles and in circles of the right-wing parties, many of whose supporters have left the country, that a government junta-in-exile will be set up, which, if it turns out to be true, would no doubt be a junta of betrayal. We shall announce the names of the members of this proposed junta, knowing well that some of them may not even have been consulted but will surely have to define their position on this matter.

The proposed junta, approved by imperialism and called the "Supreme Directorate," would be made up of the following: Alfonso Robelo, Edén Pastora, Monsignor Miguel Obando, Steadman Fagoth, Enrique Bolaños, Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, Col. Guillermo Mendieta, Col. Enrique Bermúdez, José Francisco Cardenal, Fernando Agüero, and Fernando Chamorro Rapaccioli. [HOOTS] It is said that very soon this Supreme Directorate will announce its existence publicly, once the Somozaist bands have occupied at least a small portion of our national territory, and that it will replace the present government junta and the National Directorate of the Sandinista Front. [CHANTS OF "THEY SHALL NOT PASS!"]

I believe that those who have conceived this plan are going to live and die deceived. I think that those who have conceived this plan have not been able to understand that our people, that our workers have gained complete awareness of their historical destiny. Here, during the Spanish conquest, they deceived the Indians with little glass marbles and mir-

rors. Those who dream of overthrowing the revolutionary government and its political leadership have not yet realized that the time of the conquistadors has gone, and that here the only thing we will conquer will be the establishment of a new and higher society. [APPLAUSE] They do not know what direction we are going in. [CHANTS OF "SOCIALISM! SOCIALISM!"] But our working people know what direction we are going in, and that is why I ask the workers and peasants of our country, what are we moving toward? [CHANTS OF "SOCIALISM! SOCIALISM!"]

And here, near the tomb of Carlos Fonseca, we should like to speak a little with our brother and tell him . . . Carlos, listen to how your bones, your forceful and beautiful bones, march ahead under the fullness of the sun, stepping over the ruins of the old and putrefied society, knocked down by the stone fists of these men and women.

Carlos . . . the anger, the tenderness, the burning coals, the hopes belong to you. Maker of flintstones, brother, tamer of wild horses. Carlos . . . your dreams have come true! Here is your working class, our working class [PROLONGED APPLAUSE] with its calloused hands and its shining eyes. Here is your working class, standing at attention, which will be faithful to you until victory, until blood, until death. [PROLONGED APPLAUSE]

Here is your working class — comrade postman, street seller of candies and of splendors. We are the gatherers of your resurrection. We are not frightened of phantoms, we are not frightened of mummies, we are not frightened by imperialism, nor are we afraid of the Cains.

We, Carlos, beloved brother, are your thirst and we are the riverbed through which runs the mighty stream of our working class. Once we said to you, brother, "Free Homeland or Death!" But today we say to you, we are moving toward a new society, we are moving toward development and the consolidation of a revolutionary party, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, as the party of the workers and peasants, of

---

## Our working people know what direction we are going in . . .

---

the intellectuals and the Nicaraguan patriots, we are moving toward the total elimination of the exploitation of man by man, and we say to you, regarding the belief and the thoughts of our people,

**FREE HOMELAND OR DEATH!**

[OVATION. CHANTS OF "PEOPLE'S POWER! PEOPLE'S POWER!"]

## To keep up with a constantly changing world, you need... Intercontinental Press



The *Intercontinental Press* staff follows periodicals from all over the world to keep you on top of key international developments. *IP* also publishes regular reports from international correspondents. Readers find *IP's* incisive weekly socialist analysis of world events indispensable.

### Yes! Start my subscription now!

- INTRODUCTORY OFFER.** Send me three months of *IP* for \$8.75.  
 Send me six months of *IP* for \$17.50.  Send me one year of *IP* for \$35.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Canadian Rates:** \$41 for one year; \$21 for six months. Send for rates to other countries.

Make checks payable to:  
**Intercontinental Press**  
Mail to:  
**Intercontinental Press**  
410 West Street  
New York, N.Y. 10014



# Workers strike against regime

*Coordinated nationwide action called by Solidarity*

## By Ernest Harsch

In factories, steel mills, and shipyards across Poland, workers downed their tools in a disciplined 15-minute strike on May 13 to protest martial law and to express their active support for the Solidarity union movement.

Coming after the large street demonstrations in Warsaw, Gdansk, and other cities on May Day and May 3, the strike was the third massive display of popular opposition to the regime of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski in less than two weeks. Called by a number of Solidarity leaders from different parts of the country, it was also the first nationally coordinated strike action since martial law was declared on Dec. 13, 1981.

The Polish authorities — who still try to claim that *they* are the true representatives of the workers — attempted to brush aside the significance of the strike. They maintained that it was a dismal failure.

While it is difficult to get an accurate picture of the size and scope of the strike, thanks to the government's censorship and restrictions on communications, the reports of foreign journalists — and the official radio and television accounts themselves — indicate that it was actually very widespread.

### "Long live Solidarity!"

On the morning of May 13, which marked the beginning of the sixth month of martial law, the main newspaper of the ruling Polish United Workers Party, *Trybuna Ludu*, betrayed the bureaucracy's anxiety over the planned strike. Among workers at the giant Huta Katowice steelworks in the south, it wrote, "The word 'strike' is constantly turning up in conversations once again."

Just a few hours after the newspaper hit the streets, the workers showed that they were prepared to do more than just talk.

Precisely at noon, the siren at the huge Huta Warszawa steel mill in Warsaw began blaring to signal the start of the strike, and continued for more than 15 minutes.

At the FSO automobile plant in Warsaw, some 500 workers rallied outside the factory gates after the morning shift change, chanting "Long live Solidarity!"

Workers also stopped work at the large Ursus tractor factory just outside the capital. One woman worker at Ursus told a reporter, "In my shop, the gears division, about 80 percent of the workers just switched off the machines and stood around." She added, "We are going to win."

The Polish Press Agency acknowledged that in the Warsaw area there were also strikes in the Kasprzak, Warynski, Nowotko, WSK, and other enterprises.

Simultaneously with the strike, several other protests were staged in the capital. Some 5,000 to 6,000 students rallied at Warsaw University, and smaller demonstrations occurred at the Warsaw Polytechnic, the Agricultural Institute, and at least seven high schools in a northern suburb.

In the heart of the city, hundreds of motorists stopped their cars for several minutes and leaned on their horns to protest martial law. Bystanders cheered and gave V-for-victory signs. Among those applauding was one uniformed soldier. When approached by journalists, he declared, "I'm a slave in uniform. I don't have the right to do anything."

### Cigarette breaks and exercise classes

Strikes also took place around the country.

According to travelers from Gdansk, workers at the Lenin Shipyard — where Solidarity was born — struck for 15 minutes. Students at the Gdansk Polytechnic held a silent demonstration and buses traveling between Gdansk and its sister cities of Sopot and Gdynia stopped running.

Solidarity sources reported that in Wroclaw, where the union has a particularly well-organized branch, strikes took place in a number of factories. At one shop in a railroad car factory, only 20 to 30 workers stayed at their jobs. At the Dolmel electrical equipment factory, some 200 workers struck. Workers at another plant distributed leaflets demanding the release of eight of their detained co-workers.

The Warsaw radio admitted "attempts to stop work in some factories in Lower Silesia," the industrial area around Wroclaw.

In various cities and towns, the government radio reported, there were silent demonstrations, the blaring of horns, and workers going on "extended cigarette breaks." At a cooperative in Zakopane, in the far south, workers decided to hold an exercise class.

In the heavily industrial city of Poznan, according to a radio report, there were "several interruptions in the normal rhythm of life," another of the bureaucracy's favorite euphemisms for strikes.

In Lodz, workers at the large Marchlewski textile plant — where a large majority of the workers are women — struck, as did workers in at least one other enterprise in the city.

According to a government source cited in the May 15 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, Solidarity flags went up at noon in factories in the Bialystok region, and there were strikes in several factories in Pisz.

The geographical scope of the strike was hinted at in one television account, which stated, "Attempts to halt work were made in two or three factories per province." Poland has 49

provinces.

The initial Solidarity strike call urged workers and other supporters not to hold street marches or demonstrations, in order to avoid police provocations and attacks. Most protesters followed this advice.

But in Krakow, on the evening of May 13, some 10,000 people rallied in the city's old market square, carrying Solidarity banners and chanting slogans. The crowd was attacked by the motorized riot police, the ZOMO, with clubs, tear gas, percussion grenades, and water cannon.

Also on May 13, more than a dozen prominent Solidarity leaders and figures began a hunger strike in the Bialoleka internment camp near Warsaw. They included Andrzej Gwiazda, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Jan Rulewski, Jacek Kuron, and Karol Modzelewski.

A day earlier, on May 12, some 3,000 farmers rallied in Warsaw to express their support for Rural Solidarity, the 1.5-million-member farmers' organization that is allied with Solidarity.

### Workers' consciousness

These strikes and demonstrations took place despite the martial law regulations that outlaw all work stoppages and unauthorized public gatherings. In the days preceding May 13, workers were warned that they faced immediate dismissal and up to five years in prison for organizing or participating in a strike. During and after the May 13 actions, the police did detain or arrest nearly 700 people.

But the workers' determination to act in face of such threats and repression is confirmation of Solidarity's continued mass support, five months after its activities were legally suspended and most of its national leadership was detained.

The May 13 strike was also a significant test of the authority of the Solidarity leaders outside of prison who are working to reorganize the union.

Unlike the May Day or May 3 demonstrations, which were either spontaneous or called by lower-ranking activists, the May 13 strike was called by the Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarity, which is headed by the union leaders of four key regions: Zbigniew Bujak of Warsaw, Bogdan Lis of Gdansk, Wladyslaw Hardek of Krakow, and Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk of Wroclaw.

In an interview with *Washington Post* correspondent Michael Dobbs, Frasnyniuk rejected any comparison between the situation in Poland today and the period of sporadic and disorganized worker protests before August 1980, when Solidarity first got off the ground. He stressed, in particular, the political lessons that Polish workers have learned:

"Sixteen months of freedom [from August 1980 to December 1981] divide us from the pre-Solidarity period. During this time, society learned how to organize itself and understood its power. Everybody now understands the goal of our struggle, and this consciousness is impossible to destroy." □