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U.S. Warships in Show of Support for Invasion

Israel's Bloodbath Against Palestinians in Lebanon



Israeli troops in ruined outskirts of Beirut.



Police attack Buenos Aires protesters.

Argentine Military in Deep Crisis

Ghana A Revolution Begins to Unfold

NICARAGUA

Imperialist Pressures Mount After Severe Floods

Israeli terror in Beirut

By Ernest Harsch

While President Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin were meeting in Washington June 21, Israeli jets renewed their murderous bombing raids over Beirut.

Confident of their backing from the U.S. government, the Zionist forces tightened their stranglehold around the Lebanese capital in preparation for a major assault against the last military stronghold of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

In an ominous escalation of U.S. involvement in the conflict, an armada of 50 U.S. warships, led by four aircraft carriers, has been ordered to the eastern Mediterranean, off the Lebanese coast.

The official explanation is that the ships are there on military maneuvers, although Pentagon officials have said that they are also prepared to carry out "rescue" operations in Lebanon. Given Washington's increasingly open support for the Israeli invasion, there can be little doubt that this large naval fleet — comparable in strength to the British armada sent against Argentina — is intended as a blatant display of force, directed against the entire Arab world.

Siege of West Beirut

Israeli forces and their rightist Lebanese allies have West Beirut surrounded, boxing in an estimated 6,000 PLO fighters and hundreds of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians.

Virtually daily proclamations of Israeli cease-fires notwithstanding, Israeli jets, artillery, and warships have continually bombarded

West Beirut, inflicting large numbers of civilian casualties.

In a June 24 dispatch from Beirut, *Washington Post* correspondent David Ottaway reported that Israeli jets "bombed the densely populated, low-income district of Corniche Mazraa, where the Palestinians and their leftist allies have some offices. First reports said at least 50 buildings were damaged, some extensively, and it was feared that hundreds were killed. . . .

"Eyewitnesses said the whole street looked as if it had been flattened by an earthquake."

The next day, *New York Times* correspondent Thomas Friedman reported that "the night sky over Beirut was aglow with bursts of flame as Israeli shells hit Palestinian camps and apartment houses on the southern outskirts of the city. Police sources estimated that at least 100 people were killed."

In other attacks, Israeli artillery pounded the Burj al-Barajneh, Sabra, and Shatila refugee camps. In one night alone, the Acre hospital suffered 13 direct hits, reportedly killing six patients and wounding others.

Conditions in West Beirut are steadily deteriorating. On top of a large influx of Palestinian and Lebanese refugees fleeing from the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, the city's services have been greatly disrupted. The water supply has been reduced to four hours every two days, there is little electricity, and most telephone lines have been cut.

Terrorist actions — either carried out by Lebanese rightists or Israeli infiltrators — have also been mounting in West Beirut. Cars packed with explosives have been detonated in

crowded streets, causing scores of deaths. One that exploded June 23 took 50 lives, according to Lebanese police.

This may only be a sampling of what the Zionists have in store for the city. Israeli forces have been massing tanks, armored vehicles, and heavy artillery just south of Beirut. One correspondent described the area between Damur and Doha, on Beirut's southern outskirts, as "wall-to-wall tanks."

According to a June 22 dispatch by Ottaway, "Military analysts said the Israelis had assembled a force there far in excess of what would normally be required for an assault on West Beirut."

Israeli officials themselves have become more and more open about their aims, despite earlier Israeli claims that they would not try to take Beirut. Reporting from Jerusalem June 23, *Washington Post* correspondent Edward Cody revealed, "Israeli officials have said an all-out assault or raid on PLO leaders [in West Beirut] could prove necessary."

On June 27, Israeli warplanes dropped leaflets on West Beirut warning residents to flee.

Provocations against Syrians

Together with these attacks on Beirut, Israeli forces have also renewed their aggression against Syrian positions in Lebanon. In a major offensive along the Beirut-Damascus highway, Israeli jets, tanks, and artillery succeeded in pushing Syrian troops more than 10 miles from Beirut.

From the very beginning of the invasion, the Zionist regime has made clear its aim to push Syrian troops out of Lebanon, an effort that threatens to escalate into a full-scale war with Syria. The Beirut-Damascus highway and Lebanon's Bekaa Valley (where the Israelis have also attacked Syrian positions) are both obvious routes for any drive into Syria itself.

Our Poland coverage costs money

From the very beginning of the Polish workers' upsurge in July-August 1980, *Intercontinental Press* has provided some of the most detailed and accurate coverage of political events in that country available anywhere in English.

We stress *accurate*, because the true aims and demands of the Polish workers have so often been distorted and ignored by the big-business press around the world, which has tried to present their struggle as a fight against socialism. But as readers of *IP* know, the workers and farmers are not fighting to restore capitalism in Poland, but to abolish bureaucratic privilege and misrule. They want to place the management of the country's economic, social, and political life in the hands of the working people.

Last year, we sent several correspondents to Poland to provide eyewitness accounts of

the big workers struggles under way there.

As much as possible, we have tried to let the leaders and activists of the Solidarity union movement speak for themselves. We have published exclusive interviews with such prominent figures as Anna Walentynowicz, Jacek Kuron, Edward Nowak, and Gabriel Janowski. We have translated some of the key documents of Solidarity, including the union's initial draft program, which appeared in English for the first time in the pages of *IP*.

Since the imposition of martial law in Poland last December, *IP* has provided coverage of the continued struggles by Polish workers to win their rights. This has included translations of numerous documents, leaflets, and statements that are now being circulated in the factories and cities by union activists, who are discussing how best to re-

sist martial law and rebuild their movement.

But this all costs money. Some of the eyewitness reports from Poland that we published last year were sent by telephone or telex. The cost of the Polish-language publications that we receive also mount up.

This is on top of our regular expenses, which are affected by soaring postage and printing costs. The fact is that subscriptions to *IP* and bookstore sales do not cover the costs of putting out the magazine.

That is why we are appealing to our readers to help us out. For the kind of coverage of Poland — and the rest of the world — that we know you have come to expect, we are relying on your contributions. Every dollar helps, and will be greatly appreciated. Send your contribution to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

In addition, the Israeli cutoff of the Beirut-Damascus highway is intended to prevent the Syrians from coming to the aid of the Palestinian fighters in Beirut.

Washington demands PLO's surrender

While Israeli jets and artillery have been pounding Beirut, the Reagan administration has been pressing to further the invasion's aims by political and diplomatic means. U.S. special envoy Philip Habib has been busy seeking to set up a more proimperialist Lebanese regime and applying pressure on the PLO to lay down its arms.

Walid Jumblat, leader of the National Movement, a coalition of Lebanese Muslims and leftist groups, characterized the U.S. proposal for the PLO to turn its arms over to the Lebanese army and pull out of Beirut as a call for "a total surrender by the P.L.O."

These U.S. efforts are directly linked to the Zionists' murderous bombings of Beirut. Reporting from Washington, Bernard Gwertzman wrote in the June 24 *New York Times* that some State Department officials "said that without the Israeli military pressure there would be no incentive for the Palestinians to give up their arms."

From Beirut to Tehran

For both Washington and Tel Aviv, the invasion of Lebanon has provided an opportunity to strike a major blow not only against the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, but against the workers and peasants of the entire Middle East. They hope to use the example of Beirut to pressure other Arab governments into closer collaboration with imperialism, and to intimidate working people throughout the region.

In a June 23 dispatch from Beirut, *Washington Post* correspondent Jonathan Randal commented, somewhat hopefully, that the Israeli invasion "has cut down to size what recently seemed to be the triumphant march of militant Islam symbolized by the battlefield victories of Iran against Iraq."

This imperialist concern about the influence of the Iranian revolution was also hinted at in the assemblage of the U.S. naval task force in the eastern Mediterranean. Reporting on it in the June 24 *New York Times*, Richard Halloran stated that the maneuvers "follow a recent directive from Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger to stage larger exercises on the southern flank of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The policy seeks to connect the southern flank to operations around the Persian Gulf."

In placing these warships off the Lebanese coast, Washington was also aware of the recent arrival in Lebanon of several thousand Iranian volunteer troops to aid the Palestinians. The Iranians traveled through Syria and have been reported in Aleih, some 10 miles east of Beirut along the Beirut-Damascus highway.

Socialists in Tehran report that thousands of Iranians have responded to the appeal of Aya-

tollah Ruhollah Khomeini for volunteers to fight the Israeli invaders.

The Iranian response to Israel's aggression points to some of the other long-term political repercussions of the invasion. While the invasion is certainly a step forward for the imperialists' drive to contain and roll back revolutionary struggles in the Middle East, it will also heighten anti-imperialist sentiment in the region — and throughout the world.

The barbarity of the Israeli attacks in Lebanon — which have already left 35,000 dead and wounded and driven hundreds of thousands from their homes — has aroused widespread international condemnation, not only of Israel, but of Washington as well.

And within both of those countries, opposi-

tion has also been growing. In the United States there have been demonstrations against the invasion in a number of cities, several of them drawing more than a thousand Palestinians and Americans. Congressman Clement Zablocki of Wisconsin told Begin during his visit to Washington that many of his constituents in Wisconsin had upbraided him for supporting Israel, and one group told him bluntly that his hands "are as bloody as those of Israeli soldiers."

On the night of June 26, the first large demonstration within Israel against the war took place in Tel Aviv. Police estimated that 20,000 people turned out. Protesters carried signs reading, "We have no future on the graves of the Palestinians." □

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Imperialist pressures escalate

Washington takes advantage of devastating floods

By Jane Harris

MANAGUA — As Nicaragua approaches the third anniversary of its triumph over ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza, there is no rest for its soldiers or civilians. All are mobilized to stand firm against a more formidable enemy — U.S. imperialism.

The Reagan administration, and the Carter administration before it, never liked the fact that their puppet Somoza was forced to flee to Miami. The workers and peasants, under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), have dramatically improved their lives through agrarian reform, nationalizations, literacy and health brigades, and more. The U.S. rulers have come to despise this revolution.

In fact, they do a lot more than despise it. They have launched a secret war against it. But the major press, radio, and television in the United States are maintaining a virtual news blackout on this undeclared war, just as they did in the early days of U.S. intervention in Vietnam.

But for Nicaraguans, it is as plain as the

light of day. Men, women, and children die every week, especially on the northern border. And to stop even greater numbers from dying, the country has been mobilized in a military "state of emergency" since March 15.

Now, Washington has been emboldened by two recent setbacks for working people: the British defeat of Argentina in the Malvinas Islands and the major blow to the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon. The fear here is that now Washington's hand is freer to further escalate this war against Nicaragua.

Adding to Nicaragua's problems is the fact that in late May, Hurricane Albert devastated the western half of the country, producing an even greater shortage in housing than existed previously. Shortages in food and a rise in unemployment are expected in the not-too-distant future.

These difficulties provide an added encouragement for the U.S. government to step up the level of attacks qualitatively.

They are already using an extensive arsenal: 4,000 to 5,000 paid Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen in Honduras; warships stationed in

Nicaragua's territorial waters; counter-revolutionary radio stations based in Honduras and Costa Rica; right-wing religious sects such as the Jehova's Witnesses; and former opponents of Somoza who have now become open enemies of the revolution, such as ex-Commander Edén Pastora and millionaire businessman Alfonso Robelo.

On top of this, the imperialists are using financial pressures against Nicaragua, cutting off access to private loans from U.S. banks, refusing aid from the International Monetary Fund, and denying Nicaragua emergency flood aid.

Military aggression

On March 25, 10 days after the state of emergency was declared in Nicaragua, Commander Daniel Ortega addressed the United Nations Security Council, explaining that the U.S. war against his country was not just imminent, but had actually begun:

- Sixty-seven Nicaraguans had already been killed and 20 wounded by Somoza's band operating out of Honduras.

- Somoza's counterrevolutionaries were being trained in Florida.

- Military exercises were taking place under the auspices of the U.S. Army Southern Command in the Panama Canal Zone.

- Seventy-two U.S. military advisers were stationed in Honduras.

- The U.S.S. *Caron*, equipped with sophisticated electronic espionage equipment, was stationed in the Gulf of Fonseca, and as acknowledged by Washington, carried out surveillance tasks.

Since Ortega's protest at the UN Security Council, U.S.-backed military attacks have continued and occur several times a week. At least 70 clashes have taken place this year.

The *Caron* has been replaced by the heavily armed U.S.S. *Trippe*, which recently dispatched an armed helicopter that flew so close to a Nicaraguan patrol boat that the boat was forced to fire warning shots.

The U.S. has made clear that it considers such provocations to be "routine naval activity."

Attacks from pulpit and airwaves

A more recent, less direct weapon of the counterrevolutionaries is the use of radio and television from Honduras and Costa Rica to destabilize the revolution by disinforming the public. Counterrevolutionary radio stations are located in both countries, while the transmitters of Honduras's Channel 5 have been

Moscow, PLO send relief aid

MANAGUA — The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Soviet Union have made significant donations to help Nicaragua overcome the disastrous effects of the floods at the end of May.

The PLO donation, destined to aid Nicaragua's children, was described by Sandinista officials as an "incredible act of solidarity at so difficult a moment for our Palestinian brothers."

The Soviet grant — \$31 million — will come in the form of agricultural equipment and supplies and semifinished products for industry. It is roughly six times more than the total amount of emergency aid Nicaragua has received so far.

Preliminary estimates of flood damage put the figure at \$200 million, nearly half the country's annual income from exports.

In view of the extent of the damage, "the international aid we have received so far is insufficient to meet the consequences of the catastrophe," Reynaldo Antonio Téssel, president of the National Committee to Confront the Disaster, reported June 15.

Among governments, only the Soviet

Union, Cuba (which already has production teams working to replace washed-out highways and bridges), Mexico, France, and Sweden have so far responded to any degree to the international appeal.

Washington, which last December allocated \$19 million to a CIA program to destabilize Nicaragua, has contributed a grand total of \$25,000 and a shipment of surplus powdered milk.

Meanwhile, Reagan's new ally, ex-Sandinista Edén Pastora, is on the road in Western Europe, trying to get governments there to *cut off* aid to Nicaragua.

On June 17 Pastora succeeded in getting a rump session of the European parliament (attended by only 47 of the 434 elected delegates) to vote a recommendation for such a cutoff. The maneuver fissioned the following day when parliamentary officials announced the recommendation would be rejected.

Contributions to Nicaragua's flood relief efforts can be sent to: Emergency Relief Fund, Account No. 418-05-1113-2, Banco Nacional de Desarrollo, Managua, Nicaragua.



Jane Harris/IP

Washed-out bridge in León, one of 43 in country destroyed by the floods.

strengthened to the point that its broadcasts now reach the outskirts of Managua.

Favorite cohorts of the *contras* include religious sects such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mennonites, and Hijos de Dios (Children of God), whose preachers frequently use their pulpits for counterrevolutionary agitation.

Their "religion" excludes defense efforts, allegiance to the flag, singing the FSLN hymn,

participating in the literacy crusade, or even the vaccination campaign.

Commander Lenín Cerna, who heads Nicaraguan state security, explained recently that "the role of these sects is so obvious that many Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen captured or killed in combat have been carrying bibles, not out of religious faith but because one of their methods of work is to pass themselves off as clergymen, combining preaching with the most atrocious crimes against the population along the border with Honduras."

The religious sects maintain that the recent disastrous rains came as a punishment from God against the revolution.

Another major voice of the counterrevolution is industrialist Alfonso Robelo, who announced June 16 at the luxury Panama Hilton that his Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN) is joining forces with Edén Pastora. Pastora himself recently hopped a jet for Strasbourg, France, where he urged the European parliament to cut off emergency flood aid to Nicaragua.

Financial squeeze

The U.S. rulers have no mercy — not even for the 60,000 flood victims who were left homeless.

If they did they would respond to Nicaragua's request for the freeze on two U.S. loans to be lifted. One, for \$56 million, could be used to buy U.S. surplus food. The other, for \$14.7 million, was earmarked for housing.

The fact is that with the exception of Mexico, Sweden, and France, precious little aid has come from the capitalist world.

Nor will the International Monetary Fund bring any relief for Nicaragua. One of the terms of an IMF loan would be to freeze the

workers' salaries and otherwise punish the working class — something this government is not going to be mandated to do.

The rains of late May struck at the heart of Nicaragua's economy — its agriculture and its infrastructure.

So devastating were these blows that Commander Daniel Ortega described the country as being "taken back to the first day of the triumph of the revolution. For Nicaraguans, this tragedy means starting over again, as if we had never gone through the last three years."

Commander Humberto Ortega elaborated further. Concerning the problems facing the revolution, he pointed out that on the day of the triumph over Somoza, "we inherited 79 years of imperialist domination — underdevelopment, illiteracy, poverty — that's what capitalism left us, just in this century. Added to that were the devastating effects of the [1972] earthquake, the destruction by the war of liberation, and the recent disaster produced by the rains. These are the concrete problems we face and will have to live with for many years," he said.

Facing the dangers

Even before the torrential rains fell, the FSLN began preparing the population to fight — and not just militarily — but ideologically.

On May 1, International Workers Day, Commander Tomás Borge warned of the invasion from another type of soldier — "the soldier of disorientation, the soldier of slander, the soldier of ideological diversion. It has weapons as dangerous, and maybe more dangerous, than the members of the counterrevolutionary bands."

In the unions and mass organizations an important and thorough-going discussion began to take place about the need to construct a new society in Nicaragua — a socialist society.

And when the rains came, Borge explained, that they "left them poorer" in material goods "but we are still rich in revolutionary dignity."

While immediate use is made of the aid that is coming in — \$31 million from the Soviet Union and tremendous assistance from revolutionary Cuba — the mass organizations are mobilizing vast layers of the population to trench-digging, cleanup, and medical brigades, volunteering their labor to put their country back together and to discussing exactly how to do it.

The Nicaraguan people, who carried out one of the most heroic battles in Latin American history, deserve the support of working people the world over.

Commander Carlos Muñoz, appealing to governments and workers' organizations throughout the world for aid, pointed out, "We are the voice of the exploited and the oppressed of America. We are the hope of the continent. We will move forward because we are the foremost example of dignity in America, and this honor we will not trade for the greatest treasure in the world." □

U.S. aid — for rightists

While the U.S. government has contributed the insultingly small amount of \$25,000 to Nicaragua's flood relief efforts, it is preparing to pour millions more into the counterrevolutionary campaign to topple the Sandinista government.

On June 23, the Reagan administration asked Congress to approve the allocation of \$5.1 million to opponents of the Nicaraguan government within Nicaragua.

"The \$5.1 million of assistance that we intend to provide represents more than just financial support of private sector activities," said Otto Reich, an official of the U.S. government's Agency for International Development.

"It is also a symbol of political and moral support that is invaluable to the large number of Nicaraguans who look to the United States for assurance that they are not alone."

Washington has already allocated at least \$19 million for a CIA destabilization campaign against Nicaragua.

Sandinistas take on speculators

By Jane Harris

MASAYA, Nicaragua — Shoppers in this town 26 kilometers east of Managua have more than a few consumer advocates to protect them from the monopolies and price-gougers — they have a revolutionary government behind them, determined that no one will go hungry.

While the Nicaraguan government has heavily subsidized basic food items such as rice, corn, beans, and milk, and standardized their prices for some time, certain unpatriotic merchants recently decided that their own personal profit was more important than the needs of society.

The occasion?

The fact that agriculture and transportation of crops has been disrupted owing to a disastrous 34 inches of rain, which fell in only six days.

The first step that the revolutionary government took was to demand that all shopkeepers report their inventory of basic foodstuffs immediately to enable the country to take measures to ensure ample food for all Nicaraguans.

However, not every shopkeeper took the government seriously. In the central province of Chontales some 200 merchants out of an estimated 500 did not report their stocks to the Ministry of Commerce.

The government has empowered the local Sandinista Defense Committees (CDSs) to form people's inspection teams to check prices in their neighborhoods. The committees report to the police who, collaborating with the Ministry of Commerce (both are also empowered to inspect prices), do not hesitate to slap heavy fines on these merchants. In fact, the merchants are lucky if all they get is fines. Special laws are in effect providing for prison sentences of up to four years. Storekeepers who alter the prices of their goods also face the confiscation of those goods.

Here in Masaya, as elsewhere around the country, these greedy merchants are in hot water. They wake up in the morning and find their names and offenses printed in the daily paper.

Things are beginning to break down quickly along political lines between those storekeepers who are with the revolution and those who are not. Two owners of vegetable stands *Intercontinental Press* spoke with here were furious that the government thought it could dictate prices. How could they make the money they were used to raking in if this was enforced?

Others are enjoying increased popularity owing to their voluntary fairness. Quite often one can spot these stores by the red and black Sandinista flag flying outside.

With the defense committees, the police, and the Ministry of Commerce keeping an eye on the marketplace and the highways (espe-

cially the roads to Costa Rica, where government-subsidized medicines are sold to Costa Ricans at four times the Nicaraguan price), things are looking up for the consumer.

Additionally, discussions in neighborhood defense committees and other mass organizations have given rise to two other proposals that are now being discussed in the Council of State.

The first is to give the government the right to control prices and profit margins on all goods and services.

Land reform continues despite floods

By Jane Harris

MASAYA — Torrential rains, while they have made their impression on this province just east of Managua, have not stopped the revolutionary process taking place here.

To the thousands of *campesinos* who live in Masaya, agrarian reform is practically synonymous with the Sandinista revolution. And agrarian reform took another step forward in this area June 6, when 10 agricultural cooperatives and 11 families received land titles to more than 8,000 acres of idle land.

An urgent appeal was made to those receiving land to redouble their efforts to produce more rice and more beans — the staples of the Nicaraguan diet — to confront the shortage caused by storm damage.

Masaya, while the smallest province in the country, is also one of the most intensively farmed, and therefore in a good position to help out.

The second is to add three items — corn, beans, and rice — to the sugar guarantee card Nicaraguans already have.

The truth is that right now shortages do not exist of these basic and popular food items, with the temporary exception of corn.

Yet shoppers often find them unavailable in the supermarket. In fact, not much is in the supermarkets except long lines of people.

This is because unpatriotic shopkeepers pay children and others next to nothing to clean out the shelves of these well-stocked markets. Having created an artificial shortage, the speculators resell the products they have hoarded at exorbitant prices.

Expanding the guarantee card would cut down on the effectiveness of these professional standers-on-lines who are capable of emptying a well-stocked supermarket in less than 24 hours. □

More than 1,000 *campesinos* came to the ceremony in the barrio of La Reforma, where exactly three years ago 11 members of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) were killed in the beginning of the final offensive against Somoza.

However, their families continued the struggle. They worked hard to raise agricultural production, which has aided Nicaragua's defense by making it more self-sufficient in food and less dependent on imports. That is why the families of these 11 heroes and martyrs were chosen to receive these land titles.

Similarly, the 10 agricultural cooperatives had reached a very high level of production. And production is not the only thing that is running high in this part of the country — revolutionary consciousness and dedication have also advanced. This was evident when some 90 *campesinos* were made members of the FSLN following the ceremony. □



Michael Baumann IP

Landless peasants get titles to land at June 13 ceremony in Carazo.

Military rule in deep crisis

Surrender to imperialists evokes outrage

By Fred Murphy

The Argentine military dictatorship has been plunged into its deepest crisis ever as a result of its failure to effectively defend the country's sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands. The Argentine garrison on the islands surrendered June 14 to a British expeditionary force dispatched by London to restore colonial rule.

One day after the surrender, thousands of angry Argentines protested outside the presidential palace in Buenos Aires. A dispatch from there published in the June 17 Paris daily *Le Monde* described the scene:

The demonstrations began in the morning outside the Casa Rosada [presidential palace], where the leaders had been holding meeting after meeting since the night before.

Hundreds of persons — mostly youth — chanted angry slogans against the junta and above all against the president [Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri]. "Murderers," "sellouts," "traitors," they cried. Some contrasted the 18-year-old draftees' sacrifices with what they considered the hardly glorious behavior of the military chiefs. Others distributed leaflets calling for the formation of "patriotic committees" inside the factories and offices to organize a "popular mobilization" against "Anglo-Yankee imperialism." Evidently, the far left was the majority in this demonstration.

In the evening, the crowd massed in the Plaza de Mayo was no longer the same. The government had invited the capital's residents to hear a message from the chief of state, who was to speak from the presidential balcony. Several thousand persons gathered. A banner was unfurled at the front: "To surrender is treason — sovereignty or death." The hostility had become still greater. Each time an official of

the Casa Rosada appeared, he was booed. . . .

Special units, helmeted, with bulletproof vests, charged the crowd and fired tear-gas canisters. The demonstrators scattered, then regrouped in the downtown streets to continue the protest against the junta. The shouts continued: "Lackeys"; "traitors"; "You have enough courage only to shoot at an unarmed people."

The Argentine people had hailed the recovery of the Malvinas and rallied behind the effort to prevent the British imperialists from forcibly restoring their colonial enclave there. Now their anger at London's fresh seizure of Argentine territory is being turned against the military chiefs whose refusal to carry through an effective anti-imperialist struggle brought on the defeat.

Soldiers' accounts discredit junta

Argentines are now realizing that the junta had no serious plan for defending the islands. This fact is being brought out most clearly by the soldiers themselves who were sent to the Malvinas. Prisoners of war released by the British have begun returning to Argentina. Their accounts, often published in detail by the country's leading newspapers, shed harsh light on the way the war was conducted by the military high command. The young soldiers tell of widespread disorganization and incompetence on the part of the officers, of weapons and equipment that failed to function, and of lacking hot food and warm clothing while facing bitterly cold and windy weather.

According to the June 25 *Washington Post*, such press reports "have been clipped and circulated around military headquarters in recent days by dissident officers. . . . In one, an Argentine soldier is quoted as saying, 'I would be glad to return and fight over there, but only if I have a gun that works.'"

The first scapegoat offered up by the military chiefs was President Galtieri. He was ousted as army commander and as president on June 17.

Having gotten rid of Galtieri, however, the top officers of the three military branches came into sharp conflict over what to do next. The air force and navy hierarchy publicly pressed for naming a civilian president. But the army — which holds the balance of military power — refused.

Officers feuding

On June 22 the junta itself collapsed, with the army unilaterally naming a retired general, Reynaldo Bignone, as president. The air force and navy commanders publicly dissociated themselves from this move and ordered all their officers to resign from the cabinet and

other governmental posts.

General Bignone was scheduled to take office on July 1. But he told a gathering of civilian politicians on June 24 that he had no plan of government and that "there are those who say I will not make it" to the inauguration.

According to a June 24 dispatch to the *New York Times*, "divisions within the army itself have grown within the last 48 hours as a number of colonels and lower-ranking officers have been meeting with civilian political leaders. The dissident officers have joined in demands from the other services and from civilian political leaders to return the nation to democracy well before the date of early 1984 promised by the army."

And the June 21 *Washington Post* reported that one leading Argentine daily warned June 20 "that the military struggle was the worst since a factional battle in the early 1960s led to armed incidents between military forces and nearly plunged Argentina into civil war."

The military regime was in serious trouble even before defeat at the hands of British imperialism discredited it further. Tens of thousands of workers had taken to the streets on March 30 and clashed with police in Buenos Aires and other major cities. They were demanding democratic rights and solutions to the severe economic crisis that has brought 18 percent unemployment, triple-digit inflation, and widespread factory closings and business failures.

'People have reached limits of tolerance'

The economy is now in still worse shape. Fearing the consequences of the dictatorship's internal crisis and the mounting discontent among working people, the country's bourgeois politicians are pressing the military for elections and a rapid return to civilian rule, and for changes in economic policy.

"The time for waiting is over," declared a June 23 document released by the bloc of Argentina's five main bourgeois parties known as the Multipartidaria.* "The Argentine people have reached the limits of their tolerance."

If the military should try to proceed as if nothing had changed, the Multipartidaria warned, "the explosions that occurred March 30 will inevitably be repeated in a geometrical progression."

The document urged the military to end the state of siege, lift the ban on political and trade-union activity, and release all political and trade-union prisoners. But it made no mention of the most explosive question in Argentine politics — clarification of the fate of the thousands of working-class and political activists who "disappeared" when paramilitary repression was at its height from 1975 to 1978.

Waging a campaign for the "disappeared"

*The Multipartidaria (Multiparty bloc) is made up of the bourgeois-nationalist Peronist movement; the liberal Radical Civic Union (UCR) and two of its splinters, the Intransigent Party and the Movement for Integration and Development (MID); and the Christian Democrats.

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and for the punishment of those responsible would mean taking the military rulers head on. Instead, the Multipartidaria called for seeking "common denominators among the political parties, social sectors, and the fundamental institutions of the republic." It even urged "avoiding any split that might tend to divide civilians and the military."

The bourgeois politicians fear that if the military does not make some concessions soon there is a risk of the kind of popular uprisings that swept Argentina from 1969 to 1972 and posed serious threats to capitalist rule.

The upsurge of the early 1970s was diverted

through elections that brought the old bourgeois-populist leader Gen. Juan Perón back to power. After Perón's death in 1974 and the failure of his successor and widow, Isabel Perón, to stem working-class militancy or resolve the country's economic crisis, the armed forces again seized power in March 1976.

But not even the reign of terror that followed that coup could crush the Argentine workers. Now, with the military chiefs in disgrace and their regime in disarray, the workers and their allies have a fresh opportunity to relaunch their social struggles for democratic rights and social justice. □

Israel

Ziad Abu Eain: life sentence

Was turned over to Zionist courts by U.S. government

By Michael Smith

Ziad Abu Eain, a young Palestinian extradited to Israel by order of the U.S. State Department, was sentenced by an Israeli court to life imprisonment on June 16. Ziad, a native of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, had been held in a Chicago jail without bail for more than two years while his fight against extradition went through the U.S. courts.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused on October 13, 1981, to hear an appeal on the extradition order, paving the way for Secretary of State Alexander Haig to grant the Israeli extradition request. Ziad was turned over to Israeli authorities on December 13.

The Israeli case against Ziad Abu Eain rested on the flimsiest of evidence. He was charged with planting a bomb in Tiberias in 1979, which killed two people. But the only evidence against him was a twice-recanted "confession" by Jamal Yasin, an alleged accomplice in the bombing.

Yasin's confession was written in Hebrew, a language he neither reads nor understands. At Ziad's trial, which began in Tel Aviv on April 20, Jamal Yasin testified that he only gave Ziad's name during interrogation because he knew Ziad was in the United States and thought him to be safe. No other evidence was presented to link Ziad to the bombing.

On the other hand, Ziad produced affidavits from 14 people placing him four hours away from the scene of the bombing, and witnesses testified to this at the trial.

Two U.S. attorneys — Ramsey Clark, formerly attorney-general of the United States, and Abdeen Jabara, an Arab-American human rights activist — were part of Ziad's legal defense team in Tel Aviv.

After learning of the life sentence against Ziad, Jabara told *Intercontinental Press*: "The sentence was a gross miscarriage of justice.

"It showed that the State Department's claim that Ziad would get a fair trial in Israel was simply hot air."

The fact that Ziad was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment proved that the Israelis "were unconcerned about what world public opinion might think about their judicial system," Jabara stated. "They were more interested in showing Palestinians that Israel's long arm can reach across the world and that it has the U.S. government's help in this regard."

Ziad's case will be appealed.

On May 16, following Jabara's return from Ziad's trial, but before the sentence was passed, Jabara discussed several aspects of the case in an interview with *Intercontinental Press*.

* * *

Question. What are the international ramifications of Ziad Abu Eain's case?

Answer. A number of international organizations concerned themselves with his case. The Council of Arab Ambassadors in Washington, D.C., issued a resolution condemning the way Ziad's extradition was handled by then-Undersecretary of State William Clark, who now heads Reagan's National Security Council.

Following Ziad's extradition, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution condemning the act as a violation of U.S. extradition law. That resolution called on the United States to assist Ziad in securing his freedom and his return to Jordan, of which he is a citizen.

Q. How did Ziad's extradition violate U.S. law?

A. The extradition law is supposed to protect people charged with an offense of a political nature. Courts have traditionally held that an offense has a political character when two sides are struggling for power and a person on one side is charged with an act that occurs during that struggle, such as an uprising or rebellion.

It was on that basis that in May 1979 John

McMullen, a member of the Irish Republican Army charged with a bombing, was released by a federal magistrate who said McMullen's act fell within those provisions of the law.

Q. Why wasn't the law applied to Ziad?

A. The State Department was extremely upset by the McMullen decision. They have admitted that they wanted to create a precedent with Ziad's case, in order to prevent the United States, in their words, from becoming a haven for terrorists.

The government took this case very seriously, assigning the chief U.S. attorney in Chicago, Thomas Sullivan, to handle it, rather than one of his assistants.

The State Department also gave U.S. Attorney Sullivan documents on airplane hijackings and the kidnapping of diplomats. These were placed in evidence, even though they had nothing to do with Ziad, in order to prejudice the case.

When the decision came down, it relied heavily on an article written by a law professor who served as a hired advisor to the Israeli government at the extradition hearing.

Q. Is Congress trying to take the question of political crimes out of the courts and allow the State Department to decide?

A. Yes. That is in the Omnibus Crime Bill, an extremely dangerous piece of legislation. A similar measure is included in the new treaty with the Philippines, which has sent shock waves through the Philippine exile community in the United States because it removes the question of what is a political crime from the jurisdiction of the federal courts.

Q. What media coverage did the trial get?

A. Very little. In Israel itself the case was downplayed because the evidence against Ziad was so flimsy that it was an embarrassment. The Arab press in Jerusalem did cover the trial, but those papers were not allowed to circulate in Israeli-occupied Gaza and the West Bank.

Q. What was the atmosphere at the trial?

A. Because of the international publicity during the extradition proceeding in the United States, the Israeli minister of justice went out of his way to show that Ziad was getting a fair trial. There were a number of international observers, including people from the State Department and the U.S. embassy.

Ziad was one of only a handful of Palestinians ever tried in a regular Israeli civil court. The others have been tried in military courts.

Q. Did Ziad take the stand?

A. He testified on his own behalf. Ziad stated that he was not guilty of the bombing, and that he had been visiting his sister, who was in the hospital giving birth at the time. This was corroborated by a doctor at the hospital, a local court clerk, and an employee at his family's store.

Q. What was the prosecution's case?

A. Their evidence was so weak that they tried to get permission to go to the United States and take testimony from a fellow prisoner of Ziad's in Chicago. This prisoner, Jerry Radick, had been enlisted by the FBI not only as an informer, but as a provocateur to try to set up the Abu Eain family on a weapons charge.

In return, Radick was released from jail, following an appeal to the judge by U.S. attorney Thomas Sullivan.

But some weeks after Radick's release, he was rearrested, this time on a murder charge. As a result, U.S. authorities were too embarrassed to send him to Israel.

Incidentally, Radick contacted Ziad's legal defense team to advise us that we were under government surveillance.

Q. Is any group working to defend Ziad?

A. Yes, the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), 1611 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009. □

Ireland

Republicans declare solidarity with PLO

[The following article appeared on the front page of the June 10 issue of *An Phoblacht*, a weekly newspaper published in Belfast, Northern Ireland, which reflects the views of Sinn Féin and the Provisional Irish Republican Army.]

* * *

Hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese men, women and children have been butchered and thousands more have been made homeless by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon last Sunday which followed two days of aerial bombardments of Palestinian strongholds and refugee camps.

The official reactions from western governments, and particularly the United States — which does not support a UN call for a ceasefire — shows up these governments as hypocrites and as backers of the *real terrorists* in the Middle East, the Zionist government of Israel, which has dispossessed the Palestinian people since 1949 by driving them from their homeland and hounding them ever since with a policy of genocide.

Republicans unequivocally support the Palestinian people's national rights and the expression of their separatism through the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the PLO.

The foundation of the state of Israel, its policy of racism and the sources from which it draws its support and armaments show it up as being anti-democratic in much the same way as the Orange six-county state, and as being the anchor for American imperialist domination of the Middle East in the same way as the British presence in the North determines the political complexion of the Free State.

Israel, and its backers have a long tradition of terrorism, and a long record of barbarism against which the actions of individual frustrated Palestinian groups must be placed in context.

The Palestinians are a proud, unconquerable people whose spirit of freedom and reserves of unparalleled determination and courage are an example to republicans and all freedom-fighters, and cannot be quenched by this latest

Israeli outrage. Two-and-a-half million Palestinians have for over three decades known nothing but the refugee camp. They have been pushed around, tortured and murdered, beaten and driven out whenever and wherever — including Arab states like Jordan and now once more the Lebanon — they have raised an organised defence of themselves. The Zionist state of Israel was founded on the grave of the Palestinian nation and justified in the graves of those Jews who perished in Hitler's holocaust, their sufferings being exploited and

Demonstrations and strikes in Poland

June 13 marked the end of six months of martial law in Poland, which was imposed by Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski in December 1981.

Workers and youths in several different cities around the country used the occasion to once again demonstrate their opposition to the crackdown and their continued support for the Solidarity union movement.

On June 13, a Sunday, large street demonstrations were held in Wroclaw, Krakow, and Gdansk.

In Wroclaw, following a church mass, a crowd of hundreds marched to a bus depot that had housed the headquarters of a regional strike committee in 1980. After depositing flowers beneath a commemorative plaque, most demonstrators dispersed, but some 500 remained despite threats from the police. The police attacked with tear gas and water cannon, leading to running street battles throughout the city until late into the night.

In the workers' neighborhood of Nowa Huta, just outside Krakow, a similar demonstration began following a mass. Police also attacked there, and the demonstrators broke up into crowds of 100 to 400 in different parts of Nowa Huta. Barricades were erected and street clashes occurred there as well.

According to the authorities, 238 persons were arrested in the two cities, and 23 police were injured.

desecrated to inflict the exact same privations upon the Palestinians.

In the same way that Britain can extinguish the lives of over 340 young Argentinian sailors on the General Belgrano or bomb refugees in towns like Dresden and Cologne (as in the Second World War) and yet wax eloquent, moral rantings about IRA attacks on limited numbers of British forces, and in the same way as the United States can napalm Vietnamese children, overturn democratic governments if it does not like their policies, or support the murderous regime of El Salvador, so too does Israel behave in a hypocritical and unbridled fashion against legitimate Palestinian attacks.

The Israelis are the *real terrorists* because actions must be measured by the rights fought for by those struggling against those oppressing — the weak against the strong, the repressed against imperialist might.

So, this weekend, Irish republicans can turn away for a few moments from the sufferings of Ireland to the sufferings, shared pain, anger and sorrow, of our Palestinian brothers and sisters, once more victimised and pressed by the same enemy of Irish freedom, and can think of the plight of this nation shoved around today, but destined by the will of its moral superiority and the muscle of its youth to claim freedom some day from a political system against which we also struggle.

We express our solidarity . . . we salute their courage and we wish them victory! □

Although a similar demonstration took place in Gdansk that same afternoon, the police refrained from attacking it.

Three days later, on June 16, a 15-minute strike organized by Solidarity activists briefly shut down many large factories in the Gdansk region, including the Lenin Shipyard, where the union movement was born out of the August 1980 occupation strike. The June 16 strike was called to commemorate the eight miners who were killed by riot police during a strike at the Wujek coal mine six months earlier.

Although leaflets announcing the strike had been distributed in Gdansk for two weeks beforehand, the police did not attempt to interfere. At noon, to signal the start of the strike, factory sirens blared around the city.

According to workers from the Lenin Shipyard, who spoke to *Washington Post* correspondent Michael Dobbs, most workers at the shipyard still support Solidarity and pay monthly union dues to it, despite the fact that its activities have been officially outlawed.

Another sign of Solidarity's continued strength — and audacity — has been the spread of its clandestine radio stations, which are called Radio Solidarity. The first was set up in Warsaw in April, but since then transmissions have also begun in Gdansk, Krakow, and Katowice. □

Cuban leader hits Reagan war plans

At UN Special Session on Disarmament

By Suzanne Haig

[The following article appeared in the July 2 issue of the U.S. socialist newsweekly *Militant*.]

* * *

UNITED NATIONS — The UN Second Special Session on Disarmament opened here June 7 as Israel launched its savage invasion of Lebanon.

As the session was in progress, Britain dealt a military defeat to Argentina in the Malvinas Islands. Wars continued against workers and farmers in Central America and elsewhere in the world.

On June 12, five days after the disarmament session began, the largest antiwar demonstration ever in a U.S. city occurred here in New York, as a million people marched against nuclear weapons and for peace.

On June 15, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko addressed the UN and read a statement from Leonid Brezhnev, pledging not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and calling for a similar pledge by the other nuclear powers.

Two days later, Ronald Reagan arrogantly refused to respond to Brezhnev's proposal. He rejected the calls for peace made by many of the Third World nations and by the 1 million who demonstrated June 12.

Reagan promises war

Instead, Reagan provocatively promised an even bigger war buildup, citing the "Soviet threat."

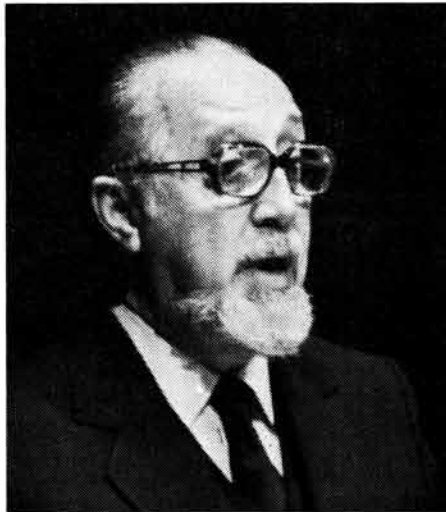
"The scourge of tyranny cannot be stopped with words alone," he said to the UN General Assembly. "So we have embarked on an effort to renew our strength that had fallen dangerously low. We refuse to become weaker while our potential adversaries remain committed to their imperialist adventures."

Reagan reiterated the proposals his administration has made for arms reductions: the elimination of land-based, intermediate-range missiles in Europe; a one-third reduction in strategic ballistic missile warheads; and a reduction in NATO and Warsaw Pact ground and air forces.

But his proposals ring hollow. Washington already has a clear military edge over the Soviet Union, and these initiatives are designed to further strengthen this advantage.

In his most hypocritical statement, Reagan asserted that "America has no territorial ambitions."

The United States, he continued, has fought "to defend freedom and democracy. We were never the aggressors. America's strength, and yes, her military power, have been a force for



CARLOS RAFAEL RODRÍGUEZ

peace, not conquest; for democracy, not despotism; for freedom, not tyranny."

These remarks were made as Washington backed Israel's aggression in Lebanon and Britain's war on Argentina, and deepened its involvement in Central America. They were made by the head of state of a government that has more than 1,500 military bases and installations in 32 countries.

Yet Reagan rabidly accused the Soviet Union of "aggression," "tyranny," and "ruthless repression." He claimed the source of war is an "East-West" conflict, one between the so-called free world and the Soviet Union, with Moscow being the aggressor.

"Soviet-sponsored guerrillas and terrorists are at work in Central and South America, in Africa, the Middle East, in the Caribbean, and in Europe, violating human rights and unnerving the world with violence. . . .

"Soviet oppression is not limited to the countries they invade," he continued, taking a shot at U.S. peace activists. "The Soviet Union is trying to manipulate the peace movement," he charged.

Cuba responds to Reagan

Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, vice-president of Cuba for foreign affairs, spoke the day before Reagan.

Unlike Reagan and the representatives of other imperialist powers, who talked only about peace in the abstract, Rodríguez began his remarks by referring to the wars in Lebanon and in the Malvinas.

While the UN session on peace and disarmament was taking place, he said, "a brutal and criminal war was imposed on two peoples who have had to confront the enormous military

superiority with which they were attacked by the forces of colonialism and aggression that, in both cases, had the United States as an efficient ally and supplier of scientific technology."

Historically, it is the U.S. government that has blocked efforts at arms reduction, he charged.

Since the Reagan administration came to office, he noted, "the rate of arms buildup, which already worried our 1978 assembly, was multiplied. . . . The United States military budget, which was \$105 billion when we met in 1978, has now more than doubled; and within four years, according to the plans already announced, it will almost double the present amount."

Washington had not only "provoked and accelerated the arms race," Rodríguez said, "but they encourage dangerous focal points of war as well."

But Washington's military buildup has not escaped the judgment of public opinion within the United States and around the world, he said.

"Members of Congress, social activists, scientists, cardinals and simple priests, union leaders and feminists, began joining their voices, raising their protests to condemn the dangerous intention by Reagan and his associates to conceive of arming themselves first to negotiate later."

Hails Brezhnev's pledge

He pointed out that even George Kennan, former U.S. ambassador to Moscow, had admitted that it is the United States, not the Soviet Union, that has led the development of nuclear weaponry and used these fiendish devices.

Rodríguez hailed Brezhnev's no-first-strike pledge and called on Washington to do the same. He said that Cuba "strongly advocates immediate negotiations" on arms limitations and the prohibition of new weapons of any kind. He called for the dissolution of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force.

Rodríguez also voiced concern that Reagan's offer to negotiate with Moscow was "only a propaganda maneuver, a temporary concession to United States and world public opinion."

He noted that the Reagan administration had not even accepted the idea of a bilateral nuclear freeze.

"If the United States government took a sensible course toward negotiations," he said, "it would begin by accepting the nuclear freeze proposed to it and which by itself would bring peace of mind — for its content and its meaning — to all the peoples demanding it.

"It would give satisfaction as well to the 72

percent of United States citizens who, according to the polls, said they were in favor of that freeze."

Rodríguez took up the Reagan administration's "tendency to present all developments of our times as if conditioned by the contradictions — regarded as insuperable — between East and West."

Instead, Rodríguez placed the cause of war on the "philosophy of plunder," the capitalist drive for greater profits.

"No one is attempting to hide the fact that the socialist and capitalist systems are substantially contradictory, and that they advocate different and opposed solutions to the social and political problems of our times.

"But to turn this ideological contradiction into an unavoidable military confrontation, to interpret the struggle born of the aspirations to social justice as a mere instrument of great-power policy, to attempt to record each political and social development anywhere on earth as a mere episode in a magnified battle between East and West, is to ignore the course of history."

Rodríguez continued:

"No one will convince the Salvadoran peasants who take up arms — desperate from long decades of misery, oppression, humiliation, spurred on by hunger, by maltreatment — that their struggles, begun 52 years ago, are a consequence of the emergence of a socialist Cuba, some hundreds of miles from El Salvador, that is manipulating them at the behest of the Soviet Union, which is acting thus at a distance of 8,000 miles from the Salvador scene."

He pointed out that the Malvinas war found its origin in the same philosophy of plunder, perpetrated by Britain, which "refuses to realize that colonialism is outdated in our times, and attempts to recover by force what it is not entitled to by right."

He also cited the threats to Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, the U.S. backing to South African mercenaries, and Washington's intervention in El Salvador as further instances of this philosophy of plunder.

Right to self-defense

While calling for peace, Rodríguez explained why it was not contradictory for Cuba at the same time to be strengthening its military forces. "In the past few months," he said, "Cuba received what many might term huge quantities of modern and sophisticated weapons. . . . Why have we strengthened our military capability, almost doubling it in one year?"

Rodríguez cited the persistent attacks on Cuba since its revolution in 1959, noting that the Reagan administration has stepped up this aggression.

"The experience of the Malvinas and of Lebanon demonstrates . . . that criticism of smaller countries for contributing to the arms race by their purchase of weapons is not always right.

"To arm oneself in order to attack one's

neighbors is reprehensible; to arm oneself in order to exercise the 'legitimate and undeniable right to self-defense,' mentioned by Fidel Castro, is necessary against the philosophy of plunder."

Peace in hands of the people

Rodríguez regretted that nothing in the Special Session "allows us to expect that the peace we need, and that the world demands, could result from our deliberations, which seem destined to be fruitless."

Nevertheless, he said, his faith in the cause for peace had not weakened, referring to the demonstrations around the world and particularly the June 12 New York protest.

Speakers blast imperialist aggression

UNITED NATIONS — In the debate during the UN Special Session on Disarmament, a number of representatives from member states of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries targetted Washington and its allies as responsible for aggression in the world today and for the threat of nuclear war.

On June 8, Ali Akbar Velayati, the foreign minister of **Iran**, pointed out that representatives from the world's nations had come together at the UN to discuss peace and disarmament at the same time that wars were raging around the world.

Velayati — along with representatives from Angola, Jordan, Qatar, and other countries — condemned the Israeli war on Lebanon.

He also attacked Washington's increasing war budget and pointed out that "the export of American weapons to the region where my country is located, that is the Middle East . . . reached \$8.5 billion [in 1980]. Generally, this export was for the protection of despotic regimes and for the purpose of suppressing nations of the Third World."

The resources and labor going into arms production could help end unemployment, poverty, and disease in these countries, he said.

Velayati blasted Washington's chemical warfare in Vietnam and its formation of the Rapid Deployment Force.

Velayati explained that the colonial and semicolonial countries — that is, the victims of imperialism — have the potential power to help lead a fight against the warmakers, if they put aside their disagreements and unite. He called for putting an "end to artificial disputes," "establishing a system of mutual guaranteed nonuse of force in their relations," and fighting together "for a collective human ideal."

Salem Saleh Mohammed, the minister for foreign affairs of **Democratic Yemen** (South Yemen), spoke after Velayati. He stated that "efforts for disarmament are continuously impeded by the unprecedented U.S. military buildup in the Middle East and Latin America, and by the escalation of imperialist intervention against the security of sovereign states, against people struggling for their national indepen-

It is "in the hands of the people" that "the decisive force" for peace lies.

"The peoples need food, schools, medicines, hospitals, factories, and not tanks, battleships, and nuclear arsenals. Let us, then, join the action of all peoples to condemn these harbingers of death who are the same ones that for centuries have taken advantage of the peoples' misery.

"If we persist," he concluded, "it will be possible to impose upon them the decisions that today remain fruitless and mere useless papers. And we must persist, with the confidence that behind us, awaiting our leadership, there are hundreds of millions prepared for this battle for disarmament and peace." □

dence, their right to self-determination, and for the elimination of colonial and racist regimes."

He also declared that "the Zionist aggression against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples was just another example of the oppressive, hostile policies of U.S. imperialism, determined to undermine all progressive and nationalist regimes opposing its policies."

Alberto Martini Urdaneta of **Venezuela** drew attention to the British government's aggression against Argentina, as did other speakers. He said that "in the denuclearized zone of Latin America, one witnesses today the military aggression by a nuclear arms possessor," Britain.

Several representatives from Africa called attention to the aggressive policies of the South African regime.

Paulo Jorge, the minister for external affairs of **Angola**, who spoke June 10, pointed out that it was the Reagan administration, its allies, and "their favorite tools and agents, namely the Pretoria and Tel Aviv regimes, who are to be blamed for the deterioration in the international situation."

He noted that the apartheid regime enjoyed the support and connivance of Washington and its allies. He also likened the South African regime to that in Israel, which had dared "once again with insolent arrogance to defy the international community by carrying out an armed invasion deep into Lebanon on the flimsiest pretext."

Joaquim Chissano, the foreign minister of **Mozambique** stated June 14, "As long as there will be oppressed peoples, there will be no peace in the world. Disarmament in Africa runs, necessarily, though the eradication of colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, and imperialism. The material, diplomatic, and political support to the liberation movements is an essential component in the struggle for peace and disarmament."

It is regimes like South Africa and the imperialist powers, he said, "that constitute the threat to international security and hinder the process of disarmament." □

A revolution begins to unfold

Soldiers' revolt sparks unprecedented upheaval

By Ernest Harsch

For six months now, a revolution has been under way in the West African country of Ghana.

It began on Dec. 31, 1981, when a group of rank-and-file soldiers and junior officers overthrew the corrupt and repressive regime of Hilla Limann. The ouster of Limann and the coming to power of a new government headed by Flight Lieut. Jerry Rawlings set off a wave of national jubilation and the beginning of the most massive revolutionary upheaval in Ghana's history.

From one corner of the country to the other, workers, farmers, soldiers, students, women, youth, the unemployed — all those who have suffered for so many years from exploitation and oppression — have been mobilizing and

This is the first of two articles on the developing revolution in Ghana. The second one will examine the level of mass mobilization and the imperialist and counterrevolutionary attacks on the revolution.

organizing to carry through what is popularly known as the "holy war." Mass demonstrations and rallies have been held in virtually every city, town, and village. Dozens of new political, social, and labor organizations are being thrown up.

While almost every sector of Ghana's population has been drawn into this unprecedented political ferment, it is the urban workers who have proven the most militant and active. In the factories, mines, docks, and other workplaces, they have been establishing various workers committees, throwing up new trade-union leaderships, exposing corrupt managers, and fighting to win better working conditions and some say over the running of the enterprises.

Broad-based citizens' organizations — called People's Defence Committees — are being set up in the workplaces, neighborhoods, and army barracks.

Responding to popular sentiment, the ruling Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) has initiated new social measures — despite Ghana's extreme economic problems. The measures have included strict price controls, efforts to improve education and health care, and a program to give land to productive farmers.

At the same time, Ghana's wealthy and corrupt businessmen, traders, senior military officers, and managers have been thrown onto the defensive. Some have fled the country, some have been imprisoned, and many have

been dragged before public investigating committees to account for their shady business dealings.

The large imperialist companies that dominate much of Ghana's economy have also met with rising anti-imperialist sentiment.

Officials in Washington, London, and Paris have been watching developments in Ghana with extreme concern. For them, much is at stake.

With a population of 14 million, Ghana is the second most populous country in West Africa, after Nigeria. Its land is highly productive, and it has major mineral deposits, including bauxite, manganese, diamonds, and gold. Ghana is relatively more industrialized and urbanized than many other African countries; about a third of the population lives in the cities.

How the revolution in Ghana progresses can have a big impact beyond the country's borders. Ghana has traditionally played a vanguard role in Africa, and developments there are often keenly followed by people in other African countries. In 1950, Ghanaian workers organized the first general strike in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1957, Ghana became the first African colony to win its independence.

To prevent working people elsewhere from learning what is going on in Ghana today, the big-business press, with one or two exceptions, has imposed a virtual blackout on news from that country. When they have broken their silence, it has been to slander the revolution by painting a picture of massive repression and of economic and political chaos.

This has served to cover up the imperialists' moves to intervene against Ghana. An international economic and financial squeeze is being put on Ghana's already weak economy in order to worsen the plight of its people and try to undermine support for the revolution. Counter-revolutionaries within Ghana are being encouraged to step up their activities.

'Classism is rampant'

One example of this hostile propaganda campaign came in an article in the May-June issue of the New York journal *Africa Report*. Written by an anonymous American living in Ghana, it reflected the fears both of Ghana's capitalists and merchants and of their allies abroad:

Classism is rampant. Anyone who exhibits signs of material success is assumed to be a criminal. . . . Workers with neither educational nor managerial training are entrusted with policymaking roles. Those who have suffered penury and unemployment now feel they have their chance. . . .

Many feel insecure with the PNDC at the

helm. . . . Anyone with property fears he or she will be called before the Citizens' Vetting Committee, found guilty of some impropriety, and levied a stiff fine. . . .

Businessmen grumble that Rawlings has "spoiled the country."

But it is not Rawlings who has "spoiled the country," nor the workers and other poor Ghanaians who are now acting to advance their interests. If Ghana was "spoiled," it was by this very same class of businessmen and traders that ruled Ghana for the past two and a half decades, together with their imperialist backers.

Ghana's first independent government, under Kwame Nkrumah, managed to register some modest economic and social advances. Efforts were made to improve social conditions and to introduce a limited degree of industrialization. Nkrumah's radical nationalism and pan-Africanism appealed to popular anti-imperialist sentiments.

By the early 1960s, however, the glitter began to fade. The government's failure to rid Ghana of imperialist economic domination — or to counter the rise of an indigenous class of petty capitalists — led to widespread disillusionment. The leadership of Nkrumah's party became ridden with corruption, and more openly proimperialist forces reared their heads.

In 1966, Nkrumah was overthrown in a military coup sponsored by the British and U.S. intelligence services.

From then until 1979, Ghana was ruled by a succession of proimperialist military regimes, except for a couple of years when the military allowed an equally proimperialist civilian administration to hold power. They threw the country open even further to U.S. and Western European corporations.

Dependent on the world capitalist market, Ghana's economy was severely hit by the international recession of the early 1970s. During the 1970s, Ghana's per capita gross domestic product declined by an average of 3 percent a year. A foreign debt of nearly \$1.5 billion built up. The gold industry was allowed to decay, and mismanagement and poor prices for farmers led to a general decline of agriculture. Unemployment grew and the high inflation rate cut deeply into living standards.

In the meantime, government officials, both military and civilian, used their positions to amass fortunes. Since there was very little indigenous privately owned industry, Ghana's aspiring bourgeoisie could accumulate wealth and capital only through graft, bribery, and backroom deals. Corruption — popularly



Mass rally in Accra in support of revolution.

known as *kalabule* (keep it quiet) — was the norm.

The first 'housecleaning'

Over the years, popular anger occasionally burst out in strikes, demonstrations, and small-scale rebellions, but the military hierarchy had always been able to contain it through repression or cosmetic reshuffling of government officials.

On June 4, 1979, however, something new happened. The officers suddenly found themselves facing the guns of their own soldiers.

A few weeks earlier, a young air force flight lieutenant, Jerry Rawlings, flew over the capital, Accra, in his jet in an abortive attempt to rally support for a coup. He was promptly arrested and brought before a court-martial.

Speaking from the dock in his own defense, Rawlings railed against the corruption of the top military officers. He explained that he had not wanted to seize power for himself, but to purge the upper ranks of the armed forces who had exploited civilians and the lower ranks for so long. Ghana, he suggested, should go "the Ethiopian way" — a reference to the Ethiopian revolution of 1974.

Rawlings's remarks were reported in the press, and he became popular overnight. Posters appeared demanding his release.

On the night of June 3, a day before the court-martial was to reconvene, a group of civilian sympathizers attempted to smuggle in to Rawlings a copy of Fidel Castro's 1953 "History Will Absolve Me" speech from the Moncada trial. By then, however, Rawlings's supporters within the military were already going into action.

Early on June 4, a group of soldiers blasted open the Special Branch compound where Rawlings was being held. As other groups rallied support among the ranks and junior officers, Rawlings was whisked off to the radio station to announce the overthrow of Gen. Fred Akuffo's regime.

Rawlings declared that the troops would undertake a "housecleaning exercise" within the military. He also promised that the previously scheduled elections would take place and that the soldiers would hand power over to an elected civilian regime by October. "But before the elections," Rawlings added, "justice which had been denied the Ghanaian workers will have to take place."

Resistance by the senior officers was soon crushed. The ranks and junior officers elected representatives to an Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), of which Rawlings became chairman. Many senior officers were arrested or had their heads shaved by the troops.

Eight top officers — including Akuffo and two other former heads of state — were marched before public firing squads, while huge crowds chanted, "Action! Action!" and "Finish them all off!"

Special tribunals set up by the AFRC tried and sentenced scores of officers and civilian officials for corrupt practices. Prices were controlled and rents were reduced. The AFRC, and Rawlings in particular, became immensely popular. Large rallies of workers, students, and farmers greeted AFRC members around the country.

The goals of the AFRC were limited, however. It did not set out to change Ghana's social or economic structure. According to Rawlings, the basic problem was "dishonesty," that is, corruption. The AFRC's measures were thus directed against only the visible symbols of corruption, not the economic system on which it thrived. The Ghanaian bourgeoisie as such was not directly challenged, nor were the imperialist companies that exploit the country.

Nevertheless, the 112 days in which the AFRC held power did have a lasting impact on popular political consciousness. How the ruling class functioned had been stripped bare for everyone to see, and the spectacle of top generals facing the firing squad and wealthy busi-

nessmen being thrown into jail showed that they were not invincible. Working people gained greater confidence in their own strength.

A lesson in bourgeois democracy

Shortly before the AFRC handed power over to the elected civilian regime of Hilla Limann, Rawlings warned, "I can sense waves of a Revolution worse than what is currently taking place in the country should the incoming civilian government underestimate the revolutionary intelligence of the ordinary Ghanaian and take him for a ride."

That is exactly what the Limann regime tried to do.

No sooner had the new government come into office than *kalabule* again became rampant. Members of Limann's own People's National Party (PNP) hurriedly began lining their pockets. Many of those jailed by the AFRC were quietly released.

Limann liberalized the country's investment code to make Ghana more attractive to foreign companies. Negotiations were opened with the International Monetary Fund, which pressed for the introduction of severe austerity measures. Unemployment increased, certain daily necessities became scarce, and inflation went through the ceiling, reaching 121 percent in 1981.

At the same time, the Limann government went after the former members of the AFRC and their supporters. Rawlings and several of his colleagues were forcibly "retired" from the armed forces in an effort to isolate them from the ranks. Others were sent out of the country. Scores of rank-and-file soldiers were secretly tried and imprisoned.

Military Intelligence agents tried to assassinate Capt. Kojo Tsikata, a popular AFRC member who had been arrested several times, tortured, and sentenced to death by previous military regimes.

But Limann's repression failed to intimidate working people. The country was swept by waves of strikes involving public utility workers, dockers, airline employees, postal workers, teachers, agricultural laborers, and others. In June 1980, hundreds of striking workers at the government-run Ghana Industrial Holding Corp. stormed into the Parliament building to dramatize their demands (several thousand strikers were then fired from their jobs in retaliation).

Students, particularly the radical leadership of the National Union of Ghana Students, protested the government's new investment code and called for forging a worker-student alliance. Various radical organizations were formed, including the June Fourth Movement, with which Rawlings was most closely identified.

Rawlings himself remained politically active. He refused to leave the country, as the government wanted him to do, and continued to draw large crowds at public rallies. He criticized the repression and the resurgence of corruption, and reminded the Limann regime that

it was in power only on "probation."

Within the military itself, the government and senior officers failed in their efforts to reimpose the old chain of command. The ranks and junior officers refused to accept the unquestioned authority of the discredited military hierarchy.

'Operation Holy War'

Finally, on Dec. 31, 1981, the Limann regime's "probation" period came to an end.

Early in the morning, eight former soldiers who had been kicked out of the army seized three armored cars and stormed into a military base in Accra to launch what has since been dubbed "Operation Holy War." As word got out that Rawlings supported the move, the ranks again rallied to the rebels.

With the overwhelming majority of the troops — and the population as a whole — backing the action, the government was soon overthrown. The constitution was suspended, all the bourgeois parliamentary parties were banned, and the new seven-member Provisional National Defence Council, headed by Rawlings, took over the reins of government.

The December 31 uprising was much more than a repetition of the June 1979 mutiny. The population — and the political leadership around Rawlings — had learned many political lessons in the intervening two and a half years.

A few weeks after the overthrow of Limann, Rawlings explained that he had been "slightly naïve" in 1979. "I just assumed and always did that oppression, or suppression, was an accidental human error. Now I know better. It was nothing but a deliberate and organized affair."

The PNDC again stressed the fight against corruption, but this time it was placed in a broader social context, as part of a struggle against economic exploitation in general.

Rawlings set the tone in his very first speech on December 31:

"This is not a coup. I ask for nothing less than a revolution — something that will transform the social and economic order of this country. . . .

"Today we initiated a holy war."

Rawlings did not call on the population to remain calm and leave everything to the new government. He urged them to form People's Defence Committees and other organizations to push the struggle forward.

"There is no justice in this society," Rawlings declared, "and so long as there is no justice, I would just say there shall be no peace."

What had begun in Ghana, Rawlings said in a January 5 speech, was "a democratic revolution to assure for our people the basic conditions of their survival. Their right to eat and feed their families, to be clothed, to attend to their health needs through the provision of basic medical facilities, the right to education for their children so that what they themselves have not been able to attain, their children can work to it."

Rawlings also made it clear that not everyone in Ghana could be part of this "democratic

revolution." He warned the ruling class, "We know that the concerted national effort we seek will be spurned by those who live in idle comfort and welcome any oppression that will sustain their situation. Such people thus can count themselves out of the struggle ahead. Let them know that they must not stand in the way or try to instigate foreign countries against us, be-



RAWLINGS

cause the people who yearn for a better, more dignified and more just nation out-number them by far."

At a massive labor demonstration in Accra January 8, Rawlings called on the thousands of cheering workers "to take the initiative of revolution into your own hands."

"What will be justice in this country," Rawlings continued, "will be justice of the people. . . . It does not make any sense to me why the very people who are in the mines, who are in the factories, using their blood, sweat and tears to create these goods cannot have some kind of money out of their own blood, sweat and tears. I am saying let no man make money at the expense of another man."

'Down with imperialist domination!'

Unlike in 1979, the targets of this upsurge are not just the exploiters within Ghana, but also the imperialist companies and powers that have kept Ghana impoverished for so long.

On January 28, just four weeks after Limann's overthrow, tens of thousands of workers, farmers, and students marched through Accra in Ghana's largest anti-imperialist demonstration in more than three decades.

In reaction to reports that British troops, with U.S. backing, were planning to intervene, the demonstrators marched on the British and U.S. embassies, with placards declar-

ing "Down with imperialist domination," "We will resist U.S. and British hypocrisy," and "Ghana is for Ghanaians."

The PNDC supported this demonstration, and Rawlings was the featured speaker.

The PNDC chairman pointed out to the crowd that Ghana had not yet won genuine independence, that all it won 25 years ago was "flag and national anthem independence."

Sgt. Aolga Akata-Pore, another member of the PNDC, put it this way in an interview in the May 24 issue of the London weekly *West Africa*:

We realise that Ghana's economy is a neo-colonial one in the sense that we are at the end of producing raw materials which we supply to the factories of our ex-colonial master and others. . . .

We realise that until we are able to break that neo-colonial structure of our economy, we are not going to make any headway. And we are not going to sit down for any foreign countries to dictate the nature or trend of our own economy to us. We are going to break this chain!

Akata-Pore pointed out that the PNDC was not against foreign investments as such, "but we cannot allow a situation in which one comes to plunder our resources in the name of investment. Such investments can go to hell!"

In the PNDC's very first declarations, it stated that the new government would review all foreign investment agreements concluded by previous regimes.

Members of the PNDC have singled out several of the largest imperialist companies operating in Ghana for particularly sharp criticism.

During the March 6 independence day ceremonies, Rawlings blasted the British Lonrho firm which has a large stake in the Ashanti goldfields. He pointed out that the Limann regime had allowed Lonrho to appoint a managing director for the government-run State Gold Mining Corp. and was considering Lonrho's outright purchase of the Tarkwa goldfield. He declared such a "monopoly situation" unacceptable.

During the inauguration of a workers' committee at the Accra branch of Standard Bank, PNDC member Rev. Kwabena Damuah denounced the existing agreement with Valco (Volta Aluminum Co.), a subsidiary of the U.S. giant Kaiser Aluminum, and called for its review. Valco is the largest foreign company in Ghana. For a long time it did not pay taxes or customs duties, and benefited from exceptionally cheap electricity rates to produce alumina from foreign bauxite, while Ghana's bauxite lay unexploited.

The government-run Ghana Broadcasting Corp. has denounced an agreement made in 1978 giving the U.S. Agripetco concern exclusive drilling rights — for 30 years — at Ghana's Saltpond oil field.

In late May, the PNDC decided not to renew an agreement between the government and the British company, Tate and Lyle Technical Services, for the management of the large Tono and Veia irrigation projects in the Upper Region of northern Ghana. Like all other agreements previously signed, Sergeant Aka-

ta-Pore told a gathering in the north, "the agreement was inimical, an insult, a complete sell-out and a big drain on the scarce foreign exchange resources of the country."

In addition, the PNDC has rejected the International Monetary Fund's conditions for the granting of credits to Ghana. On the very day that Limann was overthrown, an IMF delegation was in Accra to press for the adoption of austerity measures and the devaluation of Ghana's currency, the cedi. The bankers left disappointed.

New international ties

Parallel with this new emphasis on Ghana's anti-imperialist struggle, the PNDC has acted to change the country's foreign policy.

In contrast to the blatantly proimperialist stance of the Limann regime, the Rawlings government has established new ties with various workers states and with governments in the colonial and semicolonial world that are themselves in conflict with imperialism.

One of the PNDC's first measures was to reestablish diplomatic ties with Libya, which had been broken by Limann. The Libyan regime of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi was quick to respond to Ghana's requests for aid.

At a time when the Nigerian government had cut off Ghana's oil supplies, the Libyans donated tons of oil to Ghana, free of charge. Several shipments of medicine and food were also sent. After a Ghanaian delegation led by Chris Atim visited Libya, the Libyans also agreed to provide 60 percent of Ghana's oil needs over the following six months at a reduced price as a gesture of solidarity. A 15-year trade agreement was also signed, which included provisions for joint agricultural development projects.

Because of previous Libyan agricultural aid to Ghana, which had been cut off by Limann's severing of diplomatic relations, the Ghana National Farmers Council was loud in its praise of the reestablished ties between the two countries.

Within several weeks of Limann's ouster, an Iranian delegation arrived in Accra. Like the Libyans, the Iranians also offered to help Ghana overcome its oil shortages. A later delegation concluded an agreement for expanded trade between Ghana and Iran, under which the Iranians would supply oil and technical expertise for oil exploration, and the Ghanaians would in turn export cocoa, timber, wood products, and minerals to Iran.

In June, Kojo Tsikata, now a special adviser to the PNDC, visited Angola. He met with President José Eduardo dos Santos and announced that an Angolan-Ghanaian commission had been set up to strengthen the ties between the two countries. Tsikata also stressed that Ghana wanted to establish closer ties with other countries in Africa, such as Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and the Congo.

The selection of Tsikata to head the delegation to Angola was symbolic. While Angola was still a Portuguese colony, he had fought for a time with the guerrillas of the now-ruling

People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

Ghana has recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, the government set up by the Polisario Front, which is fighting for the independence of Western Sahara from Morocco.

In March, Atim led a major delegation to the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. He later announced that those governments had agreed to help Ghana relaunch various industrial development projects that had been initiated under Nkrumah but abandoned when he was overthrown, as well as set up new ones. These include sugar, tire, and tractor factories, in addition to help in various agricultural, food processing, fishing, construction, mining, and pharmaceutical projects.

Moscow agreed to provide Ghana with a credit of \$10.7 million, repayable at the favorable rate of 5 percent a year over 10 years.

In April, Atim led a delegation to Cuba. The Ghanaians met with Fidel Castro and visited a local Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR) to observe how they function. Several weeks later, a 10-member Cuban delegation arrived in Ghana to begin discussions on Cuban assistance in developing Ghana's economy. A Cuban medical team was also expected to arrive shortly.

Fighting kalabule

While the government's stand against Ghana's domination by imperialist interests has certainly been an important factor in its popularity, so have its measures to combat corruption and improve the conditions of daily life for working people.

The PNDC's first official act was to launch investigations into corruption. Law 1 provided for the establishment of a Citizens' Vetting Committee (CVC), whose task is to investigate not only suspected cases of corruption, but to look into the financial records of every Ghanaian who has bank balances in credit in excess of 50,000 cedis (2.75 cedis are officially equivalent to US\$1, although in fact the cedi is worth much less). The excesses were frozen.

As a result of the CVC's investigations, scores of corrupt businessmen, managers, merchants, police and military officers, customs inspectors, and government and administrative officials have been dismissed from office, fined, and jailed. Those fined were given 48 hours to pay, or else have all their assets confiscated by the state. All the proceedings of the CVC are public.

In one 12-day period in Kumasi alone, the CVC levied tax payments and fines of 55 million cedis. It collected 17 million of that within 48 hours, and gave the guilty a month to pay the balance. To ensure that they would, it took the titles to their houses and vehicles as security and seized their passports.

A major crackdown was launched against traders who sold essential goods above the officially allowed price ceiling, or who were illegally hoarding goods. Workers, soldiers, and students conducted searches of warehouses

and homes and seized large quantities of hoarded goods. PNDC member Joshua Amarte Kwei declared that all hoarded goods would be confiscated and that the homes in which they were found would be seized and given to workers.

Popular anger at the traders' standard price-gouging boiled over into outbursts in Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Koforidua, Tamale, and elsewhere. Entire market areas were burned down or smashed up by workers, students, or soldiers. In some areas, troops tried to circumvent the merchants entirely by selling goods directly to villagers at the official prices.

On top of this, the PNDC ordered sharp reductions in the prices of many basic goods, transportation fares, and tuition fees. Businessmen, fearful of popular wrath, sometimes competed with each other in slashing prices.

The PNDC also took action against urban landlords. It decreed major rent reductions — in some cases by up to one half — and set up a House Rent Administrative Council to oversee all rents in the country.

Emboldened by these measures, neighborhood committees have mobilized against landlords who try to raise their rents. In Achimota, for instance, one landlord who tried to force tenants to accept a doubling of rent by cutting off the electricity was forced by the local neighborhood committee to roll back the rent hikes; for single rooms, the new rate was less than it had previously been.

Such measures have already had a significant impact on workers' living standards. Official prices have generally been brought down by 15-20 percent, and rents and transportation fares by 40 percent. For a country that had one of the highest inflation rates in the world, before the PNDC took power, this is no small achievement.

Another important action taken by the government was to reinstate several thousand workers who had been fired from their jobs at the Ghana Industrial Holding Corp. in June 1980. The leader of that workers struggle was Joshua Amarte Kwei, now a member of the PNDC.

Rawlings and other PNDC members have tried to assure "honest" businessmen that they have nothing to fear. But in a country like Ghana, where corruption was standard business practice, such "honest" businessmen are few and far between.

Moreover, speaking at the inauguration of a Workers Defence Committee at a factory in Accra in mid-April, Sergeant Akata-Pore warned that private companies whose activities were not in line with the aims of the revolution could be nationalized.

[Next: *Workers mobilize to advance revolution.*]

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Farmers and the Cuban revolution — I

Fidel Castro's speech to National Association of Small Farmers

[The following is the first part of a speech given by Cuban President Fidel Castro at the closing session of the Sixth Congress of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) on May 17. The text is taken from the May 30 English-language *Granma* weekly, published in Havana.

[The second part of Castro's speech will appear in the next issue of *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Distinguished Visiting Delegations;
Comrades of the Party and Government;
Comrade Delegates;
Guests:

Three very important, historic and memorable dates are being commemorated today. The first is Niceto Pérez's assassination, in 1946. As Pepe Ramírez stated in his report, as time went by, that death took on the nature of a victory. On another May 17 — this time in 1959, in a liberated homeland and in the mountains where history-making revolutionary battles were fought — the Agrarian Reform Law was enacted. And, as Comrade Pepe also recalled, the 1st Congress of the National Association of Small Farmers was held on yet another May 17.

It is good to make a review of the past every so often. On this occasion, we should do so in order to review the long way we have come in the last 23 years and to recall the Agrarian Reform Law, the situation that existed in those days, what our thoughts were at the time and what things we were concerned about. We didn't even have a clear idea of what we were going to do — that is, what forms of production we were going to adopt. Our main purpose was to fulfill our promise of putting an end to the latifundium system and to the exploitation of our agricultural workers and small farmers. The main issue — the topic that was most widely discussed — however, was how much land we were going to leave in the hands of the latifundists, what kind of agrarian reform we were going to have and how radical it was going to be, because everybody was fully aware of the challenge implicit in that agrarian reform, of the battle it would initiate.

I remember that, at the time, we had a group of what we might call technicians — to be more exact, they were a group of amateurs in agrarian affairs — who, if I remember correctly, included Carlos Rafael Rodríguez; Antonio Núñez Jiménez, who had written a book on Cuba's geography; and Che. (APPLAUSE) The burning issue was what limitations we should place on land ownership. A number of U.S. enterprises owned as much as 268,600 hectares each. One day we came to an

Our main purpose was to fulfill our promise of putting an end to the latifundium system and to the exploitation of our agricultural workers and small farmers . . .

agreement and decided, "OK, the limit will be 403 hectares and, in exceptional cases, when the land is being worked extremely well, 1,343."

In any other country, 403 hectares would have sounded like an exaggeration, but here, in a country infested with latifundia that covered thousands of hectares, a 403-hectare limit was really very low. That was the key issue: how stringent we were going to make that agrarian reform. It meant the disappearance of latifundia in Cuba — including the ones owned by the imperialists. That was what we decided.

That group of technicians, assisted by other comrades, kept working on that Agrarian Reform Law. The really important thing wasn't the details of the Law but rather its rigorouslyness. Such topics as development areas and the distribution of land were discussed. Of course, we'd also decided to put an end to land rents and sharecropping; to give squatters title to their land; and to turn the land over to all those who worked it as tenant farmers, sharecroppers, small and middle peasant cane growers, etc. That was one of the bases of that Law: to free the farmers from exploitation and give them ownership of the land.

We weren't too sure about what we were going to do about the latifundia however. Up until then, up to the very end, almost the only thing that, according to the technicians, was clearly stated in the Law was land distribution. That term was always welcomed.

I'd been mulling over these land problems for a long time. I remember

We talked about land distribution, and freeing the farmers from land rent, etc., but we also talked about cooperatives . . .

that, at the time of the attack on the Moncada Garrison [1953], we used to talk about higher forms of production — very carefully, picking our way, but purposefully. We talked about land distribution, and freeing the farmers from land rent, etc., but we also talked about cooperatives.

Taking a last look at the law — the draft Law — on the plane, reading it over and over, I couldn't find the term "cooperatives" anywhere, so I added a paragraph — something that was perfectly legal, since the Law hadn't been enacted yet (LAUGHTER) — and included cooperatives in the Law. It's a good thing I did. Otherwise, the creation of cooperatives would have seemed a violation of the Law. That was the way one of the higher forms of production was included in the text. I say "one of the forms" because the other was the state enterprises. They weren't included. They were instituted, but not against the Law. Actually, they were instituted in a revolutionary, de facto fashion within the Law, because the 1st Agrarian Reform Law didn't mention state farms. They were the result of how our views on agricultural problems evolved. Needless to say, the proclamation of the Law produced great enthusiasm among the farmers.

I used to give a lot of thought to these questions. Agrarian reforms in the form of land distributions were important in revolutionary ideas because they were usually something that the farmers demanded and there are specific political circumstances in which land distribution is the only alternative, simply because it is the most politic measure, the one that gets the greatest revolutionary support — an excellent measure, but one that can destroy agricultural production.

The Revolution had tremendous support among the farmers and workers, and, for strictly political reasons, we shouldn't create hundreds of thousands of small farms. Besides, that type of distribution had another problem: there wasn't enough land to go around, and, whenever land distribution was mentioned, a lot of people in the cities, even, expected to be given a plot of land. Land distribution at the rate of one *caballería* [13.43 hectares] per capita would benefit from 100,000 to 200,000 families, but hundreds of thousands of families would get nothing. To avoid this, we would have to divide the land into even smaller sections, which would only make the situation worse.

There was really no political need to use such a method of land distribution. What we were doing by giving ownership of the land to the 100,000 families who worked it was simply distributing the land

once owned by the latifundists.

In our country, agriculture had some capitalist aspects; enormous cattle ranches and sugarcane, rice and other plantations. We also had an agricultural proletariat headed by sugarcane workers that had engaged in outstanding actions in the labor struggles. It pained me to think that land distribution would mean a step back for the labor movement, the revolutionary movement. This was apart from the fact that I was convinced that land distribution would make it impossible to maintain sugarcane production and agricultural production in general at the levels required by the country, and our country couldn't take chances with agricultural production, because it was very dependent on its agricultural exports.

I had visions of a vast canefield divided up among 10 owners and each one of them growing some bananas, cassava, rice and dry beans, with a little bit of land left over for sugarcane. What a future for the sugar industry!

That was when we began to analyze the advantages of not distributing the land and to play with the idea of cooperatives. Later we realized — at least I used to think that way when I saw an enormous cattle ranch with thousands of head of cattle and from 10 to 12 workers — that we could turn that ranch into a cooperative and make those 10 or 12 workers rich overnight. We saw other types of rice plantations with similar circumstances and we decided to create the first state enterprises on those large cattle ranches and other large agricultural enterprises. Even so, we went on developing cooperatives in the sugarcane areas, since that was clearly preferable to dividing up the land and distributing it, and the first sugarcane cooperatives were created.

Those cooperatives lacked a natural base, though. They had no historical base, because they were created with the farmers who owned the land. We were creating artificial cooperatives, turning the agricultural workers into members of cooperatives. Perhaps inspired by Martí's "A slave to the age and doctrines," I favored turning the cooperatives that were run by workers rather than farmers into state enterprises.

It goes without saying that our actions will have to be judged in the future. We can't judge them impartially and say they were correct, they were the perfect thing to do. The fact remains, however, that that was how the state enterprises were born. An analysis of that action after so many years leads us to the conclusion that it was really an act of great daring, because at that time we didn't have any cadres, managers, engineers or veterinarians — nothing! And something similar occurred with regard to industry.

The fact is, I always rejected the idea of a social retrogression as regards agricultural ownership, the idea of a socialist revolution in which the workers don't become the owners of the factories and where no cooperatives of industrial workers are created, and I strongly favored turning those lands that had belonged to the latifundists and imperialist enterprises into socialist enterprises with the same status as the factories and industry as a whole.

Exactly the same thing happened in the sugar mills as in the agricultural enterprises. Who should we choose as manager? A revolutionary worker. Who should manage a farm? A revolutionary. What were the

Our agricultural workers — the farmers' closest brothers in the proletariat — have done some tremendous work during the past 23 years, in spite of hard, difficult conditions . . .

requisites? That he be revolutionary. Maybe he didn't have more than a second- or third-grade education, and, if anybody decides to do some historical research, he'll find out that some of the farm managers were illiterate.

In those days, there wasn't anything resembling an engineer or a veterinarian — nothing — in either the factories or the countryside, yet our country managed to develop its industrial and agricultural production under those conditions. It's really incredible!

The state didn't take over the cane areas in the first year of the



Harvesting the sugar crop.

Revolution. If I'm not mistaken, this was done in the second or third year — we didn't want to upset sugar production, since the country was so dependent on its sugar exports.

We didn't have any trouble with the first sugar harvests, because there was still a large surplus of manpower. Our difficulties began when unemployment began to disappear, when the reserve of hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers we'd had in Cuba began to disappear as a result of the revolutionary measures that were taken. People with absolutely no experience were managing factories and farms, and over 100,000 industrial workers had to be mobilized to bring in the sugar harvests, especially in provinces with small populations, such as Camagüey, Ciego de Avila, Las Tunas, etc. The beginning of the sugar harvest was always accompanied by the agony of the mobilizations.

We said that that land measure was an act of tremendous daring, but a revolution necessarily implies daring, and anyone who isn't daring will never be a revolutionary. (APPLAUSE) Without daring, we would never have had our October 10, 1868, War of Independence; José Martí and Máximo Gómez would never have landed at Playitas, just the two of them, without any troops; Antonio Maceo would never have landed at Baracoa; the revolution for independence would never have taken place; and, of course, a socialist Revolution would never have been initiated in our country, only 90 miles from the United States. (APPLAUSE)

That is how our agrarian revolution was begun. Then came the 2nd Agrarian Reform Law, because what had seemed very little in the first Law looked [like] too much later on. Besides, according to the first Law, the latifundists were left with 403 hectares, and they usually included the workshops and the main installations. The first Law affected a few hundred owners — perhaps 1,000 in all — but the second one affected thousands of them by setting the limit at 67 hectares.

Special attention was given to state enterprises, and they continued to develop. Vast investments were made in roads, reservoirs and other projects. The independent farmers weren't ignored. The farmers were given credit, guaranteed markets at stable prices and every other kind of assistance possible. Living conditions in the countryside were improved, and education and health care were extended to the rural areas. In a nutshell, a veritable revolution was wrought in the farmers' living conditions and in the rural areas as a whole.

Our agricultural workers — the farmers' closest brothers in the proletariat — have done some tremendous work during the past 23 years, in spite of hard, difficult conditions. Their lives were radically changed. Whereas, in the past, they had worked as many as 13 or 14 hours a day on some occasions and had spent long, interminable months without any work, now they began to work an eight-hour day, as established by law, and earned higher wages and were covered by social

security. Moreover, they and their children were given an education and medical assistance, and all of them had guaranteed jobs. The living conditions in our rural areas were very poor, though — there were practically no houses to speak of — and our country didn't have enough resources to meet the needs of the workers in the state enterprises, who have kept the main branches of our economy going — including sugarcane, for they produced nearly all the sugarcane that was sent to the mills.

During all these years they have produced nearly all the rice, chicken, eggs, pork, beef and other important items distributed to the people. That is why, in the closing session of this Congress, on this day of happiness for our farmers, we gratefully recall the hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers who, along with our farmers, made this great agrarian revolution in our country possible. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

They worked under the worst, most difficult conditions, living in

There was an imbalance in the development of our countryside, because the main attention was placed on the state enterprises . . .

dormitories and rundown houses. And, in spite of the Revolution's efforts, building hundreds of communities for agricultural workers and their families — some of the enterprises have made great progress in this regard — our agricultural workers' living conditions are still bad and will continue to be so for many years to come.

Now, we can visit places we are proud of. This happened only recently, when we went to the Los Naranjos Cattle Raising Project, a modern community whose workers, technicians and management personnel were presented with a banner — the enterprise's achievements are truly impressive. There are many similar enterprises throughout the country that are gradually becoming models of achievement.

The difference between the past and the present — when there are dozens of engineers, veterinarians, irrigation technicians, economists and experienced managers in each of those sugarcane, cattle-raising enterprises — is incredible, and the difference between those times and these is just as impressive in terms of farm machinery — harvesters, etc. I remember that rice was harvested by hand in the first years of the Revolution. This hasn't been done in our country for many years, now, and I doubt if anybody even remembers what the sickles for cutting the rice looked like. As for sugarcane, impressive levels of mechanization have been achieved in harvesting and transporting it and irrigating and preparing the land. We rejoice over all these things along with you farmers, because you and the tens of thousands of industrial workers who were mobilized to bring in the sugar harvest have made an accelerated improvement of our farmers' living and working conditions possible.

Undoubtedly, however, there was an imbalance in the development of our countryside, because the main attention was placed on the state enterprises. This doesn't mean the farmers were ignored, but there was a time — and I'm responsible for this — when the prevailing idea was that the only way to transform our agricultural system was through the state enterprises and that one day we'd have all our agriculture socialized on the basis of state enterprises. This concept was a little idealistic, though undoubtedly revolutionary in essence. (APPLAUSE) I remember that I spoke of this in my closing speech at one of your congresses — I'm not too sure whether it was the third or the fourth, around 1971.

No revolutionary thinking is developed in a straight line, like a ray of light; what must be absolutely unwavering, like a ray of light, is man's revolutionary spirit and honesty. (APPLAUSE) Ideas aren't always presented precisely and clearly, however. I recall my ideas during that period. I was thinking about how we could develop the revolution in the countryside, as we've done in Picadura Valley, the Valley of Peru, the East Havana Genetic Group, Triunvirato and the Escambray Mountains. If it had been possible, if we'd had enough resources to do the same thing in other parts of the country, it would doubtless have meant a great advance, just as it was for the farmers

living under very bad conditions in those areas. New communities were built complete with schools, first aid stations and other facilities. Living conditions that would make city dwellers envious were created in many places in rural Cuba, but it required enormous resources, huge investments. Many years had to go by before higher forms of production could be used on the farmers' land. I remember that I gave all this a lot of thought — sometimes as I flew over valleys filled with huts or tiny plots of land, or when I went through the tobacco region in Pinar del Río province and saw all the huts where the farmers' great-grandparents, grandparents, children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren lived. I used to wonder about the history of so many plots, and I kept thinking how expensive it would have been for us — how long it would have taken and really how impossible — to build a town like Triunvirato or Picadura in each of those valleys in that way, the only way that existed before.

That was how I came to believe that we had to follow the path of cooperativization in many areas in our country. Even though over 70 percent — nearly 80 percent — of the land (including that made available under the Agrarian Reform Laws or acquired in other ways and rented land) had already been included in state enterprises in one way or another, we had reached a point where the economy and the population required that agricultural production on the remaining 20 to 25 percent of the land be developed technically. Small-scale private ownership had given all or nearly all it could. Sugarcane was being harvested by machine in many places, crop-dusting techniques were being used to spread herbicides and pesticides, and irrigation systems were being developed; all this was practically impossible with so many tiny plots. Individual agricultural production was practically at a standstill. There was no possibility of introducing advanced techniques under those conditions.

All those elements convinced us that true cooperatives — not the

No revolutionary thinking is developed in a straight line, like a ray of light . . .

ones we'd wanted to set up in the early years, with the agricultural workers — that true, logical, historic cooperatives are formed when the small farmers pool their land.

This was how, following the 1st Party Congress, the Party leadership discussed all these problems and came up with two forms of agricultural development, the two higher forms of agricultural production: state enterprises and cooperatives. These ideas, these resolutions of the 1st Congress, laid the groundwork for the 5th Congress of ANAP. A principle was set forth — it always had been set forth — but actually, two things were set forth. Following the 2nd Agrarian Reform Law, it was announced this was the last land reform — that is, everybody could relax — and this promise was kept. It was also promised that no farmers would be compelled to join a farm or a cooperative, and this, too, was and will be strictly kept, as Pepe pointed out here at the end of his speech. This principle has been scrupulously respected.

Needless to say, in view of the living conditions in some of the towns I've mentioned, many farmers — nearly all of them — saw how advantageous it would be for them and their families to join a farm, with the security it offered. Even when we decided to stick to the cooperatives, it wasn't easy. We had to convince many comrades and many cadres that that policy was reasonable. Many farmers preferred farms over cooperatives because of all the advantages they offered in terms of improved living conditions.

The country didn't have enough resources to do that. It didn't have the resources to build hundreds of thousands of homes in the countryside within a few years, when we had to go on advancing in agriculture, to meet our country's and economy's demands. Thus, the cooperative movement had a modest start.

I've often said and argued that we should have begun this cooperative movement sooner. I've said it before, and I say it now, and I take my share of moral responsibility for the delay of years in getting the cooperative movement started. (APPLAUSE) I think that the first, most sacred duty of every revolutionary is to admit his mistakes. (APPLAUSE) I always try to think back on events and analyze every

one of the acts with which I've been involved. Usually, I'm quite critical of myself — more critical than I admit — and I've always been noted for self-criticism in the Revolution. (APPLAUSE)

There were two ideas. I had a predilection for state enterprises, but, at the same time, I had a nearly sacred respect for the farmers' traditional

True, logical, historic cooperatives are formed when the small farmers pool their land . . .

individualism. I used to think the farmers weren't going to be very interested in joining cooperatives. I was underestimating the level of our farmers' awareness — I overestimated their individualism — and, at the same time, I respected them too much to even think about going against their wishes or their feelings. While I underestimated their level of awareness, I profoundly respected them — I've always done so.

I wasn't an ardent believer in cooperatives.

Whenever I speak of higher forms of production, I've always thought and still think that state enterprises are the highest. I've always liked the idea of having agriculture develop like industry and of having agricultural workers be like industrial workers. An industrial worker doesn't own the industry or production, except as part of the people, for the people are the owners of industry and production.

I've always liked that form the best, but it wasn't the most realistic one. The most realistic form — since the most realistic thing is always the most revolutionary one — for the farmers' land, that 20 to 25 percent of the land that the farmers retained, was to use both methods: state enterprises and cooperatives.

We were quite clear on all these ideas following the 1st Party Congress and the 5th ANAP Congress, and we set out to work in this direction.

We made little headway in 1977. As I recall, according to Pepe's report, there were 44 cooperatives, with 6,052 hectares of land. It was slow going at first. It seemed it would take a lot of work for the idea of the cooperatives to catch on, but we said there should be no pressure or haste, that we should let the farmers gradually convince themselves of the advantages offered by the cooperatives. That was how this movement began.

I used to think — and I still do — that this movement will last 8 or 10 years more, until a higher form of production is introduced on most of the land now individually owned. Ever since I came to this conclusion, I've been — as is always the case when I'm convinced of something — an enthusiastic, determined champion of developing cooperatives on the farmers' land, (APPLAUSE) especially in the areas where there are a lot of small plots. There are already 1,140 cooperatives in the country, covering 530,485 hectares, or 35 percent of the farmers' land.

I think our countryside will have a great future and I am sure the day will come when, what with the state enterprises and the cooperatives, our agriculture will be highly developed — not just for Latin America, where we're already far ahead of the other countries, but also one of the most highly developed agricultures in the world (APPLAUSE) and one of the most thorough agrarian revolutions ever effected, (APPLAUSE) without resorting to violence, without using coercion and with the strictest respect for our workers' and farmers' feelings and wishes.

We'll see this clearly once we've managed to build a community in every state agricultural enterprise and every farmers' cooperative, once electric power, running water and all the other advantages of modern living are available all over our countryside.

The big landowners of the past already find it difficult to recognize their old holdings, because the country is filled with dairies, new fences, dams, roads and buildings. I wonder how, say, 10, 15 or 20 years from now, when our countryside is further developed, any of them can find his way in broad daylight to where his holdings used to be, even armed with a map and a magnifying glass. (APPLAUSE) An air view of the countryside will show it dotted with model farms and communities. That's where we're heading. We've already come this far, and there's much less than half the way to go. (APPLAUSE)

Not without reason, it has been said that this 6th ANAP Congress is history-making. Here we have seen that the idea of cooperatives has triumphed. In just five years, the idea of cooperatives triumphed. That is evident here in this Congress. It was really impressive to hear the cooperatives' presidents reporting their successes. (APPLAUSE) It's incredible. There's no comparing the productivity, the production and the income of that land when technology is applied. As was reported for two sugarcane cooperatives, production doubled — from 35 tons per hectare to 70 and from 43 tons per hectare to 86 — when they were formed, and so have the yields of tobacco, potatoes, root and other vegetables, coffee and all other crops. Cooperatives mean greater enthusiasm, strength, development capacity and land utilization and better use of all the resources in our countryside. It's really impressive and stimulating to see the results achieved by cooperatives. Together with the advances that the state farms are making in citrus fruit, rice, milk, poultry, egg and sugarcane production, they indicate a tremendous advance for our agriculture and lay the bases for the healthful emulation we want to develop between the cooperatives and state farms.

The comrade from Samá, in Banes, said yesterday that they were going to win the emulation, that they were going to work more than the workers. Actually, it was his farmer's honor speaking, but we shouldn't forget about workers' honor. (APPLAUSE) We have magnificent, wonderful workers in our factories and countryside — for example, the "millionaire" cancutters, who've cut more than 12,500 tons [a million *arobas*] of sugarcane, mobilized by the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions [CTC], the hundreds of them in the sugarcane harvests; the outstanding workers; and the vanguard workers everywhere — in construction, transportation and agriculture. We know this by the number of vanguard workers who are given awards each year. Their prestige and influence among the masses of workers and farmers should grow, (APPLAUSE) so everyone takes the best workers as a model. That emulation will be held, and it'll be a hard one to win, with everybody defending his honor. It's going to be healthful and revolutionary, and the country is going to gain a lot. (APPLAUSE)

Our countryside, with its cooperative and state agriculture, is advancing with magnificent prospects. We have seen that in this Congress, and the best news is that the cooperative movement is advancing with tremendous strength and fantastic results. That has given us a lot of satisfaction.

A lot of us in the Party and state leadership have attended this Congress. We have given close attention to the report and understand the reason for this victory: ANAP has a lot to do with it. (APPLAUSE)

Naturally, all the people have advanced a great deal during these years of the Revolution and have left illiteracy behind. Many farmers' children have already become doctors; engineers; economists; and outstanding members of the Party, government, Revolutionary Armed Forces, Ministry of the Interior and all the other institutions created by the Revolution. Children who were born at the time of the 1959 victory or in 1958 or 1957 have already graduated from our universities, and the number is growing. It's been a long time since we've heard of illiteracy or semiliteracy; we're already speaking of the 6th grade as a minimum level and struggling to make the 9th grade the minimum; there's political education and a general culture that is reflected in our farmers; and there's ANAP's political and revolutionary work — Pepe complains sometimes because I make ANAP a masculine noun instead of feminine, (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE) but nobody can deny it's an organization of both men and women. I'm going to be grammatical and make it feminine, Pepe (LAUGHTER). ANAP has done serious political, revolutionary, educational, cultural, technical work among our farmers — which was reflected in the Congress and in the report. This work included efforts to create technical groups and commissions and amateurs' groups, the promotion of sports, the struggle for everyone to complete the 6th grade and all its other activities in the countryside.

The most important thing was that it was serious — very serious — work, without any politicking or demagoguery. A demagogue wouldn't last a minute here. Everyone would catch him in the act, just as they'd catch anyone who is faking or lying — much faster than they found out Pepe was limping yesterday because of a problem with his knee. (LAUGHTER) As the saying goes, "You can catch a liar faster than a

cripple," and you can catch the demagogue, the phony, just as quickly. It's been a long time since we've seen anything like that in any Congress, and this is interesting: you never see anybody making foolish remarks, which could be only natural — without meaning to, you can say a lot of stupid things. We don't stop anyone in any Congress from saying foolish, stupid, confusing things, but nobody said anything like that in the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution Congress, or the Young Communist League Congress or the ANAP Congress. I'm really impressed by these political and cultural advances, by your quality and seriousness; it's really very stimulating. This is the result of the work done by our Party and mass organizations. ANAP and its leadership — especially Comrade Pepe — deserve not only to be congratulated by the Congress, with the reelection of many of the leaders, but also to be thanked for the work they've done among our farmers. (APPLAUSE)

I'm really impressed, not only by the cooperative movement — the cooperative idea took such hold here that, at times, it seemed like a congress of the members of cooperatives, a preview of what our farmers' congresses will be like in the future — but also by everyone who spoke: comrades from the mountains and from the service and credit cooperatives. I was impressed by the sense of responsibility, wisdom and honesty with which they expressed their points of view and by the confidence, freedom, democratic spirit and honesty prevailing in this Congress. I was very pleased by the honesty with which Pepe presided over the Congress, taking part and not being afraid of speaking frankly and making criticisms. I believe that, apart from their historic traditions, honor and awareness, our farmers have been educated in this style.

The Party has had a fine representative among the farmers, but the farmers have also had a fine representative in the Party. (APPLAUSE) Comrade Pepe has represented the Party among the farmers, and he has represented the farmers in the ranks of the Party. (APPLAUSE)

The Congress has made a big impact on all of us — and, I think, on our visitors, too. We really made good use of time. Yesterday I was saying it was a shame it wasn't going to last another day. The organizers of the fair were left without a fair — or at least without farmers at their fair — in spite of the great effort they made. You have to return. Even though, from a sense of discipline, you would have been willing to spend another day in Havana, you would much rather go home than attend the fair, and this is understandable. (APPLAUSE) We made good use of our time. Extra hours were devoted to discussions of key issues, because the cooperatives' success was evident. That was the first thing reflected here. The successes scored in nearly all the branches of agriculture — tobacco, root and other vegetables and fruits — were

also reflected. There were figures on how much production had increased during the past five years. But we also discussed some disputed points, the first being the situation in the mountains. A rapid, serious study of that situation is clearly needed and the importance of coordinating the work of all pertinent agencies to solve the problem was brought out. As was explained yesterday, we need to develop coffee and our forests. A total exodus would leave us without the manpower to tend the coffee and cacao, and yesterday we said our objectives in the mountains were coffee, cacao, forests — that is, timber — and having the farmers meet their own needs. We said the mountains had a great potential in other fields, such as tourism, and that the Revolution has caused the exodus from the mountains by creating better living conditions and all sorts of possibilities on the plains.

I remember my first experiences in the mountains and the number of thatched-roof huts. Farmers lived there who had come from the plains. Agricultural workers pressured by the effects of the dead season, unemployment and hunger would often go to the mountains and, at the cost of incredibly hard work, clear the land, plant it and build a small hut. First it would be a kitchen garden and then some coffee plants, and then somebody would show up demanding the land. But, under capitalism, the social pressure was such that it was a hope, a sort of promised land, and the workers ended up going to the mountains in growing numbers. Later, it was the other way around. It is clear, and it was made clear at this Congress, that we must find a solution to this problem.

Some thought has been given to it and some efforts have been made, but not enough. A special program will have to be drawn up, and we'll have to solve various problems, including such things as how to provide enough nails and other building materials, what to do with the roads, how to keep up the ones we have and how to solve the housing problem. In short, we need an integral plan for the mountains in order to attract the people and keep them there in spite of the competition from the plains.

This will also have to be considered when we study the issue of taxes: what sort of conditions we can give to the mountains, what kind of living conditions for workers in the mountains if we want to stop the exodus, apart from political work and the work of ANAP.

In view of this, it was concluded that cooperatives should be promoted to the utmost in the mountains, keeping in mind that, except for certain areas — state enterprises with special conditions — the mountains lend themselves to cooperative work, since the agricultural work there is done by hand. This was very clear.

[To be continued]

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STATEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Halt Israeli aggression!

[The following statement was issued June 13 by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The Zionist state has unleashed a new war of aggression against Lebanon aimed at crushing the Palestinian resistance. [Prime Minister Menachem] Begin and [Defense Minister Ariel] Sharon have not hesitated to resort to the most powerful means of destruction and the most criminal methods. They have savagely attacked and bombed Palestinians and Lebanese without making any distinction between civilian and military targets.

This war has already claimed thousands upon thousands of victims, and the cost mounts every day. Hundreds of thousands of people have had to abandon their homes and jobs to swell the already enormous mass of refugees. Material destruction has been vast in both the cities and countryside. Palestinian targets have been hit with unprecedented violence by an army that, according to Begin's and Sharon's plan, is supposed to impose a "final solution."

The Israeli attack was long premeditated. They were only waiting for a favorable occasion to unleash it. In 1978, Israel launched a similar operation, which by hindsight seems to have been a dress rehearsal for the present one. At that time, the Palestinian resistance was able to maintain the bulk of its positions, and they were not breached either by the smaller-scale operations that ensued.

Thus the problem that the Palestinian resistance poses for the Zionists continued to exist on the military level also. Despite the advantages the Zionists gained as a result of the Camp David agreements, this question was not solved politically. That was what the Zionist establishment could not accept.

Another cause of concern for the Zionist leaders was the evolution of the situation in the occupied territories, most of all the upsurge on the West Bank, where the Zionists were confronted with growing mass opposition, and the determined struggle of the Golan Arabs who have remained on a protest strike for months.

The rise of the Arab masses was all the more worrying because it was having an impact on layers of the Israeli population itself, as shown by the March 27 demonstration in Tel Aviv. The effects of the economic situation were also a serious pressure. For the first time, the standard of living of the Israeli masses fell. In such a context, there was a growing feeling of insecurity and pessimism about the future, an increasing awareness that the country was caught in a blind alley.

To meet these problems, Begin needed to

pull off some spectacular stroke that could create a new situation, and lend some solidity to his propaganda about "a new 1948," that is, the opening up of a new phase of growth for the Israeli state.

The main objective of the military offensive was to deal the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] the hardest blow in its history and thereby deal a political setback to the mass resistance in the occupied territories.

At the same time, Begin sought to weaken Syria both militarily and politically and force it to withdraw from Lebanon. This would prepare the way for a restructuring of the Lebanese state, "freed" from Palestinian influence, which would be handed over to the most conservative and reactionary forces, those elements prepared to accept a "Pax Israeliana" under the tutelage of imperialism. It would mean a shift in the balance of forces between the Arab states as a whole and Israel in favor of the latter.

Begin thought that there were a number of favorable conditions for launching this operation now. They included the prolonged neutralization of Egypt resulting from the Camp David agreements; the breakdown of the Lebanese state; the weakening of the Lebanese left; the impossibility of any action by the Iraqis; and the internal problems of the Syrian regime, which made it unable to run the risk of a major military confrontation.

Begin knew very well that the American imperialists would make only formal objections, since they also have an interest in seeing the PLO crushed, Syria weakened, and Israel strengthened. He knew also that the West European bourgeoisies would not do anything concrete to stop him.

Begin wanted as well to show that the Israeli state is not comparable to the shah's Iran, that it had a considerable military strength, great political cohesiveness and represented the only solid underpinning for a counterrevolutionary strategy in the region.

His calculations proved correct. The U.S. even opposed the adoption of a resolution condemning the attack on the United Nations. The West European states, including "socialist" France, did nothing more than issue condemnations as empty as they were hypocritical. The USSR maneuvered behind the scenes, interested mainly in rescuing its ally in Damascus. It has not in any way come to the aid of the Palestinian resistance. The UN force in no respect fulfilled its assigned task of serving as a buffer.

The Arab Deterrent Force — in effect, the Syrian army — did everything possible to avoid fighting. The Arab states remained passive.

Within Israel itself, the Labor opposition gave blank-check approval to the aggression, and the antiwar demonstrations drew only a few hundreds of participants, who were brutally attacked by advocates of Jewish national unity.

The ceasefire agreement concluded separately between Israel and Syria was promoted by the U.S., which feared that Begin would go too far and touch off upsets in the region whose consequences could not be predicted. Iran's decision to send forces to aid the Palestinian resistance was the first alarm signal.

The PLO regarded the initial ceasefire as a betrayal, another indication that the Syrian regime was much more concerned with its own fate than the vital interests of the Palestinian people. Under the pressure of this maneuver, it in turn accepted a ceasefire, which seems extremely precarious. Begin has already violated it several times and undoubtedly will violate it any time he thinks that he has something to gain.

The successes scored in Israel's new blitzkrieg make it possible for the Zionist state to base itself on a position of strength in the negotiations now going on, and which will continue in an intense way, regardless of the vicissitudes of the military confrontation.

Begin will be able to count on substantial aid from the imperialists and on the more or less direct complicity of the reactionary forces in the region.

Nonetheless, the Zionist leaders' hope of opening a new phase in the history of their state and its domination in the region are in great danger of being dashed. The main objective of the war was not achieved. The PLO suffered very severe blows, lost positions, had to accept very painful losses, but the Israelis could not destroy it.

The PLO's guerrillas fought and continue to fight heroically, and their centers of resistance have not been eliminated even in the cities subjected to the enemy's worst attacks.

The hesitation that Begin began to show as soon as his army reached the outskirts of Beirut in itself reveals the blind alley in which Israel remains caught.

In the Lebanese capital and its suburbs, there are about 200,000 Palestinians who are determined to defend themselves to the last. To crush the Palestinian resistance and its organization, the PLO, which is not a "gang of terrorists," but the expression of the national aspirations of a people fighting for independence and survival, the Zionists would have to unleash a massacre bordering on genocide. And after that they would have to envisage massive population transfers toward uncertain destinations.

Moreover, the Lebanese reactionary forces, which have not overcome their own divisions, are scarcely in a position to impose a strong regime of any stability whatever.

Building a puppet Arab militia like that led by [Col. Saad] Haddad in the southern Lebanon border area is possibly only in a limited and

relatively thinly populated area. In any case, such an operation could not make it possible to avoid the costs of a prolonged intervention of the Israeli armed forces.

The internal situation in Israel could change as the precariousness of the successes made by the offensive become clear and as the losses suffered by the aggressors come to be known. These losses are quite modest compared with those suffered by the Palestinians and Lebanese, but they will seem grave to the Israelis, who are not prepared to pay a high cost in blood for victories.

It is essential for the workers movement to mobilize throughout the world to force an immediate halt to the criminal aggression by the Zionist state, and to assure full solidarity with the Palestinian resistance. Demands must be raised that the Israeli army withdraw from all of Lebanon and that all the repressive and occupation forces be withdrawn from the occupied territories; that Lebanese sovereignty be restored; and that the Palestinians keep their positions, their armed forces, and their organizations.

It is necessary to denounce the complicity

of the U.S. with Begin, and the hypocrisy of the West European states, which have adopted economic sanctions against Argentina in the Malvinas conflict, and are loath to take any concrete action against the Israeli aggression.

The workers states have to be called on to offer economic and military aid to the Palestinian resistance and to all the Lebanese forces fighting alongside the Palestinians against the Zionists.

Stop Zionist aggression!

Israeli troops out of Lebanon now!

Solidarity with the Palestinian resistance!

France

Mitterrand, the Malvinas, and Africa

Defending imperialist interests around the globe

[The following editorial, dated May 21, 1982, appeared in the June 1982 issue of *Critique Communiste*, the monthly magazine of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

International crises serve to highlight the policies of governments. The war between the British and Argentines in the South Atlantic is one of those. Since the conflict began, French authorities have sided wholeheartedly with Margaret Thatcher.

The rapidity of the French foreign office's reaction, its firm tone, and its approval of the embargo by the European Economic Community against Buenos Aires have placed our country just behind the United States at the head of the united front of imperialist powers in solidarity with the English crown.

But contrary to its claims, when London sends several thousand men, a large part of its naval air fleet and its nuclear submarines to retake the Malvinas Islands, it is not defending democracy against a bloody and reactionary dictatorship. It is simply trying to safeguard a vestige of its colonial empire, a territory subjugated by military force a century and a half ago, that allows it to control Cape Horn and access to the Antarctic continent.

London also hopes to show other dependent countries, which might be tempted to imitate Argentina's example, that it does not intend to allow great-power control over various regions of the world to be swept away.

François Mitterrand, Pierre Mauroy, and Charles Fiterman¹ once prided themselves on defending the "right of peoples." It may seem paradoxical to hear them now invoke respect

1. President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Mauroy are members of the Socialist Party, while Cabinet minister Charles Fiterman is a member of the Communist Party. — IP



FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND

for "international law," since "international law" simply sanctifies borders and sovereignty whose sole legitimacy rests in wars of plunder waged by the imperialist powers not so very long ago.

When we look more closely, however, the French government's attitude is quite consistent. Since the beginning of Mitterrand's seven-year term, the government has also opposed any challenge on the domestic scene to the profits and laws of the capitalist system. It has refused to call for the workers to mobilize against the maneuvers of the right wing and the bosses. It has distributed billions of francs in subsidies to the corporate owners.

This willingness to provide the ruling class with guarantees necessarily has implications in the area of diplomacy. It leads to the use of all available means to defend French capital's international positions.

A colonial power

We should not forget that France is, together with Great Britain, one of the last colonial mother-countries on the old continent. It ad-

ministers a multitude of islands and archipelagos spread throughout all the oceans. With these possessions, France's maritime domain (nearly 11 million square kilometers) is still the third largest in the world.

If Paris were to adopt an understanding attitude toward the Argentines, or even a decisive attitude toward the confrontation now taking place, that could create a serious threat for Clipperton Island, Mayotte, Polynesia, Réunion, or even the Antarctic lands France claims.

There was an instructive statement in this regard by J.-F. Hory, the parliamentary representative from the island of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean: "If France had not supported Great Britain, some might have thought that she would not respond militarily to any action that might be taken against the French islands of the Indian or Pacific Oceans."

Is this attitude an anachronism? An attempt by societies in full decay to revert to their past splendors? Certainly not. For the capitalist states, in the present context of economic and energy crises, control of the seas again represents a strategic stake of prime importance.

In fact, the deep seas contain inestimable reserves of still unexploited oil, nickel, cobalt, copper, and manganese, as well as rare metals, hydrocarbons, proteins, and phosphate. How can we ignore the fact that the multinational corporations — including a number of French corporations — have their eyes on these riches and view them as a source of fabulous profits?

At root, this staunch defense of the "over-seas" preserves of the French bourgeoisie should not come as a shock to anyone. It is similar to the policy applied toward Africa, the special "preserve" of the head of state under the Fifth Republic. Since Mitterrand's election on May 10, 1981, he has regularly stated he would fulfill all his "obligations" on that continent. He stated this again even more forcefully during his trip to Niger, Senegal, and the Ivory Coast in mid-May.

The meaning of these remarks is clear: the new leaders have fallen into the pattern of neocolonial relations with the capitals of French-speaking Africa. They no longer talk about "decolonizing the relations of cooperation." With remarkable frankness and cynicism, Jean-Pierre Raison, who heads up the Socialist Party's Africa section, explained in the May 20 *Quotidien de Paris*: "Having become the government party, the Socialist Party cannot, simply in terms of effectiveness, use the same forms of protest or action that it did before May 10, 1981."

When Guy Mollet was fighting against the Algerian people's freedom struggle, did he put it any differently?²

7,000 troops abroad

Wanting to demonstrate their ability to assume the "heritage," the Socialists therefore maintain 7,000 French soldiers in various countries. Even in April 1981 they were still denouncing the presence of those soldiers as "a factor in internal tensions." The Socialists are trying to reassure the local authoritarian and corrupt potentates, whose regimes, based on the superexploitation of the masses and police terror, survive through the political, economic, and military support they get from France.

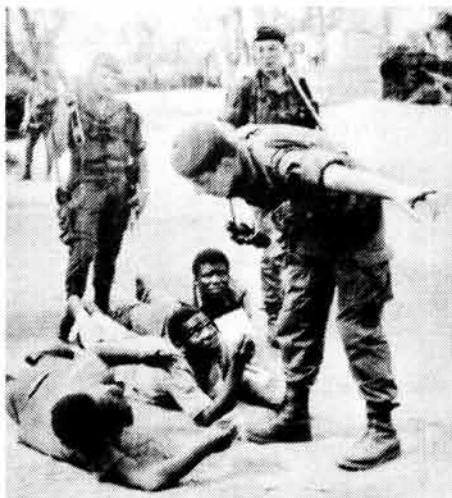
Here too, the "higher interests" of France are used to justify getting around official programs, as J.P. Raison confirms: "The rights of man, in certain spheres and more particularly in the political sphere, can have particular modes of expression depending on the country. It is not obvious that a multiparty system would everywhere be the best expression of the current reality."

The presidential palace's attitude is not simply a matter of prestige. Neocolonial domination is expressed, most importantly, through the presence of hundreds of French companies and banking institutions that shamelessly exploit the natural riches of impoverished countries and control the basic economic networks.

It was certainly no coincidence that the president of the republic chose Niger for his first official visit to the African continent. Niger is the fifth-largest producer of uranium, the mining of which is entirely controlled by French capital.

But throughout the Malvinas affair, Mitterrand has not simply wanted to defend France's colonial heritage. His policy was part and parcel of the main positions he has taken in the past year, and he spoke as the head of the fourth most important Western power.

The actions of the generals in Buenos Aires, once again, clearly highlighted the decline of



French troops intervene in Zaire in 1978. Thousands remain in Africa today.

the imperialist system of domination and the difficulty the imperialists have in ensuring that their vital interests are respected around the globe. The response of London, and its allies, was therefore a twofold test. It was a test of the cohesiveness of the imperialist camp and its institutions in a major crisis. And it was also a test of imperialism's ability to respond militarily.

Arm-in-arm with Washington

In the final analysis it was a decisive test for the policy carried out since Ronald Reagan assumed the U.S. presidency. That policy consists of rebuilding, under the lead of the American fortress, a rather shaken leadership over the "free world." This policy is being carried out through the return of a climate of tension with the countries of Eastern Europe, and the development of a gigantic arms buildup aimed at crushing any new gains for the revolution and imposing the law of the strongest in the semicolonial countries.

Leaving aside very general speeches, the French government has continually adopted the principal features of this strategy, especially by approving the modernization of the Atlantic Pact's nuclear potential and Spain's entry into NATO, and by increasing its own arms budget.

Symbolic of this orientation was the recent decision to invite the foreign ministers of the Atlantic alliance to meet in Paris in early 1983.

Claude Labbé, leader of the opposition Gaullist RPR [Assembly for the Republic] group in the National Assembly, could even pose as the champion of national independence against the United States, stating that "there exists in present French socialism a kind of masked Atlanticism."

This "masked Atlanticism" that the Gaullist leader attacks is simply the means by which the French government can carve out a decisive niche for itself in the imperialist redeployment. By appearing as a special partner of the White House, Paris seeks to use all its trump cards in the new world situation. Profiting from the

political crisis in West Germany and the difficulties in Great Britain, France can in effect lay claim to the dominant position in the European imperialist subgroup.

With the outbreak of differences in the European Economic Community, we have just seen this orientation carried out. Having taken the lead in supporting the English war of reconquest in the South Atlantic, Paris was in a strong position to isolate Great Britain on the question of setting agricultural prices and to force a solution that was in its own interests.

In early June, Mitterrand and Mauroy will have two opportunities to concretize their plan: the Versailles summit meeting of the seven principal industrialized countries (the United States, West Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and Canada); and the Bonn NATO summit. The U.S. chief executive will be present at both meetings. But one thing is certain. The workers have nothing to gain from these gatherings and only the capitalists can get satisfaction from them.

Turning backs on workers

By defeating Giscard and the right in the elections of May and June 1981, the Socialist and Communist leaders raised hopes among the oppressed and exploited of many regions of the world. This was especially the case since they continually spoke of setting up a "new international order," of "new relations with the Third World," and of a "European social space."

What remains of these speeches in daily practice? The French leaders have resolutely turned their backs on everything that could have constituted the policy of a government serving the workers. Actions that really conform to the popular demands would require a break with all the mechanisms of imperialist plunder and domination, would mean establishing new relations based on true cooperation with the dependent countries, and would require opposition to the Pentagon's arms buildup, etc.

Far from isolating our country, such policies would win it the active sympathy of all those fighting the international counterrevolutionary order.

The workers, the members of the SP and CP, the members of the big trade unions must — through action and mobilization — demand a halt to the present policy, which serves the French industrialists and financiers and their foreign counterparts.

The workers can advance this struggle by supporting all the people's struggles, by opposing the dirty British war in the South Atlantic, by demanding recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Malvinas, by demonstrating massively on June 5 against the presence in Paris of Reagan, the nuclear warmonger, the butcher of El Salvador.

The revolutionaries, with the LCR in the front ranks, have committed their forces to these objectives.

More than ever, internationalism is not a word that is devoid of meaning. □

2. Guy Mollet, a leader of the Socialist Party, was premier of France from January 1956 to May 1957, during which he pressed the fight to maintain French rule in Algeria. Mollet joined with British Prime Minister Anthony Eden and Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion in launching a joint invasion of Egypt in October 1956, following the nationalization of the Suez Canal. — IP.

Regime's offensives backfire

FMLN captures top colonel in Morazán fighting

By Fred Murphy

"If the weather improves we will be able to meet with journalists in Perquín on Saturday," Salvadoran Vice-minister of Defense Col. Francisco Adolfo Castillo confidently told a news conference in San Salvador June 17. For nearly two weeks thousands of the Salvadoran army's U.S.-trained troops had been trying to retake the town of Perquín in northern Morazán Province from the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The FMLN overran the army garrison in Perquín on June 5.

Within hours of his news conference, Colonel Castillo's helicopter was downed by the FMLN in Morazán. The Defense Ministry announced the presumed death of its vice-minister on June 18, but two days later the FMLN's Radio Venceremos announced that Castillo had been taken prisoner. Another top officer, Morazán provincial commander Col. Salvador Beltrán Luna, was killed when the helicopter was shot down.

As of June 23, the FMLN remained in control of Perquín.

Big blows to regime's forces

The loss of the two colonels was the most stinging of a series of military blows the Salvadoran government forces have been dealt by the FMLN since the beginning of June.

The rebels' offensive in northern Morazán came in response to a major antiguerrilla operation launched by the regime at the end of May in Chalatenango Province. More than 3,000 troops — spearheaded by the Ramón Belloso Battalion, a 960-man unit just back from training by U.S. Green Berets at Fort Bragg, North Carolina — were thrown into the regime's highly publicized effort to drive the FMLN out of Chalatenango. "We're taking the war to them," a U.S. adviser who had trained Montagnard tribesmen in Vietnam boasted to the *Washington Post*.

Honduran units reportedly aided the Salvadoran forces in an attempt to block escape routes across the border between the two countries. Such operations have been facilitated by the removal of Salvadoran refugee camps that had been located in southwestern Honduras just across the Sumpul River from Chalatenango.

Despite the scope of the government offensive, the June 28 *Newsweek* reported, "After a long week of bloody and inconclusive fighting, the exhausted army withdrew" from Chalatenango. "Observers said that the army's sweep accomplished very little because many rebels simply fled across the border. 'The boys flooded back in from Honduras two days after the army left,' said one."

As in previous operations of this kind, the

army's main victims have been civilians. Radio Venceremos reported the death of some 600 persons, including unarmed women and children, near the FMLN's Los Amates base. About half were shot by government troops, the radio said, and the rest drowned when trying to swim the rain-swollen Sumpul River.

In a San Salvador news conference June 9, Col. Domingo Monterrosa of the U.S.-trained Atlacatl Battalion admitted "that an unspecified number of women and children were among the 135 'subversives' the government claims its troops killed" in Chalatenango, the *Washington Post* reported June 10. The paper quoted Monterrosa as follows:

It is natural that in these subversive redoubts the armed men are not there alone. That is to say, they need their 'masses' — people, women, old people, or children, including the children who are messengers, or the wives, and they are all mixed up with the subversives themselves, with the armed ones. So in the clashes and the distinct operations that we carried out . . . it's natural that there were a series of people killed, some without weapons, including some women, and I understand some children, in the crossfire between them and us.

Monterrosa presented the operation as a successful "cleanup," even while recognizing that the vast majority of the armed FMLN fighters had escaped. He also admitted that the operation had been "coordinated" with Honduran forces, but claimed the latter had not crossed the border.

In response to the FMLN's seizure of Perquín and other rebel attacks in Morazán Province, the regime rushed to that region even more troops than it had deployed in Chalatenango. Some reports said as much as one-third of the Salvadoran armed forces was committed to the battle.

An FMLN communiqué reported June 12 that in the first six days of fighting, the government had suffered 176 casualties. Many of these came when army units moving between the towns of Torola and San Fernando were ambushed by the FMLN on June 10. The towns are located a few miles west of Perquín and have been the focus of much of the fighting.

'Frustration' at U.S. embassy

On June 18 a special Radio Venceremos broadcast announced that the FMLN had routed 250 government commandos from their base at San Fernando and taken the town. A June 18 dispatch from San Salvador to the *Washington Post* said the fighting in northern Morazán "has developed into the toughest battle of the war, and accounts by both sides indicate it is not going well for the government."

The FMLN has also stepped up its military activity in other parts of the country. "Throughout eastern El Salvador, numerous skirmishes continue," a dispatch in the June 20-21 *Le Monde* reported. The Paris daily continued:

Even before nightfall, the guerrillas are practically the masters of the main highways and control the vehicles at certain points. . . .

To the east of San Salvador, the guerrillas regularly attack the cities of San Vicente, Usulután, and San Miguel, sending in commando units from their camps on the sides of the nearby volcanoes.

The June 6 *Washington Post* reported that as a result of the failure of the army's Chalatenango offensive, "the mood of optimism around the U.S. Embassy . . . has turned to frustration and worry that no one wants to express on the record."

The millions of dollars Washington has spent on training Salvadoran troops and officers, and the tons of weapons and matériel provided to the regime, appear to be having little effect on the course of the war against the FMLN.

The latest setbacks can only bring a further decline in confidence among the ranks of the Salvadoran army. According to the June 17 *Miami Herald*, "a Western diplomat in close contact with the Salvadoran military said he received reports that some government soldiers were fleeing from the rebels [in Morazán], leaving their weapons behind." The reported death of Colonel Castillo, *Le Monde* said June 20-21, "dealt a blow to the morale of the troops fighting in Morazán, according to statements by the soldiers themselves."

The continuing inability of the Salvadoran armed forces to register gains against the insurgents increases the danger that the Reagan administration will decide to defy deepgoing domestic opposition and commit U.S. forces directly in El Salvador. On June 24, CBS News and the *New York Times* reported the presence of U.S. military advisers in a combat zone along the Lempa River in eastern El Salvador — something that is supposed to be barred, according to Washington's public policy stance. The Pentagon issued a denial of the reports the same day. In its June 25 article on these developments, the *Washington Post* included the following ominous paragraph:

"The Pentagon said that as of March 31 the Army had 7,862 officers and troops in Panama, a likely jumping-off point if the administration should decide to increase U.S. military participation in El Salvador."

Opponents of Reagan's secret war against the peoples of Central America should take this as a signal of what may be in store. We should redouble our efforts to spread the facts as widely as possible. □

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