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## ***U.S., France, Italy Offer Aid in Expelling PLO*** **Israel's Rain of Death in Lebanon**



Palestinian survivor in the ruins of Tyre.

***Sets Up New Base in Honduras***  
**U.S. Presses War Against Nicaragua**

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## Our new publication schedule

Beginning with this issue, *Intercontinental Press* will be going onto a biweekly publication schedule. This is not a step that we want to take, but it has become unavoidable.

Last year, and again this year, we appealed to readers for funds, explaining that rising costs were putting *IP* in an increasingly precarious economic situation. Although many of our readers did respond generously to our appeal for money, the increase in our costs has made it impossible for us to continue financing a weekly publication at this time.

We do not see the biweekly schedule as a permanent step. As we are able to improve our financial situation, we will resume a weekly schedule.

Developments in the class struggle make this an extremely difficult decision. Revolutions are unfolding in Central America, Iran, and Indochina. In the main imperialist countries, a growing class polarization is taking place, opening up important opportunities for revolutionary activity in the trade unions. No country has been left untouched by the social and economic crisis that is producing massive radicalization and new revolutionary upheavals around the world.

At a time like this, a Marxist magazine that

can provide rapid, up-to-date information and analysis on the major events in world politics is needed more than ever. But we simply do not have the resources to fill the objective need that exists.

On the other hand, we are confident that these same developments in the class struggle will enable the revolutionary socialist movement to attract the support of increasing numbers of working people around the world. It is that support that will enable *IP* to resume its weekly publication schedule.

In the meantime, we are changing our subscription rates to reflect *IP*'s new biweekly status. The new rates are not reduced by a full 50 percent, since many of our expenses — for example, for rent and for other overhead costs — will remain the same. Those who have subscribed under the old rates will have their subscriptions extended, and most U.S. readers will now receive their subscriptions by first class mail.

Finally, we would like to appeal once again to our readers to send whatever they can to help us overcome our financial difficulties. Contributions can be sent to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. □

## U.S.-inspired campaign stops summit of African countries

By Will Reissner

The cancellation of the annual summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which had been scheduled to take place August 5-8 in Tripoli, Libya, was a blow to the anti-imperialist forces on the African continent.

A boycott by proimperialist African regimes made it impossible to gather the necessary quorum of 34 of the 51 members of the OAU. This was the first annual summit to be cancelled in the organization's 19-year history.

The failure to hold the summit meeting places the future existence of the organization in question. At the gathering, the chair of the OAU would have been turned over to Libya's Muammar el-Qaddafi as head of state of the host country. On the agenda were such questions as relations with the Zionist state of Israel and the white-supremacist state of South Africa.

The boycott of the Tripoli meeting was spearheaded by Washington and its closest collaborators in Africa, especially the Moroccan monarchy of King Hassan II. The Reagan administration, which has publicly declared its intention to get Qaddafi, feared that under his chairmanship the OAU would take stronger

anti-imperialist positions on the liberation struggles in Namibia, South Africa, Palestine, and elsewhere.

Washington had unsuccessfully tried to engineer a similar boycott of the summit meeting of the Nonaligned Movement in Havana in September 1979, in an attempt to prevent Cuban leader Fidel Castro from serving as spokesperson of that international body.

The failure of the Tripoli meeting deepens the open split in the OAU that began in February at an OAU Council of Ministers meeting in Ethiopia. At that meeting the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) was admitted as the 51st member of the OAU.

The decision to admit the SADR to the organization prompted a walkout by 19 delegations, under the leadership of the Moroccans. The Saharan Arab Democratic Republic was proclaimed in 1976 by guerrillas of the Polisario Front, who have been fighting for independence of the Western Sahara since Morocco seized control of the territory in 1975.

Since then, the Polisario Front has driven Moroccan forces out of most of the Western Sahara. Today the Moroccan presence is restricted to a small enclave behind a 250-mile-long, nine-foot-high sand dune bulldozed

through the desert. Within this "useful triangle," as the Moroccan regime describes its enclave, lie huge phosphate deposits.

Despite the fact that the Carter and Reagan administrations have given the Moroccan regime large amounts of military aid to defeat the Polisario Front's fighters, the guerrillas have continued to gain, and have won greater international recognition. They enjoy particular support from the Algerian and Libyan governments.

Since the split in the OAU first surfaced at the February ministers meeting, subsequent meetings of OAU information and labor ministers have also been disrupted by boycotts.

But while the issue of the Western Sahara was the immediate cause of the boycott of the Tripoli summit, Washington and its supporters also feared the prospect of Qaddafi serving as OAU spokesperson for a year.

U.S. diplomats in Africa pulled out all the stops in trying to torpedo the meeting. Washington had publicly condemned last year's decision to hold the summit in Tripoli, and U.S. diplomats in Africa made no secret of their desire to sabotage it.

As President Didier Ratsiraka of Madagascar noted, the Reagan administration was ready to "do anything" to prevent Qaddafi from assuming the chair of the organization.

The case of Kenya is instructive in this regard. U.S. Ambassador to Kenya William Harrop met with Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi on August 3, two days after a coup attempt against Moi sparked a popular uprising in Kenya. (See p. 675.) Harrop urged Moi not to attend the Tripoli meeting. Since Moi was the outgoing chairman of the OAU, his boycott would be a particular blow to the gathering. Two days after meeting with the U.S. ambassador, Moi announced he would attend the summit only if there were a quorum, thereby virtually guaranteeing that the summit meeting would fall short of the number of participants required.

Qaddafi himself charged in Tripoli that he had documents showing the extent to which the Reagan administration was involved in efforts to torpedo the summit.

In fact, Washington's campaign was so blatant that prior to the opening of the summit one African minister told Victoria Brittain of the *Manchester Guardian* that "if Qaddafi succeeds in the Tripoli summit he will have American heavy-handedness to thank — several delegations are now going to Tripoli for fear of being dubbed American stooges by staying away."

In its anti-Qaddafi campaign, Washington received important help from the Saudi Arabian monarchy. The Saudis, who see Qaddafi as a stumbling block to a proimperialist settlement in the Middle East, have helped to bankroll a number of regimes in Africa. They used this financial leverage to convince some of these governments to boycott the summit.

Jean-Pierre Langellier, writing in the August 6 Paris daily *Le Monde*, notes that the Saudis

were instrumental in convincing a number of former French colonies not to attend the Tripoli meeting.

In assessing the failure of the Tripoli summit, the editors of the *New York Times* wrote on August 14 that "the comeuppance received by Libya's dictator is only his just desert." The British big-business weekly *The Economist* gloated in its August 7 issue that "another chance for Colonel Qaddafi to pose as a third-world leader has been lost."

But that is only one side of the situation. Although Washington succeeded in preventing Qaddafi from assuming the post of chairman of the OAU, it failed in its campaign to prevent the majority of the African governments from recognizing the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. It has also failed thus far in its campaign to overthrow Qaddafi, who has been successfully defying Washington for the past decade.

Finally, delegations from 30 governments out of the 51 in the OAU did go to Tripoli despite Washington's campaign, and efforts are under way to reschedule the OAU conference for later this year. □

## South Koreans get death sentences

A South Korean court sentenced two men to death and two women to life imprisonment on August 11 on charges of setting fire to the U.S. cultural center in Pusan last March. Ten others received sentences of from two to 15 years imprisonment. One person died in the Pusan fire.

All but three of the defendants were charged under South Korea's National Security Act, which makes it illegal to advocate socialism or communism.

Moon Bu Shik, 23, who was one of the two sentenced to death, charged that he had been tortured into signing a false confession that he had tried to establish a socialist system in South Korea. Moon admitted organizing the arson against the U.S. cultural center on March 18, 1982. He stated: "I wanted to protest U.S. support for the military-led Korean Government, to let the Americans know the anger of our people over the Kwangju incident and to protest humiliating remarks made by some U.S. officials about South Korea."

In May 1980 an uprising took place in the city of Kwangju to protest the rule of South Korean military dictator Chun Doo Hwan. In putting down the uprising, Chun's troops killed and wounded up to 2,000 residents of the city. Those troops acted with the explicit approval of the commander of U.S. forces in Korea.

Moon's charge that he had been tortured by police officials was backed up by a detailed study in *Korea Communiqué*, a magazine pub-

lished by the Japan Emergency Christian Conference on Korean Problems. The June issue of the magazine noted that torture had been "documented in virtually every instance of political detentions in recent years," and concluded: "The use of torture today is, if anything, more systematic and brutal than at any previous time in modern Korean history."

Editorials protesting the use of torture have appeared in the Seoul newspaper *Chosun Ilbo* and on February 15 the Justice and Peace Commission of the Korean Catholic church adopted a resolution that said, "As long as the investigative agencies continue to practice this barbaric torture, the people's distrust of these agencies and the Government cannot stop." □

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# The siege of West Beirut

*Thousands killed in massive Israeli bombings*

## By Ernest Harsch

For more than two months, Beirut has come under the heaviest artillery and aerial bombardment since the U.S. war against Vietnam.

Hardly a day has gone by without Israeli jets swooping over the western part of the city, dropping rack after rack of U.S.-made bombs on West Beirut's more than 500,000 Palestinian and Lebanese residents. Apartment buildings, hospitals, schools, shops, mosques, all have been targets of the Zionists' deadly rain of cluster and phosphorous bombs.

The regime of Prime Minister Menachem Begin — supported by the Reagan administration in Washington — claims that its targets are the military forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Lebanon.

When civilians are killed, the Zionists try to blame the Palestinian fighters themselves. One Israeli official, in a briefing to foreign reporters in Jerusalem August 4, charged that the PLO "is hiding behind a civilian screen."

The PLO is not "hiding" behind the civilian population of West Beirut. As the organizational expression of the Palestinians' determined fight to regain their homeland, it springs from the Palestinian people themselves. In West Beirut, it is rooted among the masses of Palestinian refugees living there. And the PLO has close ties with Lebanese working people as well, particularly in the predominantly Muslim

sections of Lebanon, such as West Beirut.

The Israeli regime knows this. That is why its war of aggression in Lebanon has included massive bombings of key cities and systematic attempts to terrorize the entire population.

Since the beginning of the invasion on June 6, tens of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians have been killed or wounded. Hundreds of thousands have been made homeless. Entire cities — like Tyre, Sidon, and now West Beirut — have been bombed into rubble. Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon, which is now under Israeli occupation, have been systematically blown up or bulldozed in an attempt to drive the Palestinian population out.

Thousands of Palestinians have been herded into internment camps in the south and in Israel itself. Foreign witnesses have described the routine beatings and torture of these prisoners by their Israeli captors.

The massive devastation of civilian neighborhoods and refugee camps is no accident. After all, the Israeli authorities frequently boast about the "pinpoint accuracy" of their bombing raids.

### Three shells a second

During the first two weeks of August, West Beirut came in for the heaviest bombings since the beginning of the Israeli invasion.

On August 1 — which local newspapers subsequently named "Black Sunday" — Israeli planes, artillery, tanks, and gunboats bombed West Beirut continuously for some 14 hours. Among the bombs used were U.S.-supplied white phosphorous incendiary bombs.

In a dispatch from Beirut, *New York Times* correspondent Thomas Friedman reported:

So many buildings were set on fire in the southern suburbs of west Beirut that the entire area was engulfed in a huge black cloud of smoke through which not a single building could be made out. By late afternoon the sky, which had been perfectly clear, was full of black and white clouds.

Hundreds of buildings throughout the southern suburbs of Fakhani, Bir Hassan and Corniche Mazraa, not to mention the Palestinian refugee camps, were pockmarked with shell holes, gutted by fire, riddled with shrapnel or completely destroyed.

William Stewart, a reporter for *Time* magazine, described the same day's bombings: "Building after building comes crashing down. Great flashes of fire light up the sky. A crescendo of noise like some dreadful thunder rolls across the city."

Nearly 200 people were known to have been killed in these bombings, and another 400 wounded. But hundreds more were never found, suffocated in basement shelters or buried in the rubble of their homes.

Wafa, the Palestinian news agency, estimated that the Israelis dropped or fired some 185,000 projectiles during the August 1 attacks — or more than three every second. About 60 Israeli aircraft flew more than 300 sorties against the city.

Among the targets hit was the Islamic Home for Orphans, which housed 600 children whose parents had been killed in earlier attacks. According to the director, Mohammed Barakat, he had been assured just the day before by the



Israeli regime escalated deadly bombardment of Beirut during first two weeks of August.

International Red Cross that the orphanage would probably not be bombed, since it was clearly marked on the roof with a red cross. But on "Black Sunday" the six-building complex took three direct hits.

According to *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent T. Elaine Carey, who interviewed Barakat, "One rocket, packed with phosphorous, which spreads out to start fires on impact, jetted in through a window, smashing into a classroom."

Barakat's orphanage was the only one still functioning in West Beirut. The other eight had been destroyed earlier by Israeli shells and bombs. In the entrance hall is the casing from a U.S.-made cluster bomb that had plowed into the Aramoun orphanage, which had housed 650 children.

Barakat estimated that there were at least 6,000 orphans in the city.

#### A dangerous hospital

The Israeli jets did not stay away long. They returned on August 4 for an even more massive and sustained assault on West Beirut, this time accompanied by Israeli tank columns.

For 20 hours, the shells fell. *Washington Post* correspondent William Branigin reported, "Damage spread throughout West Beirut, from once-untouched residential neighborhoods and apartment buildings, to mosques, movie theaters, banks, office buildings, fashionable boutiques along Hamra Street, the city's commercial center, to hotels, newspapers and wire service agencies."

The Islamic Asylum, which houses more than 500 people incapacitated by mental or physical illness, was hit for the third time. The children's wards on the top floor have been destroyed, and the staff is down to 15, from the 100 who worked there before the Israeli invasion.

At the Babir Hospital, patients were moved into the basement. A hospital official reported that the already heavily damaged building took at least two more direct hits from Israeli artillery shells. "So dangerous has the hospital become that even the wounded avoid it," Branigin reported.

Many correspondents reported the widespread use of both cluster and phosphorous bombs by the Israelis.

The August 4 bombings, in which more than 300 people were known to have been killed, signaled a conscious move on the part of the Israeli forces to expand the areas of West Beirut subject to attack.

According to an August 5 *New York Times* dispatch, "Many residents say they are convinced that the shelling was designed to force them to flee to the Christian eastern half of the capital. A large number of buildings around west Beirut's central Hamra Street were raked by shellfire, and Hamra Street is far from any Palestine Liberation Organization positions."

#### Vacuum bomb

Two days later, nearly 100 people were killed in a six-story apartment house near the

Lebanese government's Ministry of Information building.

Witnesses watched as two Israeli fighter planes circled over the heart of West Beirut, and suddenly swooped down and bombed the apartment building. It collapsed into a 20-foot pile of rubble.

According to the PLO, the Israelis may have believed that PLO leader Yassir Arafat was in the building. Lebanese security sources said the building housed more than 100 Christian, Palestinian, south Lebanese, and Kurdish refugees.

The PLO also charged that the Israelis used a new weapon against the building — a vacuum bomb, which is designed to suck the air out of a target over which it is detonated, causing an implosion. The PLO noted that the building was demolished without a sign of fire or shrap-

nel damage, and that adjacent buildings were unscathed.

The Soviet press agency, Tass, commented that the vacuum bomb had been used in West Beirut for the first time "in the history of military operations."

While rescue workers were digging bodies out of the apartment building, one woman shouted out, "What can we do to destroy America?"

On August 12, another series of heavy Israeli bombardments took place. For 11 hours, Israeli jets again pounded the Palestinian refugee camps on the southern fringe of West Beirut, as well as the Fakhani section of the city, where many Palestinians live. According to the Palestinian press agency, some 500 people were killed or wounded in the air raids, and

## U.S. media smear backs invasion

In the midst of the massive Israeli aggression in Lebanon, the *New York Times*, in its July 25 edition, published a lengthy smear against the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) by correspondent David Shipler. Its obvious purpose was to justify the Israeli invasion.

"Lebanese Tell of Anguish of Living Under the P.L.O." the front-page headline blared.

Until the Israeli invasion, Shipler claimed, large areas of Lebanon were under virtual PLO rule and were subject to constant "theft, intimidation and violence." He went on, "The major tool of persuasion was the gun, according to those who lived through it."

Shipler cited the testimony of a number of Lebanese — mostly people of wealth — in support of his contention.

One Lebanese, Dr. Ramsey Shabb, complained that Palestinians had encroached on his 100 acres of orange groves and vineyards. According to Shipler, "He stopped taking his family there for weekends, staying instead in an apartment he kept in the private hospital he owned in Sidon."

Another Lebanese, Shipler wrote, "Ah-lam Ghandour, whose husband is a wealthy importer, said she protected her luxurious house in the hills outside Nabatiye by never leaving it empty, by never going away on trips, by staying alert to any sign of P.L.O. encroachment."

Yet another, Dolly Raad, an executive of Middle East Airlines, was constantly worried that her car might be seized. "Miss Raad," Shipler wrote, "never drove her well-kept Mercedes-Benz to work at the airport in west Beirut, which was controlled by the P.L.O. and Syria, taking instead an old, beat-up Mercedes."

Shipler went so far as to quote an Israeli

administrator in southern Lebanon, who had the audacity to declare, "These people being pushed around by armed elements is really the worst thing that can happen."

The concrete examples Shipler cited do not describe a PLO reign of terror over the masses of people in Lebanon — as the headline suggests — but instead the concern and hostility of Lebanon's capitalists and landlords toward both the PLO and its alliance with Lebanese workers and farmers.

Shipler himself had to admit that the PLO was popular among working people. In Nabatiye, Shipler reported, the better-off Lebanese had gone to Beirut, "leaving only the poor and the sympathetic leftists."

"There were overtones here of a class struggle," Shipler wrote, "for the poor Palestinians in the camps had provided cheap labor for years in the citrus groves and the factories of the wealthy Lebanese. . . ."

"For many Palestinians . . . the P.L.O. was protector and benefactor. Some in the crowded camps recall the pitifully low wages the citrus-pickers once received in the south, and they credit the P.L.O. with forcing employers to improve the pay. The results were reflected in rising living standards."

The PLO obviously had a big impact in Lebanon. But that was not because its "major tool of persuasion was the gun," as Shipler claimed.

It was the determined struggle of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland that inspired working people in Lebanon — Palestinian and Lebanese alike — to fight for their rights against the Lebanese ruling class.

It is that source of inspiration that the Zionist invaders — and their U.S. backers — are now trying to snuff out.

about 800 homes were destroyed.

Commenting in a dispatch from Beirut that day, *New York Times* correspondent John Kifner said, "The Israeli purpose in the repeated Israeli raids on the already devastated Palestinian areas, analysts suggested, was to level them so completely that no one would ever be able to live in them."

The next day, Kifner described the effects of the bombings in the refugee camps:

There was not much left standing today in the Palestinian refugee camps, where old men, women and children were searching for what they could salvage from what had once been their homes.

Burj al Brajneh and the neighboring camps of Shatila and Sabra, all on the southern outskirts of the city, have borne the brunt of the shelling and bombing during Israel's siege of Beirut.

Today correspondents touring the center of Burj al Brajneh found its narrow, twisting lanes to be just jumbled slabs of concrete and plaster, chunks of what had once been walls, all evidence of the enormous quantities of bombs and shells poured into the camp. Sheets of corrugated roofing tin were crumpled and twisted. The floor of a second story jutted into the air, holding a sewing machine on a table.

The police said that at least 156 civilians had been found dead after the bombing, but with local police stations no longer functioning properly, it was impossible to get an accurate, independent casualty count. Many victims have been buried under buildings and nearly all hospitals have been closed because of shelling and lack of medicine, electricity and staff. What is apparent, however, is that the overwhelming majority of those killed are civilians.

For the survivors of the Israeli bombardments, life in West Beirut has become a hell.

More than 100,000 are homeless, either refugees who fled northward from the Israeli invasion of the south or those whose homes have been destroyed by the bombings.

For weeks, the Israeli forces encircling West Beirut have cut off water and electricity. All the main water reservoirs in West Beirut have run dry, and the water from private wells is becoming depleted and increasingly undrinkable.

"All the conditions for a water-borne epidemic are there," François Rémy, the regional director for the United Nations Children's Fund, said. He mentioned typhoid and paratyphoid as the two diseases that could spread most quickly under such conditions. The destruction of West Beirut's hospitals and the lack of most basic medicines would make such an outbreak catastrophic.

The Israeli forces have also barred food shipments into West Beirut. World Vision International, a relief agency, has not been able to get any food trucks into West Beirut since the end of July. The Middle East Council of Churches has been trying to send in a shipment of powdered milk but has been turned down by the Israelis. The United Nations Children's Fund has two trucks with 20 tons of food sitting in Damascus, Syria, waiting for permission to take them into West Beirut, with no luck.

The constant bombardments, the deteriorating living conditions, and the tightening Israeli

stranglehold have spurred many Lebanese residents of West Beirut to try to flee the city. Following the bombing raids of early August, up to 10,000 left in a single day.

But for the most part, the ones who left had the money to do so or someplace else to go. According to a report in the August 6 *New York Times*, "The poor and the lower-middle class — the taxi drivers, the Government employees, the shopkeepers — have nowhere to go and nothing to live off when they get there. Many who left earlier in the siege have come back because they could not afford the inflated prices of east Beirut."

In any case, the estimated 125,000 Palestinians living in West Beirut cannot leave, even if they tried to. Palestinians are turned back from the exits to East Beirut by the rightist Lebanese militia forces allied to the Israeli invaders. Some who were allowed to leave have been detained by the rightists.

As the pressure on West Beirut has intensified, so has the anger of its population.

In his account in *Time* Stewart noted, "Since

the attacks began on Sunday [August 1] there has been a remarkable transformation of opinion in this beleaguered city. Instead of desperately wanting the P.L.O. to leave in order to avoid further bloodshed, Lebanese civilians we talked to all over West Beirut now want to see Israel defeated. The Israeli attacks were directed not just against Palestinian military positions but at hospitals, schools, apartment houses, government offices and shopping centers. Everything became a target, and so did the people of West Beirut in what has become known as 'the great siege.'"

One resident of Zaidanieh, a Sunni Muslim section of West Beirut, told a reporter, "Let Israel come. We know the Israelis are stronger, but we will win." He showed the reporter 15 rocket-propelled grenades that were ready in a spare room of his home.

A Lebanese woman, standing in the lobby of her bombed apartment house, told a journalist, "My daughter, my husband, blown up, dead. Thirty years of work wiped out. But God help me, they will pay for it." □

## France: anti-Semitic murders exploited by Israeli regime

By David Frankel

Six people were killed and 22 wounded August 9 when anti-Semitic terrorists attacked a kosher restaurant in Paris with a hand grenade and automatic weapons. These racist murders were followed by other attacks, including the setting of a fire at a Jewish temple. They have been played up in the mass media as a protest against the savage Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The attacks have been used by the French government to attack democratic rights at home, and by the Israeli regime and the capitalist media to smear opposition to Zionism as being equivalent to anti-Semitism.

Minister of the Interior Gaston Defferre called for new restrictions on the right to political asylum in France the day after the terrorist attack. It was also announced that the French government is working on new measures to expand police spying.

Meanwhile, Zionist officials sought to tar all opponents of Israeli terrorism as anti-Semites. "The anti-Israel atmosphere in France since the start of Operation Peace for Galilee [the code name for the invasion of Lebanon], particularly in the French media, encourages extremist elements to harm Israelis and Jews," said the Israeli Foreign Ministry August 9.

Similar statements were made by British Zionist leaders such as Hayim Pinner, who said, "Distortions in the media have led to anti-Zionism, which spills into anti-Semitism and encourages extremist groups from the right and left."

But what has led to outrage against Israel and to an "anti-Israel atmosphere" is not distortions in the media, but the well-documented atrocities being carried out by Israeli forces in Lebanon. Coming on top of years of Zionist

oppression in the occupied territories seized by Israel during the 1967 Middle East war, and following repeated bombing raids against Lebanon's civilian population, the latest aggression by Israel has revealed to millions around the world that it is Israel that is responsible for the ongoing conflict between the Zionist state and its Arab neighbors.

One effect of the reactionary and racist actions of the Zionist regime is to encourage the growth of anti-Semitism and to give ammunition to anti-Semitic bigots.

Although it is not known for sure who carried out the August 9 attack in Paris, the French police claim to have evidence pointing to the "Black June" grouping led by Abu Nidal. This grouping has claimed responsibility for the assassination of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leaders in Paris, London, and Brussels.

The same group has been accused of being responsible for the attack on Israeli Ambassador Shlomo Argov in London on June 4. That shooting was used by the Zionist regime as the pretext for its invasion of Lebanon. Although the Israelis blamed the Argov shooting on the PLO, the British government later announced that a "hit list" found on one of Argov's attackers included the name of the PLO representative in London.

Ibrahim Souss, a PLO representative in Paris, condemned the anti-Semitic attack and pointed out that it could only help the Israeli regime in its attempts to justify its invasion of Lebanon. "At a time when the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples are being massacred in Beirut by the Israeli army," Souss declared, "the Palestine Liberation Organization rejects all blind violence." □

# PLO's fight against Israeli invaders

Reagan urges imperialist 'peacekeeping' force

By Ernest Harsch

The Ouzai district on the southern outskirts of Beirut is on the front lines of the Palestinians' resistance to the Israeli encirclement of the Lebanese capital. It is just 200 yards from the nearest Israeli tank emplacements.

On July 29, Lieut. Col. Abu Tayeb, the overall Palestine Liberation Organization commander for the Ouzai district, was inspecting the PLO's positions there, moving around on crutches because of an Israeli shrapnel wound he received a day earlier. Spotting an American reporter, he commented:

"The United States is making the same mistake with the P.L.O. that it did with the North Vietnamese. You are underestimating our real will to fight and defend our cause."

For more than two months, Washington and its Israeli allies have gotten a taste of that determination.

Despite overwhelming military odds and the continual and massive Israeli bombing raids, the Palestinian fighters have stood their ground in West Beirut. Relying essentially on their own forces, they have held off the powerful Israeli military machine longer than any other Arab army in history.

## Invaders pay stiff price

Although the Palestinians have suffered heavy losses, they have also forced the Zionist invaders to pay a stiff price.

The Israeli government admits that more than 300 of its troops have been killed since the beginning of the invasion on June 6. But there are indications that it is covering up the real

extent of its casualties. A survey of death notices in the Israeli press conducted by an Israeli researcher turned up the names of 402 soldiers killed between June 6 and June 30 alone.

One indication of the fierce resistance that the Zionists are facing came on August 4, when Israeli tank and troop units tried to push into West Beirut from several different points. Palestinian and Lebanese fighters — armed with artillery, rocket-propelled grenades, and small arms — engaged the Israelis in house-to-house combat.

After some 24 hours of fighting, the Israelis had failed to enter the city. They announced that 19 of their soldiers had been killed and 72 wounded — one of the highest tolls for any single day of the war.

"We taught the Arabs how to fight," the Palestinian press agency pointed out after the battle. "We proved that the Israelis were not invincible."

This defense of West Beirut has been truly heroic. But it is not just the heroism of several thousand Palestinian fighters. Their willingness to stand and fight, to face death if need be, is a reflection of the determination of the more than 4 million Palestinians to regain their homeland. It is a reflection of these fighters' confidence in the justice of their cause.

As PLO leader Yassir Arafat emphasized in an interview in the August 10 Paris daily *Le Monde*, "I do not fear death; it is my adversaries who must fear the consequences. History cannot be stopped. The war has demonstrated that the Palestinians fight with courage and

honor to attain their just purpose."

This image of the Palestinian people facing the superior might of the Zionist state has aroused sympathy and protest among working people around the world.

Since the beginning of the Israeli invasion, there have been demonstrations in many countries. Several thousand Iranians have volunteered to fight the Israeli invaders, and some of them are now in Lebanon.

The Nicaraguan government has broken all relations with Israel because of "the genocide being carried out by Israel with U.S. backing against the peoples of Palestine and Lebanon."

## Worldwide outcry

In the first two weeks of August alone, there were demonstrations in Damascus, Munich, New Delhi, Cairo, and other cities protesting the Israeli invasion.

"Against the Holocaust in Lebanon" was one of the slogans carried at an August 7 march by a thousand West Germans and Arabs in Munich. A crowd of at least a thousand tried to take over the U.S. embassy in Damascus on August 9, tearing down the U.S. flag and raising a Palestinian flag in its place.

A demonstration of several hundred in Cairo August 13 was attacked by Egyptian riot police and broken up with clubs and electric cattle-prods. At a news conference organized by three Egyptian opposition parties, the party leaders accused Washington of being as responsible as Tel Aviv for the "criminal and barbaric acts" in Lebanon.

The International Federation of Resistance Fighters, a grouping of World War II partisan veterans, issued a statement in Vienna declaring that "those who fought against Nazi barbarism and for the independence of their countries relentlessly condemn indiscriminate use of violence by the Israeli Government, its disregard for human rights and democratic world opinion."

In the United States, public opinion polls conducted by the *Los Angeles Times*, National Broadcasting Corporation, Associated Press, and *Newsweek* have shown that between 50 and 60 percent of those polled oppose the Israeli invasion.

Numerous demonstrations have been held in the United States and a number of prominent Jewish figures have spoken out against the invasion. More than 400 signed their names to an ad that appeared in the *New York Times* on August 8. It began: "We are American Jews who are appalled by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and by the fact that the killing and destruction are being carried out with the polit-



PLO guerrillas on the alert in West Beirut.

ical support and military aid provided by the United States."

Such widespread sentiment has even prompted several West European governments to criticize or condemn the invasion.

On August 4, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution reiterating its demand for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and censuring Israel for failing to do so. The U.S. representative was the only one on the council not to vote for it, choosing to abstain instead.

### Israelis protest war

Within Israel itself, the invasion has led to the emergence of a large and vocal antiwar movement, an unprecedented development in Israeli politics during wartime.

On July 3, more than 70,000 people, most of them Jews, demonstrated in Tel Aviv to protest the invasion.

There have been actions in many different cities in Israel. On August 5, for example, about 2,000 antiwar demonstrators rallied outside the office of Prime Minister Menachem Begin in Jerusalem.

Israeli reserve soldiers, including some who have fought in Lebanon, have been prominent in many of these actions. In late July, Col. Eli Geva was kicked out of the military for stating that he would not be able to participate in any assault on West Beirut.

An article in the June 28 issue of the Israeli daily *Davar* provided the account of one Israeli soldier in Lebanon, who described discussions among the troops there. About 70 percent of those in his unit were opposed to the war, he said, and some had drafted a letter demanding the resignation of Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. In Lebanon, he said, "you don't feel that you are doing the right thing."

A poll conducted by the newspaper *Ha'aretz* in early August found that 44 percent of those questioned thought that the government had gotten Israel into "a quagmire in Beirut."

Among the Palestinians living under Israeli rule — both within Israel and in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip — opposition to the war is universal. Protests and

strikes have been held in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

On July 24, the Committee Against the War in Lebanon and for Palestinian-Israeli Peace — a predominantly Palestinian group — was launched at a news conference in Jerusalem.

A week later, the committee held its first demonstration, in the Galilee town of Nazareth. According to the August 6-12 English-language weekly edition of *Al-Fajr*, some 30,000 people turned out for it. Most were Palestinians, but some Jews participated as well.

The demonstrators demanded, "Hands Off Lebanon!"

### 'The PLO must withdraw'

In defiance of this widespread international sentiment, the Reagan administration has continued to support the basic aims of the Israeli invasion.

In his various news conferences, Reagan has repeated, almost word-for-word, the Israeli demands for the PLO's withdrawal from Lebanon. On July 28, for example, he told reporters in Washington that "we want the exodus of the armed P.L.O. out of Beirut and out of Lebanon." A week later, Vice-president George Bush insisted, "The PLO must withdraw; they must withdraw promptly."

At an August 13 news conference, Reagan responded to criticisms of the Israelis' massive bombing raids on Beirut the day before. "I think that perhaps the image has been rather one-sided," he said, "because of the Israeli capability at replying, but in many instances — in fact, most of them — the cease-fire was broken by the P.L.O. attacking those Israeli forces."

A reporter objected, "Well, they were invaders, were they not?"

"Are they the invaders," Reagan snapped back, "or are the P.L.O. the invaders?"

Within the United Nations, the U.S. representative has consistently blocked any efforts to take concrete action against Israel because of the invasion. On August 6, Washington vetoed a Soviet-sponsored motion in the Security Council calling for a halt to all arms and military aid to Israel until its forces leave Lebanon.

Even some of Washington's imperialist allies — France, Japan, and Spain — had voted for the resolution.

### Reagan's green light

Because of the worldwide outcry against the Israeli invasion — and in particular the savage bombings of West Beirut — the Reagan administration has been forced to try to distance itself a little from the Zionists' barbaric methods. Following the bombings of early August, administration officials claimed that Reagan was "shocked" by the "senseless killings of civilians" in West Beirut.

But this "shock" did not mean opposition to the bombings. Citing an unnamed "ranking official" in the White House, correspondent Bernard Weinraub reported in the August 6 *New York Times*, "The official said, by and large, the Reagan Administration had recognized that some forms of military pressures by Israel were necessary to force the P.L.O. to leave Beirut."

A day earlier, an editorial in the *New York Times* was even more blunt. "The continuing violence in Beirut is lamentable," it said, "but it is an unavoidable way to keep the heat on."

The Reagan administration's backing for the Israeli invasion has been consistent with its overall policy toward Israel. In the August 10 *Christian Science Monitor*, columnist Joseph C. Harsch pointed out:

Early in the Reagan administration the President's security advisor, Richard Allen, identified Israeli forays into Lebanon as being justified under the doctrine of "hot pursuit." Never during the Reagan administration has the White House protested the planting of more Jewish settlements on the West Bank. Reagan called them "legal." The White House did not protest against the dismissal of Arab mayors of Arab cities in the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli declaration that the PLO "must leave Lebanon" has been echoed by the White House and its validity accepted there.

To any diplomat the record means a clear "green light" for Israel to do what it has done.

### 'Pressurizing operations'

The U.S. and Israeli governments share common goals in Lebanon: to drive the PLO out of the country, and thus strike a major blow against the entire Palestinian liberation struggle; to establish a stable proimperialist regime in Beirut and bring Lebanon more directly under Israeli domination; and to open the way for greater imperialist intervention in the Middle East as a whole.

The Israeli regime is seeking to advance these aims by military means — Sharon calls the bombings of Beirut "pressurizing operations."

At the same time, Washington is providing the Israeli regime with diplomatic cover and using the invasion to step up its political pressure against the PLO and other forces in the Arab world.

With Philip Habib as its intermediary, the Reagan administration has been pressing the PLO to leave Beirut — and all of Lebanon. It has also been seeking to drive wedges into the unity of the Palestinian forces, attempting to

## U.S. military and economic aid to Israel

(fiscal years, in millions of dollars)

	ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE			MILITARY AID		
	Loans	Grants	Total	Loans	Grants	Total
1977	\$252.0	\$490.0	<b>\$742.0</b>	\$500	\$500	<b>\$1,000</b>
1978	266.8	525.0	<b>791.8</b>	500	500	<b>1,000</b>
1979	265.1	525.0	<b>790.1</b>	2,700	1,300	<b>4,000*</b>
1980	261.0	525.0	<b>786.0</b>	500	500	<b>1,000</b>
1981	0	764.0	<b>764.0</b>	900	500	<b>1,400</b>
1982	0	806.0	<b>806.0</b>	850	550	<b>1,400</b>

\*Increased aid connected to Camp David agreements included \$800 million for two new air bases to replace those in Sinai.





Yassir Arafat in Beirut.

get the PLO leadership, or some part of it, to recognize the Zionist state.

Using the Israeli invasion as a form of blackmail, Washington has also been seeking ways to introduce U.S., French, and Italian troops directly into Lebanon, under the cover of a multinational "peacekeeping" force to oversee the withdrawal of the PLO fighters now in Beirut.

This force, as outlined in the talks arranged by Habib, would include 800 U.S. marines, 800 French troops, and 400 Italian troops. The U.S. Defense Department has already begun preparations for sending the U.S. troops to Lebanon, designating units that are already in the eastern Mediterranean to be part of the force.

Whatever the public declarations, the purpose of this force will not be to keep "peace" in Lebanon, but to further the U.S. and Israeli aims. Its presence will put additional pressure on the Palestinians and their Lebanese allies. And it will bolster the rightist Lebanese forces around which Washington and Tel Aviv hope to form a new government.

Dory Chamoun, the general secretary of the Liberal Party, one of the rightist Maronite groupings, has openly called for a prolonged U.S. military presence in Lebanon. "We would like to see the United States sponsor a multinational force to remain in Lebanon for one or two years until such time as the Lebanese Army reconstitutes itself," he said in early August.

#### Threats against Syria

Encouraged by Washington's moves in Lebanon, the Israeli forces have been systematically tightening their grip over the southern part of the country — which has been under

Israeli occupation since the early days of the invasion — and extending their positions to other parts of Lebanon as well.

Beginning August 11, Israeli tank units moved into strategic positions in northern Lebanon, around the ports of Junieh and Byblos and eastward along the Metun River.

These movements put the Israeli forces into position for further thrusts northward, against the Palestinian refugee camps and PLO positions around Tripoli, or eastward, against the Syrian and Palestinian forces in the Bekaa Valley. There are an estimated 7,000 PLO fighters in Tripoli and the Bekaa Valley.

As the Israeli forces moved northward, Sharon reiterated the Israeli government's threats against Syria. There are some 30,000 Syrian troops in the Bekaa Valley, which leads into the heart of that country. "Either they withdraw peacefully," Sharon said of the Syrian troops, "or face the consequences of Israeli forces coming within 25 miles of Damascus."

These new military moves — combined with the burgeoning Israeli economic interests in southern Lebanon and the installation of Israeli administrators there — indicate that the Israeli army is digging in for a long stay.

Under this relentless pressure from Tel Aviv and Washington — and under the threat of an even more massive bloodbath in West Beirut — the PLO has been fighting for its existence.

It has done so militarily, to the best of its ability, and has thus far been successful in keeping the Israeli troops out of West Beirut. But it has also been fighting a concerted political struggle.

The PLO leadership has rejected the Reagan administration's proposals that it water down its program and stop fighting for the Palestinians' right to national self-determination.

At the same time, it has been engaging in negotiations over the conditions for ending the Israeli siege of Beirut and for the withdrawal of the PLO forces from the city.

An editorial in the August 8 issue of the official PLO newspaper *Filistin al-Thawra* explained, "We have taken the decision for military withdrawal from Beirut, because the destruction of Beirut over the heads of its half a million Moslem inhabitants is not a mere possibility but has become a reality."

One of the reasons for this decision, the PLO paper pointed out, was the failure of the Arab governments to come to the Palestinians' aid. "We have expected the confrontation and steadfastness front, but no one came, we have expected the Arabs, but no one came. We have expected our friends in the world, but no one came."

Under the circumstances, the PLO has concluded that it has little choice but to retreat. The only alternative is to suffer an even graver military blow than it already has. The PLO not only has a right to make this decision, but an obligation to the future of the Palestinian struggle.

In negotiating over the withdrawal from West Beirut, the PLO has been seeking to save the lives of its fighters, so that they can con-

tinue the battle for Palestinian self-determination.

It has also been using the time gained through the negotiations to explain the goals of its struggle to the widest possible audience, around the world and within Israel itself.

In his interview in *Le Monde*, for example, Yassir Arafat declared that "the question today is, more than ever, our fight to exist and self-determination."

When asked if he had anything to say to the Israeli people, Arafat responded:

I find myself surrounded here, and I'm addressing myself to Israeli soldiers, as well as to the common citizens. And I'm telling them: stop — military arrogance will not shatter us. . . . Peace will reign in the Holy Land, despite the arrogance of those leaders for whom brutal force is the only maxim in the life of nations. I invite the militants of the "Peace Now" movement, of New Outlook, and all those who recognize our rights to self-determination to come to Beirut to see the destruction and the suffering of the people. A day will come when the Israelis will be ashamed and will want to forget what their present leaders did to the Palestinian people in Lebanon during the summer of 1982.

#### International solidarity

While the PLO is today struggling in Lebanon for the best possible conditions for the continuation of its fight for Palestinian rights, it is desperately in need of the broadest international solidarity.

Opponents of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon, supporters of the Palestinian struggle, and working-class fighters everywhere have an obligation to do everything they can to ease the military and political pressures now bearing down on the Palestinian people.

That means opposing any move by Washington, Paris, or Rome to send their troops into Lebanon. The dispatch of such a force can only aid the imperialist efforts to deepen the blow that has already been struck against the Palestinian people and the Arab world.

The PLO, under the threat of more massive Israeli bombings or a massacre of the Palestinians by the rightist Phalangist militia, may be forced to accept the presence of such a force in Lebanon. But activists elsewhere are under no such compulsion.

To aid the embattled people of Lebanon, it is also necessary to protest and demonstrate against the Israeli invasion itself, and to demand a halt to all U.S. and other imperialist aid to the Zionist regime. The crimes being carried out by the Israeli army in Lebanon must be exposed.

As Lieut. Col. Abu Tayeb, the PLO commander of the Ouzai district, pointed out, there are a number of parallels between the struggle in Lebanon today and that in Vietnam during Washington's war of aggression.

That U.S. aggression was defeated thanks to the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people, but also thanks to the active solidarity of anti-war forces around the world.

It is such solidarity that the peoples of Palestine and Lebanon now need. □

# Washington presses war on Nicaragua

## *Buildup in Honduras, fresh threats to Cuba*

By Fred Murphy

U.S. imperialism's war against the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua continues to escalate.

Towns and villages in northern Nicaragua have been beset by Somozaist terror attacks for months. Now, air raids against major cities have been attempted as well.

The most serious cases of aggression against Nicaragua since mid-July have been the following:

- On July 19 — the third anniversary of the Sandinista revolution — an unmarked aircraft flying from Honduras fired two rockets at a concentration of storage tanks holding 800,000 gallons of highly combustible fuel in the port of Corinto. The rockets failed to hit their targets; had either done so, the entire population of the city could have perished in the resulting fire. Corinto, which handles three-quarters of Nicaragua's foreign trade, would have been reduced to cinders.

- On July 24, a force of about 100 counterrevolutionaries crossed the Honduran border and attacked the town of San Francisco del Norte in Chinandega Province. Armed with Belgian rifles, M79 grenade launchers, and small mortars, the attackers besieged the town for two and a half hours, killing 11 militia members in battle and capturing three others and slashing their throats in the town's plaza. Eight more militia members were also captured and dragged across the border before regular Nicaraguan troops could arrive to provide reinforcements.

- On July 27, a second aerial bombing attempt was launched, this time against Nicaragua's only oil refinery, on the western edge of Managua. The attacking aircraft was detected in time to be driven off by anti-aircraft fire and planes from Nicaragua's small air force. Destruction of the refinery not only would have been a devastating blow to the country's economy, but the resulting fires and explosions could have killed thousands of Managua residents.

Besides these attacks, Nicaraguan Junta Coordinator Daniel Ortega made known in his address to an anniversary day rally of 100,000 in Masaya that the armed forces and Ministry of the Interior had thwarted a large-scale plan by the counterrevolutionaries to seize the Atlantic Coast port of Puerto Cabezas and the new Miskitu Indian settlements at Tasba Pry.

### 'Slow-motion Bay of Pigs'

Behind all these attacks stands the Reagan administration in Washington. While the full scope of Washington's collusion in the terror raids from southern Honduras remains

shrouded in secrecy, a few more details have begun to emerge in the U.S. capitalist press.

Commenting on the stepped-up aggression, *Washington Post* columnist Stephen S. Rosenfeld wrote August 6 that "it is hard to avoid the impression that the Reagan administration is cranking up something like a slow-motion Bay of Pigs invasion as a part of a multifaceted plan to destabilize Nicaragua.

"The operation entails not a single dramatic assault across a beach but, it seems, a slow flow of many hundreds of former Somoza national guardsmen back and forth across the long, rugged land border between Honduras and Nicaragua."

The mounting attacks form part of a plan presented by the CIA to the U.S. National Security Council last November and subsequently OK'd by Reagan. According to an account published in the *Washington Post* last March 10, at least \$19 million was allocated, and the CIA was directed "to begin to build and fund a paramilitary force of up to 500 Latin Americans, who are to operate out of commando camps spread along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border."

It is now clear that this was but the thin edge of the wedge. Some 5,000 counterrevolutionary troops, organized in large units and possessing sophisticated weapons, are now operating out of the southern Honduras camps. Moreover, the direct U.S. military presence in Honduras has been stepped up dramatically.

It was no accident that the escalation of war against Nicaragua by the Honduran-based counterrevolutionaries at the end of July coincided with joint U.S.-Honduran military maneuvers near the Nicaraguan border.

"G.I.'s Join Hondurans in Touchy Region," said a *New York Times* headline August 5. Correspondent Raymond Bonner wrote from Puerto Lempira, Honduras:

American and Honduran officers say the primary objective of the two-week exercise, which involves United States Air Force and Army units from Panama, is the establishment of a permanent Honduran base at Durzuna, some 25 miles north of the Nicaraguan border.

The base, which the officers say will be the largest in eastern Honduras, is in a pine forest some 45 miles west of this muggy, rundown port village. They say it will be home for an infantry battalion, supported by an artillery battery and an engineering unit. The Hondurans are also constructing an airstrip at Durzuna that will be capable of handling large transport planes and jet fighters, the officers say.

Asked why the base was being established in this isolated region . . . a Honduran Army major said it was because of its proximity to Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua.

The joint maneuvers also involved the land-

ing of 600 U.S. Marines at the Caribbean port city of Tela, Honduras, and the docking there of the big U.S. landing ship *Portland*. "Senior Honduran Army officers said that the marines who came ashore were advance party for a major exercise scheduled for November," Bonner reported.

Some 1,500 troops — nearly 10 percent of the Honduran army — are to be stationed at the new Durzuna base. The installation is adjacent to a large refugee camp at Mocerón that houses some 10,000 Miskitu Indians who emigrated from Nicaragua last year at the urging of Steadman Fagoth, a Miskitu leader formerly employed as an informer by Somoza's secret police. Fagoth is now a central figure in the counterrevolution.

In a dispatch from Mocerón published in the August 13 *Times*, Bonner cited accounts by relief workers who said that "food and supplies intended for the [Miskitu] refugees are often diverted to the Somocista guerrilla camps. . . ."

"According to the relief workers, Honduran army officers are providing arms and training for the counterrevolutionaries."

### Sandinistas protest aggression

In response to the U.S.-Honduran maneuvers and the U.S.-sponsored military buildup along Nicaragua's northern border, the Sandinista government issued a note of protest to the State Department in early August. It pointed to the maneuvers and to the published accounts of the CIA's covert-action plan as "clear examples of the serious attempts to destabilize" Nicaragua.

The protest said the maneuvers "confirm the interventionist attitude of the United States toward the Central American region and further represent a clear and open provocation, which appears to be aimed at causing an unnecessary war between Honduras and Nicaragua, with unforeseeable consequences."

A Nicaraguan diplomat in Washington told the *Miami Herald*, "All of these elements have forced us to realize the inevitable. The United States is fortifying Honduras for a first strike against Nicaragua."

The mounting attacks leave the Nicaraguan people no choice but to strengthen their defenses and prepare for full-scale war. On August 14, the Sandinista government ordered militia units to report within ten days for intensive combat training. The Sandinista People's

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Army remains fully mobilized. Civil defense preparations are under way in all factories, schools, and neighborhoods.

The July air raids against oil installations pointed up Nicaragua's vulnerability in face of the Honduran air force, the most advanced in Central America with a dozen French Super-Mystère fighters. Honduras is also scheduled to receive six U.S. A-37 light-attack aircraft and is reportedly seeking U.S. F-5 fighter jets as well.

In an interview reported in the July 29 *Washington Post*, Nicaragua's Defense Minister Humberto Ortega acknowledged that his government is seeking to obtain interceptor aircraft from France, the Soviet Union, and other countries. He noted that the few planes left from Somoza's air force had been equipped for "repressing the people" and would be of little use in the event of an invasion. "This myth has to end that when we have planes here we're inciting the arms race in Central America, because we don't have planes," Ortega said.

"We can't aspire to have a large Air Force. . . . but we have the duty and the right to have a modest Air Force."

#### 'Gulf of Tonkin' in Caribbean?

Proceeding with its propaganda tactic of turning the victim into the criminal, Washington has openly threatened to attack Nicaragua in the event Soviet aircraft are introduced into the country. "The long-expected arrival of MIG fighters in Nicaragua would be 'a major escalation' and unquestionably would bring a 'major response' from the United States," correspondent Don Oberdorfer wrote in the August 15 *Washington Post*, citing "official sources" in the Reagan administration. Oberdorfer continued:

"Among the options known to have been under study are U.S. military action to destroy the MIGs, a blockade or quarantine of Cuba and/or Nicaragua, tightening U.S. economic restrictions on those two countries, temporarily stationing U.S. airmen and warplanes in Honduras and Colombia, stepped-up supply of U.S. combat aircraft to friendly countries and a political drive on the MIGs issue in the Organization of American States and other international organizations."

The *Post* article reporting these new threats came four days after the U.S. Senate adopted a belligerent anti-Cuba resolution backed by the Reagan administration. It declared, in part, that "the United States is determined . . . to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending by force or the threat of force its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere."

The resolution passed by a 68-28 vote; in arguing against it, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Charles Percy warned that it would "be seen as a blank check from us to the President of the United States. It may be considered as a Gulf of Tonkin resolution for Cuba." (The 1964 Congressional resolution on the Tonkin Gulf was used by Lyndon Johnson

and Richard Nixon as the legal pretext for Washington's massive intervention in Vietnam.)

Meanwhile, the Reagan administration has renewed its formal certification to Congress that its puppet regime in El Salvador is making progress on its "human rights" record. The chief evidence for this dubious assertion was that a mere 400 to 500 civilians are now being slaughtered monthly by Salvadoran death squads, purportedly a 50 percent drop from the 1981 figures.

The July 27 certification statement cleared the way for continued U.S. military aid to El Salvador. The latest installment included six A-37 fighter-bombers. Washington also plans to train a fourth battalion of Salvadoran troops.

The three battalions already trained by the Pentagon have been in continual action against the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) since the end of May but have little to show for it. In mid-July the FMLN announced it was in control of highways in the eastern provinces of San Miguel and Usulután, and that it continued to hold the towns of El Carrizal and Ojo de Agua in the northern province of Chalatenango, which were captured June 28.

## Nicaragua: religious sects aid CIA

MANAGUA — A tidal wave of religious sects, some well known and others of extremely obscure origins, has hit Nicaragua, beginning almost the day after the revolution came to victory in 1979.

Working hand in glove with the counter-revolutionary bands, the sects began by heading for the most remote and backward areas of the country. There they spread a poisonous doctrine of opposition to virtually all major campaigns of the revolution, including literacy, vaccination, and enlistment in the militias.

More recently they have begun to establish themselves in larger cities.

Minister of the Interior Tomás Borge reported July 15 that there are now known to be at least 48 different religious sects operating in Managua alone, with 351 "places of worship."

A total of 99 different sects are known to exist throughout the country, he said, operating 1,500 "temples."

Two facts make clear that this does not represent a spontaneous flowering of evangelical devotion.

First, many of these sects are based in the United States and they encourage political opposition to the revolution. These include the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Seventh Day Adventists.

Second, many of the "pastors" of these new sects are former members of ousted dictator Somoza's National Guard and of

On August 5 and 6, FMLN forces attacked army posts at Osicala in Morazán Province and at El Paisanal near the capital. On August 7 and 8 the FMLN routed the regime's forces from Ciudad Barrios in San Miguel Province. Salvadoran officers described the latter attack, in which 19 government troops were killed, as "the heaviest loss that the San Miguel garrison had suffered in a single battle since the beginning of the civil war" (Associated Press, August 9).

In Guatemala, the dictatorship of Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt is pursuing its scorched-earth tactics against the Indian peasants of the country's northwestern highlands, massacring entire villages and herding survivors into concentration camps. Ríos Montt hopes to put an end to the growing guerrilla struggle against his regime. Washington shares this aim, although no U.S. military aid has been provided to Guatemala publicly since 1977. On August 6, State Department aide Stephen Bosworth renewed an administration request for \$250,000 in military training funds for Guatemala. "Our actions cannot be limited to economic and development assistance alone," Bosworth told a Congressional committee. "That would be unrealistic considering the threat posed by the

his secret police. "We were a little slow in understanding the danger these sects represented, and far too slow in beginning to make it public," Vice-Minister of the Interior Luis Carrión said in an interview in the Managua daily *Barricada* July 16.

Those days are over.

Borge made his announcement about the spreading tentacles of the sects before an outdoor meeting here of several thousand workers, who responded with angry chants of "CIA! CIA!" and "Throw them out!"

Carrión's interview, extensively quoted on radio and television, was printed under the headline: "The Sects Pouring into Nicaragua are Part of the CIA's Plans."

The sects serve as the ideological advance-guard of the armed counterrevolution. They come to rural areas, preaching that there is no need to obey the political and civil authorities, urging people not to join the militias and reserve battalions and not to defend the revolution.

"I want to call attention very clearly," Carrión said, "to the fact that an enormous number of ex-National Guards are now evangelical pastors."

They are "acting in accordance with the CIA's plans against Nicaragua. They have been given the role of carrying out the ideological and propagandistic offensive, while the armed units carry out the military operations."

—Michael Baumann

insurgents." Bosworth termed Guatemala's role in Central America "crucial, even pivotal."

Plans are also being made to boost U.S. economic aid to Guatemala to \$50 million and to provide the armed forces with helicopters. The sale of \$4 million in helicopter spare parts is also in the works.

#### Washington sees high stakes

In testimony before another Congressional committee on July 29, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders spelled out fully the high stakes Washington sees as it faces the Central American revolutions. "El Salvador is strategically important to the United States," Enders declared.

"Should it fall to a Cuban- and Nicaraguan-backed armed minority, what country in Cen-

tral America would be secure? Surely not Costa Rica, which has no army; probably not Honduras, which would then be caught between two Marxist-Leninist countries, nor Guatemala, already challenged by a virulent insurgency. It might not be long before Panama, Colombia or southern Mexico were at risk."

Behind Enders's slanders about "armed minorities" and "virulent insurgencies" stands the reality that the peoples of all the countries he named are less and less willing to suffer imperialist domination or bear the economic consequences of capitalism's deepening economic crisis. They are inspired by the immense social gains registered by the Cuban people, by the victory and deepening of the Nicaraguan revolution, and by the heroic resistance of the workers and peasants of El Salvador and Guatemala.

As they prepare to confront the coming war

against their revolution, the Nicaraguan people know they are not alone, and that they are fighting for their brothers and sisters throughout Central America and the Caribbean.

Referring to the region's proimperialist rulers who have threatened Nicaragua, Commander Daniel Ortega told the July 19 rally in Masaya, "they will never be able to understand that our principal weapon is simply our courageous, staunch and organized people, defending their sovereign right to the weapons and technical means needed to guarantee their health, education, and production, their freedom to organize, their homeland. . . ."

"To our people we say that we are confident that reason will prevail over the madness of war, but that we must prepare ourselves for the worst, prepare ourselves to fight, prepare ourselves to defeat — through whatever form the circumstances impose upon us — imperialist aggression and invasion." □

## Argentina

# Effects of the defeat in the Malvinas

## *Workers movement stunned but not vanquished*

### By Marcelo Zugadi

The military outcome of the Malvinas war has brought Argentina to an extremely unstable position. The imperialist victory in the war temporarily stunned the workers movement and enabled the military — whose grip on power had never seemed so weak — to organize a new government. At the same time, the blow dealt to the workers movement by the defeat in the war is of a very limited character. The combined economic, political, and military crises point toward deepgoing social convulsions in Argentina.

During the war against the U.S.-backed British fleet, revolutionaries understood that a victory against the British forces would have encouraged the struggles of the working people in Argentina and would have strengthened the fight against imperialism throughout the world. Whatever the plans of the Argentine rulers, they had been forced into a genuine confrontation with imperialism.

This confrontation highlighted the inability of the imperialist powers to completely control their semicolonial allies. It showed that even the most repressive semicolonial regimes must walk a tightrope between the demands of imperialism and the pressures exerted by the masses. Sometimes, these regimes take political actions as a result of mass pressure that put them into direct conflict with imperialism. The Malvinas war resulted from just such a situation, in which a political maneuver by the Argentine regime set forces into motion that the ruling class could no longer control.

It is certainly correct to say that a victory against the British would have meant a victory for the Argentine masses. But it would be wrong to conclude that the imperialist victory in the Malvinas has decisively turned back the advance of the Argentine workers and their allies.

The impact of the military outcome in the Malvinas was tempered by the concrete relationship of forces between the exploited and exploiters in Argentina. On the eve of the war, the military dictatorship had been extremely isolated and paralyzed. The bourgeois front that had supported military rule in the first years of the junta was fragmented. No capitalist force — civilian or military — had any viable plan for providing a solution to the deepgoing economic and political crisis.

In this situation, the workers movement went on the offensive. A powerful workers' demonstration took place in Buenos Aires only three days before the landing of Argentine troops in the Malvinas. During the war itself, the political mobilizations continued. A demonstration of hundreds of thousands took place when U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig visited Buenos Aires in April. Slogans supporting the fight against Britain were joined with demands for democratic rights and opposition to the dictatorship.

In mid-June, following the announcement of the surrender of Argentine forces on the Malvinas, tens of thousands of people converged on the government palace chanting "surrender is treason" and "the boys died, the officers sold out."

When the demonstrators were attacked by the repressive forces, barricades were erected in the streets of Buenos Aires. Thousands of people spontaneously joined in pitched battles lasting several hours.

But the military defeat had a visible impact on the workers movement. Following the outburst of indignation immediately after the surrender in the Malvinas, there was a marked lull in activity and confusion over the immediate road to follow.

### Dictatorship survives

Because of the victory of the British fleet, the isolated, exhausted, and besieged Argentine dictatorship has been able to maintain itself in power. The bourgeoisie, panicked at the specter of a total collapse in governmental authority, rallied around the government of Gen. Reynaldo Bignone, which was installed in June after the fall of Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri.

The circumstances in which this took place are worth recalling. For the junta, the primary aim of the Malvinas operation had been to refurbish the image of the military, to convert the kidnapers and torturers responsible for the "disappearance" of 30,000 people during the six years of military rule into liberating heroes in the eyes of the people. But exactly the opposite occurred.

The stories told by returning soldiers following the defeat in the Malvinas only increased the anger of the population. Lack of adequate equipment led to many soldiers losing limbs

due to frostbite. Troops sometimes spent whole days without food and weeks without a hot meal. Ammunition was in short supply. Weapons did not work. Officers never explained the objectives of the fighting to their troops and rarely took part in the fighting themselves.

The armed forces, already blamed for the repression and economic disaster of recent years, were openly branded as cowards, incompetents, and traitors.

Furthermore, the military was divided internally. When Bignone took over, both the navy and air force, which had called for a civilian president, withdrew from the junta. The army, itself deeply divided, was left as the sole military branch backing the new regime.

But the workers movement disoriented by the victory of the imperialists, was not able to move forward in this situation. The political initiative passed into the hands of the ruling class.

The confusion in the mass movement was heightened by the fact that all the bourgeois political parties that had been calling for a return to democratic forms of rule before the war now became the military regime's main base of support. These ruling class forces fear that if the military dictatorship were to collapse there would be no bourgeois force that could replace it.

#### Rulers forced to make concessions

The rulers are promising a transition to democratic forms of government under the supervision of Bignone. The government describes itself as "transitional" and is committed to calling elections next year and handing over power "by March 1984 at the latest."

In the meantime, Bignone had to yield important immediate concessions to the masses. These included the promise to allow the free reorganization of political parties and trade unions.

While it is true that power remains in the hands of the military dictatorship, it is also clear that this is a *different* dictatorship than the one that governed since 1976. Over the past four years, the armed forces have become increasingly divided and paralyzed. Under the impact of the war, this crisis deepened and exploded into public view as the navy and air force withdrew from the military junta, leaving the army to take total responsibility for the government, for the economic disaster hitting the country, and if possible for the humiliating military defeat at the hands of the British fleet.

Even before the Malvinas war, people were demanding an accounting of the 30,000 who disappeared under military rule. To this is now added the indignation over the deaths of more than 2,000 soldiers in the Malvinas, victims of the incompetence, corruption, and criminal conduct of the officers.

Even before the Malvinas war, there were growing demands for a Nuremberg-style tribunal to punish those responsible for the worst acts of repression. These calls are now complemented with demands in the pages of all the



Argentine troops being airlifted to Malvinas. They were given inadequate equipment, not enough food and ammunition, and weapons that failed to work.

daily newspapers for a trial of those responsible for the Malvinas defeat. This, together with the economic demands of the workers and broad oppressed layers of the population, forms the context in which the new government must operate.

#### Economic disaster

Even before the Malvinas war, the workers movement was raising the slogans "Peace [aimed against the internal war and repression], Bread, and Work." These slogans will now become even more important. On the economic front, Argentine workers are facing disaster.

Unemployment now stands at 17 percent of the work force. Real wages in April were 47 percent lower than in 1970. The gross national product has risen only 2 percent since 1974, and growth has been entirely in the agricultural sector while industry has steadily declined.

During the seven years of military rule, the foreign debt has risen from \$5 billion to more than \$36 billion. Annual interest payments amount to \$6 billion, or almost two-thirds of the country's earnings from exports. Industry is operating at a level far below capacity.

Any plans for economic recovery must confront the fact that \$14 billion of the foreign debt will fall due in the next 12 months, while foreign-currency reserves have fallen to only \$3 billion.

In its June 27 issue, the proimperialist daily *La Nación* worried that attempts to revive the economy, which it recognized were politically necessary, could unleash "an exceptional infla-

tionary wave if put into practice over a short period. In general terms," the daily noted, "the estimates range between 360 percent and 550 percent annual inflation from now to the end of the year."

#### Obstacles to ruling class plans

The rulers hope to use the fact that there is now no independent trade-union and political leadership of the working class to move rapidly toward elections in which the masses can be tied to bourgeois political formations. The capitalists hope to win time so that they can rebuild their political forces. But winning time also means allowing the masses some democratic breathing space.

Despite the fact that the trade-union bureaucrats have been dividing and demobilizing the workers movement, the workers have been pressing to rebuild trade-union unity. Local strikes have been pointing in the direction of a general strike that could help to resurrect a united union federation. Such a development would greatly complicate the dictatorship's political and economic plans.

The bourgeoisie's hope of harnessing the Argentine workers movement behind various bourgeois political parties runs up against a major obstacle. Precisely because of the weakness of the military dictatorship, the five major bourgeois parties that make up the Multi-Party Bloc have lined up behind the Bignone government. This fact can only hasten their discreditment among the masses and increase their internal problems.

August 9, 1982

# Iranian exiles intervene in peace movement

## *Supporters of Mujahedeen push reactionary line*

By Nelson González

[The following article appeared in the July 9 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

On June 12 one million people came out in a massive demonstration repudiating the Reagan administration's war policies.

Hundreds of thousands of people carried signs protesting nuclear weapons, the massive arms buildup, and the resulting deep cuts in vital social services.

Although there were not many signs directly related to the U.S. war in Central America, it was clear from the enthusiastic response which antiwar contingents and speakers received that most participants were opposed to U.S. intervention. The U.S. backed invasion of Lebanon was also not very popular among demonstrators.

In contrast to the sentiments of the majority of the marchers, there was a contingent that sought to take the focus off U.S. imperialism and its war policies.

This contingent focused its participation in the march on attacking the Iranian revolution. It was organized by the supporters of the People's Mujahedeen Organization of Iran and other opponents of the Iranian revolution.

In what was a well-planned intervention, they mobilized hundreds of supporters, passed out thousands of leaflets, sold newspapers, and organized a number of contingents with numerous banners. Under the cover of defending democratic rights in Iran, the actual political axis of their intervention was to convince those participating in the peace march to support the overthrow of the Khomeini regime in Iran — currently one of U.S. imperialism's major objectives in the Middle East.

Their literature presented one common analysis: since the shah was overthrown and the Ayatollah Khomeini took power, everything has gotten worse in Iran.

### **Khomeini equals Hitler?**

Some of the literature went so far as to compare the Ayatollah Khomeini to Hitler.

The weekly newspaper of the Mujahedeen in Britain passed out to the demonstrators featured an article explaining how, like Hitler during World War II, Khomeini has hypnotized children to go and fight in the Iran-Iraq war. "During the final months of the Second World War, a large number of Hitler Youth, with their blind dedication to their Fuehrer, went to the fronts as the last reserves and subsequently lost their lives. An identical situation today exists for the Iranian children," the paper says.

The Iraqi invasion of Iran, supported by the U.S. government, is turned on its head. Instead, Iran becomes the aggressor and the Iranian soldiers nothing more than blind storm-troopers for a fascist despot.

Other literature flatly stated, without any explanation, that the Iran-Iraq war is a conspiracy of the Khomeini regime together with the "superpowers" and Israel as part of a plot to crush all the oppressed people of the region.

This alleged Iran-Israel plot flies in the face of the reality of the Iranian revolution and its deep solidarity with the Palestinian masses.

One of the first foreign policy moves made by the victorious Iranian revolution was to immediately recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and give them the former Israeli embassy in Tehran. Yassir Arafat, the leader of the PLO, was given a hero's welcome in Iran after the revolution; whereas under the shah, he would have been shot on sight.

Iran is currently the only government in the Middle East that is sending troops to Lebanon to help the PLO. The current government's foreign policy also includes recognition of the Salvadoran rebels and the governments of Cuba and Nicaragua. Both political relations and oil have been cut off to Israel and South Africa.

### **Counterrevolutionary campaign**

Nevertheless, the Mujahedeen and the National Council of Resistance (NCR — a bloc it formed with Bani Sadr, ex-president of Iran) are waging a war against the Iranian revolution. They attempt to dress this war up as part of the anti-imperialist struggles such as those being waged by Salvadorans, Palestinians, Guatemalans, and others.

The Mujahedeen propaganda effort in this country did not just begin at the June 12 demonstration. It represents a sustained effort by these forces that began by intervening in Central America solidarity groups. Its object is to divert antiwar forces from building a movement clearly directed at the crimes of U.S. imperialism.

Not one banner and not one sign in any of the contingents the Mujahedeen organized at the June 12 demonstration expressed solidarity with the Palestinians or called for U.S. imperialism to get out of Central America.

As this bears out, their campaign has nothing to do with democratic rights or the fight against imperialist war. On the contrary, the forces that make up the NCR along with other counterrevolutionary forces are responsible for carrying out a sustained, murderous bombing and sabotage campaign in Iran against the

elected government of the Iranian people and in opposition to the overwhelming majority of the workers and peasants.

Because of their previous reputation on the left, the Mujahedeen and similar organizations are providing imperialism with "radical" cover for its political, economic, and military campaign to overturn the Iranian revolution.

Why does Washington want to overthrow the current Iranian regime?

As a result of the Iranian revolution, 45,000 U.S. embassy and military personnel were kicked out of Iran. Iran no longer serves as an outpost for imperialism aimed at the heart of the developing Arab revolution.

The revolution and the extensive mass mobilizations of the workers and peasants forced the government that came to power to grant many democratic rights and social measures. It placed the masses in a more favorable position to defend and extend such gains. Workers took the opportunity presented by the revolution to form workers councils to continue the fight for decent wages and working conditions.

The revolution also created more favorable conditions for the peasantry, oppressed nationalities, and women to carry their struggles forward.

From the revolution in 1979 to today it has been the massive mobilization of the Iranian people which has wrenched concessions from their government and demanded a policy of opposition to imperialism.

This continued vitality of the Iranian revolution — and the example it provides in the Middle East — is what Washington fears and wants to stop at all costs.

The Iranian revolution is not dead. The only thing that has died in Iran has been the revolutionary perspective of some middle class elements such as the Mujahedeen. Because of their lack of roots and confidence in the workers and farmers of Iran, they have recoiled from the power of the masses and have instead joined the camp of the counterrevolution.

Not all Iranians marching in the June 12 demonstration agree with the perspective of the Mujahedeen. Prorevolution Iranians marched with their Palestinian sisters and brothers, chanting such slogans as "Today Iran, Tomorrow Palestine!"

Antiwar forces must be on guard against the efforts of groups like the Mujahedeen, who dress their calls for counterrevolution in anti-imperialist rhetoric. They, along with other forces who attempt to take the focus off U.S. imperialism as the source of war, must be rejected. □

# What is the People's Mujahedeen group?

*A debate on the Iranian revolution today*

By David Frankel

[The following article appeared in the August 6 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

Both Evan Siegel and Kenneth Morgan strongly object (see box) to the July 9 article by *Militant* staffwriter Nelson González on the People's Mujahedeen Organization of Iran.

Morgan, who compares the situation in Iran today to Hitler's Germany, clearly thinks that the Iranian revolution is dead, destroyed by "the murderous Khomeini regime."

Siegel says things are worse now than during most of the shah's reign, and he lumps together the Iranian government and the rightist junta in El Salvador.

Both Siegel and Morgan see the Mujahedeen as a basically progressive force engaged in a struggle for democracy. They criticize the Mujahedeen for errors of strategy and tactics, but as Siegel puts it, the Mujahedeen are the Iranian government's "most formidable rival on the left."

This picture of what is going on in Iran today is consistent with the way things are being presented in the big-business media, but it is completely inaccurate.

## The starting point

The starting point for understanding what is happening in Iran is that a revolution has taken place there, the greatest mass upheaval in the history of the Middle East.

By smashing the shah's U.S.-imposed monarchy, the Iranian masses placed themselves in a qualitatively better position to resist imperialist oppression of their country and to fight for their demands. They organized workers committees in the factories and peasants committees in the countryside; they drove U.S. military bases and advisers out of their country; and the new government that they elected nationalized imperialist holdings and broke diplomatic relations and trade ties with Israel and South Africa.

These advances in the class struggle have led to a sharp confrontation between the Iranian revolution and all of the reactionary forces in the region. And that includes U.S. imperialism.

Iran has faced military attacks from Washington, an imperialist economic blockade, and a two-year-long war of aggression carried out by the Iraqi dictatorship. The Iraqi aggression has been backed by arms from the United States, France, and Britain, as well as by money, arms, and even some troops from

Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, and other reactionary Arab regimes.

## Iran-Iraq war

Now that the Iranians are moving to finally bring the war with Iraq to an end, Washington is again threatening direct military intervention

against Iran out of fear that revolution may be unleashed in Iraq, and U.S. imperialist interests and allies in the whole region jeopardized. That is why Washington proposed joint military maneuvers with Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf monarchies on July 16.

But the *Militant's* critics ignore the conflict

## Two letters to the 'Militant' on Iran

Dear Editor:

In the July 9 issue of the *Militant*, Nelson González, a staff writer for the *Militant*, wrote a vicious attack on the Organization of Peoples Mujahedin (OPM) which ought to be answered in detail. In the space available to me, I want to take up a few of its most glaring faults.

The private war between the OPM and the Islamic Republic was begun by the latter, in a series of brutal attacks on the OPM, its most formidable rival on the left. The Islamic Republic used the OPM's criminal response as an opportunity to unleash a bloody repression in Iran by no means directed only against armed groups like OPM. People were routinely executed for possessing a leaflet or a book. The scope of the killing far surpassed what the shah carried out, except in the last year of his reign.

Recently, Khomeini told a progovernment paramilitary tribal group that any secular democrat must be killed. According to the Islamic Republic's own figures, it executed as many people last year as every other country in the world combined! Mr. González writes: "The only thing that has died in Iran has been the revolutionary perspective of some middle class elements such as the Mujahedeen." If only he were right!

I missed the OPM's June 12 contingent, but in the leaflet they distributed, on Lebanon, they promise to send everyone they have to fight in Lebanon, if the Islamic Republic would let them go. Whatever one may think of such a promise, it is a far cry from Mr. González's claim that they are trying to take the focus off of imperialism.

I did see the "prorevolution" Iranian contingent. They were members and sympathizers of the pro-Moscow, pro-Khomeini Tudeh Party. When they chanted "Today Iran, tomorrow El Salvador" bystanders wondered what they were talking about. After all, in both countries, a ruth-

less repression is launched against all dissent.

Up to one or even two years after the Iranian revolution, the chant "Today Iran, tomorrow Palestine" had been very popular among supporters of the Palestinian struggle. They do not take it up any more. They much prefer the example of Nicaragua.

Sincerely,  
Evan Siegel

\* \* \*

Dear editor:

This is in reply to your article attacking the Iranian Mujahedeen in the July 9 *Militant*. First off, contrary to the opinion of the Socialist Workers Party, being opposed to the murderous Khomeini regime is not the same as being opposed to the Iranian revolution. Being opposed to Khomeini means being opposed to the murder of children, the attack on women's rights, and union busting.

The *Militant* expresses shock that the Mujahedeen compares Khomeini to Hitler. I think it's a valid comparison. Hitler, in power, attacked the left, carried out mass executions, and terrorized the masses through an armed gang of thugs ("Storm Troopers"). Khomeini, in power, attacks the left, carries out mass executions, and terrorizes the masses through an armed gang of thugs, the so-called "Revolutionary Guards."

You are correct to label the Mujahedeen as popular frontist. I agree that blocing with Bani Sadr is a mistake. There are, however, worse crimes than popular frontism, such as mass torture and executions, as exemplified by the Khomeini regime. By supporting the Iranian dictatorship, the SWP discredits any claim it makes, that it favors a democratic Socialist revolution in the United States.

Kenneth Morgan  
Price, Utah

between imperialism and the Iranian revolution. For Siegel and Morgan, the central enemy is the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Despite the fact that Washington has made no secret of its determination to see Khomeini overthrown, Morgan and Siegel say nothing about the need to defend the Khomeini government against imperialism.

It is true that the Iranian government is a capitalist government. It is true that it carries out repression against the workers and oppressed nationalities, against left-wing groups, and others. But if the Khomeini government had crushed the mass movement in Iran, if repression really were worse today than under the shah, *U.S. imperialism would be supporting the Iranian government instead of trying to overthrow it.*

Far from a demoralized and demobilized mass movement, there have been huge demonstrations in Iran supporting the fight against Iraqi aggression and the struggle of the Palestinian people against the Zionist oppressors.

One has only to look at the inspiring performance of the Iranian soldiers and revolutionary guards in defending the revolution against the Iraqi invasion to see that the Iranian masses believe that they have gained something worth fighting for.

Nelson González made this point in the *Militant*, saying: "The Iranian revolution is not dead. The only thing that has died in Iran has been the revolutionary perspective of some middle-class elements such as the Mujahedeen."

Siegel leaves out the first line of this statement, distorting its meaning to make it sound as if González is denying that executions have taken place.

#### What is the Mujahedeen?

Not much better is Siegel's statement that "the private war between the OPM and the Islamic Republic was begun by the latter," as if it were a question of who pushed who first, like in a schoolyard brawl.

Left out of this account of a "private war" is the fact that Iran was already in the midst of a very public war against the imperialist destabilization campaign and the invading Iraqi army.

This brings us to the character of the Mujahedeen. The Mujahedeen originated as an antimonarchist group based mainly among middle-class youth. They took part in the struggle against the shah and in the insurrection that finally brought down the monarchy.

But the Mujahedeen's class composition and explicitly anti-Marxist program left it rudderless in the midst of the revolution. It became more and more disillusioned with the Khomeini government, but it did not look to the workers and peasants as the force that could advance the revolution. Instead, it looked to dissenting factions within the government. This led it into a bloc with Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr.

With the ouster of Bani-Sadr in June 1981, the Mujahedeen embarked on an assassination



Mujahedeen supporters at June 12 demonstration in New York.

Suzanne Haig Militant

campaign against the leaders of the Iranian government. The decision to undertake this terrorist campaign was in keeping with the Mujahedeen's rightward evolution. Since the Mujahedeen did not look to the toiling masses, and since those they looked to inside the Iranian government had lost the struggle for power, they were drawn more and more into the imperialist orbit.

#### Boost for imperialists

At issue here is not whether individual acts of terror, which leave the masses as spectators, are a wrong strategy. The problem with the Mujahedeen is not one of ultraleftism or class collaboration, as we will see later.

What the Mujahedeen did was to launch a campaign to overthrow the Iranian government — not in a context in which the masses were struggling to do this, but in a context in which the government was under attack by U.S. imperialism and various pro-shah forces. The armed attacks carried out by the Mujahedeen gave a big boost to the imperialist destabilization campaign against Iran. It gave left cover to the counterrevolutionary drive.

The Mujahedeen has taken responsibility for many terrorist actions, hailed many others, and condemned absolutely none.

Far from seeing the Mujahedeen as a progressive alternative to the existing government, or as defenders — even misguided ones — of their rights, the Iranian workers and peasants have decisively repudiated them. They view the Mujahedeen campaign as part of the imperialist drive to bring down the government and drown their revolution in blood, and correctly so.

When a devastating explosion destroyed the office of the prime minister in August 1981, in

an attack hailed by the Mujahedeen, more than a million people poured into the streets of Tehran chanting slogans against U.S. imperialism.

#### Political evolution

The judgment of the Iranian toilers has been confirmed by the subsequent political evolution of the Mujahedeen. In a move calculated to appeal to Washington, Mujahedeen leader Massoud Rajavi has attacked what he calls Khomeini's "reactionary policies of exporting the revolution." Bani-Sadr, now allied to the Mujahedeen in the exile National Council of Resistance, says that Iran should "turn to the West for help in solving its economic problems."

The Mujahedeen have also appealed to the imperialists to tighten the economic boycott of Iran. A February 8 communique from Rajavi's Paris office noted that "officials of Khomeini's regime are now making efforts throughout the world to acquire credit," and warned that "granting Khomeini's regime any credit . . . is considered a move specifically against the people of Iran."

Columnist William Safire, formerly an aide in the Nixon White House, has urged U.S. support for the Mujahedeen "on the ramparts of the counterrevolution," while the British magazine *8 Days* reported January 23:

"US sources say Washington, Baghdad, and Riyadh would all like to see Abol Hassan Bani Sadr restored to power in Tehran, and US officials have had substantial contact with the former Iranian president and his entourage in Paris."

No, the Mujahedeen are not the Iranian government's "formidable rival on the left," as Siegel would have it. They have become part



of the imperialist counterrevolution, regardless of the intentions of individual members of the Mujahedeen who may believe they are trying to advance the Iranian revolution. Mujahedeen rhetoric about democracy, women's rights, and the rights of the oppressed nationalities is simply part of their operation to draw liberals and sections of the radical movement behind their campaign to overthrow the Iranian government.

#### **A popular front?**

Nor are the Mujahedeen "popular frontists" who have made a "mistake" in forming their bloc with Bani-Sadr, as Morgan asserts. The Mujahedeen is not a working-class party; the National Council of Resistance is not a bloc of reformist workers parties and capitalist forces; and the crime of the Mujahedeen and Bani-Sadr is not one of throwing up class-collaborationist obstacles to the revolutionary mobilization of the workers and peasants.

The crime of the Mujahedeen is that they have become one front in the imperialist-orchestrated effort to overturn what the Iranian workers and peasants have won over the past three years. As the massive demonstrations against terrorist attacks have shown, the overthrow of the Khomeini government could not be carried out short of a bloodbath against the Iranian workers.

The problem is not one of class collaboration, but of democratic cover for the counter-revolutionary movement.

Morgan's comparison of Khomeini and Hitler is undoubtedly the low point of his letter. He compares the government of *imperialist* Germany under fascism with the government of an oppressed semicolonial country that came to power through a massive popular revolution and that is the target of an unrelenting imperialist campaign aimed at overthrowing it!

Morgan calls the revolutionary guards in Iran "an armed gang of thugs," and compares them to Hitler's Storm Troopers. But the revolutionary guards are the same young people who faced the shah's massive military machine with only their bare hands, who brought down the monarchy and tore open the prisons, who mobilized in their millions against American imperialism, and who amazed the military experts around the world by driving the Iraqi invaders out of Iran. They are the future of the Iranian revolution.

#### **Mujahedeen and U.S. politics**

Drawing out the political evolution of the Mujahedeen in relation to the Iranian revolution also helps us to get a better understanding of their role in American politics. Interestingly enough, neither Siegel nor Morgan ever really take up this question, although it was the main point of González's article.

González, let us recall, began by saying: "On June 12 one million people came out in a massive demonstration repudiating the Reagan administration's war policies."

Yet the contingent organized by the Mujahedeen on the June 12 march "sought to take the

focus off U.S. imperialism and its war policies."

No signs were carried by the Mujahedeen demanding that Washington keep its hands off Cuba and Nicaragua, that it get its "advisers" out of El Salvador, that it halt its aid to Israel, or that it dismantle U.S. military bases in the Middle East.

Nor did the Mujahedeen carry any signs opposing the U.S. nuclear buildup, or calling for an end to U.S. spending on weapons of mass destruction.

Instead, they carried banners saying "Down with Khomeini's Tyranny," and "Support the National Council of Resistance."

As González explained, "This contingent focused its participation in the march on attacking the Iranian revolution. . . .

"Their literature presented one common analysis: since the shah was overthrown and the Ayatollah Khomeini took power, everything has gotten worse in Iran."

Thus, the Mujahedeen carried a reactionary, pro-war political line into the June 12 demonstration. Instead of attacking U.S. imperialism, they introduced propaganda supporting one of Washington's prime objectives in the Middle East — the overthrow of the current Iranian government.

The line of the Mujahedeen, González explained, "is to divert antiwar forces from building a movement clearly directed at the crimes of U.S. imperialism."

#### **A good line on Lebanon?**

Kenneth Morgan makes no attempt to answer González on this, or to claim the Mujahedeen contingent was anti-imperialist.

Evan Siegel tries to gloss over the facts. He says that "in the leaflet [the Mujahedeen] distributed, on Lebanon, they promised to send everyone they have to fight in Lebanon, if the Islamic Republic would let them go."

But the focus of the leaflet that Siegel refers to, like the other literature distributed by the Mujahedeen at the June 12 demonstration, was not against the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, nor against Washington's role, which is never mentioned. It is against the Iranian government.

The text of the leaflet says that the Israeli attack "to a large extent is specifically the result of Khomeini's anti-Iranian and anti-Palestinian policies over the past three years as well as his common interests with Israel."

In other words, it blames Khomeini for Begin's invasion of Lebanon! This is the leaflet that, according to Siegel, "is a far cry from Mr. González's claim that [the Mujahedeen] are trying to take the focus off of imperialism."

Siegel would have a hard time explaining how Iran's halting of oil shipments to Israel, its turning the Israeli embassy into an embassy for the Palestine Liberation Organization, its organization of mass demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian fighters in Lebanon, and its sending of thousands of volunteers to fight alongside the PLO are "anti-Palestinian policies."

Siegel tells us that supporters of the Palestinian struggle are no longer inspired by the Iranian revolution. That appears to be true for Siegel, but it is hard to imagine that Palestinian fighters in Lebanon have not been inspired by the arrival of thousands of Iranian volunteers to join their struggle.

The voices in the Arab world that have joined in the imperialist hue and cry against the Iranian government are not those of the Palestinians and other Arab peoples, but those of King Khalid in Saudi Arabia, King Hussein of Jordan, President Mubarak of Egypt, and others who have supported the Iraqi dictatorship's war against Iran.

#### **June 12 contingents**

Siegel also attacks an Iranian contingent on the June 12 march because it chanted "Today Iran, tomorrow El Salvador." Regardless of what organization those Iranians might belong to, what they did on the June 12 march was completely correct. They linked the defense of the Iranian revolution with the defense of the Salvadoran revolution. They turned their fire against the U.S. war drive.

Unlike the Mujahedeen, the prorevolution contingent also carried large banners demanding that Israeli troops get out of Lebanon and calling for a halt to U.S. aid to Israel.

(It should be pointed out that the Iranian government has also called for support to the struggle of the Salvadoran workers and peasants and spoken out in defense of the Nicaraguan revolution.)

In conclusion, one other point should be mentioned. Morgan is confused about the attitude of the Socialist Workers Party toward the Khomeini government. He states that the SWP supports the Iranian government.

What the SWP supports in Iran is the struggle of the workers and peasants to advance their class interests, including the establishment of their own government on the road to the socialist transformation of society.

The SWP opposes the attacks by the present capitalist government in Iran on the rights of women, the oppressed nationalities, and the working class. But we, like the Iranian toilers, defend that government against attacks by imperialism and other forces allied to it.

The SWP understands — as do the Iranian workers and peasants — that the fight to defend and extend democratic rights can only be carried out effectively as part of the fight to advance the struggle against imperialism.

Failure to understand this can easily lead to making a bloc with "democratic" imperialism, as we have seen in the case of the Mujahedeen — a bloc that places its members on the opposite side of the barricades from the workers and peasants.

Here in the United States, the duty of revolutionists is above all to stand in implacable opposition to the aggressive designs of our imperialist rulers. That is the best way that we can help the Iranian revolution. And it is also the only way to advance the socialist revolution right here at home. □

# U.S. arms bolster regime

### *Insurgency challenges Siad Barre's rule*

By Ernest Harsch

The Reagan administration has begun airlifting \$20 million worth of arms to the East African country of Somalia to help prop up the dictatorial regime of President Mohammed Siad Barre, which is facing increased opposition from the Somali population.

According to Siad Barre, he also received a personal message from Reagan expressing the White House's commitment to "strengthen" relations between the two governments.

As a justification for this attempt to save Siad Barre's dictatorship, the U.S. State Department, in its July 24 announcement of the arms airlift, claimed that Somalia is the victim of military attacks supported by the government in neighboring Ethiopia. "This is in connection with the recent incursion by Ethiopians and Ethiopian-supported forces," State Department spokesman Rush Taylor declared.

Not surprisingly, the Somali government also denies that the recent upsurge of antigovernment actions within Somalia is being led by domestic opponents of Siad Barre.

The official Somali radio went so far as to claim that Russians, Cubans, Libyans, East Germans, and South Yemenis were "directing Ethiopia's military aggression against Somalia."

The dispatch of U.S. arms to Siad Barre has nothing to do with defending Somalia. Rather, it is intended to keep Siad Barre's proimperialist regime in power and maintain Washington's access to Somali naval facilities.

The stakes for Washington were spelled out in an article in the August 1 *New York Times*: "The United States would stand to lose its military access to the northern Somali port of Berbera if insurgents fighting against President Mohammed Siad Barre triumph in the month-old hostilities, according to a principal spokesman for the insurgents," Mohammed Y. Abshir, a representative of the Somali Democratic Salvation Front.

The Berbera port is one of a series of U.S. naval and air bases along the western rim of the Indian Ocean and could be used as a staging area for Washington's Rapid Deployment Force.

#### Aggression against Ethiopia

The U.S. backing to the repressive Siad Barre regime is also part of Washington's broader interventionist policies in the region, which is known as the Horn of Africa. That intervention was stepped up sharply after the outbreak of the 1974-75 Ethiopian revolution and the overthrow of the U.S.-backed monarchy there.

With Washington's encouragement, Siad

Barre invaded Ethiopia in 1977, sending in tens of thousands of Somali troops. Although that invasion was carried out under the guise of aiding the struggle of the oppressed Somalis within Ethiopia's Ogaden region, its real aim was to roll back the gains of the Ethiopian revolution: a deepgoing land reform, widespread nationalizations of domestic and imperialist companies, the shutting down of U.S. military facilities in Ethiopia, a literacy campaign, and other social programs that benefited Ethiopia's workers and farmers.

That invasion was defeated in early 1978, when thousands of Cuban volunteer troops helped the Ethiopian government drive the invaders out.

Since then, Washington has increased its direct involvement in Somalia as a means of applying pressure against the Ethiopian regime, which has maintained an anti-imperialist stance.

The Somali port of Berbera, which is now being expanded for U.S. naval use, may eventually be staffed by between 500 and 1,000 U.S. troops. When Siad Barre was asked in early 1982 if there was a possibility that a permanent U.S. garrison could be stationed at Berbera, he replied, "If our common interests required it, why not?"

In November 1981, U.S. troops landed in Somalia during the massive "Bright Star" military maneuvers in the region.

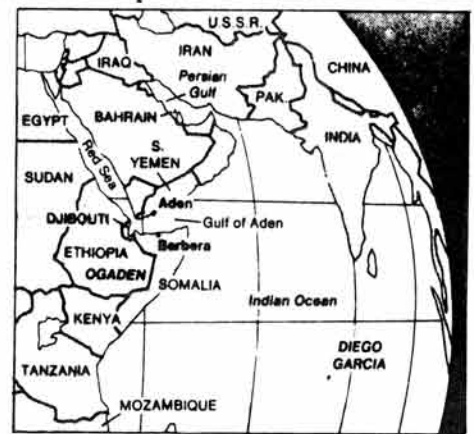
In return for such direct U.S. military backing, Siad Barre's political pronouncements have become much more explicitly counter-revolutionary. Siad Barre, who once claimed his adherence to "scientific socialism," declared in January 1981 that "Somalia is a defence against Marxism."

Despite the defeat of Siad Barre's 1977-78 invasion of Ethiopia, regular attacks have been mounted against that country by the so-called Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF). The WSLF is little more than a cover for the regular Somali army. Its military units are often given preference in allocations of scarce fuel, ahead of even some government ministries.

Even CIA testimony in the U.S. Congress has admitted that troops from three regular Somali battalions were involved in these attacks into the Ogaden.

Red Cross officials have charged that U.S. and West European relief aid to Somalia is being channeled directly to the Somali army and the WSLF. One Red Cross official declared in August 1981 that this was being done with the full knowledge of the U.S. government.

Although Washington officially maintains that it opposes the Somali regime's claims on the Ogaden, WSLF leaders have acknow-



ledged meeting with U.S. envoys in Mogadishu, the Somali capital.

Responding to U.S. backing to the Somali regime, Mengistu Haile Mariam, the chairman of Ethiopia's ruling military council, stated in September 1980:

"It seems obvious that the American government is fueling the fire in the region, stocking Somalia's expansionist war machinery, and is realizing its strategic and imperialist objectives at the expense of the people of Ethiopia and Somalia. . . . If the U.S. is determined to base its rapid deployment force in Somalia, then Ethiopia and other countries in the region will have to resort to all available measures to defend their unity and territorial integrity."

#### Domestic opposition mounts

The U.S. backing to Siad Barre is not only directed against Ethiopia. It is also directed against the people of Somalia itself, who are becoming increasingly active in their opposition to the Siad Barre regime.

This unrest has been fueled by Somalia's extreme poverty — it is one of the poorest countries in the world. Its population has been hit by a high inflation rate, and real wages have declined sharply.

At the same time, Siad Barre's increasingly close ties with Washington have aroused anti-imperialist sentiment among the masses. All of the political organizations opposed to Siad Barre have demanded the scrapping of the Berbera base treaty.

Since the defeat of the 1977-78 invasion of Ethiopia (which was opposed by sectors of the Somali army itself), Siad Barre's regime has been rocked by a series of troop mutinies and urban upsurges. These have been brutally put down, and the country's jails are filled with thousands of political prisoners.

In early February, troops mutinied in the northern town of Burao. Later that month, large street demonstrations swept Hargeisa after a crowd stormed a courtroom where critics of the regime were being tried. These demonstrations subsequently spread to many towns and villages in the north of the country.

In putting down these protests, the Somali army massacred more than 100 civilians, and arrested thousands more.

The Somali Democratic Salvation Front, the main coalition of organizations opposed to the regime, stepped up its armed actions in early July. The front receives some support from the Ethiopian government, and beams daily radio broadcasts from Ethiopia into Somalia.

According to representatives of the front, its forces have captured the towns of Galdogob

and Balumbal, both not far from the border with Ethiopia.

According to Jama Hussein, one of the leaders of the front, its aim is to topple Siad Barre's "terrorist dictatorial regime," establish a "democratic socialist" government, and end U.S. use of Somalian bases. □

## Kenya

# Mass uprising crushed

### Army guns down hundreds of protesters

By Ernest Harsch

After several days of fighting in Nairobi and other parts of Kenya, the government of President Daniel arap Moi was able to crush the most massive uprising since the country gained its independence in 1963. It did so at the cost of several hundred lives and thousands of arrests.

On August 1, rebel junior air force officers seized several air bases around the country and the main government radio station in Nairobi, the capital. Planes bombed the headquarters of the paramilitary General Service Unit on the outskirts of the city.

After seizing the radio station, the rebels proclaimed the overthrow of the Moi government. They accused the government of corruption by "a few greedy and irresponsible bandits — a gang of local tyrants." They denounced Moi's recent imposition of a one-party state, censorship of the press, arbitrary arrests, and a "ruthless repression reminiscent of the colonial days."

Almost the entire air force rallied to the coup attempt, as did many of Kenya's university students and thousands of the urban poor in the working-class neighborhoods that ring Nairobi.

The ties between the air force personnel and the students have been particularly close. According to a dispatch from Nairobi in the August 9 *Christian Science Monitor*, "The Air Force is an elite group — many are young men with university training and have many friends still in school. The airmen are imbued with the same radical — and some with Marxist — views held by some elements at the university."

The rebels began arming university students and other supporters, who set up roadblocks around the capital.

The announcement of the coup set off a massive response among the capital's working-class population. They directed their anger against the shops and businesses in downtown Nairobi.

Thousands surged through the streets of the city, breaking windows and walking off with the appliances and food they could not afford to buy.

According to an August 2 dispatch from

Nairobi by *New York Times* correspondent Alan Cowell, ". . . others, predominantly ragged young men and students, put a political interpretation to their anarchy. The catchword of the day became 'power,' accompanied by a clenched fist salute waved with menace in the direction of those who seemed part of the wealthier section of Nairobi society."

"The message, apparently," Cowell commented, "was that a revolution was under way to transfer political influence from the wealthy elite and those entrenched in power to those whose emotions had not been previously reflected in Kenya's capitalist-oriented, one-party system."

Moi answered these popular aspirations with a bloodbath. Loyal troops retook the radio station and attacked the Embakasi, Eastleigh, and Nanyuki air bases. Army units were deployed throughout the city to put down the rebellion. They moved into the working-class neighborhoods around Nairobi, gunning down scores of civilians and conducting house-to-house searches.

For days, automatic gunfire could be heard both in the downtown area and in the shantytowns. An August 1 dispatch in the *Washington Post* said, "Witnesses reported seeing bodies in the poor areas of the city and the shanty towns of Kibera in northwest Nairobi, where the rebel Air Force personnel were believed to be trying to hide."

Two days later three truckloads of corpses were seen being driven out of Kibera.

President Moi announced the closure of all the country's universities. A roundup of university students was launched.

On August 10, Mark Bosire, the parliamentary secretary of Moi's Kenya African National Union, announced that 145 people had been killed since the beginning of the uprising. Other officials have put the figure at more than 300.

In the midst of this crackdown, the U.S. government reaffirmed its backing for the Moi regime, which has enjoyed considerable U.S. economic and military assistance over the years. "We consider Kenya a good and close friend," a U.S. State Department spokesman declared August 2.

In the August 7 *New York Times*, Cowell

pointed out, "The United States has an agreement permitting American warships to use the port of Mombasa. The United States is also training some units of the Kenyan Army, which apparently remained loyal during the coup."

The August 1 uprising has badly shaken the Kenyan government and its imperialist allies. For years, Kenya has been touted as a capitalist "showcase" in East Africa, a country with a greater degree of industrialization than any other in the region.

The uprising has now exposed the other side of this "economic miracle." While a handful of Kenyans have grown rich, most have been condemned to overcrowded living conditions, inflation, growing unemployment, and increasing shortages of basic consumer goods.

The social tensions caused by this situation have been building up for some time. Students and radical intellectuals have been becoming bolder in their criticisms of the government and of its close ties with Washington, particularly the agreement to provide U.S. ships with port facilities at Mombasa.

The August 1 uprising was a dramatic confirmation of the massive disaffection that lies just below the surface in Kenya. □

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# How the Vietnam War began

*It looks a lot like El Salvador today*

By Will Reissner

Today, with the Reagan administration involved in a disguised, but very real war against the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean, it is important to remind ourselves how the U.S. war against the peoples of Indochina developed. There are chilling parallels between Reagan's intervention in El Salvador, his admitted sponsorship of covert actions against Nicaragua, his threats against Cuba and the island of Grenada, and the early stages of the war in Vietnam.

Many people have forgotten how the war in Vietnam began. They remember only the final stages — the hundreds of thousands of U.S. combat troops, the body counts, the massive bombing, the headlines, the mass opposition.

But the U.S. war in Indochina began much earlier, on a much smaller scale. For a quarter-century, under six presidents, the aim remained constant: to crush the Vietnamese freedom struggle. Changing levels of U.S. involvement were not due to changes in policy, but rather to the growing strength of the liberation forces and the U.S. antiwar movement.

## Truman backs colonial war

In May 1950, the Truman administration began providing military and economic aid to the French colonial forces battling the guerrillas fighting for Vietnam's independence, the Viet Minh.

From an initial aid package of \$10 million, Washington's support of the French war in Indochina rapidly grew. By 1954, under President Eisenhower, annual U.S. military aid to the French in Vietnam was over \$1 billion, amounting to 78 percent of the French war costs.

On August 4, 1953, Eisenhower explained what he thought the stakes were:

"If Indochina goes, several things happen right away. The Malayan Peninsula [then a British colony] . . . would be scarcely defensible — and tin and tungsten we so greatly value from that area would cease coming. . . ."

"All of that weakening position around there is very ominous for the United States, because finally if we lost all that, how would the free world hold the rich empire of Indonesia? So you see, somewhere along the line, this must be blocked. That is what the French are doing."

As the Vietnamese liberation forces grew stronger, Washington urged the French to keep fighting. In Saigon in November 1953, Vice-president Richard Nixon told the French: "It is impossible to lay down arms until victory is completely won. . . . The U.S. would vigor-

ously disapprove any negotiations for peace in Indochina."

But on May 7, 1954, the Viet Minh inflicted a devastating defeat on the French army, capturing the garrison at Dien Bien Phu after a long siege.

## 'Operation Vulture'

During the siege, Eisenhower urged the British to agree to a joint military intervention on the side of the French. Washington also drew up plans to use 200 U.S. bombers against Viet Minh positions around Dien Bien Phu. The plan, code-named Operation Vulture, included use of three tactical atomic bombs, according to Nixon's *Memoirs*.

Ultimately, Eisenhower decided against sending U.S. combat troops to fight with the French, who had already lost 74,000 troops trying to crush the Vietnamese freedom struggle.

The defeat of the French bore out Ho Chi Minh's warning to them in 1946, just before the fighting began: "You will kill ten of our men and we will kill one of yours. In the end it will be you who will tire of it."

When peace negotiations began in Geneva in mid-1954, the Viet Minh held most of Vietnam, including over half of the south. Viet Minh leaders agreed to a temporary partition prior to elections to reunify the country.

The *Pentagon Papers* show that Eisenhower never intended to permit elections to end the partition. In June 1954, one month before the Geneva accords were signed, the United States had already decided to set up a separate state in the south and to begin financing and training an army of up to 234,000 men. This new regime would be headed by Ngo Dinh Diem, who had spent the years of the anticolonial war in the United States and Europe.

Eisenhower later explained that "possibly 80 percent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh" had the elections been held as stipulated.

Washington also tried to strangle the new government in North Vietnam. At the time of the partition, the Eisenhower administration made it known that it would blacklist any French company that continued to operate in the north.

In the first year of the Diem regime, the United States poured in \$214 million in military aid and similar amounts in economic support. Some 1,600 U.S. military personnel, most operating surreptitiously, moved in to set up Diem's new army and police.

Diem unleashed a reign of terror in the countryside to destroy the Vietnamese Com-

munist Party. In the years after 1955, about 90,000 suspected CP members were executed, and up to 100,000 were jailed.

Many militants spent years living in caves and tunnels. In two districts near Saigon, only 6 out of some 1,000 party members survived the 1950s.

In January 1959, the CP leadership decided to take up arms again. The first armed action took place on January 17, 1960, in Ben Tre in the Mekong Delta, signaling the start of the "second resistance."\*

With the renewal of armed resistance in the countryside, the Diem regime, with Washington's backing, began herding peasants into rural concentration camps, called "strategic villages."

At the same time, the number of U.S. military advisers in South Vietnam again rose, to 685, and more military aid was sent by Eisenhower.

President Kennedy took office one year and three days after the Ben Tre action. In his campaign, he had called for a huge increase in U.S. arms spending, claiming a need to catch up with the Soviets.

But journalist Richard Walton points out that "not only was the United States vastly stronger, but its superiority was growing steadily, for the Soviet Union had reduced its military spending."

In addition, there was no "missile gap" — a term popularized by Kennedy in his election campaign. The United States had a 3-1 advantage in missiles and a 10-1 advantage in intercontinental bombers.

But Kennedy pressed ahead with his arms plan. As Kennedy aide Theodore Sorensen admits, "In three years Kennedy's buildup of the most powerful military force in human history — the largest and swiftest buildup in this country's peacetime history . . . provided him, as he put it, with a versatile arsenal 'ranging from the most massive deterrents to the most subtle influences.'"

Kennedy was particularly keen on "counterinsurgency," that is, fighting guerrilla forces. As planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was in its final stage, Kennedy was already stepping up U.S. military operations in Vietnam and Laos.

On March 9, 1961, Kennedy's National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy sent a memo to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Bundy reminded McNamara of "the Pres-

\*On February 7, 1968, during the NLF's Tet Offensive, the city of Ben Tre became world famous when a U.S. officer told the press that "it became necessary to destroy the town to save it."

ident's instruction that we make every possible effort to launch guerrilla operations in Viet-minh territory' at the earliest possible time," and asked him to "report to the President as soon as feasible your views on what actions might be undertaken in the near future and what steps might be taken to expand operations."

On April 12, 1961, Deputy Presidential Assistant for National Security Walt Rostow sent a memo to Kennedy that proposed "introducing into Viet-Nam operation a substantial number of Special Forces types."

The very day this memo was written — just five days before the beginning of the Bay of Pigs invasion — Kennedy was lying to the American people about U.S. involvement against Cuba. At a press conference he flatly stated that "there will not be, under any conditions, an intervention in Cuba by the United States armed forces."

In fact, however, the whole invasion was planned and financed by the United States. There were U.S. planes flown by Americans. The frogmen who were first ashore in Cuba were Americans. U.S. ships transported the invaders and U.S. naval units backed them up. And Americans were killed in the operations.

Despite the defeat of the Bay of Pigs invasion by the Cuban people, Kennedy continued to step up U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Two weeks after the invasion of Cuba, Kennedy decided to send 400 Special Forces troops, Green Berets, to South Vietnam.

#### Giap controlled by Peking?

Roger Hilsman, a Kennedy appointee in the State Department, articulated the administration's line on the struggle in Vietnam. In a 1962 introduction to Viet Minh General Vo Nguyen Giap's *People's War, People's Army*, Hilsman claimed that "General Giap is actually an 'advance man' for Chinese Communist power." In fact, said Hilsman, "he and his doctrines are serving Chinese purposes by accomplishments that could not be brought about by the Chinese or by open and avowed friends of theirs."

The Vietnamese struggle was not indigenous, said Hilsman. "The Communists," he insisted, "have developed a new kind of aggression in which one country sponsors internal war within another" (emphasis in original). This is done through "the use of native and imported guerillas."

This fantastic claim should be familiar to all who have heard Alexander Haig argue that the guerrillas in El Salvador are totally organized, sponsored, and controlled by Cuba and armed by Nicaragua.

#### 'Camelot' on the Mekong

According to Hilsman, "the strategic villages," i.e., the rural concentration camps, "are crucial in countering the tactics of General Giap."

Hilsman admits that "when one throws a barbed-wire fence around a village, when one sets up a curfew system and fires upon any



U.S. troops landing in Vietnam in 1965.

moving object outside the fence at that hour, a degree of regimentation is implied."

But not to worry! He notes that "our great-grandfathers did not like to have to ask everyone to be 'inside the stockade at sundown.' They did not like to bring up their children in such an atmosphere — but they built the stockades as a first step toward building a civilization in which stockades would be unnecessary."

By 1962, the Diem regime reported it had built 4,000 strategic villages, containing 39 percent of South Vietnam's population. Some 7,000 more were in the planning stages. Furthermore, the United States began spraying chemical defoliants like Agent Orange on the Vietnamese countryside in 1961 in order to destroy crops and woodlands used by guerrilla supporters — i.e., the Vietnamese people.

#### Kennedy okays escalation

Despite stepped-up U.S. aid to Diem, the Vietnamese people were on the verge of toppling the dictatorship by late 1961. In response, Kennedy began planning for the massive introduction of U.S. combat troops to turn the tide, although this was hidden from the American people at the time.

A November 8, 1961, memo to Kennedy from Defense Secretary McNamara and his deputy, Roswell Gilpatric, discussed the implications of "the fall of South Vietnam to Communism." It pointed out that "the chances are

against, probably sharply against, preventing that fall by any measures short of the introduction of U.S. forces on a substantial scale." (emphasis added).

The memo called for sending an initial 8,000 U.S. troops under the guise of flood-relief humanitarian help, and pointed out "that the maximum U.S. forces required on the ground in Southeast Asia will not exceed 6 divisions, or about 205,000 men."

That same month, Kennedy received a top-secret message from Gen. Maxwell Taylor on the situation in South Vietnam. Taylor said that sending U.S. ground combat forces was "an essential action" and added that "I do not believe that our program to save South Vietnam will succeed without it."

Kennedy accepted these recommendations, including the guise under which the troops would be sent. On December 14, 1961, Kennedy wrote to Diem that "in response to your request . . . we shall promptly increase our assistance to your defense effort as well as help relieve the destruction of the floods."

With the cover story in place, the number of U.S. troops in South Vietnam rose from 1,364 at the end of 1961 to 9,865 at the end of 1962. And as the McNamara memo shows, Kennedy knew this was only the start of a much larger buildup of U.S. forces.

Despite the addition of these 8,000 U.S. troops, the Diem regime continued to fall apart. Even Joseph Buttinger, once one of Diem's

strongest U.S. backers, admitted that by 1962 Diem was a hated man. "Opposed by the intellectuals, despised by the educated middle class, rejected by businessmen, hated by the youth and by all nationalists with political ambitions, and totally lacking in mass support, the Diem government had to rely for its survival on an apparatus of coercion."

Nonetheless, Robert Kennedy, a member of the cabinet as well as the president's brother, went to Saigon in 1962 to assure Diem that "we are going to win in Vietnam; we will remain here until we do win."

During the summer of 1963, South Vietnam's cities were rocked by anti-Diem demonstrations organized by Buddhists. During the demonstrations, eight monks and nuns burned themselves to death to call attention to the repression.

### The 'domino theory'

Kennedy, however, remained strongly committed to U.S. intervention. On a September 9, 1963, television news show, Kennedy was asked if he agreed with the "domino theory."

"I believe it," Kennedy answered. "China is so large, looms so high just beyond the frontiers, that if South Vietnam went, it would not only give them an improved geographic position for a guerrilla assault on Malaya, but would give the impression that the wave of the future in Southeast Asia was China and the Communists."

Kennedy emphatically rejected the advice of those who said that "they don't like the government in Saigon [and] that we should withdraw." Instead, said Kennedy, "I think we should stay."

Kennedy realized, however, that Diem would have to go if the situation was to be salvaged. In October, the U.S. ambassador to Saigon and the CIA told "appropriate" generals that Washington would "not thwart a coup," and on November 1, 1963, Diem was overthrown and murdered, three weeks before Kennedy died.

On the very day Kennedy was shot — November 22, 1963 — he admitted that "without the United States, South Vietnam would collapse overnight." By then the number of U.S. troops in the country had grown to 16,000.

Within 48 hours of taking office, Lyndon Johnson announced that U.S. military involvement in South Vietnam would continue.

Another escalation was about to begin. On March 17, 1964, Robert McNamara reported to the National Security Council that South Vietnam was on the "verge of total collapse." He proposed another increase in the number of U.S. troops, additional covert actions against North Vietnam, and a long-term bombing campaign against the north.

Johnson approved all these proposals, carrying out Kennedy's program of doing whatever was needed to prevent a victory by the Vietnamese liberation struggle. The ever-growing U.S. military commitment was determined by the growing strength of the National Liberation

Front and the ever-impending collapse of the puppet Saigon regime.

### War begins before troops sent

But as we have seen, Washington was deeply involved in fighting the war in Vietnam long before the first U.S. ground troops were sent in. We should always remember this when looking at the present situation in Central America and the Caribbean.

In Central America, the Reagan administration is already far along the road followed earlier in Vietnam. U.S. advisers are training and leading the Salvadoran regime's troops.

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## Papua New Guinea

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# Voters reject austerity

## Chan government defeated in elections

### By Peter Annear

[The following article appeared in the July 14 issue of the Australian socialist newsweekly *Direct Action*.]

\* \* \*

The conservative government of Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan has been thrown out of office in the Papua New Guinea (PNG) elections, which closed on June 25.

Twelve out of 26 cabinet ministers lost their seats in the election, the second since independence in 1975. They included Deputy Prime Minister and National Party leader Iambakey Okuk and his party deputy, Lands Minister Kavali.

Former Prime Minister Michael Somare and a newcomer, ex-Brigadier General Ted Diro, are now each looking for the numbers to form a government. [Somare managed to form the new government in early August.]

Somare's Pangu Party captured nearly half the 109 parliamentary seats in the biggest political campaign ever seen in PNG.

Diro led a group of independents into the election, then immediately took over from the fallen Okuk as National Party head when the returns were declared. This gave Diro a base of around 30 seats.

The Australian-trained former commander of the Papua New Guinea Defence Forces, Diro believes that Chan and Somare have had their chance.

Describing his own impression from the electorate to Stuart Inder of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Diro claimed: "They wanted strong leadership. They wanted the rule of law firmly established and the decline in the efficiency of the public service halted."

### Austerity drive

Chan's demise can best be seen as a rejection of his government's austerity measures.

A millionaire merchant, Chan treated PNG's

There are nearly 100 U.S. military advisers in Honduras. Washington has admitted it is funding a covert war against Nicaragua. It constantly threatens Cuba and Grenada through provocative naval maneuvers and practice invasions.

The Reagan administration promises that it has no plans to send any U.S. combat troops to Central America "at this time." We should recall that on October 21, 1964, President Johnson assured us that "we are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." □

declining economic prospects with a typical blend of handouts to business and cuts in social spending.

In the past two years, unemployment has been rising, and inflation was at 12 per cent, although it has now fallen to 5 per cent.

The collapse of world commodity prices, especially copper and coffee, has starved the country of export funds, and Bougainville Copper, which usually provides 15 per cent of government revenue, is now running at a loss.

Economic growth has gone from zero in 1981 to an expected 1 per cent this year.

In these circumstances the 1982 budget cut public service employment by 6 per cent (following a 4 per cent drop in 1981). It increased charges on motor vehicles, petrol, cigarettes, beer, and telephones, and raised import levies in general. Health services were cut.

At the same time, businesses got tax exemptions on export profits and the doubling of government credit limits for new companies.

Chan also took PNG foreign policy further to the right by strengthening ties with the Indonesian dictatorship, and he established the National Intelligence Organisation as a central spy agency.

### A liberal image

While policies played little role in the election, Somare and Pangu did create a more liberal image than any other party.

Emphasising a reduction in school fees and increased education facilities, Pangu promised better job training, more aid to community groups, improved rural health and other services, wage improvements, price control, improved public transport, and the extension of electricity to new areas.

Somare presented handouts to business in terms of creating jobs, criticised Chan for favoring overseas companies at the expense of local firms, and accused Chan of being interested only in "helping the new privileged in-

cluding ministers and their friends."

But Somare's real record is little different from that of the defeated coalition. His own government cultivated ties with foreign capital, signed a treaty with [Indonesian President] Suharto to repress the Free Papua Movement of Irian Jaya, sent in the cops to smash the historic 1975 Bougainville miners' strike, and in the same year repressed the Bougainville separatist movement with the threat of force.

The highlands trucking and construction magnate, Iambakey Okuk, claimed that he would be prime minister following the elections. He promised further reductions in government spending, more aid to foreign companies, and to "oppose the growth of communism in Papua New Guinea." On election eve he railed against trade union and student leaders who had attended the World Federation of Trade Unions Congress in Havana and visited North Korea.

The climax of his campaign was the free distribution of 3,000 cartons of beer at a rally one week before the election. Wisely, voters took the beer but kept their votes for less reactionary candidates.

## Independence Front forms government in New Caledonia

By Mike Tucker

[The following article appeared in the July 16 issue of the New Zealand biweekly *Socialist Action*.]

\* \* \*

A new government came to office in New Caledonia on June 19. Four of its seven members belong to the Independence Front — a coalition of parties which support independence from France and the establishment of a "Kanak socialist republic." This is the first time a Kanak-dominated government has been in office.

Kanaks are the indigenous Melanesian people of New Caledonia. But they make up only 40 percent of the country's population, being almost outnumbered by French-European settlers. The remainder of the population is made up of other settlers, mainly from other Pacific Islands ruled by France.

The new coalition government was elected by the Territorial Assembly on June 19 following the defeat of the previous right-wing, French-settler dominated coalition in a vote of no confidence.

A centre party, the FNSC (New Society) switched its support from the right-wing RPCR (Republican Movement) to the Independence Front.

Violent clashes broke out in New Caledonia's capital, Noumea, on June 26 when a right-wing demonstration of 15,000 French settlers confronted French paratroopers. The settlers were protesting the election of the new govern-

The political process is still weak in Papua New Guinea. This can be seen especially in the absence of workers' or progressive parties in these elections.

There are 50 unions in PNG, covering a third of the urban workforce and organised into the PNG Trade Union Congress. Many of these have been involved in militant campaigns, like the powerful mineworkers' union.

The unions have also taken political action, like their opposition to Somare's anti-democratic Public Order Bill in 1976. But they have not yet drawn the conclusion that workers need their own political party.

Additionally, the separatist parties that contested earlier elections — like Papua Besena and the Mataungan Association — have either been absorbed into other groups or have disappeared.

If anything, this election reflects a hardening of the capitalist nature of PNG politics and parties. But with the promise of worsening economic conditions, illusions in the current leaders will be seriously damaged. In this disillusion lies the future of PNG politics. □

ment, and opposing any moves by Paris to return land to Kanak ownership.

### Land reform

In early June, both French-settler and Kanak representatives had rejected proposals for "land reform" put forward by the Mitterrand government in Paris. The "reform" only involved the setting up of commissions to investigate land claims. The Kanak representatives said it didn't go far enough towards meeting their land claims, while the settlers saw it as a threat to their power and privileges.

The Kanaks regard the return of their land as a central issue of their struggle for independence. They presently retain ownership of less than 20 percent of their former lands. Seventy-five percent of farm land is in the hands of French colonists, and more than half of this is owned by eight French families.

In an interview in the June 20 *New Zealand Times*, the new Independence Front premier, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, explained:

"The achievement of land rights is basic for us — at the municipal and regional levels, and from the point of view of financial transactions. The concept of Kanak independence is based on the land.

"For us the land is not simply an object of commerce — it is above all the basis of our homeland, the foundation on which our aspirations for national independence are built."

New Caledonia's new government has no real powers, however, as the country is presently ruled by decree from Paris. The French



government placed the country under its direct control following widespread demonstrations for Kanak independence after the assassination of Pierre Delcerq nine months ago. Delcerq was the former secretary-general of the Independence Front. To date, the French authorities have refused to bring his suspected assassin, a Frenchman, to trial. And recently, 20,000 French settlers signed a petition demanding the suspect's release from custody.

During the protests that broke out following Delcerq's assassination, Kanaks set up roadblocks and took control of many parts of the country. One region, Canala, a stronghold of Kanak mine workers, remains under Kanak control with roadblocks in force. Pro-independence groups have declared Canala an independent region and set up their own administration there.

The next big event in the struggle for Kanak independence is set for September 24, which marks 129 years of French colonial rule in New Caledonia.

Last year, Kanak independence groups set this date as a deadline for the new Mitterrand government in France to make decisive moves towards granting New Caledonia its independence. Mass demonstrations and celebrations are planned by pro-independence groups throughout the country. □

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# Working-class inventors honored

### *Creativity set free by revolution*

**By Michael Baumann**

MANAGUA — Salvador Rivera is a hero of the Nicaraguan revolution.

He never fought in the war against Somoza.

Forty-one years old, the father of eight children, he says he "never even had the time to take part in the militias."

What he did do was to invent a process that saves Nicaragua \$12,000 a month in scarce foreign currency.

Rivera is one of a growing group of Nicaraguan workers whose creativity has been set free by the revolution.

A 16-year employee of the now state-owned Plywood plant, he is one of a dozen or so "innovators" being honored at a four-day exposition here.

Rivera invented a woodfiller that is used to fill in small imperfections in finished plywood. It replaces a product that used to be imported from the United States at a cost of \$5 a quart.

Rivera's woodfiller is not only considered by his co-workers to be better than the U.S. import. It costs only the equivalent of \$2 a quart to make, a savings of 60 percent.

Actually it saves much more than that.

Because of the U.S. economic squeeze, foreign currency is so scarce in Nicaragua that if the factory had to remain dependent on this one U.S.-made finishing product, it might have had to close, taking with it the jobs of hundreds of Rivera's co-workers.

There are many ways the U.S. government tries to apply pressure against the Nicaraguan revolution. One that does not make the headlines much is that private U.S. banks refuse to grant Nicaragua the loans it needs to buy spare parts and other imports that are essential for production. And because U.S. banks exercise so much influence internationally, Nicaragua has found it impossible to get loans from private banks in other countries as well.

So innovators like Salvador Rivera are genuine heroes on the economic front — saving jobs.

They do not have any special training — just what they have learned on the job over the years.

Pascual Nuñez, 30 years old and an employee of the Ministry of Construction (MICONS), is another of the innovators.

"I have worked on batteries for 10 years," he told *Intercontinental Press*. "Over the years, I learned just about everything there is to know about how to make them."

It is a good thing, too, because batteries for MICONS's heavy construction equipment would cost \$300 apiece if money existed to order them from the United States.

"Now we take the old batteries, reuse the casing and lead lining, and replace the insides

ourselves. We can do it for about 1,800 cordobas (US\$180), a savings of US\$120. And it provides jobs for 20 people to boot.

"We can make about 15 of the big batteries a day, plus about 20 of the small ones. Without them our construction equipment would be standing still."

Herberto Provia, master mechanic at Texnica, Nicaragua's largest textile mill, took a few minutes to explain how workers there keep their 25-year-old power looms running without spare parts from the U.S. and West German manufacturers.

"I am 50 years old," Provia said. "I have worked at Texnica for 20 years. I have never had any technical training in my life. In fact, my education ended with the fifth grade."

Today, however, he is responsible for the work of the maintenance department that keeps Texnica's looms running.

"Before the revolution," he said, "there was no chance to put to use what we had learned

about how to keep the machines running. The bosses wouldn't listen, even if we had wanted to tell them. If a machine broke down, they thought it was easier and cheaper to just order new parts from abroad.

"We cannot do that any more. We do not have the foreign currency.

"We ourselves make every part we need. We try to save whatever we can from the worn-out pieces and manufacture the rest in our own machine shop. It takes 80 people on three shifts to keep these old machines running, but we think we can do it indefinitely.

"And we can do it much cheaper." Even figuring in the cost of the labor, "we save about 40 percent over what we used to pay for imported parts.

"I was not the only one without any technical training," he added. "None of us had any. What we did was go to the oldest workers, those who had been there for 30 or 40 years. With their help and experience, we have been able to make the parts we need.

"Not every plant can do this," he said as he pointed to a display of replacement parts Texnica workers had made.

"Some are too small. We have our own machine shop, lathes, and power tools.

"But this is the direction we have to go in. The shortage of foreign currency leaves us no alternative." □

## Women set up cooperatives

MANAGUA — "We had always worked alone in our houses. It's a good experience to work collectively," Lidice Roiz explained, referring to the fact that she and nine other *compañeras* now own and operate their own sewing cooperative.

Located next door to one of Managua's main shopping centers, Centro Commercial, the cooperative does a brisk business. "And our prices are much more fair — they're for the working woman!" Roiz, who is in charge of the enterprise, points out.

The founding of this cooperative and 14 others like it is one of the achievements of the Association of Nicaraguan Women — Luisa Amanda Espinosa (AMNLAE).

The idea of working cooperatively is very popular here in Nicaragua — and not just among small farmers, who have formed over 2,000 cooperatives since the July 1979 revolution. In addition to sewing cooperatives, AMNLAE activists have established a cooperative for shoemakers, and five cooperatives where vegetables are cultivated.

Through the efforts of AMNLAE, working together with the Ministry of Housing, a boarded-up Somozaist construction company was turned into "Nueva Nicaragua," a spacious sewing cooperative and clothing

store with ample room for displays.

"To get started we made and sold *nacatamales* (a favorite Nicaraguan dish) and raised 5,000 cordobas (10 cordobas = US\$1)," Roiz recalled. "*Compañeras* brought cloth that they had in their homes. We worked without pay for four months."

Today, the women have established a system of prices for each type of garment. Cooperative members are paid based on how much they produce. On the average, an individual member's income has risen 300 cordobas a month above what they used to make working by themselves.

"Conditions are much better for us now," Roiz continued "but it's still hot and we could use a fan.

"Another problem is that the co-op doesn't have money to buy sewing machines so more women can be included. So far, each woman has brought her own machine and she is the owner of it."

Support from AMNLAE was instrumental in getting the operation started on a professional basis. At present, an AMNLAE *compañera* volunteers her bookkeeping services while a cooperative member is taking classes at the Banco Popular (the People's Bank) to learn how to do it herself.

— Jane Harris