

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

combined
with **inprecor**

Vol. 20, No. 26

July 12, 1982

USA \$1.25 UK 50p

Israeli Army Tightens Siege of Beirut

- Reagan's Green Light for New Bloodbath
- Tens of Thousands in Israel Hit Begin's War
- PLO Ambassador Speaks to United Nations



Israeli armor moves toward Lebanese capital.

Mexico: 50,000 at Final Rally of PRT Campaign



Part of a crowd at June 26 rally in Mexico City winding up socialist presidential campaign.

Anibal Yáñez/Militant

Begin threatens new bloodbath

By Ernest Harsch

The Israeli regime, which has already butchered thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese since it invaded Lebanon June 6, is preparing for a massive assault on Beirut.

The Zionists received an unambiguous green light from Washington for this move, when the U.S. representative to the United Nations on June 26 vetoed a Security Council resolution that called on the Israeli forces to pull back 10 kilometers from the Lebanese capital.

For several weeks now, Israeli troops, tanks, and artillery have been on the outskirts of Beirut. With the assistance of their Lebanese rightist allies, the Israeli forces have the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) — plus some 6,000 PLO fighters — trapped in the predominantly Muslim western half of the city.

According to a report from Beirut in the June 30 *New York Times*, "Senior Lebanese security sources said the Israelis had moved troops trained in street fighting into the hills around Beirut. The troops were said to be backed by a large number of small, Israeli-made Merkava tanks, which are more suitable for urban warfare than the large American-made M-60's also used by Israel."

Campaign of terror

On June 27 and 28, Israeli jets swooped over the city and dropped leaflets, in Arabic, warning the 500,000 residents of West Beirut to flee. "Hurry, save your life and the lives of those dear to you before it is too late," the leaflets declared. The leaflets were followed up by mock bombing raids on West Beirut. And on July 4 the Zionist forces cut off all delivery of food and water to the besieged area.

This Israeli terror campaign has come on top of days of artillery and aerial bombardments that devastated large parts of Beirut and left thousands dead.

The aim of this campaign is to break the resistance of the PLO. The Israeli authorities, with the direct assistance of Washington, have been trying to force the PLO fighters in Beirut to lay down their arms and surrender.

But the negotiations have been dragging on for more than two weeks, and the Israeli regime

is clearly becoming impatient, particularly in light of the growing protests against the invasion internationally and within Israel itself.

In a June 28 dispatch from Jerusalem, *New York Times* correspondent David Shieler cited Israeli officials who insisted that Prime Minister Menachem Begin "does not intend to let the siege of the Lebanese capital drag on for weeks or months. . . ."

"The impression prevails in Jerusalem that time is working against Israel's freedom of action and that if a military assault on west Beirut is to be launched, it must be done soon."

On July 2, at a news conference in east Beirut, Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon explicitly warned of such an assault. "There was never any decision not to enter west Beirut," he said.

In a television interview, Maj. Gen. Amir Drori, the head of the Israeli northern command, said that the army "is preparing itself" for possible military action in West Beirut.

Massive destruction

A full-scale Israeli attack on West Beirut would certainly lead to a bloodbath. It would come on top of the massive death and destruction that the Zionist forces have already brought on much of Lebanon.

Some 35,000 Palestinians and Lebanese have been killed or wounded since the invasion began, and another 600,000 made homeless by the savage Israeli bombings of cities like Tyre, Sidon, Damur, and Beirut.

A June 26 dispatch from Beirut by *New York Times* correspondent William Farrell provided a graphic picture of life in Beirut following a particularly savage series of bombing raids the day before:

Throughout the city, refugees lined up at social centers for blankets, food and other necessities. At Berbir Hospital, situated on the so-called Green Line separating Christian east Beirut from predominantly Moslem west Beirut, Dr. Amal Shamma, asked how many casualties she had treated, said, "We've lost count."

"Our morgue refrigerator is full, and we have had bodies piled up on the floor outside it," she said. "The whole hospital stank. . . ."

Whole families have been killed," she said, "so there's nobody to pick up the dead." She said pictures of the unidentified dead were taken before local charity organizations buried them.

Many people are going from hospital to hospital looking for relatives. Local radio stations broadcast messages from worried people seeking a son, an uncle, a wife, a husband. . . .

A place called the Islamic Home for Invalids was hit Friday [June 25]. Today its corridors were streaked with blood. About a dozen people were said to have died.

Homes bulldozed

In those areas now under Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon, the destruction has not stopped with the end of most fighting.

In a dispatch from the Burj al-Shemali Palestinian refugee camp near Tyre, *New York Times* correspondent Shieler reported that "the Israeli Army has systematically destroyed many of the Palestinians' houses that survived the battles, increasing the number of homeless families, many of them with children."

"They are all terrorists," an army officer told Shieler when asked why bulldozers were knocking down houses in which women and children were living.

At the same time, the Israeli army has refused to allow international relief organizations to provide assistance to these homeless refugees.

Israeli officials have also acknowledged that they have arrested nearly 6,000 Palestinians. The Zionists refuse to recognize them as prisoners of war, and officials have said that many of them may be tried in Israel.

In their savage bombing raids over southern Lebanon, the Begin regime has now admitted, Israeli forces used U.S.-supplied cluster bombs, an antipersonnel weapon. Each of these bomb canisters contains 650 "bomblets," which explode over an area some 400 feet in diameter.

The use of these cluster bombs is one factor in the high number of civilians killed or wounded in the raids.

International condemnation

As the barbarity of the Israeli invasion becomes more and more obvious to the outside world, international condemnation has increased, leaving the Zionist regime more politically isolated than ever before.

Protest in Tel Aviv

On July 3, between 70,000 and 100,000 Israelis demonstrated in Tel Aviv against the war in Lebanon, according to press and police estimates.

This was the largest demonstration held in Israel since the invasion. Many of those who participated brought signs demanding, "Out of Lebanon!" and "Bring our boys home!"

But the organizers of the demonstration, who were leaders of the Peace Now movement, tried to weaken the militancy of the action. The official slogans were "No more wars like this," and "Right now is the time for peace with the Palestinians." Some speakers attacked the Palestine Liberation Organization, and participants were not allowed to bring signs supporting the PLO.

Nevertheless, socialists in Israel reported that many in the crowd were very receptive to leaflets calling for immediate withdrawal from Lebanon and expressing solidarity with the PLO.

Moreover, the Committee Against the War in Lebanon and other groups are planning further antiwar actions.

Our summer schedule

Beginning with this issue, *Intercontinental Press* will be going on a biweekly summer schedule. Our next issue will be dated July 26. Following that issue, we will be taking our August break, so that the first issue after July 26 will be dated August 23. The biweekly schedule will continue through August.

Although most Arab governments took no action at all beyond proforma verbal denunciations of the invasion, the sentiment among the Arab masses is one of outrage and anger.

In Egypt, representatives of the officially sanctioned opposition parties declared at a news conference in Cairo June 29 that they would mount a "national campaign against the Zionist and United States presence in Egypt."

These parties formed an Egyptian Nationalist Committee in Solidarity With the Palestinian and Lebanese Peoples and have organized some demonstrations.

The Iranian government is one of the few in the Middle East to have gone beyond verbal protests. It called on Iranians to volunteer to fight side-by-side with the besieged Palestinians in Lebanon. Tens of thousands responded to this call, and several thousand Iranians have entered Lebanon through Syria.

In a dispatch from Mansurieh, east of Beirut, United Press International reported that "the Iranian volunteers who fought against the Israelis in Lebanon did so with extraordinary courage, despite not having the best arms."

Significantly, the opposition to the invasion has not been limited to the semicolonial world or the workers states. In the imperialist countries — where protests against Israel during earlier wars were generally small — outrage has been growing over the invasion.

In Britain and France, condemnation of the invasion has been extensive. Some 500 leading Jewish intellectuals in France signed a protest against the invasion. Popular support for the Palestinians has been especially strong in Greece, where numerous demonstrations have been held. Greek dockworkers have decided to boycott all Israeli vessels, and the residents of Kalymnos forced the departure of an Israeli military training vessel visiting the island.

At the same time, the British and French governments, as well as others in Western Europe, have taken their distance from the invasion. The Greek government, which is the only member of the European Economic Community to recognize the PLO, has condemned it sharply.

In the United States itself, protests have also been growing. In contrast to the situation during the 1973 Middle East war, when protests against Israel were limited mainly to Arab groups and left-wing organizations, demonstrations have been held in a number of cities, some of them drawing several thousand participants. Full-page advertisements protesting the invasion have appeared in newspapers like the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, signed by scores of prominent figures, including many who have never before spoken out against the Zionist regime. Among Jews who support Israel, the invasion has produced widespread shock and anguish.

But despite such sentiment, the Reagan administration has stood firmly behind the Israeli actions. In vetoing the June 26 UN Security Council resolution calling for an Israeli pullback from Beirut, the acting U.S. delegate, Charles Lichenstein, declared that it "did not

eliminate from Beirut and elsewhere the presence of armed Palestinian elements."

Later that day, another resolution condemning the Israeli invasion and demanding an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon was brought before the UN General Assembly. Washington and Tel Aviv were the only two governments to vote against it, while 127 voted for it.

This stance reflects the views of the U.S. ruling class as a whole. During a conference of the Democratic Party held in Philadelphia in late June, for example, the resolution on foreign policy declared that "the current situation in Lebanon presents an opportunity for the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty." It added:

"International terrorism has been dealt a severe blow and Soviet influence has been reduced."

Washington's unambiguous backing for the Israeli invasion, while intended to maximize the extent of the blow against the Palestinian liberation struggle, will also have the effect of heightening anti-imperialist sentiment throughout the Middle East.

As an adviser to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak explained, "It will be extremely difficult for any government in the region to conduct a policy that is friendly to the United States because the majority of the people of any Arab country, with no exception, have the impression that the Israeli operation had the United States' blessing." □

IN THIS ISSUE

Closing News Date: July 5, 1982

ISRAEL	604	20,000 march against Begin's war —by Ernest Harsch
PORTUGAL	605	Prisoners on hunger strike
MEXICO	609	50,000 at final rally of PRT campaign —by José G. Pérez and Aníbal Yáñez
USA	611	The unlamented General Haig — by Fred Murphy
GHANA	612	Workers mobilize to advance revolution —by Ernest Harsch
ANTILLES	616	GRS holds fifth congress
FRANCE	624	Massive peace march in Paris —by Christian Picquet
BRITAIN	624	Thatcher's war "no victory for working people"
DOCUMENTS	606	"The PLO is the Palestinian people" — Speech by PLO ambassador to the United Nations
	617	Farmers and the Cuban revolution — II —Speech by Fidel Castro
NEWS ANALYSIS	602	Begin threatens bloodbath — by Ernest Harsch

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

Editor: Steve Clark.

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

Managing Editor: David Frankel.

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

Business Manager: Sandi Sherman.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20,000 march against Begin's war

Unprecedented rally hears appeal from Palestinian

By Michel Warschawski

JERUSALEM — For the first time in its history, Israel has gone to war without any consensus among the Jewish population on the aims of the war or on its necessity. Also for the first time, opposition is being expressed during the war itself.

This was shown most dramatically by the June 26 demonstration in Tel Aviv, which drew between 15,000 and 20,000 people, according to both the Zionist press and the organizers of the action.

From the first days of the war in Lebanon, there have been dozens of initiatives against the Israeli aggression — many organized by the Committee Against the War in Lebanon. The decision of the committee to organize the mass rally in the center of Tel Aviv was to be a test of the depths of the antiwar sentiment among the Jewish population.

How many people would respond to the June 26 rally call?

During leaflet distribution and other preparations, it was clear that opposition to the war was growing rapidly, and the number of personalities agreeing to speak at the rally and give their sponsorship was promising. Also promising was the decision in some kibbutzim (Zionist agricultural cooperatives) to send delegations to the rally and the advertisement of one of them, Kerem Shalom, published in the daily *Ha'aretz* in support of the demonstration.

However, everyone, including the organizers of the rally, was surprised by the large number of demonstrators who came out to express their opposition to the war in Lebanon. The number cannot be explained only by the gigantic organizational effort made by the groups and individuals composing the Committee Against the War in Lebanon.

'No to the war in Lebanon!'

Among the demonstrators were veteran anti-Zionist activists side-by-side with members of Beit Hashita, one of the oldest kibbutzim. Arab militants of the Communist Party marched along with leaders of the Peace Now movement, who came despite the official stand of their movement, which opposed antiwar actions while the military operations were going on.

The official slogans of the demonstration were "Withdraw from Lebanon!" and "No to the war in Lebanon!"

But many placards were brought spontaneously by the demonstrators. The militant slogans on these signs included "Immediate withdrawal from Lebanon!" "Bring our boys home!" "How many times will the Palestinians be driven out of their homes?" and "We don't

have any future on the graves of the Palestinians." A sign carried by members of a women's group against the war declared, "We women also say no to the war."

Demonstrators also expressed solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), something the organizers of the demonstration had decided not to do officially. "Recognize the PLO" was one slogan that protesters raised.

The speakers on the platform came out very strongly against the war and the Israeli government. All of them expressed their unambiguous rejection of the idea that one has to keep quiet as long as the cannons are firing.

Reserve Gen. Mati Peled, writer Dan Meron, historian Ygal Eilon, and even the speaker from a kibbutz on the Lebanese border clearly denounced the war, its aims, its methods, and the lies used by the government and the official opposition to justify the criminal adventure in Lebanon.

The speaker from the border kibbutz noted that the government was using their security as a justification for the war. "I cannot speak in the name of all the people on the border," he said, "but in our kibbutz we never asked for such a war."

It is significant that the strong speech of a young Palestinian from the Galilee was loudly hailed, including his appeal to recognize the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Noting that the official name of the Israeli invasion is the "War for Peace in the Galilee," he asked, "The Palestinians are a majority in the Galilee. Do they intend to protect this kind of Galilee? Do they intend to protect my grandmother who is in Bourj el-Barajne [Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon] or my aunt who is in Sidon [a Lebanese city destroyed by the Israelis]?"

Two speeches were particularly noted by the Israeli media. One was the moving accusation of Raja Harnick, the mother of a major killed at the head of his unit.

The other was the announcement of a petition already signed by almost 100 soldiers in a tank regiment, which called for an end to the wall of silence that covers up the criminal and suicidal policy of Menachem Begin and Ariel Sharon.

Opposition to war among soldiers

Indeed, it is in the army, which is essentially a reserve army, that a second front against the war is opening. For the past week, there has been not a single day when a group of demobilized soldiers has not taken a stand against the war, whether through advertisements, press conferences, or petitions.

The sharp attacks of Sharon and even of some Peace Now and left Zionist leaders against "those who demonstrate while others are sacrificing their lives" has boomeranged within the army. It was from inside the army itself that many appeals to civilians to demonstrate against the war were raised.

Another sign of the lack of a national consensus is the fact that not one strike that began before the war has been called off, despite various attempts to convince the workers not to "sabotage" the war effort.

Workers at Amcor, a refrigerator plant in Tel Aviv that is a working class stronghold, began a strike two weeks before the war began. A general assembly was called and the bosses appealed for a suspension of the strike, at least until the end of the war. But the workers decided, almost unanimously, "no."

There has also been an ongoing strike by court clerks and a slowdown action under way by workers at the electricity company.

Breakdown of Zionist consensus

Even before the beginning of the war, Israeli public opinion showed widespread opposition to a military adventure which the majority of people thought was avoidable and whose consequences were far from obvious. It was widely recognized in Israel that this war was coming. Ariel Sharon had been preparing it since becoming minister of defense a year ago.

However, the government had no doubt that once the military operations began — especially if the Zionist army could chalk up some successes in its first days — it would be able to recreate some kind of national unity. The government also knew that as soon as the war began all the Zionist parties would give their support to the military adventure.

The initial militarist and nationalist sentiment among the Jewish population was therefore not surprising. It was sharpened by the efforts of the mass media to create an atmosphere of a state of emergency and national unity against the PLO.

What did surprise everyone, however, was the extent of opposition to the war from its very first days.

During the first week of the war — and while news of what was happening in Lebanon was still very limited inside Israel — two demonstrations were organized in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem that brought out dozens of people belonging to all of the leftist parties, including the left wing of the Zionist Sheli Party.

The slogans at these demonstrations were unambiguous: "No to war in Lebanon," "Immediate withdrawal of the Israeli army from

Lebanon," "Recognize the PLO as a negotiating partner," and "Open talks with the PLO."

The sponsor of this demonstration was the Committee in Solidarity With Bir Zeit University, which decided on that occasion to change its name into the Committee Against the War in Lebanon. This committee has been at the center of all the initiatives against the war in Lebanon. It took the initiative of publishing a petition in the daily *Ha'aretz*, that expressed total opposition to the war and called for immediate withdrawal and which was signed by a number of well-known personalities. After 15 days, this petition had already been signed by more than 5,000 people. It is also this committee that organized a demonstration of more than 600 people in front of Begin's office on June 13.

These initiatives, limited in their scope, helped the emergence of a much broader opposition to the war. After the publication of the petition of the Committee Against the War in Lebanon, *Ha'aretz* published more than 15 other petitions in one week, as well as advertisements and statements that all expressed in a more or less clear way a critical stand toward Begin's policy in Lebanon.

The formation in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem of a group of women against the war in Lebanon and the demonstration of more than 200 women in Jerusalem enlarged the movement far beyond the political currents grouped in the former Bir Zeit committee.

A whole range of political, academic, and artistic personalities, and even delegations from kibbutzim, joined the initiatives of the Committee Against the War in Lebanon. For example, in the press conferences organized on June 17 and 22, there was participation by people like Professor Yeshael Leibovich who called on soldiers to refuse to go into the occupied territories, the philosopher Assa Tacher, the poet Nathan Zach, and others.

Debate in Peace Now movement

One of the most important effects of this initiative has been the sharp debate that is splitting the Peace Now movement. Originally, its leadership decided to refrain from any action as long as fighting was going on, in order not to harm national unity. The pressure of the various antiwar initiatives upon the Peace Now activists has forced a shift. The majority of Peace Now in Tel Aviv decided to put an end to this previous passivity and to launch various initiatives in opposition to the war.

They were followed by the Ometz group, which regrouped the left wing of the Labor bloc and some liberal figures. It is organizing a permanent picket line of reserve soldiers just released from the army in front of the prime minister's office.

The June 26 rally in Tel Aviv symbolized a turning point in the building of a large movement against the war in Lebanon. For the first time the left is at the head of a mass movement and can give to it an unambiguous antiwar content, within the framework of solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people.

This development has obliged the moderate currents, which until now had remained completely silent, to take a more aggressive attitude toward the war. The same day of the big demonstration in Tel Aviv, Peace Now announced a demonstration for July 3. Some liberals and Labor Party dissidents raised their voices against the prolongation of the war and some of its aims, like the occupation of Beirut and the formation of a new rightist government in Lebanon. And they are demanding the resignation of Ariel Sharon, whose adventurism has no limits.

Support grows for July 3 action

Support for the July 3 demonstration is growing. There have already been several death notices published in the newspapers, put in by families of soldiers killed in Lebanon, that included calls on people to come to the Peace Now demonstration to ensure that these deaths are the last ones. Moreover, the organizers postponed the demonstration until late in the evening, because many religious people had asked to take part (July 3 is a Saturday, a Jewish religious day).

Up until now, the working and popular masses have not taken the lead in these antiwar mobilizations. But that does not mean that workers and other toiling people give any kind of enthusiastic support to the war. The war in Lebanon has already been longer than the 1973 war, and Israeli casualties have been high. The workers do not believe that this is a war of self-defense or that "We didn't have any other

choice."

Everyone knows very well that the PLO carefully adhered to the cease-fire signed with Israel in July 1981, and that it is Begin, Sharon, and Gen. Rafael Eytan who dreamed of a new war and have been preparing for it for a year.

All the crude lies of Sharon on television cannot change the generally clear feeling that this war was not unavoidable. Evidence of these feelings among the Israeli masses was reflected in the violent accusations of the family and friends of a Jewish worker killed in Lebanon, who shouted out at the official funeral, "Begin, Sharon, killers!"

The refusal of strikers to go back to work also shows how much working people are heeding Begin's appeals for national unity.

We are already very far from the mood predominating in Israel during previous wars. The emergence in Israel of a mass movement — still a minority, but by no means marginal — against the war in Lebanon is a turn in the political situation in Israel that every commentator has emphasized in recent days.

This struggle against the Zionist war drive and against the Israeli government's annexationist policy contributes not only to the defense of the just cause of the Palestinian people, who are more than ever tragically alone in the Arab world. It also contributes to establishing the basis for Israeli-Palestinian solidarity in struggle against Zionist aggression, which is the only way to create the conditions for the future coexistence between the two peoples. □

Portuguese prisoners on hunger strike

Eleven members of the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP), who have been imprisoned since July 1978, have begun a hunger strike to secure their release. The PRP is an organization that originated in a split from the Portuguese Communist Party.

The jailed PRP members have vowed that a new hunger striker will join the fast every 10 days. The first, Amilcar Romano, began on May 21. Since then he has been joined on the hunger strike by Joao Santos and Carlos Antunes. They have vowed to continue their fasts until they are released from prison or die of starvation.

Some of the PRP prisoners were held under preventive detention for two years before trial. Three leaders of the organization were sentenced to long prison terms for "moral responsibility" for bank robberies, even though the actual authors of those acts were freed.

Isabel do Carmo received a 14-year sentence, Carlos Antunes a 16-year term, and Fernando Fraguas 11 years.

It was shown in court that the provocateur who provided evidence against them had been paid by the authorities. He was subsequently freed and fled the country.

The constitutional commission, which rules on the constitutionality of laws and the functioning of institutions, annulled their senten-

ces. But the government did not release the prisoners and plans to retry them.

The PRP prisoners have been specifically excluded from the amnesty law passed two years ago by the Portuguese parliament. Their situation stands in marked contrast to the fate of the 5,000 former secret police agents of the deposed Marcello Caetano dictatorship, of whom only a handful remain in prison.

Lawyers point out that the PRP prisoners are held under worse conditions than others. They receive only limited visiting rights, their mail is censored, and they receive little medical care.

A Committee in Solidarity with the Antifascist Prisoners (CSPA) has been organized in Portugal to defend the hunger strikers and work for their release. Among the organizations taking part in CSPA are the People's Democratic Union (UDP) and the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), the Portuguese section of the Fourth International. In addition, family members of the prisoners are participating in CSPA's work.

CSPA is urging international protests against the continued detention of the hunger strikers. Resolutions, appeals, and declarations should be sent to CSPA, Rua Alexandre Herculano 55, Lisbon, Portugal.

'The PLO is the Palestinian people'

Speech by PLO ambassador to the United Nations

[On Friday, June 18, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin addressed the United Nations Second Special Session on Disarmament.

[As Begin approached the podium, a walk-out of delegates from many Third World countries took place. They joined others who had boycotted the session to protest the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The General Assembly took on the appearance of an empty cavern, with two-thirds of the delegations absent.

[Begin's speech was a belligerent justification for the Lebanon invasion. "Self-defense," Begin stated, "is a most sacred right and duty of man. . . . As long as tyranny is armed, liberty must have and develop weapons for its defense."

[In reference to growing antiwar sentiment and opposition to the war in Lebanon, Begin commented that "pacifism is a beautiful idea, but if it confronts aggressive totalitarianism it is the greatest provocation inviting attack, subjugation, and destruction. . . .

"[In the seventies and the eighties," he continued, "the disastrous unilateral pacifism found its expression in a famous, perhaps infamous, slogan: 'Better red than dead.' Foolish words. The true command is neither dead nor red, but alive and free!"

[The Palestine Liberation Organization's permanent observer to the UN, Zehdi Labib Terzi, addressed the special disarmament session the same day that Begin spoke. The following are major excerpts from Terzi's speech.]

* * *

The walkout this morning of almost two-thirds of the members speaks much louder than any other form of expression — the walkout when a criminal terrorist came to this rostrum to speak of hypocrisy and teach us something about the Bible. Israel and the Zionist movement and their supporters should learn by this act of solidarity with the Palestinian people and the Lebanese people and other Arab peoples and with all peoples who are fighting for their dignity and their rights.

A final solution

Israel's latest in the series of acts of aggression had an unashamedly declared aim: to eradicate the Palestinians — genocide. The aim of the latest act of aggression is put into force — a "final solution." That expression has rung in our ears. We have still in our memories a similar "final solution." The Herut — Begin's gang — and the Stern — Shamir's gang — are parties akin to the Nazi and fascist parties.*

They are not only akin to the Nazis in their

philosophy, they are very much akin in their behavior and method of operation. Under the misnomer "security," the neofascists carry out their aggression and military expansionism, they violate the territorial integrity of the states around them, they occupy and annex, and they reap the fruits of their aggression; and, what is more, and this is really saddening, they are even rewarded.

Here let us reflect for a moment. Were the neofascists rewarded after the fact, after committing the crime, after invading the sovereign territory of other countries or were they encouraged, maybe pushed, to commit those acts of aggression and state terrorism?

The Department of State in Washington tells us and makes no secret of its knowledge that Israel had such a plan for more than a year, but instead of deterring or discouraging — I would have wished to say prohibiting or stopping — the carrying out of the plan, the government of the United States proceeded lavishly to donate to Tel Aviv billions of dollars' worth of weapons, most advanced and sophisticated weapons. The government of the United States, as a sign of encouragement, even signed an agreement — something called an agreement of mutual understanding.

U.S. arms murder civilians

Yesterday we were reminded of the plea of His Holiness Pope Paul VI in this hall 17 years ago. We were reminded that His Holiness had said: "If you want to be brothers, let the arms fall from your hands."

His Holiness never meant that those arms should be donated to others so that they could drop cluster bombs and fragmentation bombs on innocent civilians, resulting in the cold-blooded murder of women and children; thousands of them. Let those hands be clean before you speak about the cleanliness of hands.

The government of the United States asserted that Israel was more than a friend; it was an ally, a strategic ally. All this encouragement came at a time when the administration knew about the Israeli plan and the preparations for

*The Herut is a right-wing political party in Israel, formed in 1948 by Menachem Begin and other veterans of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, an underground Zionist terrorist organization that helped drive Palestinians out of their homeland.

Today, the Herut is part of the Likud, a coalition of rightist parties in the Israeli legislature. The Likud has been in power since 1977.

The Stern Group is an organization that came out of a split from the Irgun led by Avraham Stern. The group engaged in bombings, killings, and terrorist attacks. Yitzhak Shamir is the Israeli foreign minister.

the invasion and for the massacres. Yet the Assembly was told that the Washington administration was opposed to aggression and that the Washington administration was faithful to its commitment to the charter of the United Nations. How unbelievable, when one of the first aims and principles of the charter is to suppress aggression, and one of the first principles of the policy of the United States is to foment and finance aggression.

Troops in Lebanon

Tel Aviv, as supported by the Washington administration, wants to prevent the return of the territory now in Israeli hands — in Lebanon — to the *status quo before the war*. Israel wants to dominate a clearly defined territory, a part of the sovereign territory of Lebanon. The pretext is security of the state. Do we have to recall Hitler's claims on Poland and the myth of the Polish threat to the security of the Reich?

Another declared aim or demand of Israel vis-à-vis the Lebanese is an agreement calling for the withdrawal of all foreign armies from the soil of Lebanon. There is only one foreign army on the soil of Lebanon and that is the occupation army of Menachem Begin, the almost 100,000 Israeli troops that have invaded Lebanon. That is the army that should immediately, unconditionally, and totally withdraw from Lebanese territory. This was stated in a resolution unanimously passed by the Security Council.

Here it is clear that Israel will not be satisfied with forcing an agreement akin to other agreements, but is also interfering in the internal affairs of the sovereign state of Lebanon. Whatever armies are in Lebanon, apart from the occupation army of Tel Aviv, are not foreign occupation forces; they are friendly brotherly forces invited by Lebanon, by the legitimate and constitutional government of Lebanon. This action was even agreed to by the League of Arab States.

A third demand, as reported, was the establishment of a new order in Lebanon as part of any final settlement, a new order. This expression reminds those of my age of the New Order of the Third Reich, of the Final Solution. Now where are we heading?

Disarmament

This is a special session on disarmament and when one speaks of disarmament, one does not speak about the tools of death and the instruments of destruction, but about the men and women who manipulate innocent lives and promote their own aims.

A pistol or a dagger, a cluster bomb or a homemade Molotov cocktail are lethal, but

such tools can and must be judged by the purpose for which they are utilized.

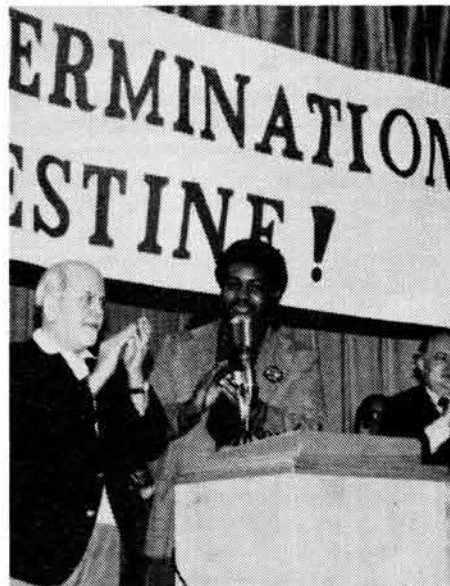
A cluster or fragmentation bomb dropped on a refugee camp and killing innocent children should be condemned and banned. A dagger, a small machine-gun or even a heavier gun in the hands of a people fighting for its liberation, for its survival, for regaining its rights should be made accessible and should be guaranteed.

The Zionist policy, since its inception, has been built on the principle of force and therefore of arms. [Vladimir] Jabotinsky, one of the founding fathers, talks of the iron-fist policy, which would characterize the nature of the envisaged state. We have discussed at length in this body and other international bodies the effects on human life that the iron-fist policy has had, but let us be reminded now of the character of Israel, an entity which has 30 percent of its prime-age population in uniform full time and the remainder capable of being mobilized rapidly from the reserves.

Perhaps this is not impressive to you. But if we were to apply those same percentage figures to the population of the United States, we would reach the figures of 13 million United States citizens continuously under arms and 60 million more as reservists. I think that would alarm most of the world.

The Zionist state — that little state that they talk of — must be committed to the use of force since it has at least 3,500 tanks, 8,000 armored vehicles, 622 combat aircraft, 1,900 pieces of artillery, three submarines, two corvettes and over 25 rocket-firing patrol boats. In the year 1982, it expects to raise military expenditures by at least 40 percent and possibly more to accelerate its campaign of extermination against the Palestinian people.

Let us be reminded now that there is not one country in the world today which spends a greater percentage of its gross national product



Terzi (left) at a 1979 meeting in New York.

Suzanne Haig/Militant

on the military than Israel, which spends something like 40 or 45 percent. Its *per capita* expenditure is the second highest in the world. Its external debt — a country with almost 4 million people — due to military expenditure alone exceeds \$16 billion.

Economic crisis in Israel

Israel has very little to offer a peace-loving world. These past few years have seen numerous wars, both international and civil and the consolidation of military states. During this time the Zionist entity has found it important to increase taxation on its population and to exploit the Palestinians under occupation. To man their garrison they have had to maintain economic policies which result not only in ex-

traordinarily high unemployment rates but also inflation rates of up to 200 percent per year.

Despite massive emigration from Israel the unemployment rate rose from 1,500 per day in 1979 to almost 11,500 in 1981. Understandably, however, an estimated 300,000 Israeli citizens work in war-related industries — 300,000 in a country of almost 4 million. To contend with this, Israel has to face two options and both have to be pursued simultaneously. The first is to increase the repression and exploitation of the people and lands occupied by force in 1967 — and those people are my brothers, the Palestinians under occupation.

The other option is to escalate arms sales abroad. Israel began this policy in a small way in 1973 and by 1977 it was exporting \$200 million worth of arms per year and by 1981 over \$1.25 billion worth, and they estimate that next year's figure will be \$2 billion.

And they still speak about the plowshare and the sword. I do not know where to draw the line of difference here. Israel has become the seventh-largest arms exporter in the world.

Mr. Avraham Asheri, who is the director-general of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said on April 13 that a new industrial plan for consolidating control over the West Bank and Gaza is under way. There is already a garrison full of Zionist fanatics who, as armed civilians, indiscriminately murder large numbers of Palestinians, take the lands belonging to the Palestinians, and continue to confiscate such lands in ever-increasing areas in order to provide space for factories which will be used for the production of sophisticated electronics for export.

The surveillance device used to capture the Black freedom fighter in South Africa is being produced in the Holy Land of Palestine under occupation. We ask how this can promote a

20,000 march in Managua against Israeli invasion

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA — "Nicaragua and Palestine have a common enemy. They are waging the same struggle."

Addressed to a solidarity demonstration here by Palestine Liberation Organization Ambassador Marwan Tahhub as Israeli jets hammered Beirut, these words struck home.

Only three years ago, thousands of Nicaraguan freedom fighters were being slaughtered by weapons the Israeli government had provided ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza's National Guard in the final months of the war of liberation.

Thousands of revolutionary workers and students marched through the streets here June 25 to show their support for the Palestinian resistance.

By the time the marchers reached the rally site — the headquarters of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) — they totaled

more than 20,000, spreading blocks beyond the site that had been set aside in advance.

The rally itself dramatically underscored the living links between these two revolutions — the fact that the present fate of the Palestinians is exactly what U.S. imperialism would like to do to Nicaragua. It also made clear Nicaragua's determination to defend Palestine by defending itself.

PLO Ambassador Tahhub detailed for Nicaraguans the brutal treatment being suffered by his people at the hands of the Israeli occupiers of Lebanon. Thousands of Palestinians, he said, including children and high-school youth, have been marched off to concentration camps by the Zionist invaders.

"It is difficult to believe that Israel alone is the aggressor," Tahhub said. "The truth is that Israel is no more than a tool in the hands of the United States."

Speaking for the Sandinista National

Liberation Front (FSLN), Commander Dora María Téllez expressed gratitude for the PLO's recent contribution for flood relief in Nicaragua. She pointed to what the Nicaraguan people could do for their Palestinian sisters and brothers.

"We must understand," Téllez said, "that the Nicaraguan revolution is a trench in the fight of the Palestinian people. They are directly in the line of fire in humanity's fight against fascism. We are the rear guard, the reserves."

"The continued life of our revolution is a source of strength for the Palestinian struggle."

Téllez went on to develop the theme that U.S. imperialism is the common enemy not only of the Palestinian and Nicaraguan peoples but of all peoples fighting for national self-determination throughout the world.

peaceful world? We ask how it is that in the Negev, in occupied Palestinian territory, the nuclear experiments are carried out and, once those little missiles and those little bombs are produced, the experimentation station is in the Kalahari Desert, in occupied Namibia? Cannot one see how these are connected, how these are linked?

Conventional arms murder too

Let me remind you that more acts of genocide in recent years are attributable to conventional, even primitive, arms than to nuclear arms, and so it is with this aspect that disarmament activity must first be concerned.

The Palestinian people knows what it means to be repressed, to be murdered, to be exiled, to be tortured. The Israelis are the masters of repression, murder, expulsion, and torture. The world has rarely seen the like of such a horrifying state, which more and more resembles Nazi Germany. The Zionist state aims not only to violate human rights, but actually to eliminate in its entirety one of the world's peoples, the Palestinian people.

Who can fail to see the hypocrisy in Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's radio announcement on IDF [Israeli Defense Force] Radio on March 7, 1982, when he declared that Israel had "reached a state of affairs where . . . [it would] stop and check the arms race. We have no intention to add, in the '80s, even a single tank, even a single gun, or even a single aircraft."

That statement came two months before the Reagan administration awarded its Zionist protégé 75 additional advanced F-16 fighter bombers. Now we can understand why Sharon said he would not produce them: he is getting them free, with American taxpayers' money.

PLO is the Palestinian people

The junta in Tel Aviv tells us clearly that the aim is to eradicate the PLO. And here let me make it clear that, in order to eradicate the PLO, Israel will have to eliminate or exterminate the Palestinian people, because the PLO is the Palestinian people, and what the international community has to deal with is the future of the Palestinian people.

The core of the conflict, as this Assembly has repeatedly asserted, is the question of Palestine and the future of the Palestinian people. The presence of us Palestinians in Lebanon is not by our choice. It is a result of the brutalities and atrocities that forced us to seek refuge in the brotherly state of Lebanon.

Our presence and our activities in Lebanon are regulated by treaties ratified by the Lebanese parliament. We are committed to honor those treaties, and only the legitimate constitutional authorities in Lebanon can address this issue with the Palestine Liberation Organization — and no one else.

In addition to the bilateral treaties, the Palestine Liberation Organization honors its commitments to the decisions of the Arab summit meetings — and particularly those decisions relevant to our temporary presence in Leb-

anon. Temporary, I say, because we are there temporarily until we return to our homes and property in Palestine.

To eradicate the PLO is the declared aim of the Zionist junta in Tel Aviv, but I declare here that the Palestinian people will not consent to an accommodation. We shall resist any and all attempts to eradicate our people. We shall fight by all means to guarantee our survival. The rights of self-defense and survival are inalienable and sacred and apply to all peoples — not only states, but peoples — without selectivity or discrimination.

Letter from Arafat

A preliminary assessment of damages resulting from the Israeli holocaust in the year 1982 — more than 40 years after the Nazi holocaust — were reported to the secretary-general, Mr. [Javier] Pérez de Cuellar, in a letter dated June 16 from PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat. With your permission, Mr. President, I shall read out parts of that letter.

"Thirty thousand Lebanese have been killed; 10,000 have been lost; 800,000 have become refugees; 14 refugee camps have been completely destroyed; three major Lebanese cities have been leveled: Tyre, Sidon and Nabatiyeh. Apart from the destruction of thousands of Lebanese villages and towns, we would cite the disruption of the lives, and interference with the vital needs, of the citizens: the destruction of hospitals, schools, water outlets, and electricity supply.

"We appeal to the United Nations to call a halt to this fascist criminal invasion, and for a complete, immediate, and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces in accordance with Security Council resolution 509 (1982).

"I call on the United Nations to send, as a matter of urgency, a high-level international mission to investigate the crimes committed by the fascist forces of the Israeli invaders, who are continuing to commit these crimes. The world should know the horrors of the crimes

that have been and still are being committed in Lebanon against the Lebanese and the Palestinians. This enemy, despite the declaration of a cease-fire, continues to carry out military operations, and its forces continue to make incursions into Lebanese territory. Beirut and even the Presidential Palace have been besieged by them."

We are determined to survive

Despite all the news we hear about a cease-fire, fighting, shelling, including shelling by warships, and bombing are still continuing in Beirut and areas of South Lebanon. The siege of Beirut is becoming more and more severe and the battle more and more fierce. This is an omen that this might lead to a massacre. I appeal to the Assembly for immediate action to be taken to stop this onslaught. However, on our side we are determined to survive and to defend our rights and our children. We shall never allow the aggressors to reap the fruits of their aggression.

The Palestine Liberation Organization, which has been invited here as the representative of the Palestinian people, has accepted and agreed to implement the resolutions of the United Nations relating to the question of Palestine. To our mind, this is the only road to peace.

On March 20, 1977, our National Council affirmed "The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in all international conferences, forums and efforts concerned with the Palestine question and with the Arab-Zionist conflict, on an independent and equal footing, with the aim of achieving our inalienable national rights as recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974, particularly in resolution 3236 (XXIX)."

This is an appeal to the international community and, at the same time, a challenge to those who obstruct sincere endeavors for peace.

If it is peace the assembly is after, then this is the time to take a stand. □

Intercontinental Press . . . It's Unique!

No other magazine in the world has the kind of in-depth political reporting and news coverage that IP presents week in and week out.

Subscribe Today.

YES! I want to subscribe. Enclosed is \$35 for a one-year subscription; \$17.50 for six-months; \$8.75 for a three-month introductory subscription.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Postal Zone _____

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

Intercontinental Press 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014

50,000 at final rally of PRT campaign

Mexican Trotskyists fight for workers and peasants government

By José G. Pérez
and Aníbal Yáñez

MEXICO CITY — Chanting, “Rosario Ibarra, candidate of the proletariat,” and “Struggle, compañeros, struggle, for a workers and peasants government,” some 50,000 Mexican toilers, young and old, marched through the heart of this city on June 26 to the closing rally of the campaign of Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, candidate of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT — the Mexican section of the Fourth International) for president of the republic in the July 4 elections.

Busloads and busloads of people gathered at 4 p.m. around the Monument of the Revolution, red flags and banners waving, and marched five kilometers from there to Tlatelolco Plaza.

The significance of this march route was not lost on anyone. The Monument of the Revolution commemorates the 1910-17 revolution spearheaded by the peasants and urban poor in the armies of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. The democratic rights and land reform that were the goals of that revolution have been blocked by the decades-long rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which consolidated its hold over the government in the wake of the revolution.

Tlatelolco Plaza is where hundreds of students were gunned down by the Mexican army and secret police on October 2, 1968. That massacre put an end to a massive popular movement that had organized one peaceful demonstration after another against repression, for democratic rights, and for freedom of political prisoners and working class leaders jailed for striking. Many of the cadres who organized the PRT came out of that 1968 upsurge.

Class-struggle fighters

The people who came out by the thousands to express their militant support for the PRT's campaign are the front-rank fighters of Mexico's toiling classes. They came from cities, towns, and villages in 30 of Mexico's 32 states; from as far south as Chiapas, on the border with Guatemala, and as far north as Sonora, on the border with the U.S. states of Arizona and New Mexico.

There were thousands of peasants — men, women, and children, with faces hardened by toil and poverty, wearing straw hats and cotton shirts or shawls; proletarians from the big plants controlled by imperialist corporations such as Renault and General Motors, and from the nationalized electrical and telephone companies, fighting against the government's austerity plan and for trade-union democracy; residents of the *colonias* (shantytowns) of

Mexico City and other major urban areas, who have been carrying out long fights with the authorities to receive the most basic services such as electricity and running water; Indian artisans and farm laborers — some speaking only halting Spanish and shouting their slogans in their native tongues; and office employees and teachers struggling against cutbacks in education.

Also present were small merchants who are being squeezed out of their stalls and tiny shops in town markets to make way for capitalist supermarkets; street vendors, who sell produce, candies, or trinkets on the street corners because they cannot find any other way to make a living; victims of government repression, including relatives of political activists who have disappeared or are “missing”; former political prisoners; workers fired from their jobs for their trade-union and political activities; women's liberation fighters and gay rights activists; and activists from solidarity movements with El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Palestine.

The marchers assembled in compact contingents by region or organization. As the march was about to step off, Rosario arrived, and the neat, orderly ranks dissolved as hundreds and then thousands of demonstrators rushed to greet her or just to get a glimpse of her. Demonstration marshals formed a cordon around Rosario to escort her to the front of the march while thousands of people shouted, “Rosario Ibarra, candidate of the proletariat.”

A major event in Mexican politics

Rosario Ibarra's candidacy has been the sensation of the Mexican presidential election campaign. She first came to prominence after her son, Jesús Piedra Ibarra, was kidnapped by Mexican cops and disappeared in 1974. She initiated a committee of relatives of political activists who had been exiled, imprisoned, or “disappeared” by the government. Since then she has waged a vigorous struggle against government repression, making her the most prominent woman in Mexican politics. In the course of this struggle, Rosario Ibarra came to revolutionary and socialist conclusions.

More than a year ago the Revolutionary Workers Party, which had achieved ballot status after a long battle, proposed that Rosario Ibarra run for president as the joint candidate of all the working-class parties, even though she did not belong to any of them. The other main workers party, the Communist Party (now known as the United Socialist Party of Mexico, or PSUM, following a fusion with some smaller, reformist groups) refused, selecting instead longtime CP leader Arnaldo

Martínez Verdugo as its candidate.

The PRT's proposal was nevertheless supported by various other organizations to the left of the Communist Party. Rosario Ibarra's personal history, her dynamic and charismatic speaking style, and her forthright revolutionary message helped to transform the PRT's campaign into a major event in Mexican politics. The impact of the campaign was further magnified by the stepped-up ruling-class offensive against the Mexican toilers — the peso was devalued at the beginning of the year and prices skyrocketed — and by the repercussions of the revolutionary upsurge in the Central American region.

The dimensions of the campaign can be gauged by the fact that the PRT's windup rally was front-page news in every major newspaper in Mexico City, with stories and photographs of the march. *El Universal* carried a lead story and banner headline reading “The oppressed and dispossessed want a change: Rosario,” along with a picture of the demonstration across the top half of the page.

To hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of Mexicans, Ibarra has become a symbol of their aspirations for a country free of exploitation and oppression. This explains the explosive response of the crowd when Rosario made her appearance at the assembly point.

'Not a single vote for the PRI!'

After the PRT leaders had gotten the contingents back into shape, the march stepped off, making its way down the Paseo de la Reforma, one of the city's main thoroughfares. The people marched four lanes across in a sea of red flags that stretched along the boulevard as far as the eye could see. In the front lines, arms linked, were Rosario Ibarra, accompanied by her husband, Jesús Piedra, and central leaders of the PRT and other groups supporting her candidacy.

Next came the Committee of Relatives of Political Prisoners, the Disappeared, and Exiled, holding a banner more than 30 feet long, completely covered with photographs of victims of governmental repression. They were followed by a contingent of the more than 400 candidates running for seats in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies on the PRT slate. Next came a marching band from the northern state of Zacatecas, proudly playing the international workers' song *Bandiera Rossa* and popular Mexican fanfares along the whole route of the demonstration. The enormous banner held aloft over this first section of the march read: “Vote PRT — for a workers and peasants government.”

After scores of contingents of workers,

peasants, and students organized by the PRT came those of the other, smaller groups that had joined with it to form Workers, Peasants, and People's Unity, an electoral alliance that supported Rosario's campaign: the Union of Revolutionary Struggle (ULR), the People's Revolutionary Movement (MRP), and the Proletarian Communist Organization (OCP).

But the overwhelming majority of participants marched in the PRT contingents, easily noted by thousands of red flags bearing a hammer and sickle and the PRT's initials. The contingents were marked off by huge banners identifying their region, union, or peasant federation and calling for a workers and peasants government or denouncing government repression, unemployment, and inflation, or demanding trade-union democracy or workers' democratic rights.

A contingent of hundreds of peasants from the PRT-led Worker-Peasant Coordinating Committee of the State of Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico sang: "In a golden cage, up on a balcony. López Portillo is screwing the country" (*En una jaula de oro, sentado en un balcón está López Portillo, chingando a la nación*).

A group of workers from Ecatepec, an industrial suburb of Mexico City, chanted, "Workers should govern, yes sir; death to the PRI, yes sir!"

Whole blocks of marchers shouted, "Not a single vote for the PRI!"

Solidarity with Palestinian people

The dominant message of the slogans and banners during the march, and of the speeches at the rally, was that Mexico's working people need their own government, a workers and peasants government, to solve the pressing problems they face.

The single most chanted slogan was "Struggle, struggle, don't stop struggling, for a workers, peasants and people's government!" (*Lucha, lucha, lucha; no dejes de luchar; por un gobierno obrero, campesino y popular*).

Other slogans were "Forward, forward, forward, compañeros, it's right here that we're building the workers movement" and "Workers, peasants, the entire people to power!" (In the political language of Mexico and Central America, "the people" includes not only manual workers and small farmers, but also a large section of the masses that are neither exactly proletarians nor peasants. Unemployed shantytown dwellers, office workers, teachers, students, street vendors, small merchants, artisans, and so on; it does not include bankers, industrialists, absentee landowners, government functionaries, or highly privileged professionals.)

The rally at Tlatelolco Plaza did not begin until after nightfall, because the march from the Monument of the Revolution took so long. Chairing the rally was Margarito Montes, general secretary of the Independent Revolutionary Peasants Coordinating Committee (CCRI) and a member of the PRT's Political Committee.

"This election campaign has had a clear internationalist character from the start," Montes said. It has been a campaign around the big issues of Mexican politics, but, Montes noted, "it has also been a campaign against imperialism, in solidarity with all those struggling around the world for their liberation. And we want to dedicate this windup rally in a special way to expressing our solidarity with the Palestinian people, a people who today are being attacked and massacred by the Zionist troops of Israel, the army put together by U.S. imperialism in the Middle East."

Montes was interrupted at this point by shouts of, "Death to Yankee imperialism!" He went on:

"We want to express our most sweeping and deepest solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and with the Palestinian guerrillas who are resisting the massacre in the Middle East. We want to say that the Palestinian people are not alone, that they have the solidarity of the Mexican revolutionaries. And, from this tribune, we demand that the Mexican government stop sending the 80,000 barrels of oil a day with which it supports the Zionist dictatorship in Israel."

Montes then introduced the various speakers: Edgar Sánchez of the PRT, and representatives of the other political organizations that supported the campaign. He also read greetings from other political and community organizations, and from Mel Mason, independent candidate for governor of California.

Edgar Sánchez underlined the symbolism behind the decision to hold the rally in Tlatelolco Plaza: "We have returned today to Tlatelolco because we have a historic commitment to a whole generation of fighters. In Tlatelolco are our origins, renewed origins following the defeat of the peasant armies of Villa and Zapata. Tlatelolco is our source of inspiration, our example, and our cry for vengeance."

Mason denounces U.S. imperialism

In his greetings, Mel Mason denounced "the U.S. government's merciless offensive of hunger and war against the workers and farmers of the United States, Latin America, and the world." Mason, who is also a member of the National Committee of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, sister organization of the Mexican PRT, went on to denounce the Reagan administration's war policy in Central America and the Caribbean:

"Through its puppet government, the Reagan administration is massacring the Salvadoran people. It is increasing its aid to the Guatemalan dictatorship. Mercenaries controlled by Washington are carrying out a full-scale war against the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua. U.S. Marines shamelessly carry out dress rehearsals for an invasion of Grenada.

"And not a single day goes by without the U.S. rulers expressing once again their hostility towards Cuba, the first free territory of the Americas."

Mason's statement also denounced U.S. corporate domination of Mexico. "We know

that Mexico, like the other countries of Latin America, is a victim of Yankee imperialism.

"Just a few weeks ago in California and across the United States, we saw *la migrá* [the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service] round up thousands of Mexican workers, whose only crime was being workers. We join with you in demanding: Stop the mistreatment of undocumented workers in the United States! Stop the deportations! Full rights for undocumented workers!"

"We also want to express here," Mason concluded, "our solidarity with the struggle of the Mexican people and with Rosario Ibarra's campaign for a workers and peasants government and for the definitive national and social liberation of Mexico."

After Montes read Mason's greetings, the crowd broke into applause, while members of the PRT took up the chant, "You can feel it, you can feel it, the Fourth International is present!" (*Se siente, se siente, la Cuarta está presente*).

A revolutionary perspective

The final speaker was Rosario Ibarra de Piedra. Despite the late hour and intermittent showers, no one had left. Throughout the rally, the crowd had broken out in spontaneous chants of, "We want Rosario!" and "Rosario, Rosario, Rosario!" When she was finally introduced, the crowd went wild, shouting slogans for a workers and peasants government and, "Rosario, for sure, hit the PRI hard."

Rosario began by calling for a minute of silence for the hundreds of students massacred by the government in this same Tlatelolco Plaza on October 2, 1968. The entire plaza was silent. When the minute was up, Rosario shouted angrily, her fist in the air, "Remember October 2!" and thousands of voices took up the chant "*2 de octubre no se olvida!*"

Rosario's 20-minute talk was interrupted continually by applause and chants. It reiterated the key themes and explained the main lessons of the campaign.

"We have learned," she said, "that the people of Mexico are learning that it is not enough to fight for immediate demands, that it is not enough to shout that we want higher wages, that we want a plot of land, that we want food, that we are hungry, that prices are high, that there is a lot of unemployment. That's not enough. The people have understood that only when they link their struggles through solidarity, that only when the workers, the peasants, the shantytown dwellers, men and women, students, all together, decide to advance hand in hand and organize, then the scattered economic struggles become a revolutionary struggle for a radical change in this country.

"Compañeros, we spoke with thousands of Mexicans, people who, although like me they have no party, know that they are going to build one. Thousands of them! We can tell you that we felt the socialism that lies waiting to spring forward from the Mexican people, a people scorned by the PRI. So much the worse for them! Because this people is going to make

the socialist revolution in this country!"

Rosario explained that the workers and peasants she spoke to throughout the campaign did not want a party that would settle for mere reforms or crumbs, but "a party that struggles to overthrow this system, to turn this country upside down. . . ."

An immoral system

The people of Mexico, she said, "this people that lived through an October 2 . . . that has suffered the sadness of 500 missing, that knows that hundreds of *compañeros* have died in clandestine jails under torture, that saw hundreds of *compañeros* fall in guerrilla struggles; this people that admires the Cuban revolution, this people that welcomes with joy and pride the Nicaraguan revolution, and that hopes for the advance of the revolution in El Salvador and Guatemala; this people is looking fear of repression in the face, and is fighting for that revolutionary struggle to arrive here soon, very soon."

"Throughout this campaign, *compañeros*, we haven't fooled anyone," she emphasized. "We never made any promises. We made commitments. We committed ourselves to struggle. We committed ourselves to take ever more rapid and ever more firm steps to achieve the victory that we are fighting for." And, she added, as a result of the campaign, "there are now peasant coordinating committees, there are now workers coordinating committees, from Palmarillo in Veracruz, to Apoyac de Alvarez in Guerrero; from Tijuana to Venustiano Carranza in Chiapas."

"All this, *compañeros*, all this that we dream of, all this that we aspire to, all this that millions of Mexicans hope for, is not going to be possible with a system like that of the PRI, no matter how much the PRI talks about 'moral renovation of society.' They talk and talk — they have been talking for years and years. These gentlemen have been saying the same thing for years! They are not even original! And now they tell us that their 'moral renovation of society' will achieve the transformation of this country. . . ."

"But the worst thing of all — and that's why they won't fool anybody — is that what is no good, what is rotten, is the system. And it's bad, *compañeros*, because a system that specially designs everything to squeeze the working people is immoral. A system that oppresses, that represses, that exploits, that kills millions of Mexicans, who live their lives in the fields that they till or in the factories where they work. People who spend their whole life working and when they die they don't even have a plot of land in the cemetery so that they could be buried."

'Arise, ye prisoners of starvation'

Rosario Ibarra concluded her speech by referring to the recent May Day celebrations in Mexico, which were dominated by PRI union bureaucrats and were little more than PRI campaign rallies.

"We announce, *compañeros*, that if we

strengthen our steps, that if we step lively, soon, *compañeros*, very soon, we will have the kind of May Day we want, a jubilant May Day, a May Day in which the workers will march as brothers with the peasants, the workers will march hand in hand with the shantytown dwellers, the women, and the students. And they will raise their fists and they will sing and smile and laugh, joyfully, for on the balcony of the National Palace will be the workers and the peasants and the slum-dwellers — the poor of this country, its real representatives. *Venceremos!* We shall overcome!"

The unlamented General Haig

By Fred Murphy

The forced resignation of Alexander Haig as U.S. secretary of state on June 25 will hardly be lamented by working people. Haig personified the U.S. rulers' open support for the world's most reactionary forces. This made him one of the most widely hated figures in the Reagan administration.

Haig was closely identified with U.S. imperialism's secret war against the peoples of Central America. He threatened repeatedly to "go to the source" and do "whatever is necessary" to stem the revolutionary upsurge in that region.

The ex-secretary of state was a key spokesman for Washington's belligerent stance toward the Soviet Union. Haig was the first to launch the big-lie campaign accusing Vietnam and the Soviet Union of employing deadly chemical weapons in violation of international treaties.

It was Haig who publicly reaffirmed the imperialists' nuclear-war strategy in Western Europe. He pointed in November 1981 to NATO's "contingency plans . . . to fire a nuclear weapon for demonstrative purposes," and declared last April that Washington would not hesitate to strike first with nuclear warheads in order to "protect the essential values of Western civilization."

Haig became the target of fierce hatred among the peoples of Latin America when he spearheaded Washington's complicity with British imperialism's war against Argentina over the Malvinas Islands — after posing duplicitously as a "neutral" mediator in the conflict.

Finally, Haig advocated even stronger support by the Reagan administration for Israel's war of civilian slaughter and wholesale destruction against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. Haig's backing of Israeli war aims made it crystal clear that the invasion of Lebanon is as much Washington's as Tel Aviv's.

It was this last crisis that touched off Haig's downfall. His conflicts — both political and personal — with others in the U.S. administration had already made him a liability in the eyes of Reagan's top advisers, but it was the growing political cost of too-close identifica-

The crowd burst out in shouts of "Rosario, Rosario, Rosario!" which only subsided when the band struck up the first few bars of the *International* and tens of thousands of fists were raised defiantly in the air and tens of thousands of voices cried out:

"Arise, ye prisoners of starvation/Arise, ye wretched of the earth/For justice thunders condemnation/A better world's in birth. No more tradition's chains shall bind us/Arise, ye slaves no more in thrall/For justice thunders condemnation/We have been naught, we shall be all!" □

tion with the Israeli blitzkrieg that finally did Haig in.

Of course, Haig's removal does not mean Washington will abandon Israel, or even take serious steps to restrain the Zionists' brutal war machine. But it does offer the Reagan administration a chance to shed some crocodile tears over the destruction of Lebanon and put a little distance between itself and the Begin regime.

At bottom, the Haig resignation again discloses the dilemma facing the imperialists as their system continues its historic decline. The measures and policies required for dealing with the crisis of imperialism — especially the drive toward war — inevitably give rise to massive resistance. The ruling-class figures who seek to administer these policies are quickly discredited. Haig now joins the lengthening list of top officials — including the last four U.S. presidents — who have had to be cast aside when no longer useful to U.S. capitalism.

While some editorial writers in the capitalist press have expressed dismay at what Haig's ouster shows about the ongoing disarray of U.S. foreign policy, they have also heaped praise on his replacement. George Shultz made his mark in the 1970s as Nixon's "economic czar," administering the wage controls and austerity measures that were the opening round in the rulers' domestic offensive against working people.

A major article in the June 12 *Business Week* summed up the causes of the Haig firing and the rulers' hopes that Shultz can pick up the pieces:

The temperamental General Haig served the Reagan administration as a lightning rod for heated reactions to controversial U.S. policies in the Middle East, Latin America, and Europe. But the new realities created by the invasion of Lebanon, the Falklands crisis, and the burgeoning economic war within the Atlantic alliance require dramatic changes in the tone and implementation, though not necessarily in the fundamentals, of U.S. foreign policy. George Shultz's skills as a negotiator and builder of consensus are tailor-made for supervising the changeover.

Nonetheless, *Business Week* cautioned, "The substantive issues of foreign policy will be less easy to solve than those of style and personality." □

Workers mobilize to advance revolution

Imperialist threats and economic pressures

By Ernest Harsch

The backbone of the revolution that is unfolding in Ghana today is the widespread mobilization of working people around the country.

Barely a week has gone by without some major rally or demonstration: to mark the launching of a new workers committee, to demand the ouster of some corrupt official or manager, to protest the activities of a foreign company.

While reflecting considerable popular enthusiasm and initiative, these are not just spontaneous outbursts. They are part of the workers' first steps toward setting up their own organizations and toward deepening their participation in the country's political life.

This process has not been smooth, and it faces many obstacles. But in general it has met with encouragement from the Ghanaian government.

In one of his first speeches, Jerry Rawlings, chairman of the ruling Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), appealed for the creation of "local defence committees at all levels of our national life. In the towns, in the villages, in all our factories, offices and work places, in our barracks, we have an immediate task for these committees — that of defending this revolution and ensuring the exposure of saboteurs."

People throughout Ghana have responded to this call. Within the first weeks after the Dec. 31, 1981, overthrow of the Hilla Limann regime, committees were set up in Accra and other large towns. They soon spread to smaller towns and villages and even to some of the more remote areas of the country.

In general, they are known as People's Defence Committees (PDCs), although the ones that are specifically based in the factories or other workplaces are sometimes called Workers Defence Committees (WDCs).

The creation of these committees has been directly sanctioned by the government, and PNDC members or prominent supporters of the PNDC have often spoken at the inauguration rallies.

In February, an Interim National Coordinating Committee (INCC) was set up to help coordinate the formation and activities of the PDCs and WDCs. It included representatives of a number of local committees, as well as from various student, labor, and political organizations. Chris Atim of the PNDC was chosen to chair the INCC.

PDC coordinating committees have also been set up on regional levels; some of their members are chosen by the local PDCs and some by the INCC.

Although management personnel can theoretically belong to the committees, they are in practice barred, since their participation is contingent on the approval of 95 percent of the workforce in a given enterprise.

Clashes with management

The tasks set for these committees are rather broad. In an early PNDC statement outlining their functions, the committees were asked to help monitor price controls, expose corruption and sabotage within enterprises, maintain public discipline, lead mass education campaigns, participate directly in the distribution of goods, increase production, and in general help identify social problems and propose solutions for them. The PDCs have also been active in the searches and seizures of hoarded goods.

In an interview with the Ghana Broadcasting Corp., Atim "said that the defence committees would constitute the power base of the country from now on. . . ."

"He added that being representatives of the vast majority of the population, the defence

This is the second of two articles on the unfolding revolution in Ghana. The first, published in last week's issue, examined the background to the overthrow of the Limann regime, the new government's initial economic and social measures, and the growing anti-imperialist sentiment in the country.

committees would have the final say in the distribution of the national wealth" (*West Africa*, February 1).

Within the workplaces, the PDCs have often come into conflict with management personnel, in some cases going beyond the guidelines set by the PNDC or raising new demands for government action.

In Tamale, a city of 120,000 in northern Ghana, workers at the Northern Regional Development Corp. forced out three top management officials.

The PDC at the Ghana Tobacco Co. dissolved the firm's interim management committee and chose its own acting managing director, as did workers at the Port Authority in Tema, just east of Accra.

Sometimes the government has supported such actions. But in other cases, where it maintained there were insufficient grounds for dismissal, it intervened to reinstate officials who had been driven out.

At a three-day conference of PDCs in the Accra-Tema metropolitan area in March, a communiqué was issued calling for abolition

of all secrecy codes, so that workers could investigate instances of corruption. It also demanded the holding of mass assemblies, or "durbars," within the factories, at which workers and management could openly discuss production problems and the workers' welfare.

In Takoradi, the PDC at the West African Mills enterprises, which is partly British-owned, has called on the government to launch an investigation into the company's operations and to take it over entirely.

The committees have also on occasion come into direct conflict with the government. In April, nearly 100 PDCs in the Accra region called for the dismissal from office of Secretary for Transport and Communications Alhaji Idrisu Mahama for approving an increase in transport fares.

The attitudes of government officials toward the PDCs differ. Some have stressed that they should not try to take on management roles, while others have raised the possibility of the PDCs assuming even greater responsibilities.

Rawlings has suggested that the PDCs could play a role in electing a constituent assembly to draw up the country's new constitution. PNDC member Sgt. Aolga Akata-Pore has stated, "The PDCs are going to be developed into People's Congresses, workers and peasants will be represented on these congresses at district, regional and national levels."

Union bureaucrats booted out

Parallel to the formation of the PDCs, Ghana's existing trade unions are being revitalized.

The official leadership of the 400,000-member Trades Union Congress (TUC) was among the first to congratulate the PNDC on its seizure of power. But that was to be expected. It has hailed every new regime since the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966.

As working people began to go into action following Limann's ouster, all the pent-up discontent and anger among rank-and-file unionists over the bureaucratic and class-colaborationist policies of the TUC leadership burst into the open.

At one of the first workers' rallies in support of the PNDC's measures, TUC Secretary General Alhaji Issifu was physically chased from the platform by demonstrators. Later, five TUC officials were seized by a group of workers and taken to Burma Camp for detention, although the PNDC soon ordered their release.

Issifu resigned as head of the TUC, and unionists in the Accra region, organized in the Association of Local Unions (ALU), announced the dismissal of the leaderships of all 17 of the TUC's affiliated unions. These rank-

and-file activists have begun speaking around the country to explain the move to union members in other cities and to urge the holding of democratic elections to choose a new leadership.

On the eve of May Day, unionists in Accra decided to celebrate the holiday by seizing the TUC's headquarters. Thousands of workers marched to the multistory building and staged a mass occupation. They named the courtyard outside Workers Revolutionary Square.

Speaking at a May Day rally the next day, ALU leader E. K. Aboagye declared, "The workers of Ghana, conscious of the leading role they have to play in the Revolution, would not allow bankrupt leadership and undemocratic institutions or structures to stand in the path of the Revolution."

Some of the ousted TUC officials have since left the country, and have begun publicly attacking the Ghanaian government from their new bases in Europe or neighboring African countries. They are charging that trade-union rights in Ghana are being suppressed by an "authoritarian" regime.

Student volunteers

The political ferment has not been confined to Ghana's workplaces. It has spread throughout the country and is beginning to involve many different social layers.

For years, students were in the forefront of the opposition to the previous regimes. They immediately hailed the overthrow of Limann and began mobilizing in support of the PNDC's measures against corruption and other social ills.

The students were crucial to the massive campaign, launched in the first weeks after the PNDC came to power, to bring the country's cocoa crop to the main ports. Accounting for some 80 percent of Ghana's export earnings, much of the cocoa had been stuck in the rural areas due to a lack of transport and to bureaucratic bottlenecks that had developed under Limann. In response to an appeal from the new government, some 11,000 students voluntarily went out into the countryside to help move the cocoa. They were organized by the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS).

Others became involved in guarding the country's borders to cut down on smuggling, repairing industrial machinery that had broken down due to a lack of maintenance, and joining with workers to crack down on corrupt traders and businessmen.

Although many students wanted to continue such voluntary work, the PNDC convinced them to return to their classes once the cocoa had been brought to the ports. But a National Youth Organising Commission was established to mobilize other youths, particularly the unemployed, to help carry out various social and economic projects.

The high schools and universities have themselves been swept by unprecedented student unrest. This has not always taken a clear political direction, however, and in a few cases teachers have been physically attacked.

The student ferment has extended to some of the more remote areas of Ghana. In the Upper Region, for example, hundreds of high school students demonstrated to demand abolition of the existing Investment Code, which they said "has opened the country to rape" by foreign companies. They also demanded that the PNDC declare education free and compulsory.

Ama Ata Aidoo, the secretary for education and one of the country's most prominent novelists, has declared that the PNDC does intend to make education free and compulsory, but cannot do so until the economic situation improves. She has also stated that increased use of Ghana's indigenous languages will have to be stressed.

Soldiers' committees formed

Within the army barracks, the widespread discontent and political ferment among troops that has been evident for several years now has continued to deepen with the PNDC's seizure of power.

The authority of the senior officers — those who have not fled the country or been dismissed or imprisoned for corruption — has been greatly weakened. Only a few, such as Brigadiers Joseph Nunoo-Mensah and Arnold Quainoo, still command much respect among the troops, largely because of their support for Rawlings's first government in 1979 and their subsequent victimization by the Limann regime.

For months after the overthrow of Limann, troops and junior officers continued to arrest their commanders. In Bawku, on the northern border, for example, nine senior officers were detained for helping smugglers transport goods into neighboring Upper Volta.

Ghana's security services have been disbanded, including the Military Intelligence, which had frequently been used for purposes of political repression against rank-and-file soldiers.

Along with the PDCs and workers committees, new Military Defence Committees are being set up in the barracks. A debate is now under way on whether senior officers should be allowed to join them.

Although the armed forces have been considerably weakened as an instrument of the bourgeoisie, there are still elements, particularly among the officers, who have proven hostile to the revolutionary upsurge. Clashes between troops and workers have occasionally taken place, and sometimes military units have used force in implementing policies.

Sergeant Akata-Pore has admitted that the army is still "a colonial army, an army that has been taught that it is not part of the people, that it is in a way opposed to them." While noting that many troops still did not understand "why the revolution has occurred," he predicted that the ties between the soldiers and working people would become stronger because "they have the same class background."

While no steps have yet been taken to replace the old army or to form other armed bodies

separate from the regular military forces, Rawlings has publicly raised the idea of setting up a "people's militia" to help defend the country.

In his first speech on December 31, Rawlings emphasized that "the work of this country cannot be defended by soldiers alone or policemen alone or border guards for that matter. The work of this country will need to be defended by 14,000,000 warriors, that is by 14,000,000 Ghanaian citizens."

Women step forward

Ghanaian women — who face considerable social, economic, and political discrimination — have also been encouraged to begin mobilizing for their rights.

In his May Day speech, Rawlings hailed the emergence of mass women's organizations and encouraged women to struggle for their liberation.

Nana Rawlings, his wife, declared in February, "We will defend our country and its achievements by all means and the revolutionary process will not be reversed. Ghanaian women will play an important role in building our country and sharing tasks with men in all aspects of life."

At a training school for PDC members, Takyiwaa Manu, of the Federation of Ghanaian Women, stressed that the revolution could not succeed unless it freed women from the conditions that hampered their full integration into the country's social development. According to the May 24 *West Africa*, "she said that women must break away from the subordinate roles and anti-social practices to which they have resigned themselves, and ensure their total emancipation."

Like other social institutions in Ghana, the churches and mosques are also being shaken to their roots.

While some bishops and other sectors of the Catholic hierarchy were prominent supporters of the former regimes, many priests and lay activists have tended to identify with the popular struggles. In the north, where Islam predominates, a similar polarization has developed. Islamic leaders there have traditionally been tied to the merchant class, while other Muslims have been attracted by the militant anti-imperialism of the Iranian revolution. That is one reason why the revolutionary upheaval in Ghana is popularly called a "holy war."

One member of the PNDC is Rev. Kwabena Damuah, a Roman Catholic priest who has a reputation as a democratic rights activist. At a symposium on "The Church and Politics," Damuah noted that the aim of the revolution in Ghana was to ensure material benefits. "This is the time to emphasize the materialistic side of life," he said.

When asked by a member of the audience if he thought PDCs should be formed in the churches, Damuah replied, "Y-E-S, yes!"

Another speaker at the symposium, according to a report in the March 8 *West Africa*, "reminded the audience of the 'revolutionary violence' used by Jesus Christ to drive the Pharisees out of the temple, and suggested this

as a parable relevant to Ghana today.”

Ghana's urban population has by far been the most responsive to the revolutionary ferment sweeping the country. But those living in the rural areas are also beginning to stir.

Most farming — whether of commercial crops for export or of food for domestic consumption — is carried out by individual producers. Like other sectors of the population, the farmers too have suffered from corruption, mismanagement, and the country's dependence on the world capitalist market.

The PNDC has announced various steps to try to improve rural conditions and boost agricultural production.

One of the most important of these has been its program to take over idle land and turn it over to farmers for cultivation. Traditionally, most rural land in Ghana is not privately owned, but the property of a particular tribal group as a whole, with the chief designated as a custodian. In practice, however, the chiefs have often dispensed the land as their private property, to the detriment not only of the farmers, but of agriculture in general. Much of this land has remained uncultivated.

At a large rally in Tamale, which is in the center of a major agricultural region, Rawlings openly accused the chiefs of blocking Ghana's economic development. Some PDCs have already acted to block chiefs from selling communal land.

According to Sergeant Akata-Pore, “Unlike Ethiopia, Ghana does not have such strong feudal structures before the revolution so that even though the land question is a little bit tricky, it is not an immediate problem. I do not think that there is any chief who can stand in the way of the defence committees acquiring land.”

In addition, interest rates on all agricultural loans to farmers have been slashed from 20 percent to 8 percent. In the Volta Region alone, 84 farm service centers have been set up to distribute farm implements and provide services to the farmers.

The government has also encouraged urban youth to go out into the countryside to help farmers set up cooperatives, collectives, and other agricultural projects. Rawlings has promised that health services in the rural areas will be increased.

In an effort to help reduce food prices in the cities, farmers have taken the initiative of trying to bypass the profit-gouging wholesale traders. The Ghana National Farmers Council — in collaboration with the Accra municipal administration and the Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guards (a radical political group) — has been working out a plan to provide retail market traders with foodstuffs for direct sale to the public.

'National government'

In its six months in power, the PNDC has taken numerous actions that are in the interests of Ghana's working people. It has encouraged them to form their own organizations. It has been responsive to popular demands.

But neither the PNDC, nor the government as a whole, are politically homogenous. Different currents exist within them, though they are generally not sharply defined.

According to Rawlings, Ghana is now ruled by a “national government.”

The PNDC has appointed 20 cabinet secretaries, who are responsible for the various ministries, as well as four secretaries and advisers who help with the work of the PNDC. All of the cabinet secretaries are civilians; they include academics, civil servants, and four former leaders of bourgeois parties that had been opposed to Limann's PNP.

There have been sharp public protests against the appointment of some of these figures, especially the four associated with the bourgeois opposition parties. At the January 28 anti-imperialist demonstration in Accra, one of the demands raised by the political groups sponsoring it was for the removal of these figures.

A statement by the National Union of Ghana Students declared, “The PNDC must clearly make an alliance with the people as it promised or with their enemy. There is no middle way. This ‘national government’ will simply lead to inertia and allow the ousted forces to consolidate their power and stage a complete comeback.”

Rawlings then appealed to the students to give the four a chance, and the NUGS subsequently dropped this demand. Later, however, new protests erupted over the policies followed by one of the four, Secretary for Transport and Communications Alhaji Iddrisu Mahama.

While some cabinet secretaries are clearly conservative, others have identified openly with the struggles of working people. Secretary for Information Ato Austin, for example, has declared that “our ideological orientation and our aspirations will centre firmly on the aspirations and ideology of the working masses.”

Although the cabinet secretaries certainly influence how policies are implemented, effective power rests with the PNDC itself. It is composed of seven people: four military figures — including Rawlings — and three civilians.

Of the military figures, only one is a senior officer, Brig. Joseph Nunoo-Mensah. His public statements have tended to be the most conservative. For example, at a news conference in London in March, he stressed “the need to have a stable Ghana. Instability is infectious. I think it is in our mutual interests; it's in the interests of the Western world to have a stable Ghana.”

Sgt. Alolga Akata-Pore, on the other hand, has been one of the most outspoken in denouncing the imperialist stranglehold over Ghana and in advocating an increased role for the PDCs and the workers organizations.

Warrant Officer Joseph Adjai Buadi, another PNDC member, is the least prominent of the seven and has made few major public statements.

All three of the civilian members in the PNDC have radical reputations: Rev. Kwabena

Damuah as a civil rights activist, Chris Atim as a former student leader, and Joshua Amarte Kwei as a rank-and-file union militant.

Atim's political organization, the June Fourth Movement (JFM), has pressed the PNDC to move faster and not be so concerned about the reactions of neighboring countries or the imperialist powers. “Revolution is a class struggle,” the JFM declared in a statement in late May, “and for that reason there is no need for the PNDC to be over-cautious and compromising on a flimsy excuse of international goodwill for the Revolution.”

Kwei frequently stresses the anti-imperialist character of the struggle in Ghana. At a meeting of PDCs in Labadi in late May, for instance, he declared that “if we have been dominated by imperialist ideas in the past, if our past thinking has been shaped by foreign interests in the past and we have clearly suffered for it, it is our duty to develop new and fresh ideas, to develop anti-imperialist ideas, ideas that teach us about foreign countries and their governments, about foreign companies and their local collaborators and how they all act together to exploit and swindle us.”

Rawlings himself has tended to avoid specific political labels, and has stressed the nationalist character of the revolutionary process in Ghana. He often refers back to the demands and aspirations that Ghanaians raised during Nkrumah's government in the late 1950s and early 1960s, although with a decidedly more militant approach than Nkrumah ever used.

In an interview with the Mozambique News Agency, reprinted in the April 28 issue of the New York weekly *Guardian*, Rawlings stated:

“People talk about capitalism as one mode of development, and communism or socialism as another mode, but at least they're both on the move, using different paths. They have something in common, namely a certain level of social integrity, a certain national character, a demand for accountability. All of which is missing in most of the third world. But without it, your capitalism, or your socialism, or whatever it is, isn't going to work.”

While Rawlings thus displayed some continued illusions about the “social integrity” of capitalism, he also indicated that tactical considerations might be involved in his avoidance of the term socialism: “But when my colleagues talk about socialism as the way forward for us, you know what I told them? ‘Be careful of labels! The Western countries have had all these opportunities to poison people's minds. The best thing you can do is solve peoples' problems practically — afterwards you can tell them that what you're doing is socialism.’”

Rawlings also noted that in Ghana “we have very little experience of current revolutionary struggles.” He then added, “So it is not easy, we do not have what one might call a united leadership. You have all these tendencies.”

Also supporting the revolution are a half-dozen radical political organizations, a few of which, such as the June Fourth Movement, are directly represented in the government. Most

of these groups arose out of the student movement over the years. Only two — the June Fourth Movement and the New Democratic Movement — have some support among workers. None has a mass base.

One attempt to unite these groups shortly after the beginning of the revolution failed, although PNDC Special Adviser Kojo Tsikata is now involved in another effort to bring them together.

Such differences — and the political unclarity of various leaders — account for some of the contradictory statements and actions of the government and the numerous organizations. These problems and obstacles may get ironed out as the revolution progresses, but if they persist, the danger exists that the political momentum in Ghana will dissipate, offering new opportunities to the imperialists and local counterrevolutionaries to strike back.

But today political discussions in Ghana are not confined to just a few people. They are taking place in factories, neighborhoods, and barracks throughout the country. The ideas and demands raised in them will have an impact on the course of Ghana's unfolding revolution and on the development and consolidation of a leadership that can carry it through to victory.

Imperialist pressures and threats

It is precisely this mass radicalization that the imperialists and neighboring African regimes fear most.

Shortly after Limann's overthrow, both the U.S. and British governments expressed their "concern" about the situation in Ghana. The U.S. State Department set up a special "working group" to watch events there. The French government imposed a ban on Ghana receiving any credit from French financial institutions.

Economic threats were made. According to the January 25 *West Africa*, diplomats in Accra "said Western aid to Ghana would depend on the behaviour of the new government in the fields of human rights and policy-making."

Various African regimes also expressed uneasiness over Rawlings's seizure of power, particularly since the conditions that have fostered mass anger in Ghana exist throughout much of the continent.

The January 4 *New York Times* — in one of that paper's few articles on Ghana since the beginning of the revolution — ran a story under the headline: "Military Coup in Ghana Alarms West African Governments." The specific examples it cited were those in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Upper Volta.

"Some of the younger military officers in Togo," the article reported, "say privately that General [Gnassingbe] Eyadema is too moderate, and that what was needed to clean up corruption and waste in the country was a revolution along the lines of that Mr. Rawlings undertook in 1979."

The military regime in Liberia, which has received considerable U.S. military assistance and which hosted U.S. military exercises in 1981, promptly broke diplomatic relations with Ghana.

The government of Nigeria — by far the most populous country in Africa and the most powerful in West Africa — imposed an oil embargo on Ghana. Since Ghana had been dependent on Nigerian oil, this caused shortages until the situation was alleviated by the arrival of Libyan oil.

The Nigerian boycott reinforced fears in Ghana of a possible move from Nigeria to unseat the new government. So when Zimbabwean and Ghanaian newspapers reported in January that British troops, with U.S. backing, had arrived in Nigeria in preparations for an attempt to overthrow Rawlings, tens of thousands mobilized in protest. Whether those reports were accurate or not, they alerted Ghanaians to the dangers of possible imperialist intervention.

The dangers were underlined again in March, when two Americans and a West German were deported from Ghana on charges of spying. They were ostensibly employed as technical experts with the U.S.-owned Volta Aluminum Co. in Tema, near Accra.

When the deportees' premises were searched, Ghanaian officials found: a multifrequency radio scanner, transmitters, tape recordings of messages from the Limann government's intelligence network, coded messages from Limann's security agents (from the first days after his ouster as they tried to organize resistance to the PNDC), planned escape routes for former government officials, and a detailed diary of political and military events since December 31. There was also evidence that the three had tried to organize meetings with Limann's security coordinator, Colonel Yahaya, who is now at large.

Later in March, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker claimed that Washington did not want to see a deterioration of its relations with Ghana. But he pointedly added, "What happens is not just a function of our decisions but also theirs."

Since then, the pressures against Ghana have eased, but only slightly. The French government decided in late May to lift its credit embargo against Ghana. The Nigerian regime has once again agreed to sell oil, although it is demanding high monthly payments on Ghana's oil debts as a condition for continued delivery.

At the same time, the news blackout on what is actually happening in Ghana has continued, combined with a vicious propaganda campaign against the Rawlings government.

Nigerian newspapers have been publishing unfounded articles accusing the Ghanaian authorities of harassing Nigerian citizens living in Ghana.

The April 26 *Wall Street Journal* carried a major blast against the Rawlings government. It bemoaned the "continued disintegration in Ghana" since Rawlings took power. "Free enterprise has been eviscerated," it maintained. Seeking to strike a "human rights" note, the *Journal* claimed, "Estimates of the dead since the coup range between a few hundred and one thousand."

Such charges are without a scrap of evidence. The British business journal *West Africa* — the only foreign publication that has had regular and detailed news from Ghana — has reported no such mass killings.

Businessmen put up resistance

In conjunction with their own activities, the imperialists have been encouraging conservative and counterrevolutionary forces within Ghana to resist and undermine the revolutionary process.

That has not been easy. The mass mobilizations and widespread anger against corruption has put Ghana's wealthy few on the defensive. Many businessmen, merchants, and other opponents of the revolution have decided to lie low for the moment.

But others are beginning to go into action. Some of those who have left the country are now organizing opposition to the PNDC from abroad. They have formed an organization called the "Campaign for Democracy in Ghana," which has already established branches in Britain, Nigeria, and other countries.

Within Ghana itself, some sectors have spoken out against aspects of the PNDC's policies. The Ghana Bar Association, for example, has condemned the PNDC's plans to set up special "people's tribunals" to try corrupt officials. Catholic Bishop Dominic Andoh of Accra has denounced Reverend Damuah for participating in the PNDC. Trade union bureaucrats who were ousted by the workers have blasted the government's supposed violations of trade-union rights.

But much more serious than such verbal attacks has been the deliberate economic sabotage carried out by businessmen and traders. They realize that the strongest weapon they have against working people is the country's desperate economic state.

"The calculation is obvious," *West Africa* correspondent Nii Bentsi-Enchill commented in the June 14 issue: "make it impossible for the PNDC to deliver the goods, politically and materially, so that it will be possible for Rawlings to fall like Nkrumah's statue once did."

In response to the PNDC's imposition of price controls, some merchants have simply pulled their goods off the market, leading to severe shortages of some basic consumer items. They then sell them on the black market at exorbitant rates. Searches by troops, workers, and PDC members have checked this form of sabotage to an extent, but it remains a serious problem.

Managers in the state-run corporations have also proven exceedingly hostile to the revolution, particularly to the formation of the PDCs and workers committees. At the Ghana National Trading Corp. (GNTC), for example, managers launched a "go-slow," in the words of the PDC secretary there. This meant that large quantities of milk, soap, batteries, and other goods have piled up in the GNTC's warehouses in Accra and Tema, without being put on the market. The managers also stopped

processing the workers' paychecks.

In some cases, businessmen, chiefs, or other "big men" have tried to buy off members of the investigating committees or win control of some PDCs.

Opponents of the revolution have also been spreading rumors and scare stories, including slanders that the PNDC was part of a tribal plot by the Ewe people to take over the country (Rawlings's mother is of the Ewe people). The major Ghanaian newspapers, which are privately owned, have contributed to this disinformation campaign, seeking, among other things, to discredit the PDCs.

Another source of opposition to the upheaval has been elements within the state apparatus itself, including the army and police. In an effort to discredit the government's aims, soldiers — or sometimes people dressed in soldiers' uniforms — have physically harassed or robbed civilians. Armed clashes, which have led to some deaths, have been reported in Kumasi, Cape Coast, and Takoradi.

In at least a dozen known incidents, police and troops have beaten up members and leaders of the PDCs. In a statement on these attacks, the Interim National Coordinating Committee for the PDCs charged that such actions amounted to "counterrevolution."

Sergeant Akata-Pore has warned that any policeman or soldier who molested civilians would be punished as "an enemy of the revolution."

Some of the most serious acts of sabotage occurred just before June 4, the third anniversary of Rawlings's first seizure of power in 1979. Speaking at a massive workers' rally in Accra held to mark the anniversary, Rawlings announced that the Tono irrigation project in the north had been bombed, a motors enterprise had been set on fire, and other vital installations had been attacked.

The emerging counterrevolution — combined with Ghana's many economic difficulties and the pressures of the major imperialist powers — places serious obstacles in the path of the revolution. It will not be easy for working people in Ghana to shake off imperialist domination and build a society that serves their own interests.

Rawlings addressed the question of these counterrevolutionary threats — and the difficulties they pose — in his March 6 speech on the 25th anniversary of Ghana's independence:

"We will keep our guard, especially against those unpatriotic and selfish persons who have lost their chance to take the people of this country for a ride. We know how they are fighting back and using lies to try and confuse people. We know how imperialism can try to blackmail us economically, using a whole arsenal of weapons. But we are not deterred. This struggle, which we anticipate will be long and difficult, can only end in one thing, the defeat of the old and corrupt establishment and the victory of a revolution — our revolution, Ghana's revolution, a revolution for Africa!" □

Antilles

GRS holds fifth congress

Sees opportunities for significant growth

The fifth congress of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), the Antilles section of the Fourth International, met for three days in late May on the French-ruled Caribbean island of Martinique. Delegates from Martinique, Guadeloupe, and from Antillean emigrant communities in France gathered in the town of Ajoupa-Bouillon, whose mayor is a member of the GRS.

The congress took particular note of the changes in the political situation in the French-ruled Caribbean islands as a result of the victory of the Socialist Party in the French elections of May 1981.

The victory of the SP, according to a resolution unanimously adopted by the convention delegates, opened a new period in the Antilles. While the GRS has no illusions about the willingness of the Mitterrand government to end colonial rule in Martinique and Guadeloupe, the organization recognizes that the SP government has not followed the same policies as former president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. In particular, there has been a decline in repression against anticolonial forces. Also, radio and television broadcasts have been opened up to anticolonialist forces, especially in Guadeloupe. The GRS, for example, now receives regular broadcast time.

The increased ability of anticolonial forces to function openly and to be heard by the population opens new political possibilities for those struggling for the independence of the islands. For decades the population has been subjected to constant propaganda from the colonial authorities, aimed at convincing them that the islands would not be viable as an independent state and that independence would result in a drastic fall in living standards.

This propaganda campaign has had an impact on the population. While most workers in the Antilles have increasingly asserted their own national identity, the majority have not yet been convinced that independence is essential if the islands are to escape the economic underdevelopment and unemployment fostered by their colonial status.

In recent years a number of local industries, including the important sugar industry, have steadily declined as a result of French government policies favoring French agricultural producers.

Since Mitterrand's election, a shift of political forces has been taking place in the Antilles. On the one hand, organizations calling for autonomy for the islands have grown, especially the Martinique Progressive Party (PPM) led by noted author Aimé Césaire, who is also mayor of Martinique's capital city Fort-de-France. The Communist Party of Martinique and the Communist Party of Guadeloupe have

also gained ground. Like the French CP, which is participating in the Mitterrand government, the Antilles CPs call for autonomy within the French union instead of independence.

But there has also been growth of the pro-independence political organizations and trade unions, and an increasing desire for anticolonial unity.

The fifth congress of the GRS addressed the question of anticolonial unity by proposing that anticolonial general assemblies be held to work out common attitudes and proposals.

The gathering also adopted a series of measures to improve the internal functioning of the GRS. These included the establishment of a full-time staff, and measures to strengthen the revolutionary youth organization, the Vanguard Youth (JAG). This summer the JAG is organizing trips by militants from Guadeloupe and Martinique to the nearby island of Grenada, where a workers and farmers government is in power.

The organization also decided to hold its sixth congress in November in order to go further into questions that were not sufficiently dealt with due to lack of time. Among these is the plan to establish an Antilles revolutionary party that will also respect the differences that exist between the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique.

The GRS has a significant following on both islands. While it has more members in Martinique, it has stronger presence in the trade-union movement in Guadeloupe, where it plays a significant leadership role in the Movement of United Trade Union Action (MASU).

The congress delegates were confident that in the new situation that exists on the islands the organization can make a significant leap forward in size and influence.

Symptomatic of the change in the situation since the election of the Mitterrand government was the fact that the GRS congress received wide coverage on radio and television, where it was reported as the political "event of the weekend."

Alain Krivine, a leader of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the Fourth International, brought greetings to the gathering from the LCR and the Fourth International. During his week-long stay, he was widely interviewed on radio and television and addressed numerous meetings on both islands. □

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

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

Farmers and the Cuban revolution — II

Fidel Castro's speech to National Association of Small Farmers

[The following is the second 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 first part of Castro's speech appeared in the July 5 issue of *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Another troublesome issue — one of the most troublesome ones — was that of the farm markets.

I made some comments here yesterday about this issue, which I linked to others. It was during the Congress's discussion. We must say something here for the farmers and for all the people, because this is an issue which has been greatly debated and possibly eagerly awaited, with many people wondering what will be done with the farm markets and what magic formula the Congress will come up with. The formula has to be a magic one; no other kind could produce the prodigious feats that many people expect of this institution: a lot of products — and *cheap*. (LAUGHTER) Well, you need a magic formula, a repeat of the famous miracle of the fish and the loaves; this turkey becomes 50,000 turkeys; a sign is given, and 50,000 turkeys are on the market with refrigeration and all. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE) Cheap, abundant turkeys.

A number of interesting things have arisen with the markets: first of all, the go-betweens. Who's to blame for the go-betweens? They themselves? No. The farmers? No. Who, then? We are — the ones who created the market. We're to blame. Yes. Of course we aren't the historic inventors of markets, but we said we would see if something could be done with them.

It was done in good faith, and nobody had any intention of helping the go-betweens, etc. There has been talk of objectives, of encouraging production; trying to do away with the black market; and trying to get the farmers to harvest some products which they weren't harvesting, getting them to limit their consumption and bring some of what they used to consume to the market. Some of that may have happened, but they also started bringing in products that used to be sold to the state collection agency, because of the cut in prices. Some people raised this issue, and we have also been discussing it; we still don't know exactly that we're going to do, but something has to be done regarding the price of pigs. There was a problem, because top-quality pigs sold for 60 pesos [1 peso = US \$0.71] so we couldn't pay more for an inferior quality product. We still don't know how it will be solved, but something will have to be done to increase the state agencies' purchases of pigs. It seems that inferior quality pigs are best for roasting, right? (LAUGHTER) Perhaps the other ones are best for making into hams to be sold to the people, but the inferior quality ones seem to be the ones the people like for roasting, because of their special features. (LAUGHTER) Something must be done, and we'll do something about the pigs that the people like for roasting — perhaps raise their prices, and those of the other kind as well — but one thing is certain: something must be done.

Products formerly sold to the state started showing up in the farm markets, and this really isn't right — to stop selling the people a product at official prices in order to sell it in the farm markets at higher prices. Workers with small incomes will probably have to go without the bit of pork, chicken or other products that they used to get through the state. This was a negative factor.

It was felt that the state collection agencies' contracts would work, that People's Power, ANAP and other agencies would impose control

and that the normal supply to the state would continue. The idea wasn't to deprive the state of the products and take them to the farm markets.

Another very unpleasant problem, the most unpleasant one of all, was the go-betweens. We said we were to blame, because it seems that the markets can't function without some kind of go-between. Why? Because a farmer doesn't have the means to come from Batabanó, Guira de Melena or Matanzas provinces to Havana to bring five or seven hens, and he says, "How can I make a trip for seven hens?" Even though he could sell them for 10 pesos apiece, etc. So the go-betweens came on the scene, because they seem to have been a necessity for those markets. Without them, how could plantains get from Holguín to Havana? And there were people with 50,000 plantains to be sold for 80 centavos apiece, which works out to 40,000 pesos! Not even a capitalist plantation owner sold 40,000 pesos' worth of goods in just a few days. The go-between must have made a profit of at least 30,000 pesos, free and clear, tax exempt. Tax exempt! He went around among the farmers in Holguín buying their plantains, and it seems there weren't many left in Holguín — they were all here in Havana at the markets, being sold at those prices.

It takes a lot of time for plantains to grow. It has to be long enough after the last hurricane passed through the area for all the shoots in the province to bear fruit. It doesn't take so long for bananas, but that's the way

When all our agriculture is organized into cooperatives and state farms, there can be no black market . . .

things are: people all over the world like bananas more, because they're more abundant and give higher yields, but here in Havana some people prefer plantains, perhaps because they don't get them very often, and they pay more for them than for bananas, while bananas are what people are used to and eat all over the world. The Holguín plantains brought sky-high prices, and go-betweens brought them in from Holguín. The same thing happened with many other products.

Ninety percent of those at the markets were go-betweens; many farmers didn't want to go to the markets out of a sense of honor. Some of the people there looked like gangsters, (LAUGHTER) like ex-cons. I saw some of their pictures and asked, "Is this Mariel? Is it the Combinado del Este Prison? Where is it?" (LAUGHTER) Self-respecting farmers didn't want to be seen there.

Who served as the basis for the go-betweens, apart from necessity? Many of the so-called wildcat farmers, who shouldn't be confused with sharecroppers. Sharecroppers can be wildcat farmers, as well, because they may be functioning as sharecroppers not affiliated with ANAP. There are a few legal and I think many illegal wildcat farmers, with their plots of land here and there. Some tapped the aqueduct for irrigation purposes, and there were all kinds of characters, including some who didn't have a square inch of land to their names. But, when the farm markets came along they thought fast and came up with an incubator and fertile eggs. When asked where he'd gotten fertile eggs, one man said "At the store" — but they aren't sold there. Fertile eggs can only be obtained at breeding stations and special farms. Somebody sneaked those fertile eggs out, and the chicken feed came from somewhere else; all this went hand in glove with corruption, theft and other illegal acts. The wildcat farmers showed up, and I think we can do without them in the farm markets in the future.

There are some who can join ANAP — for example, those who hold their plots legally and work in sugar mills. They have to belong to

ANAP or the union but not necessarily both. Others hold land illegally. In any case, ANAP must make a study, an analysis of the wildcat farmers, to see which of them can be legalized and which can't, because, in line with the new views on the markets, the so-called wildcat farmers can't participate; only ANAP members can. They are the ones who should have the right — not just anybody because he wants to, because he calls himself a wildcat farmer and shows up. This is one of the first measures.

Now, as I was saying, many of them may already be in ANAP. Why? Because there are thousands of hectares that nobody's keeping close tabs on. There was talk of the number of hectares in state farms, the hectares in farmers' associations, but there are thousands of hectares and thousands of people unaccounted for in the countryside, people with land that isn't registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, ANAP or anybody. This isn't good. We must find and cope with illegal situations and bring order to our countryside. All the land in our country should be registered with the Ministry of Agriculture or ANAP; we can't have plots of land which nobody controls. (APPLAUSE) When all the land has been pooled in cooperatives, this disorder will end.

Whenever I see a farm, I've always imagined it belonged to farmers or a farmers' grouping, but the data and statistics show there are many that aren't in ANAP and may be illegal; there may be sharecroppers on land whose owners have abandoned it.

Anyone can understand the advantages that will ensue for the country when this uncontrolled, wildcat property system disappears. It is the cause of much wrongdoing and serves as the basis for the black market. When all our agriculture is organized into cooperatives and state farms, there can be no black market; there may be theft — that's something else, that somebody should steal and sell things — but not people trading clandestinely in agricultural products. It is inconceivable that the leaders of a state enterprise or a cooperative could be implicated in such shady dealings. All these wildcat farmers and sharecroppers create chaos and disorder, and they shouldn't have access to the farm markets in the future. We've already identified two: the go-betweens and the wildcat farmers. These institutions should disappear from our agriculture.

Now, what are we going to do? The people want markets — but with abundant products at low prices. That is a fact. But what happened? The go-betweens took over the markets and inflated the prices. Some of

The go-betweens took over the markets and inflated the prices. Some of them would have been brilliant on the New York Stock Exchange . . .

them would have been brilliant on the New York Stock Exchange, I'm telling you, (LAUGHTER) because they would come along and say "Don't sell, don't sell, till the price gets to such-and-such a level." Well, the farmers didn't want any trouble with these lumpen elements, who took over the markets: "The prices are such-and-such for chicken and such-and-so for something else." Prices were increasing, and so was the supply of products — the supply, because these were products (at least some of them) that used to be sold to the state. The products and prices increased, and these people laid down the law in the markets. Things got increasingly expensive. There's the case of the head of garlic for a peso, that I talked about in Caujerí, making a small-scale criticism. Even then, I was hearing talk of garlic at a peso a head and plantains here in Havana at 80 centavos. Exorbitant, abusive prices.

This led the people to complain, and demands were made. Different points of view developed. Many of them were illusions. Prices must be lowered. Well, if you reduce prices too much, the products disappear or are sold at other prices on the black market. These farm markets are free and many of us felt they wouldn't be free if we set limits or controlled prices. I don't know the official price of a three- or four-pound hen. If you set a ceiling of 20 percent more at the farm markets, it probably won't go to any market; it would stay on the farm, to be sold on the black market or end up eaten by the farmer who raised it. The farm



Fidel speaking at the ANAP congress.

markets would stop being free, and, if prices were lowered too much, there wouldn't be any products, or they would only last for half an hour with a long line of people pushing and shoving to get the product. It was felt that supply and demand — not the monopolistic role of the go-betweens and their tampering with the market — should regulate this situation.

A group of us from the Party, state agencies and ANAP were talking over what should be done. At the Young Communist League Congress, I suggested a high tax so the state and the people could get some return on this. We were considering various methods that wouldn't regulate the markets. Those were the ideas we had — not to regulate the markets, but to impose a 40 or 50 percent tax. We thought of high taxes because we knew those who sold on the market were earning 140 million pesos a year while paying the state less than a million. At official prices, they would probably earn 30 or 40 million, so they made 100 million in extra profits; which is way out of line. So much money in the hands of so few people is a real problem. That measure was praiseworthy in that it would raise funds by taking in money, but there was the drawback that the prices could remain high and even increase. This measure would have been accompanied by one doing away with wildcat farmers and go-betweens. Since the go-betweens arose to meet a need, we felt things should be organized in such a way that, with some resources or means, the credit and service associations would take charge of getting the produce to market. We're basing ourselves on the idea of maintaining the markets.

The ideas that we had and the conclusions that a group of us reached were presented to the Congress's delegates, and we saw yesterday that you don't like the idea of a high tax; the farmers and delegates don't like it, mainly because of a basic worry: that the tax would be added on to the price which would irritate the people and result in criticism of the farmers.

I understand the basic worry of the farmers, many of whom — principally the cooperative farmers — don't even want to hear about these markets. I could see from what the presidents of many cooperatives said that they practically hate those markets, and not without reason.

But the markets exist. The people want markets with these products, but they don't want to be robbed; they don't want things to be too expensive — they want them cheap. They want them so cheap it's impossible, because nobody would bring products to sell at those prices.

We realized that most of the delegates want that market regulated, want limits established — as do most of the people. So we have here three criteria: that of the state and the Ministry of the Treasury, the idea of taxes; that of the Congress and its delegates; and that of the people. All this has to be reconciled.

The Congress has helped us change our ideas on this question and not say, "let's implement this idea," just because it was developed by a group of us and it seemed very good, and the state would receive 40, 50 or 60 million pesos.

I think we should seek solutions that are in line with the farmers' thinking, since they're the producers, and that accord as much as possible with the people's thinking. It's our duty to take them into account, because we shouldn't do anything that would impose our views over those of the Congress or the people. Therefore, we'll have to take up the task of drawing up formulas in line with what has been said in this Congress. Some of the suggestions made here can't be implemented. It's very difficult to sell at one price and then add high taxes, etc. There are formulas that are good in theory but inapplicable, almost impossible, in practice.

We have to go back and analyse all this again, taking the delegates' and the people's criteria into account.

It would be an illusion for consumers to think that we can have free markets with cheap produce. I repeat: if too rigid limits are imposed, the products won't be brought to the markets; they'll go to the black market or be consumed, or they won't be harvested or delivered. If limits are established, they'll have to be much higher than the official prices of those products. Moreover, there are 2 million people in Havana and few farmers in the neighboring province, so a very high ceiling price must be set, or the products won't come to Havana.

All this must be discussed with the ANAP Committee and everyone must discuss our decisions. If it is decided to adopt ceiling prices, they must be very high — and I don't know when we'll analyze this well — at least double the official price, and even higher in Havana. This may create enough margin for a small tax — not a high one. The limit has to

I think we should seek solutions that are in line with the farmers' thinking, since they're the producers . . . we shouldn't do anything that would impose our views over those of the Congress or the people . . .

be high enough so people will bring their products to market. If it's too high, we'll lower it later on. If it's too low, we'll have to raise it.

Moreover, the ceilings mustn't be inflexible. They may rise if the products are seasonally in short supply, or they may fall. We should forget about inflexible ceilings.

I repeat — and yesterday I argued this with a group of comrades — if the idea of establishing ceilings is adopted, they must be high if we want to attract products, and they must be even higher in Havana, because the surpluses that the farmers in Havana province have won't suffice to meet the demand in the farm markets supplying a population of 2 million. As I said yesterday, taking products to Ciego de Avila, with a population of 74,000 isn't the same as taking them to Havana, with 2 million.

When the studies were made of the markets, it was discovered that things from Cienfuegos, Ciego de Avila and as far away as Holguin were coming to Havana — clearly, because they brought higher prices in Havana. Now, Havana has a higher average income than the other provinces. If you want farm markets in Havana, if you want products to come, you'll have to have much higher ceiling prices here.

It is very important for the Congress's delegates and the people to become familiar with these points before decisions are made.

There has to be a go-between, but not like the ones who used to be there. ANAP has to solve the problem of getting these products to the market; the state has to give ANAP the necessary resources and facili-

ties, because a farmer really can't go to market to sell four chickens. From 10 to 20 farmers have to join together and find a way to send 100 chickens to market, because, if not, the markets won't work. Not every farmer has a truck; he doesn't have those resources. This is why everything always ends up in the go-between's hands.

In other words, there are two basic ideas; one, that these go-betweens be eliminated, and the other that a method be established for bringing these products to the markets. This is indispensable. The farmers could also come to the markets to sell their products.

Now, then, about the markets' future. The people want the possibility to buy things, as in the parallel market. Some of the products that are sold in the parallel market — mainly those which are scarce — have really high prices, but all the money that's collected in the parallel market goes to the treasury; it becomes one of our people's resources. This is why the people don't protest so much about the parallel market. Some may think the prices there are too high, but everything seems to cost too much to a purchaser. The parallel market has existed for several years, and all the money that is collected there goes to the public treasury. It isn't designed to make anybody rich.

I spoke on this subject yesterday, saying that, when all the farmers are organized in cooperatives and the cooperatives are in full development, the private producers will disappear, because production for home consumption is the result of collective effort in both the cooperatives and the state enterprises. Then there'll be no reason for there to be farm markets. The farm markets are based on individual producers, so, in the future, when there aren't any, there won't be any reason for farm markets to exist.

Of course, there'll be both state farms and cooperatives. The state farms don't participate in these markets. The Ministry of Agriculture did the correct thing by opposing their participating.

What can replace the farm markets in the future? The idea that I set forth in the Congress yesterday and that I'll repeat now, so all our people will be informed on the matters that were discussed here, is that, in the future, the farm markets be turned into parallel markets of agricultural produce. Why? Because, even if there's enough garlic, for example — we should strive to produce enough garlic so that, as in the case of eggs, it can be sold freely instead of in the farm markets — or even if the state farms raise a large number of sheep or turkeys, there'll always be a shortage of at least one of those products — rabbits, for instance. Nobody in his right mind would offer all the rabbits, turkeys, goats or sheep the people want for sale at the existing prices for meat products subsidized by the state. If we used prices to regulate distribution, we could put all products on sale on an unrestricted basis tomorrow at predetermined prices. We know exactly what prices to set for products placed on unrestricted sale, but we don't want to sell them this way, because it would hurt the low-income families. The idea of their being sold freely would make some people happy — people with large incomes, chiefly thieves and those who've been involved in shady dealings — but what about all the people and families with low incomes? We can't do things that way. Capitalism does it, but capitalism is one thing and socialism is another. That's not the way socialism solves problems. It tries to solve them by increasing production. There was a time when eggs were rationed. The day came when production was so great that they could be sold unrestrictedly. Situations may arise when they'll have to be rationed again for a while, but they'll always be sold at a reasonable price — nothing like 40 cents apiece.

Many products are not rationed, and there are even times when there are so many potatoes that the refrigerated warehouses can't handle them all, and they've been sold at a centavo a pound. Sometimes there's a surplus of farm produce — for example, when a hurricane or other kinds of bad weather make it necessary to replant a number of crops and, all of a sudden, we have a bumper crop of everything. Surplus products are never thrown away. They're sold at low prices.

There's no doubt that holding prices down makes rationing necessary, and these prices are quite sacred.

In these conditions, no matter how much we achieve in state farm and cooperative production in the future, there'll always be a shortage of some product or other — maybe turkeys, maybe rabbits. Suppose somebody has a craving for rabbit, lamb, goat or turkey; he should have the

opportunity to satisfy it. Or maybe somebody wants to make a sauce calling for a herb that isn't found in the markets — not a "weed," (LAUGHTER) because that's entirely different and will never be grown here. (LAUGHTER) I'm talking about things like mint.

Several days ago, a comrade was looking for burdock, because it's supposed to be a good remedy for kidney stones. None of the medicines the doctors had prescribed had solved his problem, and he remembered that the people in the countryside used to say burdock would help. I remember it, too, because I used to look for it in Baracoa and bring it home to my father, who drank tea made from it. Well, there may be some of those plants still around, and, as I said before, this man was looking for it. By the way, that is something that isn't being sold on the farm markets. There'll always be a demand for one or another of those products.

We expect that, in the future, the farm markets will be replaced by a parallel market of agricultural produce, in which the cooperatives and the state farms can sell their surplus and "side" products — the ones that aren't part of their basic production, though we still have to decide just

Surplus products are never thrown away. They're sold at low prices . . .

what is and what isn't a side product. Pesticides, herbicides and so forth are sometimes diverted from the basic to the side products.

When our country is organized in state farms and cooperatives, from 1,500 to 2,000 cooperatives can produce enough agricultural produce to meet the demand. It can't be done by 150,000 small farmers scattered all over the place. The day when we have 1,500 cooperatives and who knows how many state farms, we'll call all the presidents of the cooperatives and the secretaries of their Party cells together here in this theater — there's room enough for all of them — and take three days or 10 days, if necessary — to discuss production plans, product shortages, prices, policy — everything. Then we'll be able to encourage the cooperatives and state farms. (APPLAUSE) Then we can award prizes to those that overshoot their production plans; have surpluses of their "side" products — turkeys, goats, sheep, rabbits or hens, anything they want to raise, even pheasants, if they can. We have one state pheasant farm, and some of the restaurants here include pheasant on their menus.

The organization that is being created now to oversee these markets, which will have to be directed mainly by ANAP, will be managed by the state in the future, when the cooperative movement has made enough progress. The state will pay higher prices for the products than those being paid by the state collection agencies now, and it will sell them at even higher prices, at parallel-market prices. The income from those sales will, of course, go to the state — in other words, to the people — to cover the people's needs and expenses, development plans, health programs, education, and defense. That was what I suggested in the Congress yesterday: that, in the future, a parallel market for agricultural produce be established, just as there is a parallel market for industrial products now. We will do whatever is necessary to have these markets stocked with products to be sold at set prices — which won't be cheap. These are the ideas that prevailed yesterday regarding the markets' future.

As for what we'll do, we've already said that we'll keep the people's and the delegates' opinions in mind, but we warn you the ceiling must be flexible and high — or there won't be any products, because nobody's going out into the countryside to demand at gunpoint that these products be sent to the market. It is assumed that the farmers will deliver these products of their own free will, because they want to do it and because it pays for them to do so. Moreover, the ceiling prices in Havana should be higher than elsewhere.

We'll try to settle all these questions as soon as possible. Then, when the price regulations are established, we'll see what happens. If the ceiling prices are too low, we'll have to raise them, and if they're too high, we could bring them down. But these ideas must be clearly understood, and any idea that there are going to be farm markets full of cheap products should be discarded.

I believe that we should learn from the negative and positive expe-

riences of the farm markets and give them a socialist character in the future. The private farmers will gradually join the cooperatives, and the products they raise for home consumption won't come from individual plots of land but will be the result of collective efforts, which is one of the characteristics of our state enterprises and farms.

I wonder if there's anything else I should say about the famous farm markets. (APPLAUSE)

Another point that we might describe as problematic is taxes. Taxes are problematic not because the farmers don't want to pay them or don't feel bound to pay them, but because it is very difficult to collect them in a simple way. The ideal method is to tax profits; OK, but who'll keep the accounts for the 150,000 farmers and wildcat farmers — no, there are more of them if the wildcat farmers are included — who'll keep the accounts on the costs and profits? It's practically impossible.

We came to the conclusion that there was only one way to apply this tax — on gross sales. Some comrades said it should be applied to the land and its yield. Well, that would take years of work, involving a colossal organization that would cost more than it would bring in, at a time when small-scale agricultural production is being rapidly cooperativized. There's only one practical way: to apply it on the amount of sugarcane delivered to the sugar mill and the products delivered to the tobacco collection agencies, cattle ranches and collection agencies for other products. I think this should be the method used in collecting taxes. There wasn't any other way, so we came to that conclusion. We also analyzed a scale.

Here in the Congress a farmer from Guamá, a delegate from Guamá, expressed some concerns — reasonable ones. In having to pay the old taxes and the new one, a farmer from the mountains — he presented this example — with an income of 3,000 pesos would have to pay a little over 300 pesos in taxes. He was concerned about this, and I imagine that many other farmers are, too — especially those from the mountains, because they say it isn't possible to use machinery there, and life is harder and production costs higher. They say, rightly, that it costs a lot more to raise cacao, coffee and even root vegetables there. The delegate from Guamá said that root vegetables should bring a higher price in the mountains. We said they should be for the farmers' own use and not for sale, that it wasn't advisable to stimulate the production of root vegetables in the mountains. He made his suggestion, and it was given a lot of attention.

Comrade Elías and several other presidents of cooperatives expressed their concern that the proposed tax on cooperatives would hurt the cooperative movement, that a tax on gross sales would cut into the cooper-

I believe that we should learn from the negative and positive experiences of the farm markets and give them a socialist character in the future . . .

atives' profits — especially the sugarcane ones* — because some cooperatives have higher profits than others; some products are sold in larger quantities, with greater volumes of gross sales but lower earnings, etc. They said that the cooperatives were keeping accounts and that it would be easier to tax profits.

Here again, there were two ideas: the ideas that a group of us had drawn up and the ideas of the Congress. The Congress is being held for a purpose, and we wanted to hear what everybody thought about this. As in the case of the farm markets, I think we have to change some of our ideas on the tax and analyze the possibility of the cooperatives' being taxed on the basis of profits, because the presidents of the cooperatives defended this thesis here with sound arguments. Therefore, we should get together again to consider the tax, which we've agreed to here in principle — to consider its forms and bases. We should meet with the ANAP leadership and adopt some definitive formulas — again, taking into account the criteria that have been set forth in this Congress.

Not all points were problematic; there were some positive things, solutions that were well received and that will be welcomed by all farmers — such as the proposals on social security. But, before getting into so-

cial security, I'd like to repeat something here that I said yesterday in the Congress, and that is that the tax is a matter of principle and education, that the farmers' earnings under the last wholesale price reform are much greater than everything that will be collected in taxes and that what is collected in taxes isn't even a tenth of what our working people — our country, thanks to everyone's efforts, — including the farmers'

I think everybody understands the need for this tax on farmers to be on a scale, low for those who earn less — who should always pay something — and higher for those who earn more . . .

— spend on the countryside. Hundreds of millions of pesos are spent on investments to benefit the farmers each year; the tax would bring in only a few million.

It's important for farmers to know that this tax is a matter of education and principle. It will be a source of satisfaction for them, but it will bring in only a fraction of what the country has invested in the rural areas — a small fraction amounting to no more than a few million. We based ourselves on the view that everybody should contribute something: those who earn a little, with a little, and those who earn a lot, with more, but not proportional. This tax should be based on a scale. We shouldn't forget — and you know this as well as we do — that some farmers earn from 30,000 to 40,000 pesos a year. You know some farmers are millionaires — of course, they haven't stolen the money. In keeping with the norms of the Revolution, the prices set by the Revolution and the markets and opportunities it has provided, some farmers have hundreds of thousands of pesos. Some sell from 50,000 to 60,000 pesos' worth of products a year. With 54 hectares planted to high-yield potatoes, tomatoes, carrots, etc. just think what they earn, using wage labor.

The tax must be graduated so it'll be much higher for those with huge earnings — the millionaire farmers who earn 10 times as much as an outstanding medical specialist, or 20 times as much as an average worker, using the labor of others. I think everybody understands the need for this tax on farmers to be on a scale, low for those who earn less — who should always pay something — and higher for those who earn more. I repeat: the solution will take into account what you have said and be more or less along those lines.

However, take the documents; take the document on the farm markets, and explain the ideas that have been expressed on this score. They should be known. Take the document on taxes, as well, because the farmers should become familiar with it while we make the final decisions.

Getting back to social security, all farmers will surely be pleased with it. There wasn't much discussion on this. It was established that earnings should be determined by the cooperatives' gross sales; since the social security law will benefit the members of cooperatives, they will have to contribute.

There was discussion about something else we'll have to look into: the minimum benefits. Somebody raised this issue. We've been discussing the problem with various comrades and share those concerns. We'll see how we can raise them. In some cases, both the minimum and the maximum could be increased. The delegates' views were also considered on this score.

The document that you received and some others that Pepe's already mentioned include proposals on sales of farms, services, etc. — a number of good, positive solutions. There are some on crop insurance, too: it was agreed that it should be voluntary, except when credit is requested. In those cases, crop insurance is obligatory, because you know that, for the last 23 years, nobody has provided crop insurance except the state. Every time there's been a hurricane, a blight or some other disaster, something happened that we're very pleased about: our proletariat demonstrated its solidarity with and support for the farmers. (APPLAUSE) Everybody can understand that crop insurance should be paid for by the crop itself. This is the principle that prevails in all insurance

institutions. That was what Pepe proposed and the Congress accepted yesterday.

We're really pleased that this Congress, which is a new lesson, a new test, has been so useful. At a time when many of us were analyzing problems, trying to solve them in all their complexity and coming up with some ideas, some opinions were voiced here in the Congress concerning a few complex things. There's no question about it: you corrected those opinions and persuaded us to adopt other, more suitable variants and solutions. What was being expressed here wasn't the wisdom of a tiny group of men but the wisdom of thousands of men, tens of thousands of men who in certain situations are better qualified than any of us to hit on the right idea.

As for the much-debated question of the farm markets, the other comrades and I realized that it involved the farmers' wounded honor — there was a wound, there was a sore — and that their main concern (which was absolutely fair and honest) was that, even if it meant 40 or 50 million pesos coming in from sales in the farm markets, the high tax formula was going to place the farmers in an embarrassing position in the eyes of the people, in the eyes of the workers. It seemed to us that their concern should be borne in mind.

I believe it's a good lesson, when we think we've found good solutions, to mull things over and really consider the feelings and wisdom of the masses. That is true democracy. (APPLAUSE) That should always be the style of our Party and state: not to impose but to persuade or be persuaded — because their role isn't always that of persuading; it's also to allow themselves to be persuaded by the people as many times as necessary, because the greatest wisdom has been, is and will always lie in the people. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

As Pepe said, inspections and other rigorous measures have been taken not only in the case of the farm markets. A general policy of struggle against greed, immorality, theft and all other manifestations of corruption is being applied. Measures were taken against people who made a profitable business out of selling places in lines, and inspections of all kinds were made: in the dairies and department stores and in the Plaza. We will continue to apply this policy systematically. Why? Because there are many violations. Sometimes they're simply administrative violations, but we must combat them, too. The administrative violations

I believe it's a good lesson, when we think we've found good solutions, to mull things over and really consider the feelings and wisdom of the masses. This is true democracy . . .

lead to and facilitate fraud and theft, and we must be both persistent and tough in the case of theft and all other illegal activities carried out for profit.

We can't allow antisocial, lumpen elements to corrupt our society. (APPLAUSE) While the corrupted are an insignificant minority we can win any battle. Ah, but, if the majority are corrupted, the battle will be very difficult to win. There are cases of corruption in many places. It's sad. There have been cases of dishonesty among judges, lawyers, policemen, ordinary workers, blue-collar workers, intellectuals — everyone. There are cases. Therefore, we have to be relentless against the lumpen elements; the thieves; and those who want to make thousands, tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of pesos breaking the law, because they corrupt. Sometimes they begin in subtle ways, like friends lending a little money when you need it, not insisting on being repaid and then lending you more.

We know of cases of good comrades who, little by little, fell into the clutches of these lumpen elements in subtle ways. Sometimes the administrator of a bar may be a lumpen element: if the policy is 30 shots per bottle of rum — I'm just giving a little example; it's always good to give examples when presenting an idea — they stretch it to 35. They're robbing the public. They're pocketing the difference between the 30 shots of rum — it could be Carta Blanca, which you all prefer — and 35 shots, pocketing the difference. Or ice cream by the scoop: there should

be 50 scoops of ice cream per container. They keep this from the public and shave the scoop, taking out less so there are 60 scoops, and they pocket the difference. This is an example, an example of the procedures some people use. (APPLAUSE) Or the number of pizzas or the quantity of cheese on the pizzas. When it comes to money . . . There was an administrator, in charge of the Ward Ice Cream Parlor . . . I'm not going to say his name — actually, I don't remember it now — but it's the case, not his name, that's important here. Some days he made 300 or 400 pesos extra, selling ice cream — this guy was selling ice cream like crazy. (LAUGHTER) The assistant administrator was also corrupted, and so were several employees. The man had gone and corrupted his assistant and everyone else, with each one getting at least 15 or 20 pesos every day. It was a kind of farm market he had there, buying and selling people.

Every manifestation of corruption is a serious thing, and the people cannot permit it . . .

Well, we don't have capitalists now; the people administer the goods. Every manifestation of corruption of this type is a serious thing, and the people cannot permit it. I believe we should add up our experiences and find what controls are best — but we have to multiply them, increase them and engage in a relentless struggle, because socialism can't permit this cancer to devour it. There are thousands, tens of thousands of installations to administer. When there is theft, it's the people who are being robbed — nobody but the people. Can you count on a bad character like that, who robs the people, to take up a gun and defend our homeland? That lumpen element is the basis of the counterrevolution and treason.

Sometimes the wrongdoing is rather pervasive because of lack of inspections and controls, and we have to struggle hard against it. We can't allow anybody to steal ice cream from a child or even a shot of liquor from a drunk. Why should they rob a poor drunk? (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE) A man spends an afternoon drinking, and spending plenty of money — 'cause rum's expensive here — and, on top of that, he's being robbed.

We have to be inflexible with the thousands of stores and other establishments.

Wrongdoing is pervasive, but we are partly to blame, for we put the church in the hands of the devil — haven't you heard that saying? — through the system that was used to recruit hotel and restaurant workers. I don't want to speak ill of them, for I believe that many of those in charge have low wages that should be looked into. Moreover, there are many good people, many honest workers among them — but there are lumpen elements, too. Why? Because of how they were recruited. We found out about this not too long ago. The Ministry of Labor sent them, but as it wasn't a high-priority job — Moa, this, that and the other had more priority — the people who were left over went into hotels, restaurants, stores and services. If a survey were made, it would show that an alarming percentage of them have records of common and even counter-revolutionary crimes. You can't expect good results. We have to completely change our recruiting system. There are honest people, many honest and decent people in all the neighborhoods, everywhere.

Moreover, I'm asking many of those who've retired to come back to work. In these cases, as an exception to the rule, they'll continue to get their full pensions in addition to their wages. (APPLAUSE) We must find a way to recruit honest people for our hotels, restaurants, services and stores in general and continue the struggle.

Inspections always reveal quite a number of irregularities. Some of them consist of administrative violations — which should be punished, but not treated in the same way as theft and other crimes for profit. We must be much more severe with those who commit thefts than with those who commit violations in order to profit from them. Administrative violations should be combated, too, though in a different way, because lack of control makes theft possible. We must combat this; not treating it the same way as theft, of course, but we [cannot] sanction it. We must teach our workers to do things correctly, to obey the laws and regulations.

Often, they think the laws and regulations aren't very important, but they are — disregarding them makes it possible for others to steal.

This isn't a witch-hunt, but we're going to ferret out everyone who commits violations. Sooner or later, we'll smoke them out. We're going to work very patiently, but we're going to find each and every one of them. (APPLAUSE) We don't make a crusade of it, throwing a lot of people in jail. In fact, some may reconsider their actions and realize that they've done wrong, especially in the case of theft. That wouldn't be a bad idea, because we could give them some consideration if they went and told their superiors, "Look, I did such-and-such a thing." We can be benevolent with them, taking their attitude into consideration, and probably find other jobs for them, studying each case individually. There may be some people — I'm sure there are — who will reconsider and act accordingly. We won't publish their names, and it would pay for them to act that way, because then we wouldn't have to send so many people to jail. But, as far as the others are concerned, they are certainly going to be given the full treatment.

Many of them still have a chance. Whatever measures we take will have to show those who have committed violations the wisdom of turning themselves in and convince them that their crimes won't go unpunished. (APPLAUSE) We have ways of discovering all these cases of theft; we have ways of finding out, but just taking measures won't prevent these things. You can take a lot of measures, but then you put 3,000 criminals into hotels and restaurants, stores and other service facilities. Do you expect them to have become saints? Well, they haven't, and they're free to do as they please. They do a lot of harm — especially the ones who set up a kind of mafia. These things happen, and I can give you some more examples — for instance, the distribution of cars. The country distributes thousands of cars every year, but it doesn't put them up for open sale. The state could set up a free market of automobiles at 25,000, 30,000 or maybe 40,000 pesos apiece, but who would buy them? You know who: the lumpen elements, the "businessmen" making 300 pesos a day. Here cars are sold at a much lower price, nearly at cost, and people can buy them on an installment plan. Why do we do this? So the cars will go to technicians, doctors, engineers, vanguard workers, "millionaire" canecutters, self-sacrificing internationalists, (APPLAUSE) outstanding teachers and other blue- and white-collar workers, on the basis of merit. This is how they are assigned.

This year, our country will distribute 10,000 cars. At least 2 out of every 3 will be bought by workers connected with production and servi-

Regardless of our limitations and defects, our society is infinitely superior to the one that many of you or your parents knew . . .

ces: construction workers, sugarcane workers, workers in transportation and in various state agencies. We feel that they are the people who should be given the opportunity to have cars — not the lumpen elements. As you all know, motorcycles are also distributed among workers in the sugar mills and factories; many workers have purchased them through this system. The lumpen elements can't do this, but if they have the money, they go shopping for a motorcycle or a car, corrupting, ready to pay as much as 20,000 pesos for a car. They've corrupted vanguard workers and doctors, tempting them to make big money by selling their 4,500-peso cars for 20,000. Which is to say that these things corrupt and change individuals. The people must be relentless against these things, so when they see someone driving one of these new cars they'll know he's a technician, an outstanding worker, and not a bandit.

What need do we have for elements like these who corrupt a worker who, through his merits, has been given an award by society, who has been given the chance to buy a car at a reasonable price? As I said yesterday, those who have sold cars or motorcycles in this way should know that they're going to lose their money, and those who've bought cars or motorcycles in this way will lose them. (APPLAUSE) There's a clause in the contract that's specifically designed to prevent anyone from speculating with these valuable articles that are sold at low prices.

You want to reward a worker; you make it easy for him to buy a car, as he deserves, but you don't intend to give him a gift of 15,000 pesos. There's a clause that says anybody who wants to sell his car should go to the state, to Auto-Import, and sell it there. Then Auto-Import resells the used car at a lower price. This clause has been in the contract ever since these cars and motorcycles began to be sold. Some people have broken the contract, even produced forged papers. We know the little tricks some of them have pulled in these operations. As I said before, the buyer loses the car, (LAUGHTER) and the seller loses the money. (APPLAUSE) I imagine there'll be quite a few people running around tomorrow, arranging and rearranging things, wondering what to do and what's going to happen. (LAUGHTER)

There's a contract, and you have to abide by it.

Who does all the buying, and how do we find out who's been doing it? Who can come up with 15,000 or 20,000 pesos to buy a car? The lumpen elements, the go-betweens who've spent a couple of months in the farm markets, the man who had 50,000 plantains, the man at Ward's who bought eight cars. What do you think of that? (LAUGHTER) He had a hobby of buying and selling cars, and he was crazy about the brand-new ones.

We have to fight against all these things; we have to delve into these problems, because they're related to our workers' attitude, our people's moral principles, the law, respect for the law and our people's spirit and revolutionary conscientiousness. This is why we have to wage an all-out war against this greed for profit. Let's hope many of these people straighten up so we don't have to take drastic measures against so many of them. This doesn't mean we're going to stop going after the wrongdoers, but we'll follow a policy that distinguishes between honest people who sometimes act irresponsibly and thieves. Thieves won't have any chance at all in this country. This is a policy that involves all of us, the mass organizations, etc., because we all have to fight this battle. It isn't a matter for the police or Ministry of the Interior alone; it concerns the mass organizations and everybody.

I think the time for the reception's drawing near, and so is the end of my speech. I'd like to say something that I believe expresses the feelings of all who have attended the Congress, and that is that we were deeply impressed by what the delegates said here. Your maturity, seriousness, wisdom, honesty and courage gave us a feeling of security and great confidence in the future.

The day when all our agriculture is organized in cooperatives, with the best farmers — like you who've attended this Congress — in charge of them, there won't be many of these pressing problems that we've talked about today; go-betweens, wrongdoers, sharecroppers, wildcat farmers, etc. What a wonderful outlook our country has with its future in the hands of men and women like you! (APPLAUSE)

We have made great progress, and we will continue to do so, but it won't be easy. As we stated very clearly in the final session of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution Congress last October, nobody should think that things are going to be easy. We must be prepared to meet difficulties. We have difficulties now, and we'll have even greater ones in the future, even if we do things the right way — and we should do them the right way, even if it calls for our greatest efforts. We have to cope with the objective problems of the international situation, the increasing number of economic measures the imperialists take against us. Recently they've even said U.S. tourists can't come to Cuba. There had been some U.S. tourism. We know all about all the measures the imperialists have taken. They combine these measures with hypocritical statements, talking about negotiating positions. What negotiating positions? What proof have they given that they are ready to negotiate and discuss things?

Only a few days ago, the president of the United States said that Cuba would be welcomed in the Western community if it broke its ties with the socialist camp and joined the Western countries. (LAUGHTER) I don't know. Sometimes it's very hard to understand their mentality. For all we know, they probably think they're offering us a bargain, doing us a favor by promising us the paradise of that rotten, stinking capitalist society. (APPLAUSE)

Whatever our defects and errors in these early stages of socialism, how could we conceive all the things you've said here — what the com-

rade from La Plata, the comrade from Banés and many other delegates said regarding their pleasure and infinite happiness in having had the privilege of experiencing the Revolution and participating in the construction of socialism — without socialism? Regardless of our limitations and defects, our society is infinitely superior to the one that many of you or your parents knew. There's no comparison between that society and the dignified way of life, possibilities and happiness you've had — not only from a material standpoint, because material things alone don't make for happiness. A sense of justice, dignity, self-respect for others and love for your fellowmen also have a great deal to do with happiness, (APPLAUSE) as have moral principles; the feeling of being

United in a single bloc, our workers, farmers, intellectuals and students will march forward victoriously, and nothing and nobody can ever stop them . . .

free, equal and respected and of taking part in the battle for the progress of the world, the world you live in; and working like beavers, shoulder to shoulder with the rest of your people.

We understood that the delegates wanted to say many things when they spoke in this Congress. We know what the capitalist hell is like, and we will never return to it. Never! (APPLAUSE)

Those imperialist leaders show no respect and are insulting, for what the president of the United States said is tantamount to telling a country to commit an act of betrayal, to sell out. Their offer arouses nothing but our utter and complete contempt. (APPLAUSE)

There are men and governments that have sold out to imperialism, been hired by imperialism or surrendered to imperialism, but we serve notice on the U.S. government — and it should know, after 23 years, that we mean what we say — that our people, our Party and our leaders will never hire themselves out, sell out or surrender! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

We will confront every difficulty; pressure; and economic, political or other kinds of attack. We will keep moving ahead. The Revolution will go on winning new laurels and scoring new victories. United in a single bloc, our workers, farmers, intellectuals and students will march forward victoriously, and nothing and nobody can ever stop them.

Long live the solid, indestructible and lasting alliance between our workers and farmers. (SHOUTS OF "LONG LIVE!")

Patria o muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)

Don't miss a single issue of Intercontinental Press! Send for your subscription now!

- Enclosed is \$35 for a one-year subscription.
- Enclosed is \$17.50 for a six-month subscription.
- Enclosed is \$8.75 for a three-month subscription.
- Please send information about first-class and airmail rates.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Country _____

Make checks payable to

Intercontinental Press
410 West Street
New York, N.Y. 10014 U.S.A.

Massive peace march in Paris

LCR urges 'French troops out of Africa'

By Christian Picquet

[The following article appeared in the June 25 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Tens of thousands of people (250,000 according to the organizers) demonstrated for disarmament on June 20 in Paris. This was clearly the largest action on this theme seen in France in years.

In the first place, this march reflects the growing consciousness of how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's nuclear policy poses the dangers of war and destruction in Europe. It reveals a growing nervousness regarding the warlike policies of imperialism, as seen daily in Central America and as has just been expressed through the Malvinas conflict and in Lebanon.

But it is also clear that the antiwar movement here still has a long way to go to achieve the same scope as in the United States, West Germany, or Britain. There is at least one reason for this lag: the attitude of the Socialist Party and of the government, in which the SP is the majority.

Its unconditional support for the U.S. arms buildup has deeply divided the workers movement. The June 20 march was in fact basically supported by the Communist Party, the CP-led General Confederation of Labor (CGT), and the Movement for Peace. And it was largely made up of the CP's organizations, although numerous pacifist and immigrant-worker organizations also participated.

There is another difference with the situation in other Western countries. In those countries, although the movement includes very diverse currents, the mobilizations tend to aim their fire at the main aspects of the policies followed by the key Western countries: the "euro-strategic" missiles in Western Europe, the U.S. military budget. The idea of unilateral disarmament is slowly gaining ground.

The organizers of June 20 took quite a different approach. Asserting that they want to exert pressure on the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, they carefully avoided any denunciation of imperialism's new course. The final call stated: "We say: negotiate in the East and the West for the security of nations and so that disarmament can finally become a reality. We say that the arms race is a race to ruin and that we should spend on life what is squandered for death."

The fuzzy character of the call allowed the Communist Party to respond to the anti-imperialist sentiment of its ranks (who were not able

to express themselves during Reagan's visit to Paris because the CP opposed the June 5 demonstration), and make a show of strength, without breaking with the policies of the government, in which there are CP ministers.

Socialist Party Leader Lionel Jospin could say a short time before the march: "We would have been able to sign the text of this call. Its content does not bother us at all."

Moreover, in this way the Communist leaders were able to back up the Kremlin's diplomatic battle, the aim of which is not so much to

British socialists on Thatcher's war: 'no victory for working people'

[The following statement appeared on the front page of the June 18 issue of *Socialist Challenge*, the weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the International Marxist Group, the British section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The Argentine surrender of the Malvinas-Falklands is no victory for working people — either here, in Argentina or in the rest of the world.

The taking of Port Stanley is a victory only for our enemies — Thatcher, the bosses, colonialism and imperialism.

Hundreds of British soldiers have been killed — so many that they won't tell us the real figure. Thousands of our brother Argentine workers in uniform have been slaughtered and maimed. The £1 million-a-day cost of the war and the now inevitable increase in defence spending, will all have to be borne by working people. Thatcher will take this victory as an endorsement of her government policies as a whole and as a green light to double the punishment to which we have so far been subjected.

What socialist worth their salt could fail to be filled with loathing at the gloating, baying and cheering of Tory MP's?

Yet the despicable [Labour Party leader] Michael Foot continued his whimpering backing for Thatcher. He offered "great congratulations" to the British armed forces — "and also the Prime Minister."

What interests have working people in the colonial repossession of Argentine islands 8,000 miles away? The sheep rearing on the islands will still give profits to Coalite, yet the costs of maintaining a heavy garrison will be borne by us.

The potential oil reserves under the sea will give workers no benefits. North Sea oil has gone alongside 4 million unemployed. In this

build mass action — since it fears there could be fallout on the other side of the iron curtain — as to relaunch negotiations with Washington.

The LCR took part in the march to assert the need for unity of all the working-class forces against imperialism, including French imperialism. The LCR contingent stood out because of its dynamism and its slogans: "French or American, no to the neutron bomb"; "From Europe to El Salvador Reagan wants war — down with imperialism"; "French troops out of Africa and the overseas territories and departments"; and "Reagan-Begin are murderers — we support the PLO."

Despite its limitations, the June 20 action shows that in France, too, we are witnessing the birth of a deepgoing movement. We must now contribute to its rise and its clarification. □

case, the oil companies will get richer [amid] the biggest cut in our standard of living since the thirties. We will be faced with the stepping up of the attacks on our rights and living standards.

We have no interest in the victory of our profit-oriented system. Such victories will lead to a further turning of the screw here. They will be used to increase the subjection of exploited and oppressed peoples in Argentina and the rest of the world.

The war is not over in the South Atlantic. Argentina will continue to fight for its just claim. The war is not over at home. That is why we say:

Troops out of the Malvinas now!
Down with Thatcher!

Your library should get *Intercontinental Press*.

Intercontinental Press is a unique source for political developments throughout the world. *IP* is the only English-language magazine with a full-time bureau in Managua, providing weekly reports on the development of the revolutionary upsurge in Central America. *IP* correspondents provide our readers with in-depth coverage of events such as the Iranian revolution, the freedom struggle in South Africa, and the workers struggle in Poland.

Many of the documents, speeches, and interviews we publish appear nowhere else in English. Why not ask your library to subscribe? Make sure others get a chance to read *IP* too.