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Reagan's 'Peace' Plan: Recipe for New Wars in Middle East



U.S. Marines in West Beirut before their withdrawal. Reagan plan seeks to pave the way for new U.S. and Israeli aggression against the Arab world.

Nicaragua in Washington's Gunsights

**Workers' Protests
Sweep Poland**

***The Fight to Oust
Pol Pot from UN***

Reagan's recipe for new wars in Middle East

By Ernest Harsch

While the rubble of West Beirut is still smoldering and tens of thousands of Israeli troops continue to occupy much of Lebanon, the Reagan administration is preparing to launch a new political offensive in the Middle East.

As outlined by President Reagan in a nationally televised speech September 1, this offensive is being launched in the guise of a new Middle East "peace plan."

Its real aim is to strike further blows against the Arab world, and in particular against the heroic Palestinian people. It is a prescription for new Middle East wars.

The basic thrust of Reagan's proposal is to induce some of the more proimperialist Arab regimes to collaborate with the Zionist state, by concluding formal treaties with it and further betraying the Palestinian liberation struggle — as the Egyptian regime did in the Camp David accords of 1978.

In exchange, Reagan offered a few crumbs to the Palestinians: the establishment of a vaguely defined form of political "autonomy" within the Israeli-occupied West Bank, under the supervision of the Jordanian regime.

The same basic proposals were put forward in the original Camp David accords. But those were only partially successful in attaining the U.S. and Israeli aims. Only the Egyptian regime went along with them.

Now, in the wake of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the withdrawal of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from West Beirut, the U.S. imperialists see a new opening to try to advance this strategy.

Reagan began his speech by cheering the PLO's withdrawal from Beirut and declaring, "The Lebanon war, tragic as it was, has left us with a new opportunity."

Aside from this passing reference to the "tragic" war, Reagan's speech did not have a word about the massive death and destruction imposed on the Lebanese and Palestinian people by the Israeli invasion force. There was not a hint of any criticism of the invasion, nor any call for the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from Lebanon.

One specific element of the "new opportunity" he did raise was the possibility of now setting up a "stable and revived" government in Lebanon — a reference to the new proimperialist and pro-Zionist regime of Bashir Gemayel. Gemayel, who heads the ultrarightist Phalangist militia force, was chosen President August 23 with direct Israeli backing.

Denial of Palestinian rights

The fundamental basis of Reagan's plan is the unambiguous denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

Reagan talked vaguely in his speech of the "yearning of the Palestinian people for a just solution of their claims" and of "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians."

But in White House doublespeak, all this means is his "autonomy" proposal. It does *not* mean the Palestinians' right to self-determination — that is, the right to regain their homeland.

Reagan was quite explicit on this. He demanded that the Palestinian people and the Arab regimes "accept the reality of Israel."

"The state of Israel is an accomplished fact," Reagan asserted, "it deserves unchallenged legitimacy within the community of nations."

As far as the Palestinian and other Arab peoples are concerned, there is nothing legitimate about the racist Zionist state — a state that is based on the expropriation of Palestinian land, the expulsion of much of the Palestinian population, and the discrimination and oppression of those Palestinians still living within its borders.

Reagan made it clear that he was equally opposed to an independent Palestinian state on part of their territory now occupied by Israel.

He insisted that "the United States will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza."

Reagan warned, "make no mistake, the United States will oppose any proposal — from any party and at any point in the negotiating process — that threatens the security of Israel. America's commitment to the security of Israel is ironclad and, I might add, so is mine."

Secretary of State George Shultz reiterated this point five days later when he insisted on "a totally demilitarized area throughout the West Bank" under the "autonomy" arrangement.

Camp David revisited

Besides reaffirming Washington's longstanding backing for the aggressive Zionist state, Reagan's plan has another — closely related — aim: winning closer collaboration with Israel from some of the proimperialist Arab regimes, driving further wedges into the anti-Zionist stand of the Arab world, and undermining support for the PLO and the Palestinian people.

Reagan's call for a "freeze" on new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, his proposals on "autonomy" in the West Bank and Gaza, and his suggestion that these territories may eventually be linked in some way to Jordan, are all designed to draw the Arab regimes into a deal with Israel that betrays the Palestinian liberation struggle.

The foundation of his plan, Reagan pointed out, was the Camp David accords signed by

the Egyptian and Israeli regimes in 1978.

Those accords marked the first formal break in the Arab world's stance of opposition to the Zionist state since the creation of Israel in 1948. Under tremendous pressure from Washington, the Egyptian regime of Anwar el-Sadat agreed to a separate treaty with Israel, accepting the legitimacy of the colonial-settler state and betraying the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world as well.

The Camp David accords failed to block the PLO's growing influence and stature around the world. And Washington was unsuccessful in drawing any other Arab regimes into a similar deal. The outbreak of the Iranian revolution in 1978-79 was a key factor in frustrating U.S. imperialism's plans in the region.

The accords nevertheless constituted an important setback to the anti-imperialist struggle in the Middle East. It enabled the Israeli regime to maximize its military pressure on Syria and the PLO in Lebanon — directly paving the way for the invasion of Lebanon this year. The failure of the Arab regimes to come to the aid of the PLO in Lebanon was likewise one of the payoffs from the accords.

Taking advantage of the "new opportunity" provided by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Reagan now aims to extend this process. In particular, he hopes to draw the Jordanian, Saudi Arabian, and Lebanese regimes into a new Camp David-type deal.

And just as the original Camp David accords paved the way for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the implementation of Reagan's plan would provide new openings for Washington and the Zionists to launch further aggression against the Palestinian liberation struggle and other revolutionary developments in the Arab world.

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, upon arriving in Israel for a visit September 1, indicated as much. He told the Israelis that "the great strength of your armed forces is one of the ways in which peace can be brought to this region."

A tiff among friends

Although the U.S. and Israeli regimes agree on this overall approach, the Israeli cabinet has publicly criticized certain aspects of Reagan's plan, particularly his call for a "freeze" on new Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. On September 5 the regime indicated its determination to push ahead the settlements by allocating money for three new ones in the West Bank and approving plans for seven more.

There are some tactical differences between Washington and the Israeli regime on this question. A temporary halt in the settlement program would make it easier for Washington to entice the Jordanian or Saudi Arabian regimes into a deal with Israel — and politically easier for them to accept.

A statement issued by the White House in reaction to the Israeli government's announcement of the new settlements complained, "We cannot understand why at a time when broader participation in the peace process is both criti-

cal and possible Israel has elected to extend a pattern of activity which erodes the confidence of all."

But the Israeli authorities know from experience that Washington's supposed opposition to the settlements is largely for show. Eliahu Ben-Elissar, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), pointed out in a September 1 speech, "We were asked during Camp David to agree not to create any settlements anymore, and we did not accept that request. Egypt signed Camp David and the United States signed the Camp David accord knowing very well that we would continue to create settlements."

The proof of Washington's firm support to the Israeli regime is its continued — and massive — financial and military assistance, aid that the White House has made clear it has no intention of curtailing.

'Working together'

According to the August 24 *Miami Herald*, the Reagan administration has supplied the Begin regime with millions of dollars worth of arms since the beginning of the invasion of Lebanon on June 6. Citing Pentagon and State Department sources, the *Herald* reported that this included tanks, artillery, ammunition, antitank missiles, and armored personnel carriers.

In a second article the following day, the *Herald* reported that the Israeli regime has been receiving far more U.S. military and economic assistance than is generally known, according to a preliminary report by the government's General Accounting Office.

Total U.S. aid since 1974 has been \$22.5 billion, according to the report, compared to the figure of \$14.1 billion that is normally used by the Pentagon and State Department.

This kind of concrete backing to the Zionist state enabled Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to declare in an interview in the August 29 *New York Times* that Reagan is "a wonderful friend of the State of Israel."

Begin then added, "I don't have any recrimination. Sometimes there were differences, sometimes there were misunderstandings. But all in all we worked together."

Defense Minister Ariel Sharon — the chief planner and director of the Israeli invasion — made a similar point in an interview in the *Washington Post* that same day. The occupants of the White House, he said, "share our programs, they agree on everything."

Sharon provided a concrete example of this — Washington's full knowledge of the Israeli regime's plans to invade Lebanon. He said that "since last September [1981], I have been discussing with them the possibility that the operation would take place. I discussed it various times with Alexander Haig when he came to the Middle East; I discussed it with [Defense Secretary Caspar] Weinberger when I went to Washington last November; I discussed it repeatedly with Ambassador [Philip] Habib. . . . I never kept secrets from them; I

never made mysteries."

Although Sharon claimed that Washington was privately reluctant to go ahead with the invasion, its refusal to speak out publicly against it and its continued massive arms shipments to Israel provided the Zionists with sufficient encouragement to proceed.

U.S. troops

Riding in the wake of this Israeli invasion, Washington has also now succeeded in directly introducing U.S. troops into Lebanon.

The Reagan administration claims that the 800 U.S. Marines in Lebanon were a "peace-keeping" force. In fact, their purpose was to advance Washington's political aims in

Lebanon and the region. Their presence was intended to strengthen the Israeli position in Lebanon and to help consolidate Gemayel's ultrarightist regime.

The sending of the U.S. troops to Lebanon is also an ominous precedent that Reagan will seek to repeat on a larger scale in the future. His Middle East "peace" proposal is a cover for Washington's own stepped-up military intervention in the region.

One thing Reagan's plan will not do, however, is bring peace to the Middle East. It cannot stifle the aspirations of the Palestinian people, nor prevent working people throughout the region from seeking to throw off the yoke of imperialist domination. □

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Israelis open 'Phase 2' of invasion

Gemayel threatens masses with 'iron fist'

By Ernest Harsch

The war in Lebanon is far from over.

The country remains occupied by tens of thousands of Israeli troops, who control large areas and are poised for new attacks against the Lebanese and Palestinian people.

Following the withdrawal of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from West Beirut, the Zionists are now seeking to expel those Palestinian fighters who are still in other parts of the country, as well as to push out the thousands of Syrian troops based in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. They are likewise trying to ensure the consolidation of the new ultrarightist regime of Bashir Gemayel; that can only mean further attacks on Lebanon's working people.

The Israeli regime calls this "Phase 2" of its invasion.

'Syria's turn'

The largest number of Israeli troops in Lebanon — some 35,000 or so — are now positioned in and around the Bekaa Valley, at some points only 200 yards from the Syrians. The valley is of strategic importance to the defense of Syria from any attack launched from Lebanon. In addition to the Syrian forces stationed there, an estimated 10,000 PLO fighters are in the Bekaa.

In the early days of the invasion, Israeli jets bombed large numbers of Syrian anti-aircraft positions in the valley and engaged in large-

scale air battles with the Syrians. Since the beginning of the PLO's withdrawal from West Beirut, the Israeli regime has repeatedly warned that its artillery is within shelling distance of the Syrian capital, Damascus, just 15 miles from the closest Israeli positions.

On August 31, the Israelis shot down a Syrian photo reconnaissance jet over Beirut. Over the next two weeks, there were several clashes between Israeli and Syrian troops, and Israeli jets again bombed Syrian anti-aircraft positions in the Bekaa Valley.

An editorial in the September 1 *Jerusalem Post* summed up the Israeli regime's general approach, "And Now, Syria's Turn."

Threats against West Beirut

Although West Beirut is no longer being pounded by daily Israeli bombing raids, its population of half a million Lebanese and Palestinians is still being subjected to constant threats and pressures, from both the Israelis and Gemayel's forces.

On August 29, Israeli Chief of Staff Rafael Eytan, in an interview over the Israeli army radio, raised the demand that members of the Mourabitoun leave West Beirut.

The Mourabitoun, a Nasserist current, is one of the largest of the various Muslim and leftist organizations that are allied within the Lebanese National Movement and that fought alongside the PLO during the siege of West Beirut. Like other militia forces in the city, the Mourabitoun has refused to give up its arms, for fear that Gemayel and his Phalangist gangs will launch new massacres of Palestinians and Muslims, as they did during the 1975-76 civil war.

In early September, Israeli units actually pushed into West Beirut, before being stopped by some of the Muslim militia members. On September 6, Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon visited the new Israeli positions in the city and explicitly warned that his forces would invade West Beirut if the militia members did not withdraw. As a justification for this threat, he charged that 1,000 Lebanese "terrorists" were in West Beirut, as well as 2,000 PLO fighters who had not withdrawn with the others.

The next day, the Israeli troops pulled back. But the incursion had served its purpose: reminding the city's population that they are still surrounded by large numbers of Israeli troops, tanks, and artillery.

Deprived of the PLO's direct military support and under this constant Israeli pressure, the Mourabitoun and the Lebanese National Movement have agreed to withdraw their

militia forces from the streets of West Beirut and to turn over a few buildings to the Lebanese government's security forces. They remain in the city, however, ready to defend it from attack.

Mourabitoun leader Ibrahim Koleilat has said that his forces will not lay down their arms "as long as there is a single Israeli soldier on Lebanese soil."

The Lebanese National Movement as a whole issued a statement declaring that its member-groups needed their weapons "for the struggle to end Israeli occupation here."

'Dictatorship will be necessary'

The danger to West Beirut is real.

On September 23, Gemayel is formally inaugurated as president. In a September 7 dispatch from Beirut, *Washington Post* correspondent Loren Jenkins reported that, according to "close advisers to Gemayel," one of his first acts will be to order the Lebanese army to take full control of West Beirut. The army, which is officered primarily by Christians, has openly collaborated with Gemayel's Phalangist gangs in the past.

On September 12, army troops fought a

The human toll

At least 17,825 people were killed and 30,203 wounded during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, according to a detailed survey of police and hospital records conducted by the Beirut newspaper *An Nahar*.

An Nahar, which is one of the most reputable newspapers in the Arab world, said in its September 2 edition that the highest number of casualties were in southern Lebanon, where at least 7,571 were killed. Another 5,515 were killed in Beirut and its suburbs. The newspaper's figures, which covered the period from June 4 until the end of August, included Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian casualties, but not Israeli.

An Nahar noted that its figures were likely to be lower than the actual toll of deaths and injuries, since they did not include the countless bodies still buried in bombed buildings or wounded people who were not hospitalized.

Washington rally hits U.S.-Israeli aggression

Nearly 3,500 people marched through the streets of Washington, D.C., on September 11 in opposition to the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon and in support of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Among those addressing the rally were Danny Yarnit of the Israeli Committee Against the War in Lebanon, Rev. Ben Chavis of the National Black Independent Political Party, Dr. Hatem Hussein of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Arnaldo Ramos of El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR).

Ramos noted that Reagan's dispatch of U.S. "peacekeeping" troops to Beirut was the first step toward building public acceptance for sending U.S. troops to Honduras to menace the Salvadoran revolution and Nicaragua.

At the rally, plans were announced for a national demonstration for Palestinian rights in New York on the weekend of November 26-28, when leaders of the PLO are expected to be in the city to address the United Nations.

series of gun battles in West Beirut with members of the Partisans of the Revolution, one of the predominantly Sunni Muslim militias. An army spokesman declared that the army would restore order with an "iron fist."

An assistant to Gemayel, in an interview with the Israeli army magazine *Bamahaneh*, has given another indication of what the new government has in mind for Lebanon's working people. He said that "a five year dictatorship period in Lebanon will be necessary in order to clean up all the dirt, and convert the country into a paradise."

Gemayel has made little secret of the pro-imperialist course he intends to follow once his government is fully in place. Although the 800 U.S. Marines who had been dispatched to Beirut left the country on September 10, other U.S. military personnel may soon take their place.

According to Jenkins, Gemayel's advisers said that the government plans a rapid buildup of a strong "army of war and defense," numbering up to 100,000 troops by 1984.

"Gemayel's advisers," Jenkins continued, "said they hope the U.S. government will provide the aid, in money as well as arms, to shape this modern force."

"According to these sources, the question of U.S. aid was raised by Gemayel last week in a meeting with visiting U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger who promised that all of his requests would be given 'serious consideration.'"

A report from Washington in the same day's issue of the *Washington Post* noted that the Pentagon has already set up a team of weapons specialists to fly to Lebanon.

"Just as he did with Saudi Arabia," *Post* correspondent George Wilson commented, "Weinberger is expected to try to formalize joint military planning with Lebanon. The idea is to go beyond what weapons should be bought and how the purchases should be financed to a broad effort to coordinate U.S.-Lebanese military actions designed to defend interests in the Middle East."

While Washington is strengthening its own ties with Gemayel, the Israeli army is preparing for an extended occupation of southern Lebanon.

At the same time, the Zionists have expressed a little annoyance with Gemayel for not moving as quickly as they would like toward cementing formal ties with Israel.

"If a future Lebanese government signs a peace treaty with Israel," Sharon said September 6, "Lebanon will certainly be united territorially."

He then pointedly warned, "But if there is a government in Lebanon that for any reason does not sign a treaty, then there will certainly be a special status in southern Lebanon along the 40-kilometer security strip that Israel needs."

A more explicit threat of partition could hardly have been made.

Another Israeli official said the next day that

even if a treaty is signed, "there will always be a need for a special arrangement for southern Lebanon."

Israeli administrators have already been sent into southern Lebanon and Israeli banks and businesses opened there. Journalists have reported sighting trucks with prefabricated houses for Israeli soldiers to live in during the

winter months.

A prolonged Israeli occupation, however, may meet renewed Lebanese resistance.

Nabih Berri, the head of the Amal, the Shi'ite Muslim militia, said at a rally in Beirut August 31 that if the Israelis did not leave, "we would become the new Palestinians who will fight them." □

Nicaragua

Terrorists hit road project

By Michael Baumann

NORTHERN ZELAYA PROVINCE, Nicaragua — A small wooden cross marks the spot where Donald Espinoza was gunned down.

Bits of his incinerated clothing can still be seen on the ground near the dynamited rubble that was once a rural health clinic.

A day after the attack, a piece of earth-moving equipment still smolders.

Espinoza, a member of the Sandinista Defense Committee and an employee of the Ministry of Construction Heavy Equipment Depot near the remote village of Rio Iyás, is the most recent victim of U.S. imperialism's undeclared war against Nicaragua.

Espinoza was murdered just after midnight on August 30 as he tried to sound the alarm siren. Seventy counterrevolutionaries, part of the army Washington is using to turn this area into a battlefield against the Nicaraguan revolution, had entered the depot with powerful explosives.

Their aim was to blow up road construction equipment being used to build what will be the first road connecting Nicaragua's Pacific and Atlantic coasts.

After killing Espinoza, the counterrevolutionaries went about their work with ruthless efficiency.

More than 30 heavy construction vehicles were destroyed with charges of M-60 plastic explosives — a type known to be supplied by the CIA.

Bits and pieces of engine parts lay everywhere — scattered amidst the blackened hulks of tractors, front-end loaders, bulldozers, dump trucks, and fuel vehicles. The explosions that destroyed them were so powerful that they were heard in Waslala, 30 kilometers away.

Initial estimates of the damage were set at \$1.2 million in road equipment and tens of thousands of dollars for the clinic and medical supplies.

Had it not been for the vigilance of the dozen militia members guarding the only bridge across the Iyás River, the destruction would have been even greater. The counterrevolutionaries tried to blow it up too, but were driven back by *milicianos* guarding the 200-foot structure.

Following the attack, the counter-

revolutionaries headed back toward the Honduran border, 80 kilometers to the north. There 5,000 ex-members of ousted dictator Anastasio Somoza's National Guard, mercenaries, and other opponents of the Nicaraguan revolution are based in 17 camps where they are armed, trained, and paid by the U.S. government.

A mammoth engineering and construction project was Washington's target here. It is the 420-kilometer road being built from Matagalpa in the west all the way across the interior to Puerto Cabezas on the Atlantic Coast, at a cost of millions of dollars.

The revolutionary Sandinista government has made establishing this first overland link with the Atlantic Coast a high priority. With the aid of Cuban engineers and Soviet material assistance, an all-weather road has already been cut through half of the rugged terrain separating the two halves of Nicaragua. Plans were to complete it by December.

"The destruction of this equipment may slow us down, particularly in maintenance, but it won't stop the project," regional government official Wilfredo Barreto told *Intercontinental Press*.

"It may take a few months longer, but we'll finish it."

The clinic will be the loss most immediately felt by the peasants of this isolated region. Prior to the blast it provided free medical care to 15,000 people, more than half of them children.

"On average, a doctor and medical assistant here treated over 100 people a day," regional health director Clarence Silva said as he pointed to a heap of twisted tin, all that remained of the clinic.

"This is a very poor area. Under Somoza no medical care whatsoever was available. Today 95 percent of the patients come on foot or on horseback, on trips ranging from six hours to two days," Silva continued.

"Now, until we can rebuild the clinic, they will have to go 30 kilometers further to Waslala for medical care."

The first road to connect some of the most isolated villages in Central America. A clinic serving thousands of patients who never before saw a doctor.

For U.S. imperialism these are merely two more targets in its ongoing secret war to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution. □

Nicaragua in Reagan's gunsights

Sandinistas warn of invasion threat from Honduras

By José G. Pérez

After months of almost total suppression of all hard news on the conflicts raging in Central America, the U.S. capitalist media have recently published a spate of reports indicating that the Reagan administration intends to provoke a war between Honduras and Nicaragua.

Such a war would qualitatively deepen direct U.S. military intervention in the region. This would represent a deadly threat not only to Nicaragua, but to the Salvadoran and Guatemalan freedom struggles and to Cuba, which Washington has repeatedly cited as the "source" of all its problems in the region.

Among the most ominous indications of the Reagan administration's drive toward a broader war in Central America are comments made by an anonymous "senior State Department official" at a press briefing at the end of August.

According to Don Oberdorfer of the *Washington Post*, "the senior State Department official . . . said there is a belief among its neighbors that Nicaragua, as presently constituted, may be incompatible with the rest of Central America. This basic question will have to be faced in the future, he said."

'War is a real possibility'

Since taking power through a popular revolution against U.S.-backed dictator Anastasio Somoza three years ago, the revolutionary government headed by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) of Nicaragua has faced increasingly open hostility from Washington.

At the center of Washington's concern is the deepening revolutionary process within Nicaragua. The drive by the FSLN-led government to consolidate the political, economic, and social gains of the toilers has been met by mounting opposition, sabotage, and armed resistance by the Nicaraguan capitalists and their international allies.

In an interview in the August 29 *New York Times*, Daniel Ortega, Nicaragua's head of government, warned of the danger of a U.S.-provoked war between Nicaragua and Honduras.

"We are expecting an air attack and an attack by land" from Honduras, Ortega said. "To the extent that there exists in the United States Government the desire to provoke this war, it becomes practically impossible to avoid it."

On August 28, Commander Hugo Torres, a top officer of the Sandinista People's Army, told a meeting of 1,000 professionals and technicians in Nicaragua that "we are experiencing the first phase of an aggression."

He explained that, since the beginning of the year, there had been 38 counterrevolutionary infiltrations from Honduras, 36 attacks on border posts, 5 violations of Nicaragua's territorial waters by U.S. warships, and 75 violations of Nicaragua's airspace, including 29 by U.S. spy planes.

"From all this, you can only conclude that war is once again a real possibility in Central America. . . . The possibility exists that in the next few months we may see aggression of greater magnitude, with the participation of regular armies, including U.S. Marines."

He also reported that there are at least 17 different counterrevolutionary camps in Honduras "financed by the U.S. government."

Ortega's and Torres's charges were immediately confirmed by an unexpected source — one of the top-ranking officers of the Honduran army.

Col. Leonidas Torres Arias, who served as head of Honduran military intelligence from 1976 until January of this year, revealed at an August 31 news conference in Mexico City that military strongman Gen. Gustavo Álvarez Martínez was planning an "adventure of madness."

Torres Arias and another top member of the military hierarchy were sent into diplomatic exile in May of this year, reportedly because of their disagreement with the course toward full-scale war with Nicaragua.

A key element in Torres Arias's opposition to a war with Nicaragua is his judgment that "we have neither the economic nor military capability to impose a military decision on another state."

U.S. buildup in Honduras

But General Álvarez understands that too. Beginning last April, top officials of the Honduran government, including Álvarez, have repeatedly stated that the regime would "welcome U.S. intervention in Central America."

U.S. aid is rapidly building up Honduran military capabilities.

The country's air force — already by far the strongest in Central America — has been expanded further. It is qualitatively superior to Nicaragua's. According to *Washington Post* columnist Mary McGrory, Honduras has 39 combat-ready planes to Nicaragua's 7. Other reports put total Honduran strength at 47 or more aircraft. In mid-August, the U.S. Congress approved \$21 million for three Honduran airfields, including a major new base 25 miles from the border with Nicaragua. The United States is also upgrading the military airfield on San Andrés, a Caribbean island claimed by

Colombia that is just 120 miles from Nicaragua's eastern coast.

Honduras is also building two new naval bases.

There are some 100 U.S. military advisers officially in Honduras — double the number in El Salvador. In addition, the U.S. embassy in Honduras has been rapidly expanded and Washington has some 210 Peace Corps "volunteers" in the country — the fourth-largest such contingent in any country in the world.

According to the just-published pamphlet *Inside Honduras: Regional Counterinsurgency Base* by Philip Wheaton, high-ranking dissidents within the Honduran military estimate the total number of U.S. servicemen in Honduras to be as high as 900.

The purpose of this military buildup is no secret. Referring to an appropriation for military aid to Honduras, Rep. Thomas Harkin told Congress on August 11: "Let us not have any illusions about what this \$21 million is for. It is for pushing the Honduran military, with our active assistance, into a regional war."

Leaders of the Salvadoran liberation forces are also sounding the alarm against U.S.-sponsored escalation. "The regionalization of the war in Central America is under way," said a mid-August statement by the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

"U.S. imperialism's decision to intervene directly and massively in the area was made long ago. The technical, logistical, and personnel preparations for war are almost complete. The necessary political conditions do not yet exist to a sufficient degree, but the Reagan administration is working at an accelerated pace to create them. . . .

"The imperialist aggression is at the door."

Targeting Nicaraguan revolution

This mounting danger of U.S. intervention is Washington's response to the deepening revolutionary process in Nicaragua. The past few months have seen an acceleration of class polarization and conflict in that country.

Underlying this clash is the dynamic toward the further consolidation of the revolution in Nicaragua through the creation of a workers state based on the nationalization of all major enterprises and the establishment of a planned economy.

This would be a major blow to international imperialism, definitively removing Nicaragua from the sphere of direct capitalist exploitation. The imperialists know that once this process is completed, it becomes qualitatively harder to bring the country back under foreign

domination. In fact, they have never succeeded in overthrowing a socialist revolution once the capitalists have been expropriated.

Consolidating the socialist revolution in Nicaragua would also further fuel the revolutionary upsurge throughout Central America. It would serve as an additional inspiration and example to the Salvadoran and Guatemalan fighters, shifting the balance of forces against the U.S.-backed regimes in those countries.

For these reasons, Washington has embarked on an all-out drive to topple the Nicaraguan revolutionary government, as a central part of its war to defeat the regional revolutionary wave.

In July 1979, after a bloody civil war, the Nicaraguan people overthrew the hated Somoza dictatorship, replacing it with a new government controlled by the FSLN, the political representatives of Nicaragua's workers and farmers.

This government immediately launched far-reaching reforms, including nationalization of the banks, a radical agrarian reform, confiscation of the ill-gotten properties of Somoza and his henchmen, and massive public health and education campaigns.

Although concerned by the revolutionary overthrow of Somoza and the radical measures of the new government, many Nicaraguan capitalists at first did not openly oppose it. They had also wanted Somoza's ouster and hoped the revolutionary flood would soon recede and business as usual could be resumed.

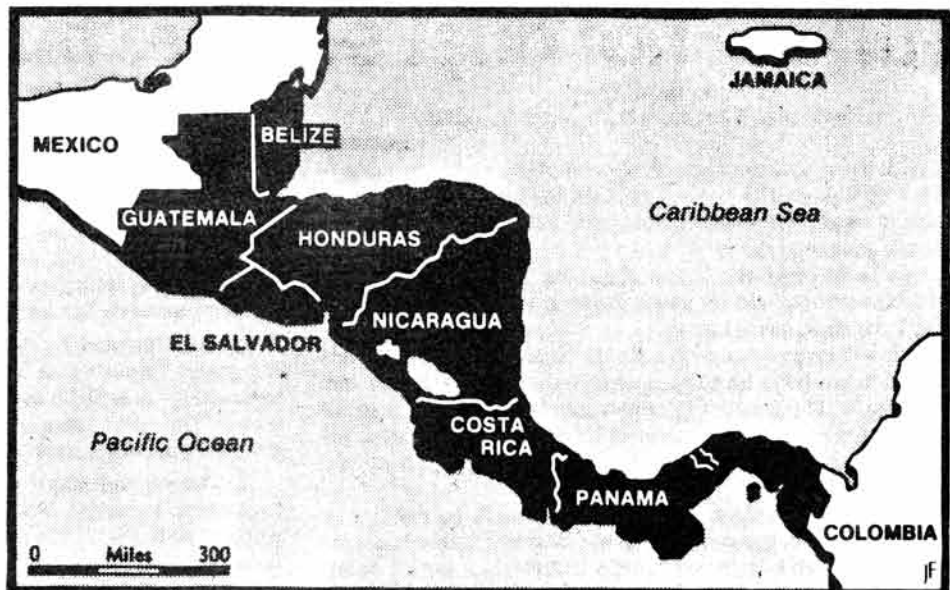
In line with this projection, several representatives of the capitalists took posts in the new government, including millionaire industrialist Alfonso Robelo and newspaper heiress Violeta Chamorro, who became part of the five-member Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction, the top government body.

The capitalists hoped to use their governmental positions to slow down the revolution's advance and recapture control once it ran out of steam.

Class polarization

But that is not the way things turned out. Real political power was exercised by the workers and peasants, not the capitalists. The FSLN used its governmental hegemony and tremendous moral authority to extend the revolution. It consciously promoted and led the organization of Nicaragua's toilers into new, fighting mass organizations — the block-by-block Sandinista Defense Committees, a popular militia, a national women's organization, a militant and democratic trade union federation, and an association of small farmers and ranchers.

Over time, the capitalist elements left the new government and went into open, and increasingly hostile, opposition. Robelo reactivated his Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN) and turned it against the revolution. *La Prensa*, the Chamorro family's newspaper, became a stridently anti-FSLN organ. The U.S. government accentuated its hostility towards



the revolution, cutting off promised aid and loans and giving money instead to the counter-revolutionary bands of Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen operating from Honduras.

The workers and farmers have effectively used their fighting mass organizations and control of the government to defend their rights and living standards and to take big steps toward transforming society in their own interests.

The capitalists have responded by using every trick in the book to make a quick profit, usually with the idea of sending the money out of the country, decapitalizing the economy.

These growing social tensions in Nicaragua are a reflection of the fact that, while they have conquered political power, the workers of Nicaragua do not yet have full control over the economy. Large sections of industry and agriculture remain in the hands of private capitalists and landowners.

As the capitalists have gone more and more openly toward counterrevolution, the majority of Nicaraguans are becoming convinced that, sooner or later, there will have to be a complete transformation of the nation's economy to eliminate capitalism.

'We are fighting for socialism'

In preparation for this year's May Day celebrations, the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) launched the slogan "Defend the revolution — for the building of socialism!" Together with this, a nationwide discussion among working people took place that drew the lessons of the three years since the revolutionary victory.

Lucio Jiménez, CST general secretary, explained in an interview printed in the FSLN daily *Barricada* in April:

We, the toilers, workers, peasants, and most progressive sectors of society, under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, have taken power in order to make substantial changes and rad-

ically transform the country's economic and social structure. For we are convinced that only a transformation of this type will enable us to meet the most deeply felt needs of the workers.

This is the way we defend the conquests the revolution has already made. We are not prepared to return the land, the factories, and the banks, nor are we prepared to see the agrarian reform law disappear. We are fighting to hold onto these things, but also for a future in which the exploitation of man by man will be done away with forever, a future in which the workers and the entire people will be the rightful owners of the product of their labor and sweat. In other words, we are fighting for a socialist future.

Capitalist counterrevolution

The deepening of the revolutionary process reflected by this discussion brought an immediate and unambiguous response from the representatives of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie.

On April 15, ex-Sandinista Edén Pastora, who had left Nicaragua and dropped out of sight the year before, held a news conference in Costa Rica. He denounced the FSLN and the course charted by the revolutionary government and promised to overthrow it by force of arms. MDN leader and former junta member Alfonso Robelo left Nicaragua shortly thereafter, to join Pastora in exile.

Beginning in May, there was a sharp escalation of attacks by Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen from the border with Honduras. These attacks had been a constant threat since the victory of the revolution, and had become a major problem by the end of 1981, when the Reagan administration implemented a not-so-secret CIA plan to destabilize and overthrow the Nicaraguan revolutionary government.

By July 1982, however, the attacks became so serious that the Nicaraguan leaders described them as "a silent, but bloody invasion." A *Washington Post* columnist described the situation as "a slow-motion Bay of Pigs."

In addition, two air raids were carried out against strategic Nicaraguan economic

facilities from Honduras in July.

Within Nicaragua itself, the clashes between revolutionary and reactionary forces have become very sharp.

Due to the discredit of their traditional parties, leaders, and news media, the capitalists have increasingly tried to use the Catholic church hierarchy as the cat's paw of the counterrevolution.

A number of church functionaries, headed by Managua Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo, have especially targeted members of the clergy who support the revolution, ordering them to abandon their parishes and staging other provocations.

The purpose of this is to portray the *class* struggle between the exploiters and toilers taking place in Nicaragua as a struggle over freedom of religion.

This forms part of the ideological battle under way in Nicaragua, as the exploiters and Washington seek to divide and confuse the masses and thereby weaken the revolution.

Provocation by church hierarchy

The provocations by the Catholic church hierarchy culminated on August 16, when street fighting erupted in a major Nicaraguan city for the first time since the 1979 revolution.

Counterrevolutionary middle-class and bourgeois youth led by some members of the Catholic clergy occupied a church-run school in the city of Masaya. They opened fire without provocation on a peaceful demonstration by prorevolution Catholics. The counterrevolutionaries murdered two demonstrators and wounded several others. Eventually, enough government forces arrived to enter the school and take into custody all those inside.

This event has been portrayed by the big-business press as a popular rebellion by the religious people of Masaya against "atheistic Sandino-Communism."

Nevertheless, it is easy enough to confirm that what is involved is a class struggle that finds reflection *within the church*, not a government campaign to suppress religion. One need merely note that the Nicaraguan cabinet includes several persons who also happen to be Catholic priests, including Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto Brockman.

The Masaya incident was obviously a planned probe by counterrevolutionary forces within the country and an indication of how desperate they have become as they seek to prevent the consolidation of the revolution.

The incident is especially ominous because the "senior State Department official" who briefed reporters at the end of August cited it as an indication that there is mounting rebellion in Nicaragua against the revolutionary government. "While saying that he is not predicting that the Nicaraguan government will be overthrown, the official said that the level of opposition to that government may not be very different from that in nearby El Salvador, where a bloody civil war has been raging for years," the *Washington Post's* Oberdorfer reported.

In 1961, the myth of massive domestic op-

position to the Cuban revolutionary government was precisely the pretext most used by the Kennedy administration to justify the CIA's Bay of Pigs invasion. The purpose of such lies is the same today: to confuse working people in the United States and around the world who correctly believe the Nicaraguan people have a right to whatever government they desire.

Region-wide revolutionary upsurge

The importance to the U.S. rulers of overthrowing the Nicaraguan revolution is magnified because it forms an integral part of a chain of revolutionary upsurges shaking the Central America and Caribbean regions — none of which imperialism has been able to push back.

- In El Salvador, despite massive amounts of military aid, the government has not been able to deal a major defeat to the forces of the FMLN. In the 12 months ending June 30 — by the regime's own admission — government troops had 3,801 casualties, including 1,073 killed and 144 missing in action. The number of casualties is more than 20 percent of the Salvadoran armed forces. In the 12 months of 1981, the Salvadoran government troops had 801 dead.

- In Guatemala, Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt has escalated the regime's war against Indian peasants since assuming power through a military coup last March. Between March 23 — when he took power — and the end of June, some 3,500 Indians in 90 villages were massacred.

Nevertheless, the Reagan administration is pushing for open resumption of direct military aid to the Guatemalan government (right now such aid is funneled through Israel), because the government has still not been able to stop the growth of the revolutionary movement. According to "U.S. sources" cited by Don Oberdorfer in the August 15 *Washington Post*, the revolutionary forces now have "about 3,500 full-time combatants."

- In Grenada, the workers and farmers government that came to power in 1979 has staunchly resisted U.S. blackmail, despite the small size and population of this Black, English-speaking Caribbean nation. Working people have made important gains there, including the construction of a popular militia and various mass organizations.

- Cuba remains a central obstacle to Washington's plans for direct intervention in the region. Reagan knows he cannot assume that the Cubans will stand idly by if an outside invasion threatens to overthrow the Nicaraguan revolution. The Cubans have not only made this clear through their words; in Angola and Ethiopia they have shown their capacity to render effective military assistance.

Moreover, Cuba remains a source of inspiration and example to all the peoples of Latin America. It shows what can be achieved in the fields of health, education, and economic development through the establishment of a government that represents the workers and peas-

ants and the abolition of capitalism. At a time when unemployment and human misery are rising throughout Latin America as a result of the world crisis of the capitalist economic system, the attraction of this example will grow.

For these reasons, Cuba is also a central target of Washington's military pressures and threats.

Toward a new Vietnam

In recent weeks, there have been new threats against Cuba. The most outspoken of these was the Symms resolution, supported by the administration and ratified by both the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives and Republican-controlled Senate. It states:

"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 threat of force its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere."

Sen. Charles Percy, the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called the resolution "a blank check" for the administration, and said it "may be considered a Gulf of Tonkin resolution for Cuba," recalling the 1964 congressional action that was used by President Lyndon Johnson as legal authorization to escalate the war against the people of Vietnam.

Senator Percy's reminder is more apt than he may care to admit. For the truth is that the United States today is already involved in a new Vietnam in Central America — just as it was already deeply involved in Southeast Asia in 1964 — and for the same reasons.

Successful revolutions by the toilers of semicolonial countries that put workers and peasants governments in power represent a deadly threat to the property and profits of the tiny clique of bankers and big businessmen whose interests dictate U.S. government policy. The imperialists are intervening and will continue to do so "by whatever means may be necessary" — in the words of the Symms resolution — because their most vital interests are at stake.

It is the working people of the United States who are paying with their tax dollars, and who will pay with their blood, for the war the U.S. government is waging against the workers and farmers in Central America and the Caribbean.

What is needed is an educational campaign of meetings, forums, and public protests to get out the truth about what the U.S. government is doing and what the stakes are for working people in the United States and in Central America. □

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Workers hit streets for Solidarity

Union-called protests sweep 54 cities

By Ernest Harsch

Defying government threats and massive displays of police might, tens of thousands of people turned out in cities throughout Poland August 31 for demonstrations of support for the Solidarity union movement.

These marches, rallies, and demonstrations were the largest such actions since December, shortly after Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law and outlawed Solidarity's activities. The government itself admitted that protests were held in 54 cities, located in 34 of Poland's 49 provinces.

The turnout — particularly in face of the government's repeated threats to crush the demonstrations with force — showed Solidarity's continued massive support among working people.

The date of August 31 had been chosen for the demonstrations to mark the second anniversary of the end of the 1980 Lenin Shipyard strike in Gdansk, which led to the formation of Solidarity.

Workers gunned down

When the underground Solidarity leaders called the actions, they stressed that they should be "mass, peaceful demonstrations."

But despite the peaceful character of the actions, the government moved to break them up with force. In cities around the country, the riot police — known as the ZOMO — attacked with tear gas, water cannon, clubs, and, in a few cases, guns. Five workers were killed, four of them by police gunfire.

In Warsaw, the capital, thousands of people rallied at several different sites, despite the presence of large numbers of ZOMO, water cannon, and armored vehicles. When a crowd of several thousand in front of the Palace of Culture and Science in central Warsaw began shouting "Solidarity!" and "We want Lech!" — a reference to the union's imprisoned national chairperson, Lech Walesa — the ZOMO started to fire hundreds of tear-gas canisters and sprayed the crowd with high-powered water cannon.

One of the largest demonstrations took place in Wroclaw, a city in southwestern Poland where Solidarity has a particularly well-organized network of clandestine committees.

A crowd of up to 20,000 rallied in the downtown area. As elsewhere, the riot police attacked, and elite paratroop regiments were flown in to help them put down the demonstration. Police opened fire into the crowd, killing a 27-year-old worker. Extensive street clashes followed and the authorities imposed a curfew on the city.

Forty miles northwest of Wroclaw, in the copper-mining town of Lubin, police also opened fire. According to residents of the town, several thousand people gathered in a central square and sang the Polish national anthem. The police tried to break up the rally by firing blanks. When the protesters realized that blanks were being used, they began to laugh and hoot. Then the police opened up with real bullets, from a distance of 20 to 25 meters.

Two people were killed on the spot, a 17-year-old woman and an 18-year-old man. Several days later a third person, a 28-year-old miner, died of his wounds. About a dozen others were wounded.

Angered by the killings, residents of Lubin continued their demonstrations for several days, shouting out to the police, "Gestapo! Gestapo!" and "Murderers!"

In the industrial suburb of Nowa Huta, near Krakow in the south, several thousand workers from the giant steelworks there marched toward the town center. They were attacked by the ZOMO, leading to street clashes. Fighting was also reported in Krakow itself.

'The military with us!'

The commemoration of August 31 in Gdansk began just outside the giant Lenin Shipyard, which has become a symbol of the Polish workers movement because of the 1980 strike there.

Workers leaving the shipyard after the 2:00 p.m. shift change rallied at a large monument to workers killed there during strikes in 1970. Delegations from various departments in the shipyard brought wreaths to put at a cross of flowers arranged above a "V-for-victory" symbol. The crowd grew to thousands, as union supporters came to the monument. Solidarity activists gave speeches.

"As you see, we are celebrating this anniversary peacefully, without bloodshed," one young worker told the crowd.

After an hour, when the crowd began to thin, the ZOMO attacked. Running street clashes then followed in many parts of the city, including the Old Town and the working-class residential areas to the north. Barricades were erected across roadways.

At one point during the night, seven army trucks with soldiers accompanied by a bulldozer pulled up to a barricade in the northern section of the city. The young men and women clustered around the barricade chanted, "The military with us! The military with us!" The trucks then turned around, leaving the barricade untouched, while one soldier flashed a "V" sign at the protesters. The crowd started

singing the national anthem.

Fifteen minutes later a large contingent of ZOMO arrived. With tear gas and concussion grenades, they cleared the avenue.

The next day, the body of a 22-year-old worker who had been beaten to death was found near the site of one of the demonstrations in Gdansk.

'Solidarity lives'

The August 31 demonstrations were called by the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK) of Solidarity, which is composed of five key union representatives from different parts of the country. Since its formation in April, the TKK has been functioning as a provisional national leadership for the union, providing some direction to the activities of the hundreds of individual Solidarity committees that exist in factories and neighborhoods throughout Poland.

Following a moratorium on strikes and demonstrations in July, the TKK on July 28 issued its call for the August 31 actions. This was necessary, the TKK said, because the government had refused to respond to Solidarity's gesture of goodwill by moving to lift martial law and release all the imprisoned union leaders and activists.

"From August 16 to August 31," the TKK declared, "the presence of our union will be especially visible. We appeal for stepped-up poster and leafletting actions. We call on union bodies to organize peaceful street demonstrations on August 31 under the slogans: allow Solidarity to resume its activities; free those who have been interned, arrested, and sentenced to prison; conclude a national agreement."

A subsequent declaration by the Regional Executive Committee in the Warsaw area stressed, "Each of us has to demonstrate that Solidarity lives, functions, and continues to fight."

Government threats

The government — which has been proclaiming the demise of Solidarity ever since the imposition of martial law — took fright at this call for demonstrations. It did not want the union to be able to publicly display its continued mass support among working people.

The authorities launched a major campaign of threats and intimidation, to try to prevent people from turning out. Large numbers of riot police were mobilized in a show of force. They attacked several of the local demonstrations that were held in the weeks preceding August 31.

On August 25 in a nationally televised

speech, Gen. Czeslaw Kiszczak, the interior minister, warned, "The authorities and law enforcement bodies have effective forces and the means to guarantee calm and security. Public order shall be maintained."

Archbishop Jozef Glemp, head of the Polish Roman Catholic church, also called on Poles not to demonstrate, in an address to 350,000 worshippers in Czestochowa August 26. He chastised the crowd for applauding when he called for Lech Walesa's release.

The government's threats to use force against the demonstrators, combined with Glemp's appeal, undoubtedly kept some Solidarity supporters at home. That made the massive turnout on August 31 even more impressive, and proved once again that the union is not a handful of "extremists," as the authorities charge, but a movement deeply rooted in Poland's working class.

Initially, the government tried to claim that the demonstrations were small and scattered. Jerzy Urban, a chief government spokesman, termed the protests a "fiasco" for the union's underground leadership. Government statements and newspaper commentaries maintained that workers did not support the protests, since there were no strikes in the factories — ignoring the fact that Solidarity had not called any strikes.

August 31 was clearly a victory for the union. The bureaucrats who govern Poland could prove that they were still capable of breaking up peaceful demonstrations. But Solidarity proved that its support among the workers — and the population as a whole — has not been broken by more than eight months of martial law.

Arrests and show trials

Unable to win any popular support for its measures, Jaruzelski's governing military council has continued to rely on repression.

In addition to the five protesters who were known to have been killed by the police, and the hundreds of injured, some 4,050 people were arrested for participating in the demonstrations. Within just a few days, more than 1,800 of them had already been tried and sentenced, most receiving fines, but 137 got prison terms.

Several prominent Solidarity leaders were among those arrested. Zbigniew Romaszewski, a key underground leader in the Warsaw area, was picked up on the day of the demonstrations. Anna Walentynowicz, a leader in Gdansk who had been released from detention in July, was rearrested the day before the demonstrations.

In a clear attempt to intimidate Solidarity activists, the authorities are now preparing for show trials of some of the union's most prominent figures.

On September 3, the government filed formal charges against Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Jan Litynski, and Henryk Wujec, accusing them of conspiring "to overthrow the political system by force." All four have been

in detention since martial law was declared in December, and all were associated with the former Committee for the Defense of the Workers (KOR), a grouping of intellectuals formed in the mid-1970s that was prominent in its support of Solidarity after the union's establishment.

The charges against them could bring the death penalty.

The authorities have often falsely charged the KOR with being "antisocialist," because of its criticisms of bureaucratic rule and its support for workers' struggles.

In a September 6 radio broadcast, the government attempted to blame Kuron for the seizure of the Polish embassy in Bern, Switzerland, that same day by a previously unheard-of right-wing terrorist group called the Home Army-National Liberation Front. Solidarity representatives have condemned the embassy seizure. The group itself has denied any connection with Solidarity or the KOR.

DOCUMENTS

Polish unionists discuss strategy

'For a general resistance movement'

[The following document was issued July 28 by the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK) of Poland's Solidarity union movement. The TKK functions as a provisional national leadership body for the union and is composed of five key Solidarity leaders who evaded detention when martial law was imposed on Dec. 13, 1981: Zbigniew Bujak, Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk, Wladyslaw Hardek, Bogdan Lis, and Eugeniusz Szumiejko.

[Entitled, "The Underground Society — An Initial Basis for a Programmatic Declaration," it is their contribution to the discussion now under way among Solidarity's members and supporters over how to carry on the struggle for workers' rights and how to oppose martial law.

[The text is taken from the August 25 issue of the *Solidarnosc Biuletyn Informacyjny*, published in Paris by the Coordinating Office of Solidarity Abroad. The translation from the Polish is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

1. The experience of eight months of the state of war shows that the struggle for our aims requires the participation of society as a whole, a society conscious of its immutable rights and organized for a long-term effort.

The government's war against society continues. Only its tactics have changed. Today the authorities are formally fighting against the Independent and Self-governing Trade Union, Solidarity. By questioning the agreements signed in August 1980,* the government is threatening society's basic interests. Under the cover of the state of war, it is striving to elimi-

The radio broadcast also accused Michnik and Litynski — as well as Karol Modzelewski, another detained Solidarity leader — of having "connections with Trotskyite terrorist groups in the West."

Anka Kowalska, a former KOR spokesperson, responded to such fabrications, stating, "We never planned or contemplated the use of force, violence or terror. Peaceful methods formed the basis of KOR's ideology — and this was stated on numerous occasions. This was how we wanted to shape society's consciousness."

Last year, Anna Walentynowicz replied to similar charges that the KOR was an "antisocialist" group. "The KOR is in no way an antisocialist force!" she said in an interview in the March 19, 1981, issue of *Wiadomosci Krakowskie*, a Solidarity journal. "It's a real Committee for the Defense of the Workers. . . . It's not the KOR, but the government, that's antisocialist." □

nate the independent organizations that arose after August 1980. It is introducing laws into the Sejm [parliament] seeking to take away what we had won in the period before December. Society has been deprived of the ability to function independently and to actively shape political life.

The authorities seek to create a political and legal order in which there is no room for any independent social efforts. All the decisions and promises are only intended to gain some time: the government hopes that the population — tired by the struggle for survival, deprived of a perspective — will give up its program of reforms and reconcile itself to subjugation.

The Provisional Coordinating Committee has consistently maintained that only a social accord can bring Poland out of its present crisis. The proposal for an accord has already been made by the union, the church, and various representative social groups. But the government aims solely for peace, obedience, and work — work under conditions of waste and exploitation.

2. Our aim is to build a self-governed society — a self-governed republic — in line with the program adopted at Solidarity's First National Congress. In the present situation, we can advance toward that aim only through an underground social movement.

The TKK calls for the organization of a general resistance movement and the creation of

*In the August 1980 accords, which ended a two-month-long countrywide strike wave, the government agreed to many of the workers' demands, including the right to form their own independent and democratically run trade union. Those agreements led to the formation of Solidarity. — IP

an underground society. This movement should encompass different spheres of social life and activity, all groups and milieus, in the cities and the countryside. This is the foundation of its strength, making it impossible for the government to create and perpetuate antagonistic divisions within society.

The underground resistance movement must reduce the feeling of individual isolation. It must teach collective action. It must strengthen the consciousness that we can achieve our aims only through self-organization and our own initiative. It has to show society its inherent strength.

3. The underground society must above all:

- Frustrate the government's attempts to crush society;
- Develop its capacity for self-organization and self-defense;
- Raise the people's political consciousness to prepare them for life in a democratic Poland.

4. The underground social movement is composed of groups organized on the basis of factory, workplace, neighborhood, or circle of friends. The character, scope, and forms of action of each group depend on its capabilities.

5. It is particularly vital to turn to the youth. The weight of organizing various forms of resistance rests on the youth, who by their very nature are the most self-sacrificing and uncompromising. The massive participation of youth in the underground social movement will augur our victory.

6. Each member of a group should be able to act within the framework of the underground society. There is a place in it for everyone who accepts our program. In the underground social movement, there are no big or small questions. What counts is the totality of attitudes and actions testifying to independence of thought and readiness to carry out organizational tasks or provide help to those who need it. What counts are results, determination, and courage in battle — if that becomes necessary.

7. We propose the following principles to guide the activities of the underground social movement:

- Organizing assistance for those who face repression, have been fired from their jobs, are living in poverty, are ill, or are otherwise in need of material and moral support.

- Organizing the circulation of independent information: printing and publishing activities, distribution, leafleting, and exposing the aims of the government's propaganda.

- Organizing instruction and self-education: independent education and an independent teachers' movement, supplementary courses, workers' and people's universities, discussion clubs, educational publishing houses; training movement organizers and activists; establishing libraries and financial assistance for young students, teachers, and writers; setting up social endowments, etc.

- Organizing actions that demonstrate the existence of the social resistance movement: around anniversaries, through posters and leaflets, and through participation in protest actions called by the regional decision-making



Demonstrators in Warsaw in May. Sign reads: "Solidarity was, is, and will be."

bodies or the TKK.

- Organizing economic activities (cooperatives, workshops) and influencing the functioning of the economy.

8. The underground society will fight against fake organizations set up by the government. It will organize boycotts of the official propaganda media, meetings, discussions, and events of a political or propaganda character. It will oppose collaboration.

The underground society will act to develop

national culture. At the same time, it must oppose the government's attempts to use that culture in a one-sided manner, as its instrument. Therefore, a particular responsibility rests on literary, journalistic, and scientific milieus to draw up a moral code outlining the limits of their activities and designating where collaboration and action against the interests of the nation begin.

9. The underground society — through pressure on the government — will create the conditions for a social accord and the gradual extension of social and political rights.

10. The underground social movement should be decentralized. All union bodies have a responsibility to undertake actions called and organized by the underground society. The clandestine regional decision-making bodies will fulfill a consultative and coordinating role. They will direct activities and publish suggestions, instructions, and programmatic declarations in the underground press. The Provisional Coordinating Committee will ensure coordination on the national level.

11. We expect the underground social movement to become an additional factor influencing the international situation in Poland's interests.

12. These proposed actions will create a common national movement united around Solidarity. The underground society will determine the basis for political action, including in the event the union is outlawed. It will prevent a social collapse. It will exert direct pressure on the government, by threatening to isolate it and by forcing it to recognize the fact that only the road of agreement will lead to a solution to the problems that Poland now faces.

The underground social movement will create the indispensable conditions for effectively struggling for our immediate aims: freedom for the political prisoners and internees, an end to the state of war, and the reactivation of the independent union movement, as well as our long-term aim — the establishment of a self-governed republic. □

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The fight to oust Pol Pot from UN

Washington, Sihanouk back Khmer Rouge

By Will Reissner

There can be no denying the murderous record of the Pol Pot regime against the people of Kampuchea. From 1975 until its overthrow in early 1979, Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime was responsible for the deaths of up to 3 million of Kampuchea's 7 million people, through starvation or execution.

Even though Pol Pot's record of barbarism is now common knowledge, and his government has been out of power for more than three years, his representative continues to occupy Kampuchea's seat in the United Nations, with strong backing from Washington and Peking.

When the United Nations reconvenes on September 21, the question of Kampuchea's representation will again be put to a vote, as it has been each year since 1979. And once again Washington is leading a campaign to keep the seat in Pol Pot's possession.

This year for the first time, Washington will have the help of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, a new convert to Pol Pot's cause. Sihanouk, who ruled Kampuchea until he was overthrown by a U.S.-sponsored coup in 1970, has had firsthand experience with Khmer Rouge barbarism. He was himself imprisoned by the Khmer Rouge for three years, and saw some of his children and grandchildren murdered at their hands.

At the last UN debate on who should represent Kampuchea, in 1981, the U.S. deputy permanent representative to the UN, Kenneth Adelman, urged that the credentials of the representative from Pol Pot's "Democratic Kampuchea" be accepted. Adelman self-righteously argued that "in accepting the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea, the United States in no way indicates a diminution in its central and deep concern for human rights violations."

The Reagan administration, like the Carter administration before it, claims that U.S. support for Pol Pot at the UN is based on opposition to the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea. Washington also charges that the present Kampuchean government, headed by Heng Samrin, is simply a puppet of Vietnam.

Why Vietnamese troops are in Kampuchea

I raised these issues with Vietnam's vice-minister of foreign affairs, Hoang Bich Son, in New York on September 1. Son, who is also his country's ambassador to the United Nations, pointed out that Vietnamese troops are in Kampuchea for two reasons: to protect the Kampuchean people from a return by Pol Pot's forces; and to protect Vietnam from a repetition of the two-front invasion from Kampuchea and China that it suffered in December 1978 and



Hoang Bich Son, Vietnam's vice-minister of foreign affairs and ambassador to the UN.

February 1979.

Pol Pot's army mounted an invasion of Vietnam using 19 of its 23 divisions. This invasion, Son pointed out, would have been inconceivable without the aid and support of the Chinese government, which saw Pol Pot's attack on Vietnam from the southwest as one prong of a pincer tactic that also included a Chinese invasion of Vietnam from the north.

These invasions were planned and carried out, according to Son, by China's rulers to demonstrate their value to Washington as a new ally. Ever since the Vietnamese people defeated U.S. imperialism, Washington has tried to maintain military and political pressure on Vietnam to prevent that country from healing its war wounds.

Pol Pot's overthrow

But Vietnam was able to defeat both invasions. And after Vietnamese troops stopped the invasion by the Pol Pot forces, they launched a counterattack into Kampuchea.

"While we were defeating 19 of Pol Pot's divisions," Son stated, "Kampuchean patriotic forces rose up inside the country and were able to overthrow the government because only 4 divisions remained inside Kampuchea."

The Vietnamese diplomat readily acknowledges that Heng Samrin's Kampuchean forces could not have toppled Pol Pot's regime if Vietnamese troops had not encircled the bulk of Pol Pot's army. But he strongly rejected the charge that the new Kampuchean government is a Vietnamese puppet.

"Many of the leading figures in the new government of Kampuchea," Son stated, "were originally members of the Khmer Rouge" and supported its anti-Vietnam policies. "But," he added, "they eventually became aware of the atrocities committed by the Pol Pot regime and fled to the jungle to fight against it." Heng Samrin himself was a commander in Pol Pot's army while it was staging border attacks against Vietnam, and did not abandon Pol Pot's cause until the end of 1977.

Vietnam withdrawing troops

Recently, Vietnam has been able to withdraw substantial numbers of its troops from Kampuchea because the Heng Samrin government is increasingly able to defend the country against attacks by Pol Pot's forces based in Thailand.

In early July, Vietnam announced that major new troop withdrawals from Kampuchea would take place that month. Officials in Thailand, which provides sanctuary and aid for Pol Pot's forces, dismissed the Vietnamese withdrawal as a mere rotation of troops.

But Son disputed this, pointing out that this was not the first withdrawal of Vietnamese forces. "Last year," he told me, "we withdrew troops without publicity, although it was reported in the Japanese press." Son added that "today there are such sophisticated ways to monitor military activity that you cannot claim to have done something that you haven't. It is very easy to check."

Vietnamese troops remain in Kampuchea, Son emphasized, to protect that country against the return of Pol Pot. "If the Thai government stops aiding Pol Pot's forces, we will withdraw even more troops, and if China stops supporting Pol Pot we will withdraw *all* our troops," he stated.

But Son added that as long as the Khmer Rouge receive aid from abroad, the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops "would be morally inadmissible and would amount to Vietnamese complicity in genocide against the people of Kampuchea."

Khmer Rouge offensive blocked

With the passage of time and the growing strength of the Heng Samrin government, it becomes increasingly difficult for Washington to marshal support for Pol Pot's forces, which

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are now concentrated in Thailand and in a small enclave of Kampuchea near the Thai border.

A recent rainy-season offensive by the Khmer Rouge, aimed at improving their military situation and bolstering their claim to the UN seat, was beaten back. Most of Pol Pot's forces were driven out of Kampuchea.

Because of these military setbacks, the attention of Pol Pot's international backers is shifting more to the diplomatic arena. Washington is working to improve the image of the Khmer Rouge in the hope that this will keep Kampuchea's UN seat in the hands of Pol Pot's forces.

As part of this campaign to improve the Khmer Rouge's international image, Washington and its Southeast Asian allies were successful in pressuring Prince Sihanouk to join an alliance with the Khmer Rouge, although all effective power in this alliance remains in the hands of Pol Pot's supporters.

Sihanouk's about-face

An agreement establishing a nominal three-person leadership — made up of Prince Sihanouk, former Prime Minister Son Sann, and the Khmer Rouge's Khieu Samphan — was signed on June 22. The Carter administration had originally proposed the establishment of this very same "troika," although at that time Sihanouk indignantly rejected any suggestion that he cooperate with Pol Pot or other forces from the Khmer Rouge.

Sihanouk revealed in January 1980 that he had been approached in Peking by Carter's ambassador to China, former United Automobile Workers President Leonard Woodcock. According to Sihanouk, Woodcock "urged me to come to terms with Pol Pot. 'Only the Khmer Rouge,' said Woodcock, 'are strong enough to stand up to the Vietnamese.' I was supposed to come to terms with the murderers of my compatriots and even of my own children and grandchildren," Sihanouk recalled in a conversation with Australian journalist Wilfred Burchett, which was later broadcast on New York radio station WBAI.

Less than three years later, Sihanouk has in fact joined the very same alliance he angrily rejected in 1980. He has "come to terms" with the murderers of his compatriots, children, and grandchildren.

Marching in step with Washington's propaganda campaign, Sihanouk has also changed his tune on the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea. At one time he acknowledged that by overthrowing Pol Pot's regime, Vietnam had saved the Kampuchean people. In his 1980 book *War and Hope: The Case for Cambodia*, Sihanouk wrote that Kampuchean who oppose the Vietnamese troops "would rather see their miserable compatriots subjected to more Khmer Rouge genocide than sanction the Vietnamese efforts to save them from annihilation."

In 1980 Sihanouk opposed any call for "unconditional withdrawal of the Vietnamese armed forces from Kampuchea" because "once

such unconditional withdrawal had taken place, Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and their 'SS' would resume their horror show and once again transform all of Kampuchea into a vast gulag, an immense slaughterhouse worthy of Auschwitz." Apparently this specter no longer bothers Sihanouk.

Hired gun

Sihanouk and Son Sann bring nothing to their Khmer Rouge allies but their names. However, those names are now especially important to supporters of the Khmer Rouge because of the greater emphasis on the diplomatic battlefield.

Sihanouk will be the star performer in the campaign to whitewash Pol Pot. He is expected to address the United Nations session that takes up the question of Kampuchea's representation. There he will plead that Pol Pot's representative should retain Kampuchea's seat.

The real Kampuchean government, on the other hand, has decided that this year it will not present its own candidate for Kampuchea's UN

seat. Instead it has endorsed an Indian proposal that the seat remain vacant during this session, a solution similar to the one adopted by the Movement of Nonaligned Countries at its September 1979 summit conference in Havana. Washington opposes this proposal, knowing that if Pol Pot's forces are ever removed from the UN they would lose all international credibility and it would then be harder to justify continuing to provide support to the Khmer Rouge.

Vietnamese Ambassador Son dismissed the alliance between Sihanouk, Son Sann, and the Khmer Rouge as "a farce," noting that "Sihanouk has simply been hired to keep Kampuchea's UN seat for Pol Pot."

Whether or not he is successful in this endeavor, Sihanouk's marriage of convenience to Pol Pot can do little to slow the continuing consolidation and the growing strength of Kampuchea, a country that has been liberated from the clutches of the murderers whom Sihanouk himself denounced so eloquently in the past. □

Antigua

Socialists beat back press gag

ACLM exposes regime's corruption

The proimperialist government on the Caribbean island of Antigua has failed in an attempt to silence the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement and the ACLM's newspaper, *Outlet*.

The repressive moves began July 23 when the *Outlet*'s offices were raided by 20 police sent by the regime of Prime Minister Vere Bird.

Bird's cops seized files, correspondence, and mailing lists of subscribers, as well as documents the government later claimed were "classified." The latter were actually materials from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and documents published in Barbados concerning the Space Research Corp. (SRC).

Outlet and the ACLM have been instrumental in exposing the SRC's use of Antigua as a conduit for military goods shipped illegally from the United States to South Africa's racist apartheid regime.

The ACLM has also exposed other instances of the Bird regime's corruption, repression, and domination by U.S. imperialism — which has two military communications stations on the island — and has spoken out on behalf of the struggles of Antigua's working people. It has likewise actively campaigned in defense of the revolution in Grenada. As a result, the ACLM, an avowedly Marxist organization, has won the respect and support of growing numbers of Antiguans.

The ACLM's mounting influence on the island was reflected July 14 when between 3,000

and 4,000 Antiguans turned out for an ACLM-sponsored public meeting. (The total population of Antigua is 75,000). This rally, which disclosed further evidence of corruption in the Bird regime, was no doubt the immediate cause of the government attempt at a crackdown.

The July 23 raid on the *Outlet* offices was followed up the next day with an announcement by Antigua's police commissioner that publication of *Outlet* was banned as of July 31. On July 26, the *Outlet* offices were burglarized. Printing equipment and loudspeakers were carried off.

The ACLM responded by exposing how the ban on its newspaper violated the government's own press laws. *Outlet* was shown in court on September 4 to be a duly registered publication, and the government's representatives had to admit that there was no legal basis for closing it down.

Meanwhile, the ACLM had brought out an issue of *Outlet* while it was under the illegal ban. Published on August 14, the paper's press run was partially seized by the regime. ACLM leaders Tim Hector and Howard Lovell are still being prosecuted on charges of publishing an illegal newspaper.

The ACLM has appealed for telegrams and messages to be sent to the Antiguan regime calling for a halt to the attacks on freedom of the press. These may be sent to Prime Minister Vere Bird, St. John's, Antigua. Copies should be sent to *Outlet* Publishers, Tanner Street, St. John's, Antigua. □

Rightists attack new government

Seek to counter independence struggle

By George Fyson

[On June 19, the Independence Front, a coalition of five parties, formed the government of New Caledonia, a French colony of 130,000 people in the Pacific Ocean. It was able to topple the previous right-wing government after forming an alliance with a smaller party, the New Society (FNCS).

[This was the first time that the Kanaks, the indigenous Melanesian people, have had their own government, although neither the government nor the local parliament have any real powers, with effective control still in the hands of the French colonial authorities.

[The following article was written following a visit to New Caledonia. It has been taken from the August 13 issue of the New Zealand biweekly *Socialist Action*.]

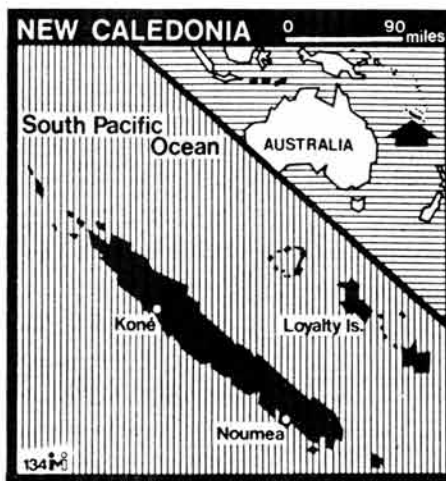
* * *

On July 22, New Caledonia was the scene of a violent intrusion into the country's parliament, the Territorial Assembly. While 5,000 to 7,000 people, mainly French, held an all-day demonstration in the centre of the capital, Noumea, against the new Kanak-dominated government of New Caledonia, a squad of about 30 men armed with sticks and bars, many with helmets and masks for protection from tear-gas, burst into the Assembly chamber. They attacked the elected government members, banged their weapons and shouted that the Assembly should be dissolved, throwing furniture, tearing out microphones, and so on.

The attack occurred while a particularly important debate was proceeding concerning a land reform measure designed to return traditional land to the Kanaks. The reform is being proceeded with by the French government, which has overall power in New Caledonia, as in its other colonies. The local Assembly was debating the reform, or "ordinance," to arrive at an opinion that could be transmitted back to Paris.

Traditional elite

The attack did not come out of the blue, nor were the invaders an isolated group. All the evidence points to the complicity and involvement of key elements of the traditional ruling elite in New Caledonia: the "respectable" right-wing parties, the cops, the local daily newspaper, and business interests. This action was just one part of the expression of fear and frustration by those who have become rich as a result of 130 years of colonisation of the Kanak people of New Caledonia — their fear that their privileged position will be brought to an end by the steps being taken by the Kanaks and their leaders in the government.



The links between the invaders and the colonial elite were pointed to in the July 27 issue of *L'Avenir Caledonien* (The Caledonian Future), newspaper of the Caledonian Union, one of the parties in the Independence Front.

L'Avenir explained how there were a number of notorious ultra-rightists, known to have made threats to shoot independence supporters, seated in the public section of the Assembly and relaying information on the situation inside to groups of others outside on the street. When the group burst in, these people leapt the barrier and joined them on the floor in front of the members' desks.

L'Avenir explained their aims:

"The commandos' mission was to take the government Councillors hostage, while waiting for the arrival of more strong-arms in the street outside. There, vehicles were to arrive loaded with arms which would have been used to blackmail the government.

"But the pirates of the Territorial Assembly messed up their seizure of hostages for there were too many of our [Independence Front] militants in the Assembly chamber, and because police complicity has limits which cannot be breached without appearing too obvious to everybody."

L'Avenir also explained how, at the moment when the commandos invaded the Assembly, only three police, one of them well known to have extreme right-wing sympathies, were on duty at the doors. After several minutes delay the police forced their way into the chamber and chased the invaders out, allowing almost all of them to escape!

Anti-Kanak conspiracy

In the light of the previous few months' record of violence by the right wing in New Caledonia, including the assassination of Inde-

pendence Front leader Pierre Declercq in September 1981 and an attempt to invade the French High Commissioner's residence in June (which was only repelled by tear-gas and baton-wielding police) the cops' failures on July 22 cannot be put down to simple negligence. There exists a deliberate, continuing conspiracy at all levels of the state apparatus to frustrate the new government and to allow the right wing to get away with outrageous acts against it.

Right-wing leaders, including members of the Territorial Assembly and Noumea mayor Roger Laroque, issued solemn statements after the invasion dissociating themselves from "violence" and calling for "order." But as *L'Avenir* explained, "Beyond [their] words . . . we see accomplices who talk 'democracy' and support armed commandos, who speak 'democracy' and hire thugs against those who hadn't responded to their strike call." (Right-wing businessmen and shopowners had called for a "general strike" to coincide with their July 22 demonstration, and some shopowners who refused to participate have received a variety of threats and attacks, including some having windows shot out, since then.)

To make matters worse, in the days following the July 22 violence, the French authorities decided to release Dominique Canon, who had been held in jail for 10 months on suspicion of being the assassin of Pierre Declercq. The evidence against Canon has been considerable, but the legal authorities and police have dragged their feet and refused to bring him to trial. Just one example of their sluggishness was the police decision not to search the houses of a number of leading right-wingers who were charged by independence forces with being in collusion with Canon, until July this year, 10 months after the assassination itself!

The openly right-wing daily paper in New Caledonia, *les Nouvelles Caledoniennes*, has treated the liberation of Canon as an event for celebration. It also positively publicises the defence of the few who have been arrested for participating in the attack on the Assembly.

How has such a situation developed in this country, and what is likely to happen next?

Fight for independence

The population of New Caledonia today is divided almost evenly between the native Kanak people, and the French colonists who combine with various hangers-on from other previous French colonies such as Algeria, Indochina and Vanuatu.

A French colony since the 1850s, the territory consists of a fertile West Coast, containing extensive cattle ranches set up when the

Kanaks were brutally expelled in the 1870s; a mountainous "backbone" to the country, scarred by the massive nickel mining; and a narrow East Coast populated by Kanaks living mainly at a subsistence level in traditional villages. The only significant town, Noumea (population 60,000), is very much dominated by the French colonists.

In the shops, houses and streets of Noumea you see the considerable flashy wealth of many of the colonial elite, side by side with poverty and atrocious living conditions among the Kanaks. The situation can be compared to a place like South Africa.

The reasons for the colonists' fear of a Kanak-dominated government are plain for all to see.

The main Kanak independence party, the Caledonian Union, was formed in 1952 — the same year that Kanaks were allowed to attend secondary school for the first time. The Kanaks have made considerable advances since that time.

The Independence Front was formed in 1978, through a coalition of five different parties. It contested the 1979 Territorial Assembly elections, winning 14 seats (out of 36). Though predominantly Kanak in membership and leadership, there are a number of French and people of other races (such as Polynesians from other French Pacific territories) involved in the

Front. (See box for main points of the front's programme.)

The two biggest recent boosts to the Kanaks' struggle have been the achievement of independence by neighbouring Vanuatu in July 1980, and the victory of Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand in the French presidential elections of 1981.

Mitterrand has so far avoided promising independence for New Caledonia, but the situation is very favourable for pushing forward reforms leading in that direction. Because of the way the French colonies are set up, New Caledonia itself sends two elected representatives to the French parliament, the National Assembly.

One of these is a Kanak from the Independence Front, Ralph Pidjot. Pidjot is planning to introduce an electoral law reform for New Caledonia into the Socialist Party/Communist Party-dominated French Assembly. This reform, by restricting the voting rights in New Caledonia of those just arrived from France (which includes many hundreds of people in the army and government who intend only short-term stays there), would give the Kanak people a decisive majority in New Caledonia. This would allow them to predominate in the future of what is, after all, their own country, in which they have been denied their rights for so long.

Most of the French in New Caledonia are right-wingers, appalled at the prospects for Kanak independence, backed up by what they regard as a "communist" government in France. Their rage and frustration — and their blatant racism — can be very clearly seen in their actions such as the invasion of the local parliament and the assassination of Pierre Declercq, and also in some of their publications.

Here are some extracts from a leaflet circulated at a big right-wing demonstration in November last year:

"Women and Men of New Caledonia! We have been betrayed and given away to savages . . . Handed over to the savagery of barbarians, because our leaders always recommend that we keep our calm. . . ."

"They don't know, these leaders, that the savages refuse any dialogue . . . their only tactic, learnt in Moscow, being to sow terror and panic through violence. . . . Arm yourselves, Caledonians! Join quickly the ranks of the counter-attack. . . ."

The leaflet then went on to list several independence leaders and Assembly members, ending with the threat: "All these madmen and dangerous persons should be thrown out of our peaceful and civilised society before they become the murderers of our children."

A leaflet distributed in huge quantities at the time of the July 22 demonstration had a similar theme. Under the heading "l'avenir" (the future) is a clenched fist holding a flower stem topped by a skull. This is a parody on the French Socialist Party symbol: a clenched fist holding a rose.

The Independence Front is by no means taking these dangerous developments lying down. The night before the demonstrations and Assembly debate of July 22, over 200 Independence Front activists attended an emergency meeting outside their headquarters in Noumea. The mood was one of firmness and determination, and they decided to go in strength to the Assembly the next day, to protect their elected leaders.

The day we left Noumea, the debate on the reform "ordinances" was continuing, and it was noticeable that many more Independence supporters — dozens and dozens, in quiet groups — were occupying the area surrounding the Assembly, and all nearby intersections, quite outnumbering the police on duty, to prevent a repetition of the attack of July 22. They know they cannot rely on the police to do that, nor on Mitterrand to hand them independence on a plate.

Nationwide demonstrations, and the occupation of whole sections of traditional land by Kanaks in various parts of the country, are planned for September, on the anniversary of Pierre Declercq's assassination.

New Caledonia is becoming the central focus of independence struggles in the Pacific, and the outcome of events there will directly affect many of the Pacific Islands — from Vanuatu to the whole of French Polynesia. This battle deserves the closest attention, and the full support, of all those fighting for social justice in this part of the world. □

Program of Independence Front

[The following is a slightly abridged version of the common platform of the five parties that make up New Caledonia's Independence Front.]

* * *

1. Front for Independence

a) Political independence

The Kanak native people possess the sole right to independence. This right, which has been confiscated by the colonial power, must be conquered and regained.

The non-Kanak workers must be part of the struggle for independence. Through this fight, the non-Kanak is made legitimate within the Kanak cause.

Political power will be exercised by the people.

b) Economic independence

The colonial power has confiscated the Kanak patrimony and has managed it for its own profit. The people must take back and manage their patrimony: land, mines, natural and maritime resources, means of production and so on.

c) Cultural independence

The colonial power ignored the Kanak culture only to exploit it as a means of colonisation. Culture is the symbol of a people. People must reject imported models to

create and promote their own.

2. Anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist front

We must fight against the dominating social structures created by the capitalist system and replace them with egalitarian modes. We must fight the multinational set-ups and the governments behind them and promote an economic and cultural community amongst the Pacific people to set up an anti-imperialist front. People must set up political and economic institutions to prevent capitalist and imperialist power from plundering the country indirectly through neocolonialist regimes.

3. Front for development

Development must be led and approved by the people. Legitimate development must reject all imposed development plans and methods that strengthen multinational firms and local privileges.

4. Front for Kanak lands

Colonisation has robbed the Kanaks of their land. The Independence Front maintains that all the stolen land be given back to the Kanak people without reservations or preconditions.

For a Kanak society and for the construction of socialism.

Socialist conference discusses labor's struggle against war and capitalist crisis

By José G. Pérez

[The following are major excerpts from an article that appeared in the September 3 issue of the U.S. socialist newsweekly *Militant*.]

* * *

BERLIN, Ohio — Some 1,200 people met here July 31–August 5 for a socialist activists' and educational conference. Participants came from cities and towns all over the United States, and there were more than 70 guests from other countries.

About half of those attending were workers from major industries and unions where the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance — the organizers of the gathering — have many members: coal mining, steel, auto, rail, garment and textile, petrochemical, electrical, aerospace and machinists, transit, and teamsters.

Half of those attending were under 30, and nearly 100 had never attended this kind of conference before. Some 73 participants were Afro-Americans, and 66 were Latinos.

Political activities

The weeklong conference was packed with political activities. Seven major presentations were given to the conference by SWP and YSA leaders. These were: "Imperialist War and the Fight Against It," by YSA National Chairperson Malik Miah; "The Capitalist Crisis and the State of the U.S. Working Class," by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes; "American Farmers: Labor's Ally on the Land," by Doug Jenness, coeditor of the *Militant*; "Revolutionary Cuba Today," by Mary-Alice Waters, national cochairperson of the SWP; "The Marxist Approach to the Workers States," by Barry Sheppard, also a national cochairperson of the SWP; and "Fall Perspectives and Tasks in Building the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance," by Mac Warren, coordinator of the YSA National Office.

Two rallies were held during the conference. In addition, there were meetings of activists who work in major industries; panels and workshops; and some 100 classes. These covered three broad areas: Marx, Engels, and revolutionary politics; the class struggle in the United States; and international revolutionary developments.

Among the most-attended classes was a five-part series on the workers and farmers government presented by Steve Clark, a member of the SWP Political Bureau. The classes were based on a report adopted last spring by the party's National Committee analyzing the im-

portance of workers and farmers governments as the first form of government that is likely to arise following a successful anticapitalist revolution.

For the first time since the SWP and YSA began organizing these conferences in 1970, several of the main class series were presented both in English and Spanish, including a five-part series on the *Communist Manifesto*, a three-class series on Marx and Engels on the peasantry, and a two-class series on Marxism and the class struggle in the revolutions in Europe in 1848.

Following the conference, the National Committee of the SWP held a three-day plenary meeting. Among the principal points on the agenda were a political report and discussion assessing the conference and a report and discussion on how the party's deepening roots in the working class have confirmed and strengthened the SWP's internal norms of democratic and disciplined functioning.

The fight against war

The conference was kicked off by Malik Miah's presentation on the fight against imperialist militarism and war.

Miah spent much of his report explaining the stakes and forces involved in the confrontation in Central America and the Caribbean — the attacks against the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua by CIA-backed counterrevolutionaries operating from the Honduran border and within Nicaragua itself; the civil wars against U.S.-sponsored dictatorships being waged by the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala; and the U.S. military threats and economic pressures against the Cuban and Grenadian revolutions.

Miah stressed that "the communist approach, the working-class approach today in the fight against imperialist war and militarism begins with one simple fact: *imperialist wars have begun*."

"To be effective, any movement for peace, any movement for freedom that arises today has to speak out against these wars in which our country is involved."

Miah said the conflicts in Central America are central to world politics today. What is involved, he explained, is the extension of the socialist revolution.

The U.S. capitalists will do everything in their power to prevent the extension of the socialist revolution, he said, as they have shown with their wars against Korea and Vietnam and their unabated 23-year campaign to overthrow the Cuban revolution.

The imperialists must try to stop the exten-

sion of the socialist revolution because it directly attacks their most vital interests: their markets, their properties and their profits. Furthermore, the consolidation of the socialist revolution in Nicaragua, or the victory of the insurgents in El Salvador, would further tilt the relationship of forces on a world scale against imperialism.

It would inspire hundreds of millions of toilers in Latin America and throughout the world to redouble their struggles against the oppressors and exploiters, and would show the peoples of the colonial and semicolonial world that revolutionary struggle and socialism is the answer to imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation.

Reagan is intervening

Miah stressed that "Reagan is not just *threatening* to intervene in Central America. He *is* intervening, and he's going in deeper and deeper each day."

But this ever-growing direct U.S. participation is being hidden from the American people, Miah said, citing as an example the recent sharp escalation of attacks against Nicaragua, which has been covered up by the daily press.

"Defense of the Nicaraguan revolution is a central task for Marxists here in the United States and around the world," he said. "This is especially important in the context of the other wars in Central America as well as the stepped-up pressures against revolutionary Cuba and Grenada."

Antinuclear protests

Miah explained that the growing opposition to nuclear power and weapons and the mounting sentiment for nuclear disarmament strengthens the fight against U.S. intervention in Central America and elsewhere. He hailed the June 12 disarmament rally, calling it "the largest protest demonstration ever held in the history of the United States." It sent a clear message to Washington that the American people do not want to be dragged into new wars.

Class-conscious workers should continue to participate in antinuclear protests and explain that the threat of nuclear annihilation comes from imperialism, and above all from U.S. imperialism, Miah said.

"The fight against nuclear war can't be separated from the so-called conventional wars being waged by the United States," he explained, "because it is precisely out of such wars that a nuclear holocaust could develop."

Miah also discussed the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, denouncing it as barbaric. The U.S. government bears full responsibility for this in-

vasion, he said, since it gives massive amounts of military aid to the Israeli aggressors. "The cluster bombs that are killing Palestinian and Lebanese children all bear the legend, 'Made in USA,'" he said.

Miah singled out the fighting capacity and heroism of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). "They have fought better than any Arab government in a war against Israel. The PLO's political standing among the world's population has risen considerably since the war began, and the Israeli government's has dropped. Israel remains politically isolated on a world scale and Begin has not achieved his main objective, which was to destroy the PLO, not only militarily, but above all as a political factor."

"Yassir Arafat, chairman of the PLO, is displaying capacities that any working-class fighter must recognize and identify with," Miah continued. "He is calm in leading his troops against a superior force, and does it with honor. He is also placing the PLO in the strongest political position for the next phase of the struggle."

Miah also singled out the emergence of an antiwar movement within the state of Israel. "That is an unprecedented development," Miah said. "It is so significant that the PLO leadership has gone out of its way to appeal to this movement for peace."

"Not only in Israel, but worldwide and especially inside the United States, growing numbers of workers see that Israel's policy is one of annexation of more and more Arab land, under the guise of establishing what the Zionists call genuinely secure borders."

"The Zionists know, the imperialists know, just as well as we do, that there is no such thing as secure borders when you are sitting on someone else's land."

Internationalism

Internationalism ran like a thread throughout the entire conference.

One of the high points of the weeklong gathering was the international rally held the last night.

Speakers included representatives of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) of Grenada; Casa Nicaragua; the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador; the African National Congress of South Africa; and the U.S. Committee in Solidarity with Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Laos. The Washington-based Palestine Information Office also sent greetings.

Every single speaker — from Nicaragua to South Africa — not only appealed for support to their own struggle, but called for solidarity with all those fighting imperialism, and especially with the Palestinian people. Every one of these appeals was met with cheering, applause, and shouts of "PLO, PLO, PLO!"

In addition, representatives of the Grenadian NJM and of the Association of Vietnamese Patriots in the United States gave special presentations to the entire conference.

Numerous classes were given on the histories and struggles of other peoples. These in-



Part of crowd at international solidarity rally in Oberlin, Ohio, August 6.

cluded classes on southern Africa, Argentina, Iran, Palestine, Poland, Nicaragua, Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and the struggle of the oppressed Maori people of New Zealand.

There were also extensive discussions of antiwar and solidarity work in a separate workshop on this topic and at meetings of activists working in industry.

From these discussions, it became clear that socialists are involved in countless such activities, everything from marches for nuclear disarmament to Nicaraguan flood relief, to anti-draft and antiregistration protests.

Marx and Engels on war

The overall political approach that guides socialist workers in these antiwar activities was also taken up in Miah's presentation. He outlined the traditional attitude of the communist movement towards war, beginning with the teachings of the founders of scientific socialism, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

"They explained repeatedly," Miah said, "that the war of the slaves against their enslavers is the only justifiable war in history."

"Most importantly," he added, "Marx and Engels explained that only by fighting uncompromisingly for the victory of the enslaved, for the expropriation of the exploiters, can reactionary wars be held off or defeated and the threat of war ultimately eliminated by humanity."

Miah explained that the SWP and YSA also based themselves on the teachings of Lenin. In fighting against World War I — a war between various imperialist robbers over the division of their booty — Lenin contrasted the opposition of genuine Marxists to that war to that of bourgeois pacifists and middle-class radicals.

Lenin explained that class-conscious workers do not limit themselves to condemning wars between nations as brutal and barbaric, as the bourgeois pacifists do. We differ from them, Lenin explained, in that we understand the inevitable connection between wars and the class struggles within a country.

Wars cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished, and this can only be done through socialist revolution. History shows that this will entail bloody civil wars because the capi-

talists will fight against the immense majority of society to maintain their privileges and property.

Lenin always explained that it was necessary to study each war concretely. "Our principle is that we stand with the oppressed against the oppressor in every war," Miah said.

Miah said the working-class program for the struggle against war and militarism is simple: "Unilateral nuclear disarmament of the imperialists; dismantling of all overseas U.S. military bases; elimination of the U.S. war budget and utilization of those funds to meet human needs at home and abroad; full political rights for soldiers; replacement of the standing imperialist army with a popular militia.

"In a phrase, not one penny, not one person for Washington's war machine."

The task of revolutionary socialists in the struggle against war, Miah explained, is to advance the working class in incorporating this program into its defense of its own class interests.

The fight against imperialist militarism and war forms an integral part of the broader program that workers and farmers will need in the fight to establish their own government and carry out the socialist transformation of society. Socialism, by eliminating the class antagonisms that lead to military conflicts, will guarantee an end to all wars.

At the heart of the weeklong conference were the fraction meetings — meetings of activists who work in a given industry — and the workshops and classes geared to discussing the political work that SWP and YSA members carry out with their co-workers.

SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes presented an assessment of these meetings in his political report to the postconference National Committee plenary meeting.

Barnes stressed the importance of the SWP and YSA becoming firmly rooted in the industrial working class before the decisive battles against the capitalists begin.

He explained that the current period is a preparatory one that will lead to immense confrontations between the employers and the workers in coming years. In this sense, it is analogous neither to the period of social protest movements of the 1960s nor to the post-

World War II strike wave. It is most analogous to the years immediately preceding 1934, which set the stage for the all-out war to organize decisive sectors of the American working class into industrial unions.

"The preparatory period is precious to us," Barnes said. "It means we can be there beforehand, go through the transformation of the American working class and transform our party in this process."

Barnes explained that this is not simply a question of where individual socialists work, but of the party as a whole going through the evolving discussions and debates, as well as the skirmishes and battles that are already being fought.

This is impossible unless the big majority of SWP and YSA members are industrial workers and carry out their political work in the plants as part of fractions.

Three key categories

He said that among the socialists' activities in the labor movement today, three broad categories could be singled out:

- Explaining concretely that at the root of the problems working people face is the capitalist system.

- Popularizing a program of demands to defend working people against the employers' offensive. Such demands, taken as a whole, point the road toward the formation of a labor party based on a militant and democratic union movement that will carry out the fight for a workers and farmers government.

- Participating in and helping to draw the lessons from the many class skirmishes and battles that are already breaking out.

Barnes explained that battles such as the strikes of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) against the government, and of the United Food and Commercial Workers against Iowa Beef Processors in Dakota City, Nebraska, are of great importance. They are open and direct forms of class struggle, and as such, play a vital role in the workers' gaining experience in class combat and becoming conscious of their position in society and interests as a class.

"It's wrong," he said, "to think that a working-class leadership tested in battle can be formed, or that a radicalization of the workers can take place, without such struggles, without defeats, without strikes that are partial victories, without a vanguard learning how to lead retreats as well as advances. That is literally impossible."

Socialists in industry

For this reason, there is no substitute for revolutionary Marxists going through these kinds of experiences as part of the industrial working class.

The SWP and YSA began concentrating their members in large industries several years ago. Today, about half of the party members hold industrial jobs and some 76 percent are either in industry, temporarily laid off from industrial jobs, or have left such jobs for a brief

period to work full-time for the party.

The meetings of workers in various industries revealed that, despite the sharp economic downturn, the percentage of party members with jobs in industry has not declined significantly.

Many party members in industries like auto, steel, or rail have been laid off. But the number hired in other sectors of the economy, such as petrochemical, garment, and electrical, has compensated for these layoffs.

Even in some of the hardest-hit industries, such as auto, the anarchistic nature of capitalist production — which is guided exclusively by the search for higher profits — has meant that occasionally a plant or shift is reopened even as other factories or shifts in different cities and parts of the country are laying off workers or shutting down altogether.

Speaking of this experience, Barnes said: "The most important test for us was a very simple one. We went through a bad year of depression, with massive layoffs and massive pressures, yet there's no fundamental change in the party. Some fractions have been weakened, some people have changed jobs, but the party as a whole hasn't been changed.

"We haven't fled from the industrial working class as a result of these pressures. We're in. We're in to stay. We're part of what's going on.

"We're more and more not going through an experiment, but going through these experiences as part of the working class."

Industrial concentration

In his report to the plenum, Barnes went over the key factors that led the SWP to decide at the beginning of 1978 to concentrate the big majority of its members in basic industry.

"The background to this," Barnes said, "is the decisive social weight and political role of the strongest contingents of the labor movement, the largest unions in industry and manufacturing."

He explained that these were also key elements in the party's decision at its national convention a year ago to build a national fraction in the garment and textile industries in addition to the other industrial priorities established several years ago.

"It's there that we begin," Barnes explained, "with the economic weight of those two industries and the size and importance of these unions. But that's not the ending point. The composition of the workforce — overwhelmingly immigrant workers and oppressed nationalities, and largely female — and the character of the struggle that will be necessary to transform the unions were additional weighty political considerations.

"The real conquest of the fractions above all," Barnes said, "is that we are part of the industrial working class now. Our political problems are the problems of the vanguard of our class. We have no individual, special problems as the SWP. From firings to winning new people to socialist ideas, from good experiences to defeats, everything we go through is what the

vanguard of our class is going through.

"And it is from that vantage point that we participate in the fights against U.S. intervention, nuclear power and weapons, racism, and attacks on women's rights."

Class struggle

Barnes elaborated on these themes in his presentation on "The Capitalist Crisis and the State of the U.S. Working Class," given to the conference a few days before.

He began his talk by reading the sentence that stands at the head of the first full chapter of the *Communist Manifesto*: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

"There are times when this seems like an extreme statement," Barnes commented, "or hardly an accurate one-sentence generalization. But as the years go on in the 1980s, that sentence sounds more and more not only like it could be an accurate summary of history. More and more, we can see we're living in that history right now."

Barnes pointed to the Dakota City, Nebraska, meatpackers' strike as an example of the undisguised class battles that are increasingly becoming common. Cops, national guardsmen, and scabs have viciously attacked the picket line in an attempt to crush the strike. He cited the point of view of Currier Holman, founder of the company, who said: "Business as we pursue it here at IBP [Iowa Beef Processors] is very much like waging war."

"That," Barnes noted, "is at least an honest, straightforward, and accurate description of business and business-labor relations."

Barnes pointed to numerous aspects of the ruling-class offensive against the democratic rights and standard of living of working people: attacks on busing for school desegregation, the mounting death row population, attempts to roll back abortion rights, and raids by immigration cops in factories where Latinos work and neighborhoods where they live.

"These struggles," Barnes said, "aren't reducible to the struggle between labor and capital in its purest form — in the plant, in the mine, in the union negotiating committee. But all these are expressions of the fact that the history of our society, which we are living through, is the history of class struggle.

"Grasping that, understanding that it's not just a phrase, not just a way of being for our side, not just a way of pointing to a period of extreme problems, but the most fundamental single fact of our lives — that is the only way to find solutions to what we face."

Barnes said that Reaganomics, monetarism, supply-side economics, or Keynesianism, are neither the cause of the problem facing workers nor its solution. "The problem is capitalism. The political problem for those of us who are part of the oppressed and exploited is how to understand this, how to break out of the myths that surround and hide this fact.

"The solutions put forth by the rulers are lies," he continued. "They're not even wrong theories, they're simply rationalizations for

whatever policies they need to apply at a given time to advance their interests."

He added that the reason capitalists are not investing in new plants, and are shutting down many of those that exist, is because they are not getting enough return on their invested money. For decades, despite the massive profits the employers have reaped from the unpaid labor of workers, the rate of profit has tended to decline in industry after industry.

The forces that drove the post-World War II boom of the world capitalist economy have largely become exhausted. Without expanding markets, numerous capitalists have learned, investing in new plants and equipment is not good business, and can sometimes be suicidal.

This is why the concession bargaining strategy adopted by the U.S. labor officialdom at the behest of management is a trap, Barnes said. Concessions will lead to higher profits — but not to new investment to create and preserve jobs. This is because even substantial concessions cannot bring a reversal of the long-term downward slide of the rate of profit.

The idea that workers can buy out individual bankrupt factories or companies from the employers and run them more efficiently under capitalism is equally false. Under the lash of competition, the managers hired by the workers would be forced to make the same kinds of decisions as those hired by the capitalists, and for the same reasons.

Program to defend workers

Instead of relying on a strategy of concession bargaining, or on the idea that the workers can simply buy out the capitalist class, revolutionary socialists put forward a program of struggle to defend working people against the capitalist economic crisis and to strengthen their unions and other fighting organizations of the oppressed and exploited.

Among the measures socialists advocate, Barnes said, is a reduction of the workweek with no cut in pay to combat unemployment. To protect working people from inflation, all wages, pensions, and unemployment benefits should be automatically adjusted to compensate for increases in the cost of living. Socialists also call for a massive program of public works to build schools, hospitals, mass transit systems, decent housing, and other badly needed facilities and to put millions of people back to work.

The purpose of these demands, Barnes explained, is not to draw a picture of what a socialist America would look like. They are aimed at charting a course of mobilizing the working class and other oppressed and exploited layers in struggle against the employers, instead of continuing to rely on the bankrupt course of class collaboration.

Barnes pointed out that the blows being suffered by the working people tend to drive them closer together. Nevertheless, these blows do not come down equally, due to national and sex oppression, which are an inextricable part of U.S. capitalism.

The lower wages and higher unemployment

of Black, Latino, and women workers are then used as a club by the employers to further depress the standard of living of all workers.

That is why fighting for affirmative action — preferential training and hiring, and adjustment in seniority lists — for women and members of oppressed nationalities is an essential part of the program needed to draw together all working people in a united struggle against the employers.

Two roads for Black struggle

The two roads forward for Black people and the working class as a whole were symbolized by two conventions, Barnes said. One was held a few days before his presentation; the other was scheduled to be held a few days after.

The first was in Gary, Indiana. This was a conference of procapitalist Black leaders called together by Mayor Richard Hatcher. There, [Atlanta Mayor] Andrew Young and other Black leaders tied to the two-party system projected Black capitalism as the road forward for Black liberation. They said Blacks could use their economic power to carve out a niche in the business community.

The second convention was the congress of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP), held the weekend following Barnes's talk.

Discussions at that conference, Barnes said, would focus around the NBIPP's charter, which projects a course of building a Black party independent of the two-party system through anti-imperialist and anticapitalist struggles.

"It's those two roads symbolized by those two conferences that captures the debate on which way forward for the Black movement," Barnes said.

Women's rights

The need for a class-struggle approach is also at the heart of the women's rights fight today.

A workshop at the conference took up struggles for equal rights by women in industry and in society as a whole. It was led by Margaret Jayko, a member of the YSA National Executive Committee and coordinator of the SWP's participation in women's liberation activities.

Women coal miners, oil workers, garment workers, steelworkers, and others described ongoing skirmishes on the job over sexual harassment, affirmative action, and other issues.

The discussion indicated that being in industry has strengthened the party's ability to effectively participate in all arenas of the women's liberation struggle — from battles on the job and in the unions, to groups like the National Organization for Women and the Coalition of Labor Union Women, to the various protest actions against attacks on legal abortion and other women's rights.

Worker-farmer alliance

In his presentation on "American Farmers: Labor's Ally on the Land," *Militant* coeditor

Doug Jenness explained another aspect of working-class strategy in the United States.

Like wage workers, working farmers are also an exploited class, and they are exploited by the same bankers and big businessmen that rob the workers. In addition, production of food and fibers is one of America's biggest industries.

Workers should support farmers' struggles to develop solidarity between the two classes that produce all the wealth of the country. These struggles are being organized around demands aimed at protecting the standard of living of farmers and against foreclosures and forced sales of their land.

Class-conscious workers should explain to farmers that the cause of the farmers' problems is the same as that of the workers — capitalism. Jenness said the labor movement should put forward a program addressing the problems of farmers and charting a course toward replacing the capitalist government with a workers and farmers government.

Cuba's role

Because of the central role it plays in world politics and in the development of a Marxist vanguard on an international scale, revolutionary Cuba was the subject of a separate talk by Mary-Alice Waters.

Waters explained that Cuba follows a working-class internationalist foreign policy designed to advance the anti-imperialist struggle and the world socialist revolution.

The Cuban leaders, she said, have played a vanguard role within the Movement of Non-aligned Countries and other international forums, mobilizing world public opinion against imperialist attacks such as the British colonial aggression against Argentina and the Israeli government's invasion of Lebanon.

The Cuban people have also provided aid — especially substantial considering Cuba's modest resources — to countries fighting imperialist domination. Their aid includes everything from doctors, teachers, and construction workers to military assistance in repelling armed aggression.

The Cuban Communist Party's revolutionary course is also manifested in the domestic policies it follows within Cuba, Waters said. The Cuban leaders have waged a consistent struggle to mobilize the working class against tendencies toward bureaucratism, and have consciously promoted and led an increasing participation by the Cuban masses in governing society.

Defense of workers states

Related themes were taken up by Barry Sheppard in his talk on "The Marxist Approach to the Workers States."

The Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and other states where capitalism has been overthrown, Sheppard said, represent fundamental conquests of the world working class. Therefore, these countries must be defended against all

imperialist attacks.

He pointed to the achievements in culture, science, and technology made possible by the elimination of capitalism and the institution of a planned economy based on state property.

He also noted that the existence of workers states, and the creation of new workers states over time, has helped shift the relationship of class forces on a world scale to the benefit of the toilers.

For example, the victory of the Soviet people against German imperialism in World War II set the stage for the carrying through of the socialist revolution in several other nations — including China, the world's biggest country — and for successful independence struggles throughout most of the colonial world.

Nevertheless, Sheppard said, most of the workers states are bureaucratically deformed. Government decisions are not made in the interests of the toilers and with their participation; instead, they are geared to defending the material privileges of the governing bureaucracy.

Sheppard said that the bureaucratized workers states are analogous to bureaucratized trade unions. In both cases, their capacity and power to fight the enemies of the working class is hampered by misleaders.

But both unions and workers states remain fundamental conquests of the working class, despite misleadership.

Class-conscious workers, Sheppard said, should support the struggle for workers democracy in the bureaucratized workers states, such as that being waged by the Solidarity labor union in Poland. The SWP and YSA view these struggles as steps towards a political revolution by the toilers to replace the bureaucratic misleaders, while maintaining and strengthening the planned economy based on state property.

Fall tasks and perspectives

Fall perspectives for building the socialist movement were outlined in a presentation by Mac Warren on behalf of the SWP Political Bureau.

Warren began his report by noting that, from discussions at the meetings of industrial workers and at workshops, "it was universally agreed that there is a significant and important increase in receptivity to our ideas on the job."

Warren explained that the number one priority for the SWP and YSA this fall would be reaching out to the growing numbers of people who are willing to consider socialist ideas through the 1982 Socialist Workers Party campaigns.

"The number one antiwar, antiracist, anti-sexist, anticapitalist activity we will be carrying out," Warren said, "will be the socialist election campaigns."

He explained that the SWP is fielding candidates in 27 states and Washington, D.C. In 22 states and the District of Columbia, the party has launched drives to place candidates on the ballot, since being on the ballot greatly increases the impact of the campaigns.

To place socialist candidates on the ballot, more than half a million signatures on nominating petitions are required. Warren explained that as of the time of the conference, some 430,000 had already been collected, leaving about 100,000 to go. By far the biggest effort was in California, where SWP members and other supporters of the independent campaign of Mel Mason for governor collected more than 210,000 signatures on nominating petitions, nearly double the official requirement. Mason is a member of the Seaside City Council and of the SWP National Committee.

Gains of petition drives

"Just think about what we were able to do over the course of the petitioning campaigns," Warren said. "We talked to hundreds of thousands of people all over the country. Hundreds of people signed cards asking for more information and got subscriptions to the *Militant*. Many thousands of people signed our petitions

not just because they support our democratic right to be on the ballot, but also because of what we have to say on fighting war, racism, and on the big issues of the day."

"Petitioning is not the end of the ballot fight," he added. "Experience has shown the bipartisan bureaucrats who run elections don't care that the signatures we get are valid. If they can get away with keeping us off the ballot, they will."

Integrally tied in with the election campaigns, Warren explained, was the projection for the fall circulation drive of the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Warren concluded his presentation by explaining that in the past year or so there has been a noticeable increase in the number of people joining the YSA and the SWP, and that more people had decided to join during the course of the Oberlin conference. □

United States

Why stock market went wild

Federal Reserve fights banking crisis by printing money

By William Gottlieb

During the last two weeks in August, the New York Stock Exchange experienced the greatest rise in its history. The widely watched Dow Jones industrial average soared 115½ points.

The millions being raked in by rich stock market speculators and brokers contrasts sharply with the depression-like conditions that workers and farmers are facing. In the United States, industrial activity is at the lowest level reached so far in the current recession, and unemployment is the highest since the 1930s.

The farm crisis continues with no sign of letup. Farm income is at a 50-year low, and many farmers are losing their land.

Similar conditions exist throughout the capitalist world. What is behind the dramatic surge in stock prices in the midst of this economic crisis?

Actually, such a sharp upward movement in stocks is quite common near the low point of a recession. It usually heralds an economic recovery.

During a recession, with production sharply curtailed and millions out of work, the bosses are able to blackmail workers into accepting lower wages and worse working conditions. At the same time, reduced production means the amount of unsold commodities depressing the market are steadily reduced.

All this leads to a sharp increase in profits. And greater profits mean increased dividend payments on stocks and thus higher stock market prices.

Higher profits implies a gradual overall re-

covery in the economy. Capitalist production is, after all, production for profit.

Has the current global recession reached its lowest point? Are we due for a recovery?

After three years of recession this is a possibility. The current downswing in the business cycle will not last forever. At some point a cyclical rebound is inevitable. However, it would be wrong to jump to any quick conclusions. In the spring of 1980 there was also a powerful stock market rally. The U.S. economy experienced an upswing that collapsed within a few months.

What are the forces working against a strong recovery?

In length, the current recession is already comparable to the depression of 1929–33. But the decline in investment, industrial production, and world trade is still far from matching the collapse of the 1930s.

For example, industrial production is now about 10 percent below its 1979 level. But between 1929 and 1933, industrial production fell almost 50 percent. This means that the liquidation of surplus commodities has not yet even approached the levels of the Great Depression. Thus the major cause of the recession — the surplus means of production and commodities weighing down on the market — has not been eliminated.

Banking crashes

Historically, the turning point in major capitalist crises of overproduction has been the banking crash. The inability of commercial and industrial firms to sell their commodities forces

them to default on bank loans. At a certain point the bank's depositors and other creditors lose confidence and demand payment in cash. The banks cannot meet this sudden demand for cash and have to close their doors. They are in no position to lend additional money. Since the banks are the pivot of the entire credit system, credit is paralyzed. Production, employment, investment, and trade experience a violent collapse. This forces all "unsound" businesses to liquidate. Even the strongest companies have to run their inventories down to very low levels to raise the cash necessary to stay in business.

This process leads to tremendous unemployment for workers and widespread ruin for farmers and small businessmen. But for capitalism it is absolutely necessary.

Greatly reducing the amount of unsold commodities pressing down on the market enables it to "clear." Production to rebuild the depleted inventories then becomes profitable. As profits recover, confidence in the banking system returns, interest rates fall, and the way is open to economic recovery.

It was just such a banking crash that marked the climax of the Great Depression in 1931-33. After that the economy began a slow long-term recovery.

That was half a century ago. As far as capitalism is concerned, a new banking crash to clear the world market of surplus commodities is long overdue. Ordinary recessions, even if severe and prolonged, can no longer do the job. And sure enough, the signs that foreshadow a huge banking crisis have appeared.

Signs of crisis

Whole countries are facing virtual bankruptcy. It became clear during August that Mexico could not repay its \$80 billion foreign debt. This means major trouble for the biggest U.S. banks. The nine largest have money amounting to 40 percent of their capital and reserves on loan to Mexico.

Mexico is not an isolated case. Argentina, with a debt of \$39 billion, is also in desperate financial straits. Indeed, between 1973 and 1981 the long-term debt of the semicolonial countries increased from \$97.3 billion to \$425.2 billion. Even taking inflation into account, this is a huge increase.

It is interesting to note in passing that one of the concerns of the bankers is the worsening financial position of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The bankers complain that OPEC is becoming a net borrower rather than a net lender to the banks. This exposes how fraudulent were the claims of a few years ago that the main danger of a banking crash came from the huge cash surpluses being piled up by the "rich Arabs."

Serious as the prospect of countries defaulting on billions in loans is to the banks, the growing wave of failures of private companies is perhaps of even greater concern to them. As one French banker said, "Compared with what

the French steel industry owes us, Polish debt is a minor problem."

In Germany, bankruptcies of private firms are occurring at the highest rate since World War II. In August, the AEG-Telefunken electrical and electronics firm and the huge Wienerwald restaurant chain declared insolvency. AEG-Telefunken is nearly 60 percent owned by German banks. And this does not take into account the money that the banks have loaned to Telefunken.

In Britain, business liquidations are up 20 percent from last year. Even in Japan, the major imperialist country most resistant to the world recession, the liabilities of failing companies were 9 percent higher than last year.

U.S. bankruptcy wave

In the United States there has also been a wave of failures. According to Dun & Bradstreet Corp., 572 businesses failed in one week alone in August. This number has not been matched since the early 1930s.

The August bankruptcies include the giant Manville Corp., one of the biggest industrial corporations in the United States. Until Manville's bankruptcy, its stock was a component of the Dow Jones industrial average. The fact that Manville declared bankruptcy in order to dodge liability for asbestos-related damages, rather than because it is insolvent, will not diminish the financial impact of its action.

The huge number of bankruptcies has led to a mounting wave of failures among smaller commercial banks. Among these are the scandal-ridden Penn Square Bank in the United States, and the even more scandal-ridden Banco Ambrosiano in Italy. So far none of the biggest banks have failed and there has been no chain reaction. However, in the last month it has become clear that the floodwaters are finally reaching the doorsteps of some of the giants themselves. (See following article.)

The bankers and their spokespeople in the government and in the press often claim that a banking crash cannot happen again because of government controls. The U.S. Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC), which insures bank deposits of up to \$100,000, is frequently pointed to. But the FDIC is simply an insurance company that both the banks and the government contribute to. It can handle the failure of isolated banks, but it simply does not have the funds to meet a full-scale banking crisis. Like any insurance company, it too can go bankrupt.

In addition, deposits above \$100,000 are not insured by FDIC at all. As a tool for preventing a banking collapse, the FDIC has more psychological than real value.

The real weapon of the government against a banking crisis is not the FDIC, but the Federal Reserve Board — the central bank. The central bank acts as banker to the commercial banks and the government. It is the bank of issue; that is, it issues paper money. If the commercial banks face a run in which the depositors demand to withdraw their funds in cash, it is the central bank that must provide

the cash, thereby avoiding a banking collapse.

The bankruptcies of corporations and governments that are sweeping the capitalist world mean that a run on the banks, including the biggest, has become an imminent danger.

The Federal Reserve, in order to head it off, has dropped, at least for now, its "tight money" policy. It is saying to the big depositors of the capitalist banks: don't worry about your money, we'll see to it that your bank has enough to pay you off, no matter how much of the stuff we have to print.

Business Week, one of the most important business organs in the United States, wrote in an editorial in its September 6 edition: "It would be almost unthinkable for the Fed to allow recovery to be short-circuited at this juncture. The costs to the country in idle resources and soaring unemployment are unsustainable." Then, getting to the real point, *Business Week* wrote, "Moreover, strains in the international banking system threaten world stability."

Translated into ordinary language, this means the following. Tight money and high interest rates were fine as long as it simply meant a severe recession. But now the banking system has been brought to the brink of its worst collapse in history. If this banking crash materializes it will mean a depression of such violence that the enraged workers and farmers of the world may overthrow the capitalist system altogether. Therefore, the banks must be bailed out at virtually any cost.

Why Wall Street went wild

Stock market prices have been extraordinarily low (once inflation is taken into account) in recent years. Capitalist investors have generally preferred high-interest-bearing securities — that is IOU's — to stocks. In addition to collecting high interest payments, the holders of such securities also have preference over stockholders in the event a business goes bankrupt and is liquidated. No small consideration under current circumstances.

In recent months the fear of a full-scale banking crash weighed heavily on the market. In the event of such a crash individuals and businesses would dump stock on the market in a desperate attempt to raise some cash, driving the price of stocks sharply lower. Other stocks would become worthless due to bankruptcies and liquidations. As the threat mounted through the summer, capitalists became more and more unwilling to hold shares. Wall Street prices fell steadily.

However, when it became clear in the middle of August that the Federal Reserve would go to virtually any lengths to avoid a banking crash at this time, the *immediate* fear suddenly faded.

Furthermore, the shift to easy money by the Federal Reserve meant a sharp fall in interest rates. This is because the banks have more money to lend as the Federal Reserve moves to increase the money supply. Lower interest rates encourage investors to shift their money from interest-bearing IOU's back into stock (though interest rates are still at levels unheard of until

a few years ago).

In addition, the shift to a more liberal monetary policy by the Federal Reserve increases the chances considerably over the *short run* of a business upswing. Even a weak and brief upturn, which would hardly put a dent in the 10-million-plus U.S. unemployment figure, would mean a considerable rise in profits and dividends.

Cheaper credit also makes it easier to speculate in stocks with borrowed money.

With the sudden prospect of higher stock market prices, capitalists scrambled to buy stock before the prices rose more. Bank trust departments and other financial institutions command billions of dollars, which they can pour into the stock market at short notice once they think prices are heading higher. Corporations that have surplus cash and few productive investment possibilities due to the deep recession also can make quick bucks if they speculate successfully in stocks.

All these factors came together in the market

explosion.

Does the change in the Federal Reserve's policy mean that the economic situation will also change for the better for working people?

Not likely. The Federal Reserve's giant bank bailout may trigger a new wave of global inflation worse than anything seen so far. It was just to head off this threat that the Federal Reserve adopted its tight money policy to begin with. Such an inflationary explosion would mean a plunge in real wages.

Danger signals

Already, inflationary danger signs have appeared. The September 6 *Business Week* noted that "the Fed's governors undoubtedly welcome the sharp decline in interest rates and the runups in the stock and bond markets. But there are some reasons to believe that they are worried about the rapid rise in the precious-metals markets, where gold moved up by about \$48 per oz. this week. To the Federal Reserve, the price of gold remains a fever chart

of inflationary expectations. . . ."

Indeed it does, since the "price of gold" is nothing but the expression of the value of the paper dollar in terms of the money commodity. A sharp fall in the dollar's value against gold — if it continues — is a sure sign that a new wave of inflation is on the way. And as the experience of recent years has demonstrated, no serious upturn in economic activity can be based on this kind of inflation.

The Federal Reserve and the capitalist class that it serves find themselves between a rock and a hard place. If they let the printing press run, they will sooner or later face runaway inflation, which will be combined with, or followed by, depression. But if they return to the "tight money" course, they face a banking crash and depression.

Nothing shows more clearly that it is not this or that policy of the government or the Federal Reserve that is responsible for the economic crisis. It is the capitalist system itself. □

Bank failures worry Wall Street

The Penn Square bankruptcy case

By William Gottlieb

[The following article appeared in the September 3 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

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During the first week of August, John H. Perkins and Donald C. Miller, president and vice-chairman respectively of Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Co., met with officials of top Wall Street firms at the exclusive Four Seasons restaurant in New York City. Though these men are little known to the general public, their decisions will help determine the fate of thousands of businesses and millions of jobs.

The subject of the conversation at the Four Seasons was the spreading repercussions of the failure of the Oklahoma City-based Penn Square Bank on July 5.

Penn Square is by no means the only U.S. bank to fail recently. For some time, a wave of failures and forced mergers has been sweeping the savings and loan network. Recently a growing number of small commercial banks have either failed or been forcibly merged. Twenty-four federally insured banks have failed during the first seven months of this year.

Most of these failures represent the collapse of small capitalists who have fallen victim to the three-year-long recession. However Penn Square is different. While itself a relatively small bank, it has connections that lead to the very summit of U.S. and world banking.

Oilmen on slippery slope

In 1974, a clique of oilmen led by William Jennings and Carl Swan bought control of the then-tiny Penn Square Bank. Between 1974

and 1981, deposits at Penn Square rose from \$29 million to \$470 million. Jennings, Swan, and other bank directors used the money that was entrusted to them by Penn Square depositors to finance their various business enterprises.

For example, Penn Square loaned Swan and various businesses that Swan had interests in some \$200 million. One of these businesses is now in bankruptcy. That is, it is refusing to return the money that it had "borrowed" from Penn Square. Other Swan companies have paid virtually no money on Penn Square loans since the beginning of the year, though so far they have not resorted to the legal niceties of bankruptcy proceedings.

Jennings, the chairman of Penn Square, received some \$18 million in loans from Penn Square and associated banks. Like Swan, one of Jennings's companies is in bankruptcy and others are paying little or no principal or interest.

Things went sour for Jennings, Swan, and company when the long recession cut into the demand for gas and oil. In 1974, when Jennings and Swan took control of Penn Square, it seemed to some as though the supply of oil and gas would never catch up with demand. Superprofits seemed assured.

But once again the familiar capitalist phenomenon of overproduction caught up with the oil and gas market. A huge oil glut developed as more oil and gas was produced than could be sold in a recession-stricken economy. Prices of oil and gas slumped. Suddenly the "sun belt" was hit by recession. The borrowed money that Jennings and Swan so liberally invested in their oil and gas ventures proved hard

to recover.

In and of itself, the collapse of such middle-size capitalists as Jennings and Swan would not set off tremors throughout the banking world. The problem was that Jennings and Swan had unloaded many of their loans on much larger banks, including some of the biggest in the country.

What Penn Square did was "sell" its loans to other banks, which would pay cash for an IOU, planning to make their profit by collecting the outstanding loan. Penn Square, meanwhile, would then loan the proceeds of these sales once again — perhaps to companies controlled by Jennings, Swan, or other Penn Square directors.

The operation would be repeated again and again. It is estimated that through these methods the Penn Square directors got their hands on more than \$2 billion. This does not count the generous fees they collected for their "services."

Now, with many of the loans that Penn Square sold uncollectable, the banks that bought the loans are stuck with the losses.

Among the banks that Penn Square sold loans to are Continental Illinois Bank, based in Chicago, and New York's Chase Manhattan Bank. Continental is the sixth-largest bank in the United States, while Chase, closely associated with the vast Rockefeller financial empire, is one of the most important banks in the world.

The purchase of dubious loans from Penn Square is not Continental's only problem, however. The giant Chicago-based bank has loaned millions to such bankrupt companies as

Nucorp Energy, Alfa of Mexico, Braniff, and AM International. The Penn Square scandal threatens to be the straw that breaks the camel's back for Continental.

It has been disclosed that James Harper, an executive vice-president of Continental, sold all his 68,938 shares in the bank April 22. And Harper is not the only one who has a lack of faith in Continental's future. The bank and its senior officers are the subject of a class-action suit by some Continental stockholders charging them with fraud.

Clouds over Chase

While Chase Manhattan is a much sounder bank than Continental (it has the Rockefeller fortune to back it up, after all), it has shown a knack of late for being involved in practically every major financial fiasco. Besides its purchases of Penn Square loans, Chase recently lost tens of millions in the failures of Drysdale Government Securities and Lombard-Wall, two Wall Street government security firms.

The August 17 edition of the *Wall Street Journal* reports that capitalist investors are becoming uneasy about lending money to Chase. And when the money men are uneasy about Chase, they are uneasy about a lot of other things as well.

Behind the banking failures and scandals is the wave of bankruptcies and other financial shocks that is sweeping the world economy. The insolvency of AEG-Telefunken in West Germany, the failure of Banco Ambrosiano based in Italy, and the sharp devaluation of the Mexican peso are some examples that have occurred in just the last few weeks.

After three years of recession, the world capitalist economy has reached the very brink of a new Great Depression. With unemployment in the United States officially at 9.8 percent and at similar levels in Western Europe, depression conditions already exist for millions of workers and farmers in the advanced capitalist countries. In the colonial and semicolonial countries, the plight of hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, and unemployed is becoming desperate.

Rescue by Federal Reserve?

It is becoming clear that a few more months of credit squeeze and the world economy will be in a depression fully comparable to that of the 1930s.

There is mounting evidence that the U.S. central bank, the Federal Reserve Board, is now trying to pull the world capitalist economy back from the brink. On August 13, the Federal Reserve cut its discount rate, the rate at which it lends money to the banks, from 11 percent to 10.5 percent. It was the third such cut in a month's time.

The central bank is mobilizing its own vast financial power to prevent the collapse of Continental National, Chase Manhattan, and thousands of other business enterprises. Can the Federal Reserve's rescue operation succeed?

In the short term the central bank may very

well ease the mounting financial tensions. Interest rates have already declined considerably in recent weeks. The stock market has rallied. With the Federal Reserve expanding the money supply, industrial production and economic activity in general may well pick up in the coming months. Unemployment may even decrease somewhat. Even in its death agony capitalism does not decline along a straight line. The capitalist economy continues to experience cyclical ups as well as downs.

But if the Federal Reserve does succeed in staving off a full-scale crash this time, it will actually worsen the underlying problems of capitalism.

Banking crashes play a necessary role under capitalism. By periodically causing a collapse in credit they force business to slash produc-

tion. Weaker enterprises go bankrupt. In this way, surplus commodities and means of production are eliminated. The way is thus prepared for a new long-term upswing of the capitalist economy.

Assuming the Federal Reserve Board rescue operation is successful, the problem of too many commodities being produced by "unsound" businesses will be worsened. The current mess is, after all, the cumulative result of such Federal Reserve rescue operations in past recessions.

The real choice confronting decadent monopoly capitalism is to take the plunge into the second Great Depression of the century now or do so a little later under even more desperate economic circumstances. This is the only choice this dying system offers. □

Philippines

Marcos extends crackdown

In preparation for visit to Washington

By Fred Murphy

In preparing for his mid-September state visit to Washington, Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos has pursued his crackdown on trade unionists and other opponents of his repressive rule.

Marcos charged August 8 that "intelligence reports" had revealed "a plan for a nationwide strike, which will be accompanied by nationwide bombings and assassinations." Since then at least 39 people have been jailed, including labor leaders, as well as political activists accused of belonging to the outlawed Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Along with 42 others who are still being sought by the police, all have been charged with plotting to overthrow the Marcos regime.

Felixberto Olalia, the 79-year-old leader of the May 1 Movement (KMU), and an aide, Crispin Beltran, were arrested August 13. They have been charged with "inciting sedition and rebellion" and confined to a military stockade.

The KMU is a coalition of unions with some half a million members; it has been in the forefront of numerous recent strikes for wage increases and against layoffs and plant closures.

Besides the KMU's offices, other union headquarters raided August 13 were those of the National Federation of Labor, the Philippine Alliance of Nationalist Labor Organizations, and the Association of Democratic Labor Organizations.

On September 1, Bonifacio Tupaz, general secretary of the Trade Union of the Philippines, was arrested along with 22 other union leaders. Seventeen of these, including Tupaz, were held in jail.

On August 28 the regime announced the arrest of Isagani Serrano, whom the authorities

claimed was a member of the CPP Central Committee in charge of "mass action."

In addition to the jailings, Marcos has launched a broader campaign to intimidate those who might seek to protest during his absence from the Philippines. A special unit of 1,000 cops was mobilized in Manila, the Philippine capital, in early August.

"After the police killed a reported 45 holdup suspects in the first eight days," the *New York Times* reported, "Mr. Marcos ordered half of the men to wear uniforms and to kill only when absolutely necessary. Many of the hardcore robbers, he charged, were also subversives."

In launching the current crackdown, Marcos aims to prevent protests during his U.S. visit and to demonstrate to the Reagan administration that his regime needs stepped-up U.S. economic and military aid.

Eight members of Congress have issued a statement opposing the Marcos state visit. Their statement, issued September 1, said Marcos's visit "should distress all those concerned with struggling for a foreign policy which truly serves the interests of peace, justice, and human rights."

A wide array of Filipino organizations and U.S. human-rights and political groups are planning a different kind of welcome for the dictator than Reagan's. The National Committee to Oppose the Marcos State Visit will hold a national day of protest on September 16.

The protests will demand a halt to U.S. support for the Marcos dictatorship, as well as calling on the Senate to reject ratification of a U.S.-Philippines treaty authorizing the extradition from the United States of Filipinos accused of political crimes by the Marcos dictatorship. □

Belaúnde's 'antiterrorist' crackdown

Workers, peasants, students swept up in police dragnet

By Fred Murphy

Acting under a state of emergency declared August 20 after a series of bomb blasts blacked out the capital and other coastal cities the day before, the Peruvian government has launched a crackdown against popular struggles.

Among the 250 or more persons jailed by President Fernando Belaúnde Terry's police since the emergency went into effect are the following:

- Manuel Curotto, general secretary of the Bank Workers Federation (FEB). The FEB went on strike throughout Peru for higher wages and other demands during the first week of September.

- Lazo Tovar, president of the Federation of Peruvian Students (FEP). Tovar was detained as a result of student demonstrations on September 2 at two Lima campuses, San Marcos University and the National Engineering University (UNI). The protests were against the extensive arrests of UNI students during police dragnets in previous days.

- José Pérez Olivares, president of the Andahuaylas Peasant Federation in the south-central province of Apurímac. Olivares was seized August 24 when his house was raided by Civil Guards. Olivares's brother and the vice-president of the Andahuaylas federation were also jailed.

- Various leaders of the civil construction workers union. The 200,000 members of this union had been on strike since August 13, but the leadership decided to suspend the work stoppage when the state of emergency was declared.

- Dozens of youthful residents of the poor neighborhoods and shantytowns that surround Lima. The 20,000 Civil Guards and other police deployed in the capital have carried out massive dragnets and random raids on homes, sweeping up hundreds of youth and detaining those who lack what the cops consider proper identification.

These moves by the Belaúnde regime represent an escalation of its attacks on human rights in Peru under the pretext of fighting "terrorism." These began in early 1981; since then, a total of about 1,000 persons have been jailed throughout the country under Belaúnde's "antiterrorist" law. Some 300 are being held at the notorious island prison of El Frontón. Most of these are peasant leaders, students, neighborhood activists, or trade-union militants.

'Sendero Luminoso'

The repression has been felt most heavily in the impoverished countryside of the south-central Andean highlands — the provinces of

Ayacucho, Apurímac, Huancavelica, Junín, and Cuzco.

Ayacucho has been the center of operations of an armed organization usually referred to as Sendero Luminoso (SL — Shining Path).

Politically, the SL claims to be the "true" Communist Party of Peru. It proclaims its adherence to "Marxism-Leninism-Maoism" and its determination to follow "the Shining Path of José Carlos Mariátegui" — founder of the Peruvian communist movement in the late 1920s. The SL holds that the only road to revolutionary power in Peru today is through peasant-based armed struggle that will "encircle the cities from the countryside." It denounces the rest of the Peruvian left as "parliamentary cretins" and "objective allies of reaction."

Sendero Luminoso began its armed activity in mid-1980 with a series of dynamite bombings of government buildings, communications facilities, and electrical pylons. These continued through 1981, along with occasional raids on farms and police posts in the countryside around Ayacucho.

More spectacular actions by the SL began in March of this year. A March 3 raid on the federal prison in Ayacucho freed some 300 inmates, including 90 persons accused under the antiterrorist law. Attacks on police posts continued during subsequent months, along with assassinations of local government officials, merchants, and persons considered police informers. The SL has also raided warehouses and distributed food and farming tools to peasants.

Government brutality

The regime's response to the guerrilla challenge was to impose emergency rule and curfews in the affected provinces and send in the special counterinsurgency unit of the Civil Guards known as the "Sinchis." The region's peasant communities became the main target.

"The presence of special anti-terrorist police . . . is known to have created much resentment and fear among the region's inhabitants, who hold members of the paramilitary units responsible for beatings, robberies and rapes," the *Miami Herald* reported last March 11.

"In addition, peasant community leaders have complained that former landlords in the area work hand-in-hand with the police, denouncing campesinos and their leaders as terrorists as a means of getting their lands back." (The latest case of this kind was the arrest of the Andahuaylas peasant leaders — Andahuaylas was the scene of some of the most

important land struggles of the 1970s.)

The government also promised a series of public-works projects for the long-neglected Ayacucho region. Thus far, none of these have gotten off the drawing board. Meanwhile, conditions there remain as described in a dispatch from Peru to the August 27 London *Guardian*:

"The average annual per capita income in [Ayacucho] province is £35 [US\$60], while other social indicators like literacy rates, health, and full-time employment put it firmly at the bottom of the Peruvian League. Over 70 per cent of the population eke out a living from near-barren soil."

Austerity and resistance

Since the August 19 blackout in Lima — widely attributed to Sendero Luminoso, although the group has not claimed credit for it — and an attack by 200 guerrillas three days later on a heavily armed Civil Guard post in the Ayacucho town of Vilcashuamán, the Belaúnde government and the Peruvian bourgeois press have sought to whip up hysteria against "terrorism."

Belaúnde has called for restoring the death penalty and has spoken vaguely but persistently of an "international conspiracy," even accusing human-rights groups abroad of being in league with the "terrorists." Right-wing politicians and newspapers have urged that the regular army be mobilized in Ayacucho, a step that Belaúnde has rejected, at least for the moment.

Prime Minister Manuel Ulloa has alleged that there is "coordination and coincidence" between the recent bombings and "labor conflicts"; he accuses the trade unions of "taking advantage" of the violence.

In fact, it is Belaúnde and Ulloa who have taken advantage of the recent events in order to clamp down on the unions and popular organizations. Such repression is necessary if the regime is to continue applying the harsh austerity measures insisted upon by the International Monetary Fund and the big imperialist banks that hold Peru's \$10 billion foreign debt. These measures have led to plant shutdowns, layoffs, and sharply declining living standards for the country's already impoverished toilers.

Strikes like those of the bank workers — as well as labor actions being prepared by copper miners, oil workers, and other unions — show that resistance to Belaúnde's policies is mounting. Moreover, the regime's inability to eradicate Sendero Luminoso and the sympathy the group receives from many Peruvians indicate that the patience of the people is wearing thin. □