

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

combined
with *inprecor*

Vol. 20, No. 32

October 18, 1982

USA \$1.25

UK 50p

U.S., French, Italian 'Peacekeepers' Back Israel's War Against Palestinians



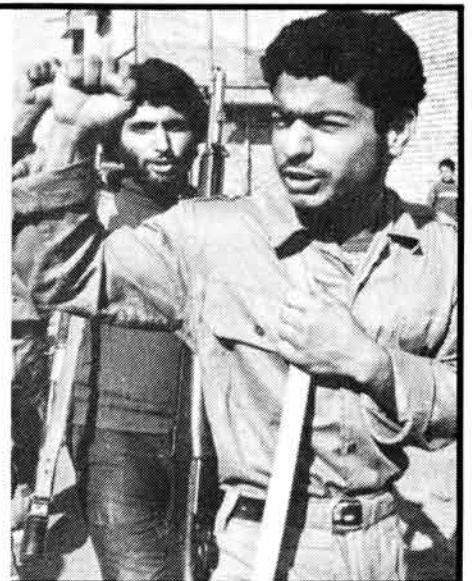
French paratroopers in West Beirut.



Gen. Jaruzelski

Reagan Chimes in With Trade Sanctions Polish Regime's New Attack on Workers

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'Open season' on Palestinians

By Ernest Harsch

"From arbitrary arrests to vigilante raids, to the denial of shelter, running water and electricity, it is open season on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon."

That description — from a Beirut dispatch by reporter Dan Williams in the October 3 *Miami Herald* — captures only part of the war that is now being waged against the half-million Palestinians living in Lebanon. The September 16–18 massacre of hundreds of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps was just the most dramatic expression of this war.

From the very beginning of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon on June 6, the Palestinian people and their heroic struggle for self-determination, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), have been the central targets of the Zionist onslaught.

The massive Israeli bombing raids of West Beirut were not directed primarily at the PLO's military forces. The main targets were the Palestinian civilian population and the predominantly Muslim Lebanese working class that has long supported the Palestinian struggle.

Aim to crush Palestinians

The Israeli rulers know full well that in order to strike a major blow against the Palestinian movement it is not sufficient to hit the PLO's fighters, but to strike at its roots — the mass of exiled Palestinians. That is why the Israeli jet fighters concentrated on bombing so many hospitals, schools, refugee camps, apartment buildings, clinics, and other facilities and institutions that served the Palestinian population as a whole.

Armed and funded by Washington, the Israeli invaders were successful in driving the PLO out of Beirut. They are now pushing to expel the PLO from other parts of Lebanon, as well as the Syrian troops stationed at the Bekaa Valley. On October 4, Israeli jets again hit Syrian antiaircraft positions in the valley.

At the same time, the Zionist rulers aim to terrorize and disperse as much of the Palestinian population as possible, to break it up as an organized entity, to wipe it out as a political force.

All this is presented by the U.S., French, and Italian imperialists as part of the campaign to "stabilize" Lebanon and to assert the authority of the Lebanese government — the new rightist regime of Amin Gemayel, whose Phalangist militia gangs carried out the massacre in Sabra and Shatila.

Massive roundups

When the Israeli army first overran West Beirut on September 15, Israeli troops rounded up thousands of Palestinians and members of

the various Muslim and leftist militia forces that were allied with the PLO. They also looted and carted away invaluable archival material collected over the years by Palestinian scholars, including irreplaceable manuscripts and documents on Palestinian history and culture. The Israeli rulers want to erase every vestige of the Palestinian nation.

After the Israeli troops withdrew from the city, the sweeps were continued by the Lebanese army, with the direct backing of the multinational force of U.S., French, and Italian troops.

In a September 27 dispatch from Beirut, *New York Times* correspondent James Clarity reported, "The army has been carefully checking the passports and identification papers of people on the streets, and in some neighborhoods has been ordering people out of their homes to be checked. In the process, the army has detained an estimated 3,000 people.

"Press reports here say that about 300 people, most of them believed to be Palestinians, have been deported in recent days, most of them to Syria."

In subsequent days, thousands more were picked up. Entire sections of West Beirut were cordoned off, and troops made house-to-house searches and stopped cars and people on the streets for identity checks. In just one Palestinian refugee camp in West Beirut, Burj al Brajneh, 578 Palestinians were arrested for not having proper residency papers.

On October 5 and 6, French troops participated directly in the roundups. Together with the Lebanese army, they sealed off the downtown area of West Beirut with tanks and armored cars. While Lebanese troops detained Palestinians and Lebanese civilians, the French soldiers searched automobiles.

Some of those later released have reported being beaten and otherwise mistreated by their captors. Muslim leaders in West Beirut have raised an alarm about 1,500 people who are now missing.

An unknown number of those detained in West Beirut have been taken to the Israeli-run Ansar detention camp in southern Lebanon, which is now thought to hold some 8,000 prisoners, most of them Palestinians.

Similar roundups are being conducted by Israeli troops in the Palestinian refugee camps around Sidon in southern Lebanon. There have also been reports of shootings and other terrorist attacks against Palestinians in the south, carried out by the rightist Christian militia forces.

'They will be deported'

The searches, detentions, expulsions, and killings have spread fear and anxiety throughout the Palestinian population of Lebanon. "It's as if there was a plan to terrorize the

Palestinians," one 70-year-old Palestinian told a reporter.

In fact, there is a plan. More and more, Lebanese government officials are admitting that their goal is to expel or drive out much of the Palestinian population.

As a justification, they are seizing on the fact that as many as half of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon do not have valid papers. Only those who came with the first wave of refugees in 1948 were given identity cards, issued by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. But many thousands more have sought refuge in Lebanon since then, driven out of their homes by the 1956 and 1967 Middle East wars and the 1970 civil war in Jordan, in which the Jordanian government expelled the PLO and much of the Palestinian refugee population from that country.

In an interview in the Saudi Arabian magazine *Al Yamama*, Gemayel declared that these Palestinians had no right to be in Lebanon. "Neither law nor logic allows them to remain in Lebanon," he said.

Following some of the army sweeps through Burj al Brajneh and parts of West Beirut, Maj. Atef Torbay, a spokesman for the Lebanese Defense Ministry, was asked what would happen to Palestinians who did not have identity cards. "They will be deported," he replied. He did not indicate where to.

Houses bulldozed

On September 27, the French-language Beirut daily *l'Orient le Jour* reported that government officials were studying plans to limit the number of Palestinians in Lebanon to 50,000 — about one-tenth of those now in the country. Although the Lebanese regime is in no position at this time to actually try to implement such a sweeping expulsion, the announcement that it is considering such drastic plans is an important political move. It indicates the direction of the government's policy and is intended to further terrorize the Palestinian population.

Another Beirut daily, *An Nahar*, reported the same week that the government wants to relocate the refugee camps outside of the main urban areas. According to a summary of the report in the September 30 *Christian Science Monitor*, this would be "to protect the Lebanese public from taint by politically active Palestinians."

The Phalangist-dominated regime has already begun to destroy some of the Palestinian camps, and to prevent Palestinians from rebuilding those damaged by the war. In the Palestinian neighborhood of Meia Meia in Sidon, for instance, militia forces have systematically burned and bulldozed Palestinian homes.

Although electrical power has been restored to the rest of Beirut, it has not been turned on in the Shatila camp. Moreover, shops and houses built by Palestinians and Lebanese Muslims on so-called public land in Beirut are being bulldozed. No provision has been made to house the people being driven out in this

way. They had originally been forced to build these structures on any available land after being expelled from their homes in East Beirut during the Lebanese civil war or in the south during earlier Israeli attacks.

The September 16–18 massacre in the Sabra and Shatila camps was part of this organized campaign to terrorize the Palestinian population.

This was pointed to in the September 28 issue of *Ha'aretz*, the main daily paper in Israel. Military correspondent Zev Schiff commented, "It has become apparent that this was not a spontaneous act of revenge after the murder of Bashir Gemayel [Amin's brother, the president-elect, who was assassinated September 14], but an act that was planned beforehand with the objective of causing a mass flight of Palestinians from Beirut and Lebanon."

Marines back crackdown

This ongoing terror campaign shows up the true role of the multinational "peacekeeping" force in Lebanon. The purpose of the U.S., French, and Italian troops is not to protect Palestinians and Lebanese from the rightist Phalangist-led bands, but to help Gemayel's Phalangist-led regime impose its ruthless grip on the country on behalf of the imperialists.

One unnamed "U.S. policy-maker" was quoted in the October 4 *Washington Post*, "The central problem is trying to assert central government control over the fringe elements. Somehow, these elements will have to be purged or suppressed."

According to the Phalangists, these "fringe elements" include half a million Palestinians and the many thousands of Lebanese working people who support the Palestinian struggle and oppose the imperialist domination of their country.

The immediate role of the more than 3,000 U.S., French, and Italian troops is to directly facilitate the mass sweeps the Gemayel regime is now carrying out. Just before the U.S. Marines were sent in, an unnamed U.S. government official told the *New York Times* September 27 that the marines would "man borders and major road crossings so that the Lebanese Army won't have to worry about their flanks while they get on with their job of disarming various factions, finding arms caches and so forth."

As the French participation in the identity checks showed, the troops are not limiting themselves to protecting the Lebanese army's "flanks."

In addition to the troops' specific actions, their very presence in Lebanon is intended to politically bolster the Gemayel regime, which is still far from its goal of establishing control over the country as a whole.

One of the tasks of Morris Draper, President Reagan's new special envoy to Lebanon, is to assess Gemayel's military needs, in preparation for the provision of U.S. arms and financial assistance.

The ties between Washington and the

Phalangists are not new. They go back at least a year.

In July 1981, Bashir Gemayel visited Washington and met with a number of U.S. government officials. Shortly thereafter, according to a report in the October 1 *Washington Post*, the Central Intelligence Agency established an "information link" with the Phalangist militia's intelligence units, commanded by Elie Hobeika, an aide to Bashir Gemayel. Hobeika also maintained close ties with Mossad, the Israeli counterpart of the CIA.

It was Hobeika who led the Phalangist forces into Sabra and Shatila to carry out their massacre of the Palestinian refugees.

Just as the Israeli government has been seeking to deny any responsibility for that massacre by pinning the entire blame on the Phalangists, the U.S. government is trying to claim that its hands are clean of the mass detentions and beatings of Palestinians now being conducted by the Lebanese army.

On October 6, State Department spokesman

Alan Romberg said that Washington was working closely with the Lebanese government "in establishing control over West Beirut." But he also had the audacity to claim that the Reagan administration was "concerned, of course, that it be done in a proper manner, without basic violation of rights."

The crimes being carried out by the Israelis, Phalangists, and Lebanese army troops — backed by the White House and the French and Italian governments — have caused the Palestinian people much suffering, and will undoubtedly cause more. But they cannot stop the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, any more than the atrocities carried out by the apartheid regime in South Africa have been able to stop the Black freedom struggle in that country.

Washington and the Israeli regime have already paid a high political price for their bloodletting in Lebanon. International solidarity with the Palestinian people and efforts to expose and spotlight the criminal actions of the imperialists can help raise that political price even more. □

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

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

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

To Subscribe: For one-year subscriptions in the U.S. or Canada send US\$25.00. Subscription correspondence should be addressed to: Intercontinental Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: (212) 929-6933.

For airmail subscriptions to Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe send US\$35.00 for one year; US\$17.50 for six months. Write for subscription rates to all other countries.

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

We prefer payment in bank drafts or postal checks payable in U.S. dollars because of the charges involved in clearing personal checks drawn on other currencies. However, personal checks will be accepted, with an additional 5 percent added for clearing charges.

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

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

Why 'peacekeepers' will not bring peace

Imperialists deal big blows, but pay heavy price

By David Frankel

[The following article appeared in the October 8 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*.]

* * *

Claiming that they will act "to restore peace to Beirut," President Reagan has ordered 1,200 marines into Lebanon.

The U.S. Marines, along with French and Italian troops, are acting as an occupation force in behalf of the right-wing Christian forces that were handed governmental power by the Israeli army in late August.

There is a precedent for this invasion of Beirut by U.S. Marines. The same thing was done in 1958, and for the same reason — to shore up the discriminatory political system that guarantees the domination of Lebanon's Maronite Christian minority. A majority of Lebanon's population is Muslim, and the Maronite sect represents at most only half of the Christian minority — in other words, less than a quarter of the population.

This discriminatory arrangement was foisted on Lebanon by its former French colonial masters, who used it to divide the population, thus facilitating their rule. From the point of view of the imperialists, this remains a useful arrangement for maintaining their domination. The result for Lebanon was the bloody civil war of 1975-76, and the years of chaos since then.

Far from leading to peace, the reimposition of a Lebanese government based on the most right-wing sectors of the Maronite minority can only result in big new conflicts within Lebanon, whatever immediate successes there are in stabilizing the new regime. The multinational "peacekeeping" force is committing a crime against the people of Lebanon. And this crime is linked to another one — the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Results of invasion

The politics of the Middle East have passed through a historic watershed. This is clear in light of the events since the Israeli army invaded Lebanon on June 6.

While the long-planned Israeli invasion has dealt big blows to the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, and to the anti-imperialist struggle in the Middle East as a whole, it also showed the scope of the difficulties facing the imperialists. The rulers in both Israel and the United States have paid a heavy political price for their gains.

Within Lebanon, the negative impact of the Israeli invasion is quite clear. The military positions of the Palestine Liberation Organization



U.S. Marines in Beirut.

(PLO) in Beirut and in the southern part of the country have been eliminated. Thousands of Palestinian fighters have been killed or captured, and thousands more dispersed. Much of Lebanon remains under Israeli occupation. And a right-wing, Phalangist-dominated government has been installed in Beirut.

Furthermore, Washington, along with its imperialist allies in France and Italy, has taken advantage of the situation to send combat troops, with orders to shoot, into Lebanon. This move must be seen in the context of the overall U.S. military buildup in the Middle

East during the past five years.

Washington's purpose in beefing up its military presence is to prepare the way for intervention to defend the interests of U.S. oil companies against revolutionary struggles in the region. Moreover, by sending marines into the explosive situation in Lebanon, Reagan has established a precedent that will make it easier for him to do the same thing in Central America and the Caribbean.

At the same time, the events in Lebanon showed the limits of imperialist power. Although the fundamental purpose of the Israeli invasion was to eliminate the PLO as a political force, that was beyond the power of the Israeli military machine.

Heroic resistance

The heroic resistance of the PLO in West Beirut — especially when contrasted to the brutality of the Israeli siege — gave millions throughout the world a new understanding of the progressive character of the Palestinian struggle.

The ability of the PLO leadership to explain the issues in their battle for self-determination, and to organize and lead a necessary retreat from West Beirut in the face of vastly superior military forces arrayed against them, was a source of pride and inspiration to the Palestinian people.

As a result, the military blows inflicted on the Palestinians have not led to demoralization or political retreat. This is particularly evident in the militant protests among the Palestinians living under Israeli rule. On September 22, for example, a general strike among Palestinians living in Israel involved 90 percent of the Arab population, by the government's own admission. This is unprecedented, and it reflects the further expansion of the PLO's authority among the Palestinian people.

Above all, the impact of the massacre in West Beirut has marked a historic turning point in the way that the Middle East is seen by the world working class. There has been a decisive shift against the Zionist state. The myth of Israel as a peace-loving, democratic, and humanitarian country besieged by its Arab neighbors has taken a severe beating.

The Israeli rulers will never wash away the stain of the massacre in West Beirut. The true face of the Israeli colonial settler-state was exposed to too many people.

Within Israel itself, hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets to protest the massacre and the war policies of the Begin government. This marks a giant step forward for the class struggle inside Israel, the beginning of a much

broader political process that will inevitably lead Jewish working people to question the basis of the Zionist state.

But the blow to the Israeli ruling class has also shaken Reagan and the U.S. rulers. Israel, after all, is Washington's main ally in the Middle East, its most reliable bastion against the Arab revolution.

In the past when the Israeli regime launched attacks on its neighbors, it could depend on an international atmosphere in which it was mistakenly seen by many as an embattled under-

dog. It was given the benefit of the doubt by many working people in the United States, who saw U.S. military, economic, and diplomatic backing to Israel as morally correct. In the months of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, climaxing in the massacre of September 16-18, this has qualitatively changed.

What working people see now is that U.S.-supplied cluster bombs, F-16 fighter-bombers, phosphorus shells, tanks, and artillery are all used to murder defenseless civilians. U.S. aid to Israel, which is essential to the Zionist state

and to the maintenance of U.S. imperialist domination of the Middle East, is now being widely questioned.

PLO's political role

The fact that the impact of the defeat in Lebanon has been mitigated to such an extent is a tribute to the revolutionary nationalist leadership of the PLO.

To begin with, the Palestinian masses were armed and organized, thanks to the PLO. This was not like Chile in 1973, where the workers

SWP's view of Palestinian withdrawal from Beirut

**By Cindy Jaquith
and Doug Jenness**

[The following article appeared in the October 15 issue of the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*. It is signed by the coeditors of the paper. The joint statement it refers to appeared in the October 4 issue of *Intercontinental Press*, on page 733.]

* * *

A statement on Lebanon appeared in the October 1 issue of the *Militant*. The introduction identified it as a joint statement by the French Revolutionary Communist League, the Italian Revolutionary Communist Group, and the U.S. Socialist Workers Party.

The appearance of the SWP's name on this statement was an editorial error. The SWP had not signed it, and it did not reflect the views of the SWP. The SWP's position was most clearly expressed in the front-page article signed by David Frankel that appeared in the October 8 issue of the *Militant*.

The joint French and Italian statement implied that it was an error for the Palestine Liberation Organization to have organized the withdrawal of its forces from West Beirut last August under an agreement that included the presence of a multinational force of U.S., French, and Italian troops.

The statement asks, "What good was the disengagement force sent to Lebanon in late August under the Habib plan? It organized the departure of the units of Palestinian fighters, legitimizing the Zionist military presence in Lebanon. By its presence it guaranteed the election of the Phalangist murderer Bashir Gemayel to the Lebanese presidency by a rump parliament that met in a barracks under the guard of Israeli bayonets. It dismantled the Palestinian defense lines in West Beirut."

An imperialist army of 70,000 troops — the Israeli army, armed with the most advanced and destructive military equipment financed or directly provided by U.S. imperialism — was already occupying Lebanon before any members of the multinational force arrived. Its presence was "legitimized" by naked force, and it was that same military power that enabled the Israeli army to dictate the election of Gemayel to the Lebanese presidency.

Furthermore, it is not true that the U.S.-French-Italian force organized the PLO's departure and dismantled its defense lines. The PLO organized its own departure and dismantled its own defense lines in the face of the overwhelming military force that was threatening to pulverize West Beirut and kill thousands more civilians. To help ensure that its fighters would not be massacred by the Israeli army during the withdrawal, the PLO proposed that a multinational force be brought into Beirut to serve as a buffer between the Palestinians and the Israeli troops encircling the city.

Of course, as always, the U.S., French, and Italian capitalist governments had nothing progressive in mind in agreeing to the multinational force. By its political stance and heroic resistance throughout the Israeli onslaught, however, the PLO had made the political cost for imperialism of any slaughter of the PLO fighters during the withdrawal very high.

As the *Militant* pointed out in the October 8 article by David Frankel, "an analogy could be made to the organizers of a progressive demonstration who, faced with an attack by a superior force of armed rightist thugs, call on the police to defend the democratic rights of the demonstrators. Such an action does not imply political support to the cops, approval of their role in society, or abandonment of the need for self-defense."

The article also stated that the PLO's only alternative to a negotiated withdrawal was to make a futile last stand in West Beirut.

"Such a decision would have led to far more civilian casualties than even the massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. . . . The only thing a fight to the end would have accomplished would have been to help the Israelis in their aim of destroying the PLO and its forces."

Therefore, the article continued, the PLO "correctly rejected this suicidal course and chose instead to organize and lead a retreat. . . ."

Once this decision had been made, the tactics the PLO chose in carrying out its retreat were — like the decision itself — dictated by the relationship of military forces. As the October 8 article explained:

"Since the Palestinians were not in a position to force a pullback of Israeli troops, they proposed an international force that would interpose itself between their forces and the Israelis as the only way to ensure that they would not be slaughtered during the withdrawal."

The joint statement of the French and Italian sections of the Fourth International further asserts that U.S., French, and Italian troops that returned in September, following the massacre in West Beirut, "will not serve the interests of the Palestinian and Lebanese people any better" than the troops that went in August.

This confuses the concrete role of an international force that the PLO had to accept in order to obtain a withdrawal of its military forces from Beirut, with a military occupation force that will stay as long as necessary to prop up the most proimperialist, anti-Palestinian, anti-working-class government possible.

Both Washington and Israel are attempting to establish a stable, rightist government in Lebanon. That was one of the objectives of the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon. That is the purpose of the current so-called peacekeeping force — to help the Phalangist killers that carried out the massacre in Sabra and Shatila.

If it were true, as the joint French and Italian statement implies, that the agreement the PLO accepted for the withdrawal of its troops, rather than the U.S.-Israeli onslaught, was responsible for ensuring Phalangist control of the Lebanese government; for forcing the departure of the Palestinian fighters; and for the dismantling of PLO defense lines — then it would also follow that the PLO was in large part responsible for the massacre in Sabra and Shatila.

But this is false. A position that implies that the PLO's policies in any way contributed to the massacre in West Beirut is scandalous. The truth is that the PLO's policies were designed to prevent a much more devastating massacre.

We condemn the genocidal U.S.-Israeli policy that inevitably led to the holocaust in Lebanon. And we demand the withdrawal of all imperialist occupying armies — French, Italian, Israeli and United States — from Lebanon.



Liberation fighters arriving in Cyprus. PLO organized and led a necessary retreat.

and peasants were left defenseless in the face of the rightist coup. Sidon, for example, was surrounded by Israeli forces on the second day of the war, but it wasn't until June 16 — nine days later — that the Israelis were able to take the city.

Because of the PLO's history of support for the rights of the working people in Lebanon, many Lebanese fought side-by-side with the Palestinians.

By June 14, the Israeli forces had completed the encirclement of Beirut. But thanks to the fight put up by the PLO and its allies, the Israelis — with their vastly superior military might — were not able to move into West Beirut until September 15 — three months later.

It is important to note that the PLO did not simply lead a military resistance. What happened was that the military fight organized by the PLO enabled it to gain time and to help mobilize a worldwide political campaign against the crimes of the Israeli regime. This political campaign maximized the price that the Israeli rulers had to pay for their invasion of Lebanon.

At the same time, the PLO opened up negotiations in hopes of finding a way to withdraw its forces from Beirut. The only alternative to this course was to make a futile last stand in West Beirut.

Such a decision would have led to far more civilian casualties than even the massacre in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. The Israelis, after all, had already demonstrated their willingness to bomb West Beirut to rubble.

The only thing a fight to the end would have accomplished would have been to help the Israelis in their aim of destroying the PLO and its forces.

The PLO fighters, who have already proven their capacity for heroic struggle and resistance, correctly rejected this suicidal course and chose instead to organize and lead a retreat, knowing full well that it would have to be carried out under the most difficult conditions. They therefore opened up negotiations for the withdrawal of PLO forces from West Beirut.

It is quite clear that the Israeli regime did everything in its power to literally blow up the negotiations. On August 1, for example, a front-page headline in the *New York Times* read, "Key Negotiations on P.L.O. Pullout Predicted Today." The negotiations were prevented by 14 hours of the fiercest Israeli shelling to hit West Beirut up to that point.

A truce was arranged, negotiations were resumed, and then on August 4 the Israelis launched a new attack on West Beirut. "Tempo of Talks Had Been Increased Just Before the Ground Assault," a *Times* headline reported.

And on August 12, the *Times* reported "Habib Peace Plan Appears on Verge of Final Approval." Agreement was forestalled, however, by a 10-hour bombing of West Beirut by Israeli forces.

But international public opinion prevented the Israelis from simply breaking off the negotiations.

The end result was that the Israelis, who had hoped to destroy the leadership and fighting battalions of the PLO, were forced to agree to their evacuation from West Beirut. The fact that the PLO forces were able to organize their withdrawal in military units and to keep their small arms was a remarkable accomplishment under the circumstances.

A key question in the negotiations was how the PLO forces could get out of Beirut alive. The Israeli government initially demanded that the PLO fighters lay down their arms and depart by road to Syria under an Israeli "safe-conduct." This was tantamount to a demand that the PLO commit suicide.

Since the Palestinians were not in a position to force a pullback of Israeli troops, they proposed an international force that would interpose itself between their forces and the Israelis as the only way to ensure that they would not be slaughtered during the withdrawal.

The Israeli government rejected the use of UN forces in this capacity, or the inclusion of Soviet troops in such a force. Therefore, the final agreement called for U.S., French, and Italian troops to be sent into Beirut to supervise the withdrawal.

An analogy could be made to the organizers of a progressive demonstration who, faced with an attack by a superior force of armed rightist thugs, call on the police to defend the democratic rights of the demonstrators. Such an action does not imply political support to the cops, approval of their role in society, or abandonment of the need for self-defense.

In fact, the PLO leaders have repeatedly made clear their view that Reagan shares the guilt for the invasion of Lebanon with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Return of the marines

Of course, the U.S. imperialists tried to get the most out of the situation, just as they always do. The fact that the PLO was forced to ask for U.S. troops gave Washington an opportunity.

Reagan moved very carefully in this regard. The 800 marines that arrived in Lebanon August 25 carried unloaded weapons, no heavy arms, and were limited to a 30-day stay. In a letter sent to Congress on August 24, Reagan emphasized that "our agreement with the government of Lebanon expressly rules out any combat responsibilities for the U.S. forces."

But Washington had established a precedent. Taking advantage of the massacre in West Beirut, Reagan ordered the U.S. Marines back. In announcing the decision, Reagan claimed September 20 that the new multinational force — now beefed up to more than 3,000 troops — would be "similar to the one which served so well last month."

This is not the case. The new intervention force is not charged with supervising the implementation of a specific agreement, but, as Reagan explained, with helping "the Lebanese government to resume full sovereignty over its capital" — a task that is likely to involve armed clashes between the rightist government and the forces it is trying to quell.

That is why this time the marines are taking missiles, helicopters, armored personnel carriers, and other heavy equipment. Moreover, the marines have been explicitly authorized to use force, and on September 28, Reagan announced that they would remain in Lebanon at least until Israeli and Syrian forces are out of the country. In other words, for a long time.

Reagan's pious pretense that the U.S. Marines will help to stop any more massacres of Palestinian civilians is exposed by the fact that the stated mission of the U.S. force is to back up the new Lebanese government — a government dominated by the same Phalangist killers who carried out the massacre in Sabra and Shatila.

Both Washington and Tel Aviv favor the establishment of a stable rightist government in Lebanon. That was one of the goals of the Israeli invasion. The massacre in West Beirut made it politically impossible for the Israeli army to carry out that task in the Lebanese capital. Therefore, the ball has been passed to the U.S.-French-Italian "peacekeeping" force. That force should be withdrawn at once, along with all Israeli troops in Lebanon. □

Bureaucrats ban Solidarity

Reagan chimes in with new trade sanctions

By Ernest Harsch

Ten months after the imposition of martial law in Poland, the country's working people face continued attacks from the bureaucratic rulers in Warsaw and from U.S. imperialism.

On October 8, the Sejm (parliament) passed a new trade-union law that officially bans Solidarity — the mass, democratically run union movement that was born out of the 1980 strike wave. It also outlaws the 3-million-member farmers' organization, Rural Solidarity, that was allied with the union.

Through this crackdown, the government of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski provided the Reagan administration in Washington with a new handle to step up its anticommunist propaganda drive and its attacks on the Polish workers state.

The day after the banning, Reagan imposed new economic sanctions against Poland. He suspended Poland's most-favored-nation trade status, which will raise tariffs on Polish manufactured exports to the United States.

Reagan again hypocritically proclaimed his support for Solidarity. Meanwhile, in the United States, he is carrying out a systematic assault on the rights and living standards of workers and farmers. In Poland, moreover, these new U.S. sanctions, on top of those imposed last December, will only add to the suffering of Polish working people.

Bureaucratically controlled unions

Jaruzelski and his colleagues clearly hope that the formal banning of Solidarity — coming after the detention of its national leadership, the outlawing of strikes, and the other rigors of martial law — will demoralize the workers and make it possible to break their resistance to bureaucratic rule.

The new law envisages the formal revival of trade unions, beginning on January 1, 1983. But these unions will be extremely weak and totally dominated by the government's bureaucratic apparatus.

They are to be limited for at least two years to the confines of individual factories, with no opportunity to collaborate with one another. They are legally barred from addressing broader social and political questions. Special government-appointed tribunals will have the right to change union leaderships.

While strikes will still be allowed on paper, they can only be legally called following long and complicated arbitration procedures, which in effect will make most strikes illegal. Sympathy strikes, or strikes of a "political character," will be totally prohibited, with the authorities having the right to determine what constitutes a political strike. Strike pay, one of the gains won by Solidarity, is now forbidden.

On top of all this, the government has declared that the Solidarity leaders now in detention — the real elected leadership of the Polish working class — will have no right to resume trade-union activities.

The purpose of these new unions will not be to represent the interests of workers, but to maintain the bureaucracy's control over them. In effect, they are the same as the bureaucratically run unions that the workers revolted against in 1980.

Who is 'antisocialist'?

In the weeks preceding the ban on Solidarity, the authorities sought to justify their move with a new propaganda campaign against the union, accusing it of being "antisocialist" and charging that its revival would be inimical to the interests of the Polish workers state.

By accusing Solidarity of being "antisocialist," the authorities are identifying socialism with their own bureaucratic misrule.

What Solidarity has fought against in the two years since its formation are the bureaucracy's anti-working-class policies, its gross mismanagement of the Polish economy, its enormous material privileges, and its efforts to stifle democratic rights.

Answering earlier charges that Solidarity was "antisocialist," for example, an article in the May 8, 1981, *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, the main union weekly prior to martial law, declared:

"The basic means of production — the factories, steelworks, mines, shipyards, railways, banks — are not privately owned by capitalists, and there is no one who would want to return this national property to the

capitalists. . . . Workers want their factories to be more socialist, genuinely socialist. They want them to be controlled not by the apparatus, but by workers self-management bodies. . . . In defense of these principles — which socialism has long fought for — no excuses or prevarications will be allowed."

By banning Solidarity, the Jaruzelski government will not be able to eliminate this basic conflict between the country's restive working class and the bureaucracy. It will not be able to abolish the demands or aspirations of Solidarity's millions of supporters. Ten months of martial law — during which Solidarity's activities were "suspended" — has not been able to do that.

Clandestine Solidarity committees exist in many factories around the country. Some 1,700 underground bulletins and newspapers are being published. Several union radio stations are continuing to broadcast. A National Coordinating Committee (TKK) is still functioning as a provisional national leadership, although one of its key members, Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, was arrested just days before the union was banned.

The August 31 protest demonstrations called by the TKK gave a measure of the union's continued active support. Many tens of thousands of workers turned out across the country. The government has now admitted that demonstrations were held in 66 different cities.

On September 13, new demonstrations were held in Wroclaw, Krakow, Szczecin, and Lodz. On September 30, some 10,000 workers marched through Wroclaw, and other actions were held in Gdansk and Warsaw.

Solidarity leaders have responded to the banning of the union by calling on its members to stage a four-hour protest strike November 10. A statement issued by the TKK proclaimed, "We appeal to all working people, no matter to which unions they belong, for a massive nationwide protest against lawlessness and poverty." □

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Iranian forces advance against Iraq

Sudanese ruler offers troops to bolster Iraqi aggression

By Fred Murphy

Iranian forces are once again moving forward in their efforts to end the two-year-old counterrevolutionary war launched by the Saddam Hussein dictatorship in neighboring Iraq.

In the heaviest fighting since July, Iranian troops and volunteers routed Iraqi units from about 90 square miles of Iranian territory in an area along the border between the two countries, 100 miles northeast of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad.

The Iranian offensive on the war's central front exposed the falsehood of earlier claims by the Iraqi regime to have withdrawn from all the Iranian territory seized in the early weeks of the war.

Saddam Hussein's aim when he sent his troops and armor into Iran in September 1980 had been to topple the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini and weaken the Iranian revolution. Hussein feared the impact that the massive upsurge of the Iranian toilers was having on Iraqi working people. This fear was shared by Washington and other imperialist powers, who welcomed the Iraqi invasion.

But the Iranian people rallied to defend their country and revolution. By June of this year, the Iraqi occupiers had been driven out of all but a few pockets of Iranian territory.

Victories alarm Washington

When Iranian troops entered Iraq in July to seal Saddam Hussein's defeat and put a stop to continued shelling of Iranian cities from across the border, the Reagan administration grew more alarmed. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger warned July 28 that Iran's victories posed "a serious threat to all countries of the Middle East, including Israel."

The Iranian regime has called for active solidarity with the Palestinian people, and has sent troops to Lebanon. Iranian leaders urged all Muslims to unite against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and denounced the failure of the Arab regimes to take action.

The imperialists and their allies wasted no time in responding to the latest Iranian advances against Iraq. On October 1 a powerful bomb ripped through a crowded square near the central bazaar in Tehran, the Iranian capital, killing 60 or more persons and injuring at least 700. Three buses laden with passengers were destroyed in the blast. According to Radio Tehran, most of the bus victims were "from the poor people of south Tehran."

The attack came hours after tens of thousands had marched in Tehran to hail the war victories. Many of the victims were no doubt demonstrators returning to their homes



Iranian forces gained ground around the town of Sumar in offensive that began September 30.

in the poor and working-class districts near the site of the bombing.

No group has taken credit for the attack. It is known, however, that some of the counterrevolutionary gangs headed by the late shah's top military officers have close ties to the Iraqi regime. According to revelations published in the *New York Times* last March 7, the CIA has provided these monarchist groups with arms and millions of dollars worth of aid.

Another group that has often taken credit for terrorist attacks in Iran is the People's Mujahedeen Organization. It tried to blame the latest bombing on the Iranian government.

The U.S.-backed regimes in the region view Saddam Hussein as the point man in the battle to contain the anti-imperialist ferment inspired by the Iranian revolution. Right after the latest Iranian advance, dictator Gaafar al-Nimeiry of the Sudan made known that regular Sudanese troops would soon be dispatched to Iraq.

Nimeiry thus joined other Arab rulers in actively supporting Saddam Hussein's war. The Saudi monarchy and the rulers of the small principedoms of the Persian Gulf have provided at least \$25 billion in cash. Jordan's King Hussein has sent soldiers as "volunteers," and on October 4 he visited Baghdad along with the

commander of the Jordanian army. Meanwhile, the Mubarak regime in Egypt is providing arms and equipment, and possibly pilots and troops.

The Sudanese move was welcomed in Washington. "American and European analysts" cited by military correspondent Drew Middleton in the October 4 *New York Times* said that "early and effective Sudanese military intervention" is an "urgent need" for Iraq.

Another *Times* article two days later — also by Middleton — warned that if "a war of attrition along Iraq's borders" is to be avoided, "Iraq must obtain trained infantry and artillery units from outside soon." Middleton suggested that aid from the Sudan might not suffice. "Intervention by Jordan, which is closer to the battlefield, could be more effective," he said, adding that Saddam Hussein would be pressing the Jordanian king "to send troops to reinforce the Iraqis in the front line."

It is indeed questionable whether the shaky and near-bankrupt Sudanese government — which faces widespread social unrest — can sustain a costly intervention by itself. It certainly cannot do so without stepped-up U.S. aid. In the fiscal year that just ended, Washington provided the Sudan with \$100 million in military assistance, more than three times the amount given in the previous year.

Marines to land in Oman

The Iranian revolution stands in the way of U.S. imperialism's goal of imposing and strengthening its domination over the Middle East as a whole. Despite Washington's recent gains — the defeat suffered by the Palestinians in Lebanon and the landing of U.S. Marines there — its overall aims are far from being achieved.

Thus, besides encouraging local clients like Nimeiry to step up aid to Iraq, Washington is also preparing for more direct intervention against the Iranian revolution. Elaborate military exercises on air, land, and sea have been scheduled for this month by the Pentagon in the Persian Gulf country of Oman, just across the gulf from southern Iran.

According to U.S. officials cited in the August 25 *Washington Post*, the maneuvers — which include practice landings by the marines — are to "serve notice on Iran that it would risk a sharp U.S. response if it threatened moderate Arab nations friendly to America with military force or subversion."

According to the *Post* "the Pentagon has put top priority on finding ways to protect such friendly Arab governments from being toppled by radicals" inside their own countries. □

Interview with an Iranian socialist

How different social classes have reacted to war with Iraq

[The following is an interview with an Iranian socialist who left Iran in late July. The interview was conducted on September 17; footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. What has been the reaction of the Iranian masses to the entry of Iranian military forces into Iraq?

Answer. Let me begin by reviewing developments in the war since November 1981. At that time the government began to respond to demands of the masses for mobilization to drive back the invading Iraqi forces. The military mobilizations that started then brought a series of victories — the siege of Abadan was broken, hundreds of square miles of territory were recaptured, and, finally, last May, the city of Khorramshahr was liberated. That was the last key position that Iraqi forces still held inside Iran.

The Iranian masses rejoiced at seeing the government take concrete action, mobilizing masses of people, training them, and sending them to the war front. That had been the people's demand from the very first days of the war. I remember many demonstrations in which masses of Iranians were demanding, "Arm us!" But the passivity of the bourgeois politicians at the head of the government kept this from happening for many months.

So the response of the masses to all the victories was quite positive. They saw these as victories for their own demands.

After the liberation of Khorramshahr, there were spontaneous mass demonstrations. In Tehran, the streets throughout the city were filled (save for a few small wealthy neighborhoods in north Tehran where there has never been any support for the revolution). In many other cities and towns as well there was rejoicing and happiness. I had not seen such celebrating since the victory of the insurrection against the shah. Everyone was in the streets, kissing and dancing and hugging each other.

The Iranian people did not have the intention of continuing the war simply because they wanted to keep fighting, or take more land, or anything like that. But they could see that the liberation of Khorramshahr did not mean the end of the war. The Iraqi government did not even stop shelling Khorramshahr — it kept up the attacks with long-range cannon from Basra. Iraqi jets kept on bombing towns and villages in the western part of Iran.

So it was obvious that the war was not over. While we had managed to liberate almost all of Iran, certain areas near Qasr-e Shirin are still

occupied by Iraqi forces. They are not there for making peace.

The situation remained one of military confrontation. The Iranian masses began to realize that the end to the war will come only when the Iranian revolution is extended to Iraq — when the Iranian people find solidarity among their Iraqi brothers and sisters.

Now, Iranian officials did not have any ready-made plan for going into Iraq. Imam Khomeini made a statement in May saying that Iranian forces should not go beyond the borders in liberating Khorramshahr. But once that was achieved it became obvious that in order to defeat the Iraqis we had to go to the other side of the border.

The speaker of the parliament, the prime minister, and the president all made very clear statements then that the only reason for Iranian forces to move into Iraq was to defend Iran and the revolution against the attacks by the Iraqis.

Q. What was the response on the part of those who have actually been doing the fighting — the soldiers, the youth, the workers?

A. The section of the population that had given the most thought to the question of having to move onto Iraqi soil was of course the fighters at the front. They had learned through first-hand experience that we are not fighting a conventional war, but a war of national defense against a counterrevolutionary force backed by imperialism. So the question of borders is secondary.

The discussions among fighters at the front were reflected in the official organ of the Revolutionary Guards, *Payam-e Engelab*, and the journal of the Reconstruction Crusade, *Jihad*.¹ Articles there expressed the need for extending the revolution to Iraq and for getting a bigger hearing among the Iraqi people. They also pointed to the need to deepen our revolution in order to be able to gain more support from the Iraqi masses.

The same kind of sentiment was expressed among the Revolutionary Guards and the Mobilization Corps (Baseej).² The Baseej has accounted for 70 to 80 percent of those who fight at the front ever since the big mobiliza-

1. The Jihad-e Sazandegi (Reconstruction Crusade) is a government-sponsored organization of student youth that provides aid to peasant villages such as literacy and construction projects. The Crusade has also played an important role at the war front, building bridges and roads, repairing machinery, and so on.

2. The Baseej-e Mustazafin (Mobilization Corps of the Oppressed) is a volunteer militia made up largely of poor and working-class youth.

tions were initiated by the regime almost a year ago.

The *baseejis* are mostly youth under 18. Seventeen or 18 years old mostly, but some as young as 12 or 14. They often leave school to fight. And they are there quite voluntarily — they go of their own accord. But the fact that they are allowed to go shows the kind of sentiment that exists.

Similar sentiments have been expressed by the workers in the factories and in meetings of the factory *shoras* [committees]. For example, the Fifth National Congress of Islamic Factory Shoras, held in Shiraz June 6 and 7, adopted a resolution that put military mobilization against Iraqi aggression as the central task. They also made clear their solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese masses. Together with those demands went the need to reorganize the economy and increase production and to legally recognize the *shoras*. The congress also took a stand against firings by the factory managements and called for a united national workers organization.

The participation of workers has by no means declined. I just received a letter from a friend of mine saying that in his factory there was a day of mourning organized for a fellow worker who had been martyred at the front.

And the peasants have also supported the war effort in a big way. The Iraqi rulers hate the peasants of Iran and their organizations, the village *shoras*, which are quite widespread in the countryside. Whenever the Iraqi forces occupied a village in Khuzestan, they either arrested or murdered the members of the *shora*. These organizations have acted as vehicles for the peasants to mobilize against the Iraqi invasion.

I recently read a report by the Reconstruction Crusade from the province of Khorramshahr. More than 1.5 kilograms of gold and more than a kilo of silver have been donated to the war effort by the peasants there.³ The peasants of course don't have much gold and silver, so you get an idea of their support for the war.

Q. Was any discontent expressed with the decision to take the war into Iraq?

A. The capitalists who remain inside Iran and support the current government — the bazaar merchants, and so on — have always frowned on the war effort. Their position has been clear: we should come to terms with Saddam, we should come to terms with the United States, with all the enemies of the revolution.

3. At current gold and silver prices, this amounts to a total of about US\$20,000.

And we should put an end to any kind of mobilization or organization of the masses, and stop giving lip service to the demands of the masses.

Another sector of the merchants has already joined the campaign to overthrow this government. You can read the names of such people in connection with the coup attempt [ex-Foreign Minister Sadegh] Ghotbzadeh or in connection with the armed campaign by [ex-President Abolhassan] Bani-Sadr and the People's Mujahedeen Organization to overthrow the government, and even in connection with the still more right-wing groups that operate outside the country.

The spokesmen of the big Iranian bourgeoisie are mostly outside of Iran. They have openly condemned the move to send Iranian fighters into Iraq. Ali Amini — who recently formed a so-called Front for the Liberation of Iran, an umbrella group of pro-imperialist forces — condemned the extension of military action into Iraq and called for armed struggle against the Iranian government. Shahpur Bakhtiar [the last prime minister appointed by the shah] who has maintained good relations with Saddam Hussein all along, has also taken such a position.

At the beginning of the war Bani-Sadr and the Mujahedeen supported defending Iran. The Mujahedeen even asked to send a separate group of their armed volunteers to the front to fight. But since they began their armed campaign against the government they have changed their position by 180 degrees.

They blame the Iranian government for the

war and call for its overthrow. They oppose any kind of mobilization for the war effort. So they fall in with the counterrevolutionary forces in Iran.

As for the upper layers of the urban middle class — doctors, lawyers, engineers, managers, professors, and so on — all throughout the war they have been nagging and complaining. What they see in the war above all is the shortages of consumer goods. They want the war to end so the shortages can be overcome. Of course, it is not just the war that is responsible for the shortages — it is also the economic blockade and all the other pressures from the imperialist world on Iran.

It is important to note here that the mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie — the small shopkeepers, artisans, peddlers, and so on — generally support the war effort, and many have volunteered to go to the front. This is true as well of the large numbers of unemployed and underemployed city dwellers, those who do odd jobs in order to make a living or who depend on charitable contributions organized through the mosques by the Islamic clergy.

Once the workers and toilers were able to push back the Iraqis from nearly all parts of Iran, the top layers of the middle class had a good excuse to say, "OK, now it's time to finish the war, let's get our food back, let's fill up the shelves, let's have Paris fashions back in the shops." They didn't like the idea that the war had not really ended, that everything had not returned to "normal."

This is not necessarily open opposition, however. In face of all the efforts by the vast

majority of the population, these layers tend to be silent in most cases. And when mobilizations take place and victories are won, a section of this strata vacillates and even supports the fighters. On the day Khorramshahr was liberated, you could see all kinds of middle-class types in the streets, kissing soldiers and so on.

A reflection of such attitudes can be observed among the petty-bourgeois leftist organizations in Iran. These divide into two camps — one in the orbit of the Mujahedeen and the other around the Tudeh Party, the pro-Moscow CP.

The ones who gravitate toward the Mujahedeen — such as the People's Fedayan (Minority) and the Peykar organization — see the struggle against the government as their main objective. They view the war as some sort of pretext by the government to maintain itself in power. So they either oppose the war effort outright or else ignore it and focus their work around calling for action against the government.

The Tudeh Party has been formally on record in support of the war effort. But it has not put that question at the center of its activities. Now it focuses attention on questions such as the economy, the living standards of the masses, and so on, without linking these to the war.

Since March the Tudeh Party has more and more openly been calling for peace. In Isfahan, for example, the local Tudeh organization opposed the entry of Iranian forces into Iraq and debated the Socialist Unity Party (HVK —



"Women have broadened their role in society through participation in the war effort."

one of the groups in Iran affiliated with the Fourth International) on the question.

The Tudeh Party's position is similar to that of the upper middle-class layers, but it also coincides with the position of the Soviet bureaucracy, which wants to maintain the status quo. Just before Iranian forces entered Iraq, the UN Security Council passed a resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire; the Soviet delegate voted for that resolution.

The People's Fedayan (Majority), which now has two public factions, called for a peace plan about a year and a half ago. One faction now follows the line of the Tudeh Party, while the other faction takes contradictory positions, first joining in the war effort, then calling for peace.

Q. How has the war affected the class struggle inside Iran?

A. The Iranian masses are learning a great deal in the course of this war. It is not the case that the masses are fighting but not advancing on any other issue. Nothing could be further from the truth. An example — something a friend of mine observed near Tabriz:

A village shora was built, not just around the demand for land, which is a very important question in Iran, but also on mobilizing the population for the war effort. What has happened is that a third of the people in the village are armed. They have been trained. They have their own unit of the Baseej.

OK, one could say, fine — they're going to the front and thus defending the revolution. But what about the land — which besides national independence is the central question throughout Iranian history in this century?

Well, one problem the Iranian peasants have always had in getting land is that the landlords, or the "feudals," as they are called in Iran, have their own armed gangs. By using arms they have always stopped the peasants from getting land. In this village, however, with one-third of the population armed, they could easily handle the feudals and their thugs.

So you see how the question of the war and the land question are very much interconnected.

The same can be seen among the workers. There is hardly any factory in Iran where there is not a unit of the Baseej. The workers have been able to learn to use weapons, get their section of the factory work force armed, and in some cases take charge of security for the factory. Obviously it is harder for the capitalist forces to attack armed workers.

It is also a question of the political weight of the workers and peasants. A peasant or worker can say, we all know that Saddam and the imperialists are attacking our revolution. But who is doing their share in defending this country? Who is doing their share in defending our revolution? Obviously, the workers and the peasants. So why then should the peasant not get a piece of land, why shouldn't a land-reform program be implemented? Why should we not have the right to control production in our fac-

tory, the right to a decent job, and so on?

This happens with specially oppressed sections of the population also. There have been a whole series of attacks on the rights of Iranian women. But at the same time, women have broadened their role from being solely wives, sisters, or daughters. How? Through participation in the war effort.

There was an interesting letter in one of the women's magazines in Iran from a woman who had joined the Revolutionary Guards. She wanted to go to the front but her father would not allow it. So she was appealing to public opinion, saying that what she wanted to do was for the sake of her country and the revolution, and that this situation where her father had the authority to keep her in the house was counter-revolutionary.

Q. What impact did the Israeli invasion of Lebanon have in Iran?

A. The Iranian revolution has been the most powerful force in the Mideast in defense of the Palestinian people ever since the overthrow of the shah. The Palestinian fighters are national heroes in Iran.

There were spontaneous mobilizations as soon as news of the invasion reached Iran. The Iranian government announced it would send armed forces to Lebanon to fight alongside the Palestinians. It called on all Arab and Muslim countries to do the same, to form a common front against Israel not only in words but in deeds.

Within a few days there were planes leaving Iran with volunteers bound for Damascus or Lebanon.

The Iranian government had for some time maintained a unit of the Baseej in Lebanon, made up of Lebanese who support the Islamic Republic and accept the leadership of Imam Khomeini. These fighters immediately joined in the defense of South Lebanon and Beirut.

In Iran the government asked for volunteers. At one factory that I know of in Tehran, so many workers volunteered that they had to hold a lottery to choose who would be sent. A worker's name came up, he went for a couple of weeks of training, then was put on a plane and sent off.

The plane was supposed to fly over Turkey, but by then the Turkish government was refusing to allow flights over its territory by Iranian volunteers bound for Lebanon. They had to take a roundabout route. I don't know how, but they finally made it to Syria.

Some of the Iranian volunteers were supposed to join with the Syrian forces, and others went to reinforce the Baseej unit inside Lebanon. Iranians were the only organized force besides the Syrians who actually joined the Palestinians and the Lebanese and fought against the Israelis.⁴

4. According to a report in the September 14 *New York Times*, Iranian volunteers in eastern Lebanon, around the town of Zahle, came under attack by Israeli planes on September 13. The report also mentioned volunteers from Libya.

Q. What kind of relations does the Iranian government have with the Palestine Liberation Organization?

A. Right after the shah fell, the old Israeli embassy in Tehran was turned over to the PLO for its office in Iran. The PLO was recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

The Iranian regime advocates unity of all Muslim and Arab peoples against Israel. It also advocates mass action. Imam Khomeini declared the last Friday of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan to be "Jerusalem Day" and called for mass demonstrations to be held on that day against Israel. This has become a source of inspiration for the masses throughout the Mideast — not since the Nasser period have there been such demonstrations.

As part of this campaign, the Iranian leaders sent people into Lebanon to work with the Palestinian and Lebanese Muslims. But the call for Muslim unity within Lebanon is not the same as the call for the unity of Islamic nations in general against U.S. imperialism and Israel. This conception of Islamic unity, when applied inside Lebanon, leaves out Christian Palestinians, and excludes militants from leftist organizations. Nonetheless, it is an uncompromising approach, calling for the destruction of the state of Israel.

The Iranian leaders also had influence within Amal, the main organization of the Shi'ite Muslims in southern Lebanon. But as the situation polarized, their supporters wound up as a minority in Amal. The majority moved to the right and actually became quite close to the positions of U.S. imperialism. One leader of Amal, Nabih Berri, joined the Committee for National Salvation in Lebanon.⁵ He was condemned for this by the Revolutionary Guards' newspaper, *Payam-e Engelab*.

While the Iranian government is anti-communist, it was not behind Amal's attacks on the left organizations in Lebanon. It was the proimperialist wing that was responsible for those. The pro-Khomeini wing of Amal was expelled.⁶ □

5. The Council of National Salvation was a short-lived body set up in Lebanon June 14 by then-President Elias Sarkis. Leaders of the major political factions in the country, except for the Palestinians, were invited to discuss the basis for a new government under the guns of the Israeli army. The council fell apart after the withdrawal of Lebanese National Movement leader Walid Jumblatt.

6. According to a report in the September 17-23 English edition of the Jerusalem weekly *Al-Fajr*, the Amal movement called for a general strike in the Lebanese town of Baalbek "to protest the election of Bashir Gemayel, the Phalangist leader, to the presidency. A statement distributed by the movement described Gemayel as an agent for Israeli and US interests." *Al-Fajr* did not indicate which faction of Amal issued this call, although it did say that several hundred Iranian volunteers were positioned in the hills around Baalbek.

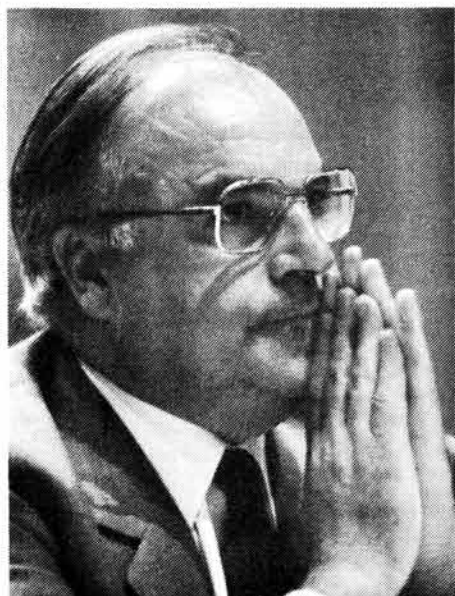
Social Democratic government ousted

Statement of International Marxist Group

[On October 1, a parliamentary vote of no-confidence toppled the government of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, bringing to an end more than a decade and a half of rule by the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in West Germany. At the same time, Helmut Kohl, the leader of the bourgeois Christian Democratic Union (CDU), was chosen the new chancellor. Kohl was able to replace Schmidt with a seven-vote margin, after garnering 256 votes. These came from both the CDU's own deputies and from more than half of the deputies of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the SPD's former coalition partner.

[The reaction in Washington was one of satisfaction. "We certainly take pleasure in seeing a Government that is more in tune with the Reagan philosophy," one White House official was quoted in the October 2 *New York Times*. According to the *Times* report, "Several officials said that the Christian Democratic-led coalition would be more supportive of NATO policies, more determined to go forward with the deployment of new American medium-range missiles in a year, and perhaps somewhat less eager to engage in trade and arms control with the Soviet Union."

[The stage for the toppling of the SPD was set on September 17, when the FDP decided to end its 13-year coalition with the Social Democrats. The immediate impetus to the breakup was Schmidt's refusal to accept an economic proposal drawn up by the FDP's economics minister, Otto Lambsdorff, which projected sweeping austerity measures.



HELMUT KOHL

[Behind the breakup also lay the bourgeois FDP's concern over the growing influence of the SDP's left wing, which, among other things, has been calling for a ban on the deployment of U.S. medium-range nuclear missiles in West Germany.

[Following the breakup of the coalition, Chancellor Schmidt challenged the FDP and CDU to agree to new federal elections, but the two bourgeois parties refused. In the Hesse state elections September 26, the SDP garnered 10 percent more votes than pre-election polls had projected, while the FDP was eliminated from the state legislature entirely. Fearing similar reversals on the federal level, the CDU and FDP chose not to test their electoral support and to topple Schmidt through a parliamentary maneuver instead.

[The following statement was issued on September 20 — following the breakup of the coalition but before the parliamentary vote — by the Central Committee of the International Marxist Group (IGM), the German section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The breakup of the Social Democratic-Free Democratic coalition in Bonn brings to an end sixteen years of Social Democratic government. Although the SPD itself has expected this shift for a long time, it nevertheless represents a major turn in the relationship of forces between the social classes and their political parties.

This change in West Germany, the world's second most powerful imperialist state, strengthens the West German employers and U.S. imperialism, when only a year ago the Socialist Party in France won the presidential and parliamentary elections — the greatest victory in its history — and, in the last few days, the Swedish Social Democratic and Communist Parties won an absolute majority in parliament.

The occasion for the final end of the Social Democrats in government was the "Lambsdorff Paper" produced by the FDP minister for the economy. Given its concept of a "social-market economy" and the deepening economic crisis this autumn, it would mean that practically all the reforms introduced by the SPD-FDP government would be withdrawn.

The paper had every possible proposal to increase the rate of profit for the employers at the expense of the working class. It proposed a massive shift from direct to indirect taxation, cancellation of taxation on industry, and reduction of trade taxes. There would be unlimited scope to change working hours to suit the

employers' interests. An extensive program of privatization of the public sector was proposed, along with even more drastic cutbacks in the welfare state — the reduction of unemployment pay to 50 percent of the previous wage — which is only the first step in dismantling the social gains of the working class.

Lambsdorff's proposals were not a political slip. They had the approval of almost all the employers' organizations. With the sustained economic recession, the expected record figure of 2 million unemployed, and a new budget deficit of over 1 billion marks [US\$400 million], the paper made clear that a governmental party which has to take into consideration the interests of the trade-union leadership is not viable in the present situation.

The FDP's wish for a change of government was not, however, the reason for the breakup of the coalition, despite the SPD's attempts to create a myth of "betrayal." Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Lambsdorff, the leaders of the FDP, would not have dared to act in this way if the SPD had possessed the ability to mobilize the working class and young people as it did during the 1980 elections, or during the attempt of Christian Democratic Union leader Rainer Barzel to remove the SPD from office in 1972. The massive loss of votes for the SPD among the working class, youth, and the middle class, to the point where its votes in state elections fell to below 35 percent, was the work of the SPD itself.

It was the SPD that explained, in its 1982 and projected 1983 austerity policies, that the workers must make sacrifices, that misled the workers as to the dimensions and the causes of the crisis.

It was the SPD in alliance with the trade-union leadership that obstructed any fightback against austerity.

It was the infamous call for repression against those protesting at the extension of Frankfurt airport for military reasons, and Schmidt's fervent support for NATO's rearmament policy, that led hundreds of thousands of young people to seek an alternative to Social Democracy.

It is dishonest of the Social Democrats to accuse the FDP of wanting "the wage earners and trade unions to accept lower real wages, and the unemployed, pensioners, tenants, and the socially vulnerable to make great sacrifices" when the SPD itself asks exactly the same from wage earners and the socially oppressed. Schmidt, in fact, repeated his support for these policies in his declaration to parliament.

The task now is to find another policy —

one which means that the employers themselves bear the burden of the crisis they have created, which does not stop short of breaking the power of the bankers and the employers in its effort to defend jobs. A program which bases itself on the distribution of the available work between all the workers, and prevents the employers' efforts to secure their profit through new rearmament measures.

All the calls to the trade-union leadership by the SPD "not to rock the boat" so that the Social Democrats can solve the problems have failed. In fact they have led to deep discouragement and political uncertainty among the workers. This has been shown during factory closures and redundancies, as well as at the last elections. For the first time in the history of the Federal Republic half the working class today chooses to vote for the CDU-CSU.* The SPD has opened the way to government by the employers through its reformist policies.

The DGB, West Germany's central trade union federation, has called demonstrations against austerity on October 23 and 30. All possible forces must be mobilized to turn these demonstrations into the beginning of a strong opposition to the bourgeois measures.

Trade unionists, supporters of the peace movement, the women's movement, anti-nuclear groups, those who are fighting discrimination against immigrants or unemployment, as well as all those who suffer from the austerity measures of the bourgeoisie, should join forces to demonstrate against unemployment, rearmament, and destruction of the environment. For the trade unions these demonstrations should be the first steps in a new line of march:

- For joint trade union action against the employers' anti-union measures,
- For jobs, not bombs,
- For the 35-hour week now — with full pay and job creation,
- Against any other austerity policy, whether budget cuts or decrease in real wages,
- A militant common line of march for the big majority of wage earners, employed, unemployed, pensioners, young or old, immigrant or German, women or men.

SPD members who disagree with the line of their party, who hold Schmidt and the SPD leadership responsible for having made it possible to throw the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the workers, and for having disarmed the working class, must fight for the SPD to draw the conclusions from these developments.

The SPD in opposition will no more turn to a socialist policy than it did in government. This was made explicit by Willy Brandt when he stated that the Social Democrats will not change their political line with the change in government.

For all these reasons, it is necessary to put forward not the completely failed line followed

*The Christian Social Union (CSU), is the Bavarian state branch of the CDU. — IP

by the SPD leadership, but a political course that attacks the power of the employers.

It is important that all those who support a socialist solution to the crisis, who want to organize opposition to unemployment, social

cuts and national chauvinism, who oppose the destruction of the environment, rearmament, and discrimination against women can present their own alternative in the coming federal elections. □

Nicaragua: U.S.-backed gangs claim three more victims

By Michael Baumann

MASAYA, Nicaragua — Three coffins draped in Sandinista flags lined the stage as Nicaraguan Defense Minister Humberto Ortega addressed several thousand people here October 2. The working poor of Masaya had gathered in the Indian barrio of Monimbó for the funeral of three of their sons — an artisan, a stonemason, and a laborer.

Their deaths were a direct result of Washington's continuing war against the Nicaraguan people.

In addition to trying to strangle Nicaragua economically, Washington is arming and training thousands of counterrevolutionaries, remnants of the ex-National Guard of Anastasio Somoza, the hated dictator who was overthrown here in 1979.

These bands conduct murderous raids along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border, as well as in the interior of the country.

"We have to be honest with ourselves," Ortega told a somber audience.

"The battle to defeat the counterrevolutionary bands is not going to be a short one."

The funeral here was for three members of Reserve Battalion 80-15. They were victims of the most recent clash with counterrevolutionaries, in the distant mountains of Central Zelaya province. Reserve Battalion 80-15 left Masaya a month ago. Made up largely of veterans of the 1979 insurrection, it was

selected as the first reserve contingent sent to Zelaya to help respond to the stepped-up attacks there.

Two members of the battalion died directly in combat; the third, wounded, drowned as he tried to cross the river. Twenty-four counterrevolutionaries were killed in the battle, bringing to more than 350 the number of *contras* who have been killed in recent months.

But 5,000 more are based in camps just across the northern border with Honduras, and an estimated 1,500 are based in remote areas inside Nicaraguan territory.

"This struggle is not going to be resolved quickly," Ortega repeated. "We are poor, so poor that it may well take 15, 20, or 30 years to emerge from our poverty."

"Yet we must also face the very real possibility of an armed invasion, either by the Honduran army or the imperialists themselves."

"We must prepare for this. And we must do it ourselves, without expecting anyone to come to our aid."

"We need a better level of organization, of combativity. We must give the whole world an example of what we are capable of accomplishing in this difficult situation."

During the long march to the cemetery the crowd of workers and artisans chanted slogans of support to the revolution, and defiance of imperialism. □



Michael Baumann/IP

Nicaraguan reserve unit leaving Masaya in September for duty on northern border.

South Africa wages undeclared war

Workers arm to fight terrorist bands

By Ernest Harsch

Mozambique, like Angola, is the victim of an undeclared war conducted by the apartheid regime in neighboring South Africa.

Incursions by South African commandos, terrorist attacks by South African-directed guerrilla groups, and threats of a South African invasion are becoming more and more common. Recent months have shown the extent of the danger facing the people of Mozambique:

- In mid-July, about 200 members of the South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) moved into a rural area north of Beira, Mozambique's second largest city, to carry out a series of terrorist actions. Over a period of several weeks, they mined roads, beat peasants in their fields, stole food and clothing, raided houses, cut off the ears of two women, and cut off the ears and noses of two primary school teachers. On August 10, they raked a passenger train with machine-gun fire, killing 14 and wounding 50.

- On July 22, Mozambican troops clashed with a South African army unit in Mozambique's Maputo Province.

- During the first three weeks of August, a government radio broadcast reported, more than 40 armed terrorists were killed in clashes with government troops in the provinces of Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, and Sofala.

- On August 17, a parcel bomb addressed to Aquino de Bragança, a key adviser to Mozambican President Samora Machel, exploded in Maputo, seriously injuring de Bragança and killing Ruth First, a leader of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa. The ANC accused the South African authorities of the attack.

- Gen. Magnus Malan, the South African defense minister, warned Mozambique in August against deploying SAM-3 and SAM-6 anti-aircraft missiles along its border with South Africa. "When similar weapons were installed on the Israeli border, he said, Israel considered it necessary to invade Lebanon to neutralize them," the British *Daily Telegraph* reported August 21.

- A few days later, South African commandos landed by helicopter at the Mozambican border town of Namaacha. They killed two Mozambicans and a Portuguese mechanic.

- On August 28, MNR guerrillas kidnapped six Bulgarians working in Mozambique on a road project.

- In early September, Mozambican troops overran an MNR mountain base in Manica Province, killing 46 guerrillas.

Mozambique, President Samora Machel has said, is engaged in a "permanent war against

imperialism. It is imperialism that prepares, trains, equips and finances the bandits."

Ever since Mozambique won its independence from Portugal in June 1975 — following more than a decade of armed struggle led by the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) — the country has faced the hostility of the major imperialist powers and of the white settler regimes in the region.

Mozambique's victory in 1975 gave a big boost to the fight against imperialist domination and racial oppression throughout southern Africa. The Zimbabwean freedom fighters were able to use independent Mozambique as a base from which to wage their struggle against the Rhodesian settler regime of Ian Smith. Blacks inside South Africa were greatly inspired by Mozambique's independence, contributing to the massive urban uprisings in that country in 1976.

Since then, Frelimo's refusal to buckle to imperialist pressures and threats has aroused increased concern in the South African capital of Pretoria and among the apartheid regime's backers in Washington and Western Europe.

Their opposition has taken numerous forms. One of the most damaging has been their effort to economically strangle Mozambique, a poor and underdeveloped country of 12 million people.

According to President Machel, there is an "undeclared economic blockade against our country."

The British government has refused to grant further export credits to Mozambique, while the West German government has blocked assistance to Mozambique from the European Economic Community. In 1981, the Reagan administration in Washington cut off all food aid to Mozambique following the expulsion of six American officials accused of spying for the CIA.

Pretoria's cat's-paw

Parallel to these economic pressures, the imperialists have unleashed the terrorist gangs of the MNR.

While the MNR claims to be a liberation movement, it is nothing more than a creature of the South African regime.

The organization was first set up by the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation shortly after Mozambique won its independence, both to provide the Rhodesians with information on the Zimbabwean liberation forces based in Mozambique and to retaliate against Frelimo for aiding the Zimbabwean struggle. Initially, the MNR was composed largely of Mozambicans who had fought against Frelimo

on behalf of the Portuguese colonialists. Later, it was joined by a number of former Frelimo members and leaders who had been expelled from that organization on charges of corruption.

When the Zimbabwean people succeeded in ousting the white minority regime of Ian Smith and winning their independence in 1980, the MNR was forced out of its bases in that country. The South African authorities, who had already been providing aid to the group since 1979, took over its direction.

The MNR's new base was established at Zoabostad, in South Africa's Transvaal Province. Its radio station, Voz da Africa Livre (Voice of Free Africa), began broadcasting from South Africa in June 1980.

That same month, a major Mozambican government offensive succeeded in taking the MNR's main base within Mozambique, at Sitatonga, in which 272 MNR troops were killed and 300 captured. For a while, the MNR was in total disarray.

By late 1981, however, the MNR gangs were again in a position to step up their attacks. This was a result of greater, and more direct, South African backing.

South African planes now regularly violate Mozambican air space to drop supplies to the MNR bands and to provide the MNR with reconnaissance information on the location of Mozambican troops. The Mozambican army has captured quantities of ammunition from the MNR, marked in English and Afrikaans, the two languages of South Africa's white population.

In December 1981, Mozambican troops captured yet another MNR base, at Garagua, in Manica Province. They found there a helicopter landing pad and drums of helicopter fuel.

They also found MNR documents, including reports and minutes of meetings in October and November 1980 in Zoabostad between the MNR's main leader, Afonso Dhlakama, and a certain "Colonel Charlie," who was later identified as Colonel Van Niekerk of South African Military Intelligence.

Economic sabotage and terrorism

According to the minutes, Van Niekerk promised the MNR continued logistical support, weapons, ammunition, and other equipment. He also said that specialists and instructors would be sent to teach the MNR forces how to use heavy weapons and carry out sabotage. "The instructors who go to Mozambique will not only teach, but also participate in attacks," Van Niekerk said.

Van Niekerk also gave the MNR a list of

priority targets, including the Mozambique-Zimbabwe pipeline and the rail links between Zimbabwe and Mozambique's ports.

While previously the MNR had sought to establish some bases of support among sectors of the Mozambican population (largely by distributing food and scarce goods in isolated rural areas), its focus has now shifted entirely to sabotage of vital economic installations and to outright terror actions against the population in general.

Following Pretoria's instructions, the MNR in late 1981 blew up bridges along the main road and rail links between Beira and the Zimbabwean city of Mutare. The port of Beira was forced to close down for several days after saboteurs destroyed several marker buoys in the harbor's access channel. The Zimbabwe-Mozambique pipeline has been hit several times, as have power pylons carrying electricity from Mozambique's giant Cabora Bassa hydroelectric dam.

Following one attack on the Beira-Mutare railway, the authorities found the body of an unidentified white, who had been blown up while trying to plant a mine.

Pretoria's interest in disrupting road and rail links between Zimbabwe and Mozambique is also part of its drive to put economic pressure on Zimbabwe and other Black-ruled states. Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and a number of other countries in the region belong to the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), whose aim is to lessen those countries' dependence on South African transportation links. Three of the five strategic ports designated for that purpose are in Mozambique. By hitting Mozambique's roads and railways, Pretoria is clearly hoping to scuttle the SADCC's efforts.

At the same time, the MNR has targeted Mozambique's efforts to build up its economy and provide the population with vital social services.

For instance, according to the Beira *Diário de Moçambique*, the MNR caused widespread destruction in the Gorongosa district 100 miles northwest of Beira between the end of 1981 and May 1982. The MNR gangs destroyed all seven communal villages in the district, three agricultural cooperatives, a state farm, and a saw mill. They burned down the district's health posts and all 31 primary schools. In each attack, villagers were killed or kidnapped.

Many of these attacks on villagers are also aimed at driving them out of the countryside and into the cities and main towns, so as to undermine the country's agricultural production.

Arming the population

The MNR now operates in 7 of Mozambique's 10 provinces. The provinces of Manica, Sofala, and Inhambane are considered unsafe outside the main towns. While the MNR's attacks have been limited to the more inaccessible and sparsely populated regions, they have nevertheless become a serious threat to the

country's economic life and the well-being of its people.

In face of these terrorist attacks, Frelimo and the government have begun a major mobilization of military forces — and of the population as a whole.

Veterans of the guerrilla struggle against the Portuguese are being sent back into the army to bolster its leadership, organization, and morale.

In late May, thousands of troops, backed by air force and artillery units, launched a major offensive in Manica Province. Zimbabwean planes and troops also participated.

But the government cannot rely on its army alone. The 20,000 regular troops are unable to adequately defend such a large country (it is nearly 1,300 miles from the southern tip of Mozambique to its northern border), and they cannot respond quickly enough to attacks in the more inaccessible regions. When President Machel toured Inhambane Province in February, people in a number of towns demanded arms to fight the MNR.

In March, Machel appointed military commanders in all of the MNR-affected areas to reestablish the civilian militias, which had initially been set up following independence but had not been maintained. A document adopted by a Frelimo party conference that month declared, "It is necessary to strengthen our action against armed gangsters by organizing the people into self-defence units."

Light weapons purchased abroad have been

distributed to militia members at mass rallies held in cities and towns throughout the country. For example, at a mass rally in Tete on September 1, which was the culmination of a series of mass demonstrations throughout the province, workers were given arms. According to a Mozambican radio report, the provincial governor in Tete "emphasized the need for every residential area to have an organized force to defend the people."

These military preparations are not only intended to help defend the population from the MNR bands, but also from the MNR's masters in Pretoria.

In April, António Hama Thai, the chairman of the Maputo City Council, explicitly warned the people of the city that they had to prepare for a possible war with South Africa.

A similar point was made by President Machel at a mass rally in Inhambane in March. He reminded the crowd that "we have already fought and defeated Portuguese colonialism. After independence, we fought and defeated the regime of the tobacco-growing layabout, Ian Smith.

"Now we are called to war once more, this time to liquidate the armed bandits who are the agents of the racist and minority regime in Pretoria, the agents of international imperialism."

Machel then added, "Let the South Africans come themselves. We don't want the agent, we want his boss. Let's fight against the organ-grinder, not the monkey." □

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685).

1. Title of publication: Intercontinental Press.
1A. Publication no. 363930.
2. Date of filing: September 27, 1982
3. Frequency of issue: Biweekly except 1st in January, 3rd & 4th in August. A. No. of issues published annually: 24. B. Annual subscription price: \$25.00.
4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
5. Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
6. Full names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor. Publisher: 408 Printing & Publishing Corp., 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Editor: Steve Clark, 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Managing Editor: David Frankel, 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.
7. Owner (if owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.): 408 Printing & Publishing Corp., 408 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Mary-Alice Waters, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Barry Sheppard, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, Calif. 94110. Steve Clark, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Malik Miah, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Farrell Dobbs, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. James Mac Warren, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Reba Hansen, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Cynthia Jaquith, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Elizabeth Stone, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90006. Joel Britton, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90006. Jack Barnes, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Caroline Lund, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, Calif. 94110. Allan Hansen, 711 NW Everett, Portland, Ore.

97209. Barbara Matson, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. 406 West St. Realty Corp., 406 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Douglas Jenness, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Nora Danielson, 2864 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, Calif. 94609. Susan Berman, 2230 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44114. G. Craig Gannon, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Joan Campana, 1317 Est Rue Ste. Catherine, Montreal, P.Q. Canada H2L2H4. Priscilla Ring, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amounts of bonds, mortgages or other securities (if there are none, so state): None.

9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (Section 411.3 DMM only): Does not apply.

10. Extent and nature of circulation. Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months. A. Total no. copies printed (net press run): 3,937. B. Paid circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1,275. (2) Mail subscriptions: 1,911. C. Total paid circulation (sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 3,186. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies: 2. E. Total distribution (sum of C and D): 3,188. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 695. (2) Returns from news agents: 54. G. Total (sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 3,937.

Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date. A. Total no. copies printed (net press run): 3,700. B. Paid circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 1,193. (2) Mail subscriptions: 1,803. C. Total paid circulation (sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 2,996. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary and other free copies: 0. E. Total distribution (sum of C and D): 2,996. F. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 700. (2) Returns from news agents: 4. G. Total (sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 3,700.

11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed)
Sandra M. Sherman
Business Manager

How to fight bosses' offensive

Trade unionists seek answers to layoffs, wage freeze

By Russell Johnson

[The following article appeared in the September 24 issue of the New Zealand fortnightly *Socialist Action*. Footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Nineteen eighty-two is proving to be a catastrophic year for working people.

On the economic front, almost 85,000 people are registered as unemployed or are on special work. Thousands of workers have been thrown onto the dole as factories have closed down or laid off large numbers of workers.

Many workers have been especially stunned by the inability of the powerful meat workers' unions to save the jobs of thousands of their members at Patea, Gear, Hellaby's and elsewhere.

Workers' uncertainty has also been aggravated by the cancellation of new industrial expansion projects like the Aramoana smelter and the new pulp mills that were scheduled for Nelson and Northland.

Working farmers face shrinking markets for meat, wool and dairy products. Many have been saved from bankruptcy only by the huge subsidies being paid out by the government. Thousands of people are living in campgrounds and garages because of the growing housing crisis.

On top of this, inflation is running at about 17 percent, as New Zealand enters its second decade of double figure inflation.

World recession

Underlying this economic calamity is a deep world recession that began in 1980, the second in less than 10 years. This recession is the product of a chronic capitalist crisis of "over-production."

That is to say, in the "boom" years of the 1950s and 1960s the world's capitalists built so many factories that today they can produce far more goods than working people can afford to buy at prices profitable to the capitalists. The capitalists respond to this by cutting back production and laying off workers, further shrinking the demand and deepening the recession.

The New Zealand capitalists and their government are taking advantage of the recession and the resulting mass unemployment to carry out a class war against working people, aimed at weakening the labour movement and boosting profits at the expense of wages and working conditions.

At the heart of this war is the wage freeze,¹ which government ministers openly admit is

designed to reduce real wages. Government spokesmen have even called for the unions to go further and accept wage cuts to "save jobs."

Major blow

The wage freeze and the government's subsequent Budget represent the most serious political attack on the working class in the Muldoon years. It is a major blow to the living standards of all workers, especially those on lower incomes, and a severe restriction on the democratic rights of the unions.

It needs to be met by a massive mobilisation of the labour movement and working farmers aimed at bringing down the Muldoon government and replacing it with a Labour government responsible to the unions.

Socialist Action supports every action carried out by sections of the labour movement to resist the bosses' attacks and oppose the wage freeze. Class conscious workers support the FOL/CSU-organised² Campaign Against Cuts in Living Standards, for example, which has been organising an educational campaign against the wage freeze.

Roots of freeze

However, no section of the leadership of the unions has given a clear lead to workers in explaining the roots of the wage freeze in the deep crisis of capitalism, and what this means for developing a working class political strategy for fighting back.

The FOL/CSU campaign, for example, has so far been confined to explaining the unfairness of the wage freeze and the need for a big wage increase. In addition, no major industrial or other protest actions have yet taken place, three months after the freeze was imposed.

The political perspectives underlying this approach on the part of the union officialdom is most clearly spelled out in the newspapers of two organisations, the Socialist Unity Party (SUP) and the Workers Communist League (WCL), to which a number of union officials in Auckland and Wellington belong.

Both papers overestimate the power of the Muldoon government and its ability to confuse and divide workers, while minimising work-

ers' understanding and willingness to struggle against Muldoon.

'Confuse and divide'

Tribune, the paper of the SUP, for example, editorialises in its August 9 issue that the freeze and the subsequent Budget are aimed at confusing and dividing the workers "by appearing to give some more than others. . . . It is clear that careful consideration has gone into analysing which groups he [Muldoon] can gain most from by helping and which he can gain most from by creating division and apathy in their ranks."

"Muldoon," the editorial concludes, "is certainly no Robin Hood."

A similar view is being put forward by *Unity*, the paper of the WCL. For instance, the August 11 issue editorialises:

"The struggle to defeat the freeze, and win a general wage increase will be protracted and difficult. It is vital that it is coordinated, disciplined and based on a common claim. . . . Only a wide base for the campaign will ensure defeat for the government. With a wide base, and correct strategy, workers need not fear a snap election should the National government attempt it."

Tribune also refers to this alleged fear on the part of workers to take on the bosses' government. Auckland Trades Council President, Bill Andersen, warns in the August 23 *Tribune*:

"The government is also preparing for an early election and will probably attempt to use the planned FOL/CSU campaign against the economic 'freeze' (on wages alone) as a basis. 'Law and order' will be the Tory cry as the unions challenge the wage fix."

'Positive lead'

Under a banner headline, "Now, Not Later!" the September 8 *Unity* calls for the trade union movement to fight the wage freeze "this year". "Workers need a positive lead," it argues.

But neither *Unity* nor *Tribune* is offering such a positive lead to working people. The perspectives they put forward represent a political retreat in face of the Muldoon-directed capitalist offensive. How is this?

Firstly, both the WCL and the SUP have been blaming the "division and apathy" of many workers for the lack of a fightback, ignoring the responsibility of the union leaderships to give a "positive lead" in opposing the wage freeze both in word and deed.

But at the same time militant workers who do want to take action against the bosses' attacks are warned against "unpopular strikes"

by Bill Andersen in *Tribune* and to be "disciplined" and "united," by *Unity*.

We are told to wait for a mass movement to be built, that is, to wait for the union leadership to give a "positive lead." This can only encourage pessimism among many union militants, and even begin to sound like an excuse for not taking any decisive union action at all.

Stakes in fight

But more fundamentally, neither *Tribune* nor *Unity* are clearly explaining to vanguard workers, that is, those who clearly *do* want to fight the government and who *do* understand that the wage freeze and the Budget are anti-working class, what the stakes are in this fight.

They do not explain:

- That the current world recession reflects a deep-seated economic crisis that is *insoluble* within capitalism except at a massive cost to the working class and working farmers through another Great Depression like the 1930s.

- That the capitalist class is using this recession to wage a relentless class war on working people through their control over the government.

- That to combat the effects of this recession the labour movement must struggle for demands that protect working people regardless of the effect on the capitalist system.

That to win such struggles the working class must break the capitalist control over the government and establish the political rule of working people.

Overthrow capitalism

The working class perspective cannot be to make capitalism work better, but to overthrow it and establish socialism.

Of course, both *Tribune* and *Unity* make some comments along these lines. For instance, Bill Andersen writes in the September 6 *Tribune*: "It is important to understand that these repressive moves stem from the insoluble contradictions of capitalism and are not just questions of government/employer policy."

But these become mere gestures because they are not incorporated as the *starting point* of the political strategy the papers propose to the labour movement, in face of the wage freeze and the economic crisis.

Above all, both the SUP and the WCL are shrinking from drawing the central political conclusion that vanguard workers need to draw from this situation.

A mass pressure campaign may force a political retreat by the Muldoon government over a specific issue at a specific time, as the 1980 Kinleith strike forced the withdrawal of the last set of wage controls. But no mass pressure campaign can alter the fundamental course of the National government. This is determined by the interests of New Zealand big business.

To change the course of the government, the labour movement must win political power and dismantle all the state institutions which back up capitalist rule — the courts, the cops and the armed forces.

Union fight

Today this means the organised powerhouse of the working class, the unions, must fight to bring the Labour Party and its parliamentary wing under the control of working people. They must force the party to take up working class demands and lead the fight against the wage freeze and the Muldoon government, both in parliament *and* in the streets.

A concerted move in this direction by the

unions could not be more timely. The Rowling/Lange leadership³ have discredited themselves among vanguard workers with their attempts to cut union ties with the Labour Party and their shameful collaboration with Muldoon in denying Samoans their legal right to citizenship.

A union call to launch a struggle to make the Labour Party an effective fighting instrument of the workers would attract a broad response within the working class today.

Instead *Tribune* and *Unity* turn union militants' attention away from such a *political* line of march. *Unity* simply states that "The wage freeze will only be broken through widespread industrial action" and ignores the need to get rid of Muldoon.

And while *Tribune* considers the election of a Labour government "a progressive step," it confines itself to criticising the "illusion" that "a Labour government could solve the problems within the existing economic and political framework." It does not propose what the unions should do to bring the Labour Party into the fight against the "existing economic and political conditions."

Why debate

Why is it important for politically conscious workers to discuss out and debate the wrong political perspectives put forward by the Socialist Unity Party and the Workers Communist League?

After all, what either of these organisations says and does is hardly decisive to the outcome of the class struggle today. Both are too small

3. The New Zealand Labour Party is headed by former Prime Minister Wallace Rowling. The party's deputy leader is David Lange.



Ross Hampton/Socialist Action

Demonstration in Auckland during September 1979 general strike provoked by Muldoon's attempts to hold down wages.

to have that sort of influence over the working class today.

Nevertheless, a number of the most well-known trade union officials who are identified in the eyes of workers as representatives of the socialist and class struggle viewpoint in the unions, are associated with the SUP or WCL.

In addition, their political timidity and retreat in face of the capitalist offensive is shared by a much broader layer of trade union officials.

Their wrong perspective can particularly confuse and demoralise rank-and-file fighters in the unions who look to them for a lead on what to do. Union militants are not inspired to have confidence in the working class, but to view so-called "backward workers" as the weight holding the labour movement back.

Thinking workers need to draw the conclu-

sions that they cannot look to this layer of the trade union officials (or any other) for political leadership today. Instead they must look to themselves.

Transform labour movement

Under the blows of the economic crisis and Muldoon's anti-working-class policies, workers are learning many bitter lessons. An important layer of workers are discussing out the meaning of the government's attacks and are looking for new and more effective ways to mobilise working class power to fight back.

False starts will undoubtedly be made. But many of these workers will be won to the socialist movement. This is provided socialists seize on each major turn in political and economic events to explain how all the workers' problems are rooted in capitalism, and that

the only way out is to establish a government of the working people to establish socialism.

In time, powerful new fighting moods must inevitably take root among workers. Out of this process new class struggle fighters will come forward in the factories. Together with the best union officials they will lead a fight to transform the entire labour movement, the unions and the Labour Party, into a powerful movement that links up with the working farmers and all the oppressed.

It is out of this new mass political movement of the working people that the mass socialist movement of the future will be built. But the key task today in preparation for this mass movement is to achieve political clarity among the vanguard workers on the programme and strategy around which this movement must be built. □

Nicaragua

Construction workers press demands

Exchange between union leaders and head of government

By Michael Baumann

MOMOTOMBO GEOTHERMAL PROJECT, Nicaragua — "Why are Italian technicians paid twice as much as Nicaraguans? On top of that, they don't treat us very well."

"Why do they have private, air-conditioned living quarters while we sleep four to a small room, with poor light, sanitation, food, and no recreational facilities?"

"We need more workers and more construction equipment if we're going to finish this project on time."

"Our wages are too low for this kind of work under these conditions. We need a readjustment."

What had been scheduled as a brief informational visit to the vast geothermal project under way here concluded with a public presentation of workers' complaints and concerns to the Sandinista government.

At the closing ceremony, union leaders representing the construction workers union SCAAS and Nicaraguan technicians working on the project put these questions and more to

Commander Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the Junta of National Reconstruction.

Present in the audience were some 50 workers, several top officials of the revolutionary government, and 20 journalists, including correspondents for *Intercontinental Press*.

The meeting, held September 25, reflected several of the difficult problems the revolution faces.

The geothermal project itself, when it enters initial operation next year, will be a major advance to the country's economic potential (see box).

But it is being built in an isolated, hot, muggy, mosquito-plagued area on the northern shore of Lake Managua, with few amenities for the workers who are based there six days a week.

The geothermal project, like everything else in Nicaragua, is being carried out in the context of the undeclared war — both military and economic — that American imperialism is carrying out against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Money is short, for everything. Major resources have to be devoted to defense against increasing attacks by the 5,000 counter-revolutionaries armed, trained, and paid by the U.S. government and stationed in camps just across the northern border with Honduras.

At the same time, funds available to the government are declining. On the one hand, the cutoff in U.S. economic aid and U.S. pressure to reduce loans and grants from other sources is making its impact felt.

On the other, revenues from exports will be sharply reduced this year, as a result of the disastrous floods last May and a severe drought

Nicaragua's plans for geothermal power

MOMOTOMBO GEOTHERMAL PROJECT, Nicaragua — Nicaragua is a land of lakes and volcanos. Although the technology has long existed to use this combination as a cheap, renewable, nonpolluting source of energy, it took the Sandinista revolution to begin to bring this to reality.

Plans, research, and investigation for this first geothermal unit date back to the mid-1960s, but it is only in the last three years that the project has really moved ahead.

Today, atop this remote 10-square-mile area of proven geothermal potential, one of the world's most modern power plants is being built.

Thirty-two wells have been dug to tap the earth's own steam. Twenty of them are productive, and the first five will be tapped to turn turbines when the unit enters initial operation in June 1983.

The first unit will provide 35 megawatts of electrical power, saving Nicaragua \$60,000 a day over what it would cost to produce the same electricity with imported oil. Research indicates that a second unit, at the same site and producing an equal amount of power, is feasible.

Eight more geothermal sites located throughout the country are believed to offer similar potential, and studies are continuing on them. Two major hydroelectric plants are also on the drawing board.

Nicaragua's overall plan for meeting increased power needs calls for a 20-year budget of \$765 million. If the goals can be met, by 1991 Nicaragua will produce more than four-fifths of its electricity through geothermal and hydroelectric plants.

— M.B.

that hit the key northern agricultural provinces in July and August.

Badly needed spare parts, machinery, and fuel — all of which must be paid for in dollars — are in increasingly short supply.

What funds are available are devoted to health care, education, agrarian reform and increasing crop yields, long-range projects like Momotombo, and \$10-million-a-month price subsidies on basic food and consumer items.

The plain truth, however, is that not everyone in Nicaragua either fully understands this context or agrees completely with the way priorities within it are decided. It would be utopian to expect that they would.

Political conflict

SCAAS, the Union of Carpenters, Bricklayers, Assembly Workers, and Allied Trades, is an example of this reality. Affiliated with the union federation CGT(i),¹ it has a tradition of conflict with the revolutionary government.

The conflict stems, at bottom, from the fact that the CGT(i) leadership, although it formally accepts the Sandinista government as one that represents the workers and farmers, often acts as if the government was a capitalist regime. As a result, the CGT(i) advances economic demands without taking into account the impact of its demands on the overall economic plan the government is trying to advance, or the effect of its demands on other sectors of the working class.

In Managua, for example, SCAAS workers went out on strike in January 1980 in opposition to a government program to create more jobs by reducing hours and wages of relatively well-paid SCAAS workers employed on a national project.

Since September 1981, strikes have been prohibited by law in Nicaragua.

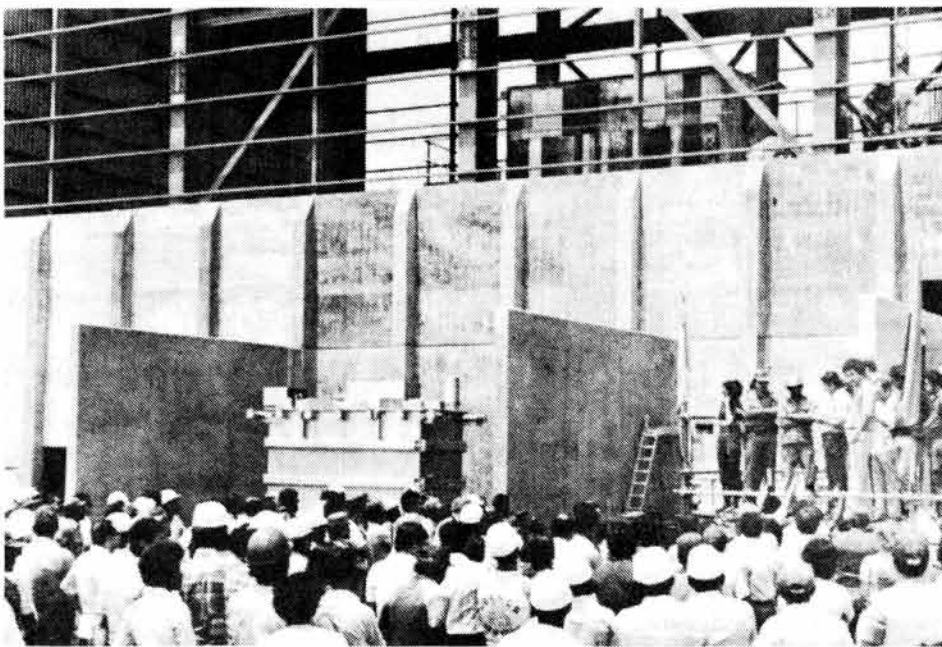
The government, the FSLN, and the leadership of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) argue that this is a necessary measure to face up to the imperialist threat and the economic crisis, and that other channels now exist to resolve labor disputes.²

1. The CGT(i) (Independent General Workers Federation), although relatively small, is a politically important union federation. It is affiliated with the pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Nicaragua (PSN), and through the SCAAS it organizes about one-third of the country's construction workers.

According to official figures from the Ministry of Labor, the CGT(i) has 6,500 members, 4,400 of whom are construction workers. By contrast, the main union federation, the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) has 84,000 members (two-thirds of the country's organized work force), 9,000 of whom are construction workers.

The CGT(i), it should be noted, does not accept these figures. It publicly claims a membership of 20,000, but has never presented documentation to back this up.

2. For a more thorough treatment of the considerations involved in the ban on strikes in Nicaragua, see "The FSLN, the working class, and the economic emergency" by Fred Murphy, *Intercontinental Press*, November 30, 1981, p. 1170.



El Nuevo Diario

Meeting between Momotombo workers and Commander Daniel Ortega.

The union leaders at Momotombo, by taking the step of publicly presenting their grievances to Ortega, indicated they were not satisfied with the response they had so far received.

What the rank-and-file workers at Momotombo actually thought could not easily be determined. Those who attended the meeting stood with their arms folded during most of it.

As each of the union leaders finished his remarks, Commander Ortega took written copies of their complaints. He then asked for permission to speak.

Ortega replies

Despite the country's economic limitations, he said, many of the concerns expressed seemed justified, particularly the requests for militia equipment, better food, a television, and recreational facilities. He said that the regional government commission, the Institute of Energy, and the Ministry of Labor would be asked to look into these complaints.

But wage adjustments, he said, are practically impossible because of the economic crisis.

"Remember," he said, "that when they give wage increases in other countries, what they do is raise the price of everything else even more." What the Sandinista government does, on the other hand, is to try to maintain workers' buying power through subsidized and controlled prices.

"There are some workers who *should have* wage increases," he added. "Those are the workers who are still receiving less than the minimum wage, of whom, unfortunately, there are still a great many. They are the first priority."

In response to the question about the foreign technicians' wages and living conditions, he explained that the project was being built in

coordination with the Italian government, which was providing technology and experts Nicaragua did not have.

"It's hard for them to come here and work here under these conditions," he said, and we have to pay them and house them at international standards. Unfortunately, we cannot afford to pay Nicaraguan technicians at the same rate. "That's a reality we just have to face."

And we do not have on-the-job problems with the Italian *compañeros* because they're Italian, Ortega added.

"We have the same problems among ourselves, between Nicaraguan technicians and Nicaraguan workers. It's an inheritance of the past.

"Some technicians are arrogant. And not all members of the working class display a perfect level of organization, cooperation, and discipline in their work."

The real problem we face, Ortega said, is productivity.

"Workers don't want to work as hard as they did before the revolution. And that's not right. Before the revolution, when you had the boss over you, you worked hard. We have to work even harder now, because we are working for ourselves, for the entire nation."

Ortega urged the workers to try to establish better communication with the Ministry of Labor. You can't expect miracles, he told them, because it has limited resources and receives a vast quantity of complaints similar to yours.

"But it is an instrument of the revolution, it is headed by revolutionaries, and the revolution has confidence in it."

The meeting closed with applause and the chanting of revolutionary slogans.

The workers then began to discuss the issues among themselves as they boarded buses for the weekend trip to their homes. □

The revolution vs. joblessness

Government plans to wipe out unemployment

By Baxter Smith

ST. GEORGE'S — The People's Revolutionary Government here is undertaking its most ambitious project since it came to power in 1979: wiping out unemployment.

On this Caribbean island of 110,000 people, just over 7,000 workers are unemployed, accounting for 22 percent of the workforce.

The government has just announced a plan to create 6,000 new jobs over the next three years: 3,000 in agriculture, 2,000 in construction, 500 in tourism, 100 in agro-industries, and the rest in teaching and other sectors.

The announcement of this plan followed a series of mass meetings, conferences, and discussions involving all layers of the population. Meetings have been held in all parishes of the country since early this year, with the goal of discussing how to end joblessness.

Prime Minister Maurice Bishop set the tone for the campaign at a national gathering of unemployed people and delegates from mass organizations in June.

"We come before our people," Bishop said, "openly as always, admitting this problem of unemployment and pointing out that together — party, government, and people — we have to find a solution."

He said it was necessary to find "a mass solution to end unemployment, of trying to end unemployment through increasing production."

"The people themselves," Bishop said, "and in particular, the unemployed themselves, must be fully involved and engaged in finding the remedies that will cure joblessness."

Bishop explained that unemployment is "created by capitalism." He pointed out, "It was only when capitalism came along" that unemployment emerged.

"There is more unemployment today in the capitalist world than in the past 50 years," the prime minister stated. "The capitalist world today is going through a major crisis. And one of the major side effects of this crisis is massive, unbelievable unemployment."

High unemployment was plaguing Grenada long before the revolutionary government came to power in March 1979.

In 1970, joblessness was estimated at 30 percent. Then came the 1974-75 world economic crisis. Unemployment was about 50 percent at the time of the 1979 revolution, which was followed by the current capitalist economic crisis.

Last March, in preparation for launching the unemployment campaign, the government undertook a census of jobless people.

The census located 7,040 persons who were either totally jobless, or part-time or seasonal workers. This figure puts unemployment today

at around 22 percent — less than half of the 1979 figure.

Sixty-four percent of all persons reached in the census are between the ages of 16 and 25. Seventy-two percent of the jobless are women. The census found that 80 percent of all jobless never began secondary school. Many of these unemployed youth have gone for years without finding full-time jobs.

These figures represent the results of colonial and neocolonial oppression. However, as great as the problem is, conditions are improving.

Economic expansion

The halving of the jobless rate in just three years indicates the commitment to social and economic progress that has been a hallmark of Grenada's workers and farmers government.

Several thousand new jobs have been created through the launching of major projects such as the international airport; road, school, and housing construction; agro-industries; and health and education expansion. As well, more than 200 jobs have been created through the establishment of cooperatives. (Two hundred jobs in Grenada is equivalent to about 400,000 jobs in the United States, or 100,000 in Britain.)

At the various parish meetings and conferences on unemployment, economic expansion — particularly agricultural expansion — was projected as the major way to end joblessness.

There are more than 7,000 acres of idle land that could be put into production to create jobs. The government estimates that one job could be created per acre, and in the case of banana production, three jobs for every two acres. Additional jobs resulting from greater land usage would include trucking and shipping, packaging, and agro-industries.

At the national and local conferences, jobless youth were pressed to sign up for agricultural cooperatives. The National Cooperative Development Agency, a state enterprise, puts up loans and helps find land for youths forming agricultural cooperatives.

At workshops at these conferences, jobless youths volunteered for, or suggested the creation of, dairy products production; sandal making; bakery, crafts, and construction cooperatives; the teaching of agricultural science in the schools; and more agricultural training schools, among other things.

Training schools

In particular, jobless youth have been encouraged to sign up for agricultural training. The La Sagesse agricultural training school was opened in June and the Bocage school on September 17. Two more are planned to open

soon in Boulouge and Dumfires, the latter on Grenada's sister island of Carriacou.

At the schools, modern methods of scientific agriculture are taught in a 12-week course. The students are urged to set up agricultural cooperatives after graduation.

At the dedication ceremony for the Bocage school, Agriculture and Cooperatives Minister George Louison said that "such training schools will break the vicious cycle of unemployment and develop a new farmer with new skills and methods."

In addition, the National Youth Organisation is spearheading a drive to increase youth involvement in agriculture through radio ads and literature.

As part of the effort to involve all layers in the discussion, the government held a conference with local businessmen in July to solicit their ideas for ending unemployment.

However, this meeting contrasted sharply with others in which workers, farmers, and jobless youth offered their ideas. One businessman, for example, charged that unemployment existed because people are lazy.

These businessmen, who tend to be concentrated in export-import enterprises and tourism, have demonstrated little desire to contribute to Grenada's economic well-being. Nonetheless, Prime Minister Bishop urged them to set up small-scale manufacturing. He exhorted: "The time has come for deeds and not words."

Because so many of the unemployed in Grenada are women, special emphasis is being placed on devising ways to train women for the new jobs that will be created over the next few years. A key role in this is being played by the National Women's Organization (NWO).

In September, NWO President Phyllis Coard explained that the NWO is faced with the big task of educating women to fill some 5,000 jobs that traditionally have not been done by women in Grenada, particularly in agriculture. Coard urged women to enroll in the agricultural training schools, and noted that a large number already had applied to the new school in Bocage.

A new department in the Ministry of Women's Affairs has been set up, called Women in Production. It is headed by Patsy Romain, an executive member of the NWO.

Its purpose, Romain said, will be to "look at and deal with the problem of unemployed women." The department, she said, will help coordinate the recruitment and training of women for the new jobs that are being created.

Besides encouraging women to go into agriculture, Romain's department, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, plans to estab-

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lish centers in every parish where women can learn practical construction skills. "Women will learn carpentry, masonry, surveying, and other construction skills at the centers," Romain said. "Right now we have very few women painters, surveyors, and so forth. And we want that to change, too."

In addition, more than half of all scholarships offered to Grenadian students for study

abroad are being taken by women. Romain said that this includes the study of medicine, science, and engineering.

Getting women into the productive areas of the economy will be a feature of the December congress of the NWO. NWO groups around the island are presently discussing a draft program for the congress.

Finding the means to bring women into the

job market is just one way to draw them more into the revolutionary process.

According to a summary of her remarks in the September 18 *Free West Indian*, Coard said that the "NWO needs to educate women about politics, the economy, underdevelopment, unemployment, the ways in which Grenada can be developed, the social problems affecting our people, and in leadership." □

Guatemala

Interview with a revolutionary leader

'The Indian struggle became a class struggle'

[The following interview with Rigoberta Menchú, a Quiché Indian and a leader of the Guatemalan Patriotic Unity Committee (CGUP), took place in New York on June 10. It was conducted in Spanish by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. There has been considerable discussion about the role of the Indian population in the Guatemalan revolution. Can you tell us how the Indian struggle has developed, and the relationship between this struggle and the overall struggle of the oppressed and exploited in your country?

Answer. The struggle in Guatemala really began to take shape about 20 years ago. At that time Guatemalan revolutionaries emerged who had a dream about changing society, and they began to plant the seeds of a revolutionary consciousness in Guatemala.

There have been different eras of struggle. In the years after the CIA-sponsored overthrow of the Jacobo Arbenz government in 1954 there was a growing spontaneous struggle.

In the early 1960s an armed revolutionary movement arose, but it was defeated because it did not have the participation of the masses of the people, including the Indians. Although the armed groups were totally defeated, they left a seed and showed future revolutionaries that it required more than one or two groups of people to make a fundamental change. They showed that fundamental change requires the participation of the people as a whole.

Since then our people have attempted to use every available means to organize mass movements to demand fair wages, better treatment from the landlords, respect for the rights of the workers, and to demand that the bosses honor their labor contracts.

Through these struggles and these organizations, the masses have slowly clarified their positions and objectives.

A change has also taken place in the role of the churches. In the 1960s, all the churches were strongly anti-Communist in their message and activities, supporting the regime to a great

er or lesser extent as a way to "defeat communism."

But many religious figures began to realize that communists were not the problem. Rather it was the fact that Indians were dying of hunger, were afflicted with terrible poverty, exploitation, oppression, discrimination, and repression.

As a result, some of the churches began to take a more progressive position, and we can also say that the cause of our people owes something to their Christian faith.

In this early period our political-military organizations began their initial work among the Indians.

Q. What was the situation of the Indians?

A. The Indian lived in a very closed world. Indians fought other Indians, they fought the *ladinos* [non-Indian population], they fought each other; the Catholics fought against Protestants. There are 22 different Indian languages, and Indians in one area cannot understand those in another.

Furthermore, the native population had become extremely cynical because for decades they had been promised many wonderful things, but nothing ever happened. Every new president promised more food, new schools, roads, and housing. But we never saw any of these things.

Eventually we did not believe in anything anymore — not governments, not ourselves, not the *ladinos*.

When the revolutionary movement arrived on the scene, it had to prove itself over and over again before the Indians would take a step toward revolution. But the movement showed that it was different, that it did not make false promises or lie to the Indians. Once the Indians were convinced that the revolutionary organizations meant what they said, they began to get involved. Then even the worst repression only strengthened the resolve of the Indians.

We Indians are the majority of the population in Guatemala. You cannot say we have Christians on the one hand and Indians on the

other, or that the population is made up of workers, peasants, and Indians. Indians are Christians, workers, peasants, students, and some are even professionals.

Q. In what way do Indians participate in the struggle?

A. An Indian who becomes involved in the revolutionary struggle has family members who are also brought into it and who in turn spread it further. Today the Indian population supports the revolution on all levels.

They give their five centavos to the revolutionary organizations. They donate corn, beans, labor, firewood, and the like. Women cook for the fighters. The revolutionaries are no longer something foreign to us. They are our own people.

The people have become the base of support for the armed struggle. But there are also different levels of participation within the population. You must understand that the revolution is not made simply with guns. It is made with ideas, with booby traps, with barricades, with the fabrication of people's weapons, with words, with signs, with campaigns to teach our own comrades to read and write.

We began to carry out intensive political work among the population. Indian comrades had to learn to read and write, to speak Spanish, to drive, to have opinions. Out of this process new leaders of the struggle emerged.

In 1972 the different Indian nationalities held a congress in El Quiché Province. The congress was supposed to discuss solutions to the poverty and discrimination which our Indian people face.

But the congress did not accomplish anything because it was run by anthropologists and other figures who decided that the poor Indians were not competent to draw their own conclusions on how to solve their problems.

Despite this failure, the congress gave birth to a consciousness that Indians had to do things for ourselves. About six years later, in 1978, this was concretized in the establishment of the Peasant Unity Committee (CUC).

In the meantime, although our comrades did

not found an organization, they began to work in local projects, in cooperatives, in radio broadcasting. A station was set up in Santa Cruz del Quiché — Radio Quiché — which broadcast every day in the Indian languages. At the same time we continued to work in Caritás and other church groups and members of cooperatives.

In 1975 an organization of Indians was formed. The founders were comrades from various Indian peoples.

Once the organization was founded, we began to work among peasants on the Pacific Coast. Many Indian peasants go down to the coast to work on the plantations. They are organized there, and when they go back to their areas in the highlands they spread revolutionary consciousness.

After a time, however, we came to realize that Indians were not the only peasants in Guatemala. There were also poor ladinos who lived in the same conditions we did. We began to realize that we had to reach out toward the ladinos. This was not easy, because there had been a history of conflict between Indians and ladinos.

But we were slowly able to forge links between Indians and ladinos. In some of the massacres that have taken place, poor ladinos as well as Indians were murdered.

Over the course of time we understood that we did not need an organization just for Indians, but a class-struggle organization, since the poor Indian and the poor ladino share a common enemy.

Carrying out the class struggle required a great deal of effort on our part. We had to learn to read. We had to teach each other. We had to learn to work together with the ladinos. We also had to break down ideological and linguistic barriers. But we were able to broaden our movement, and the struggle became a class struggle.

The Peasant Unity Committee arose in 1978 after the May 29 massacre in the town of Panzós, in which more than 100 Indians and ladinos were killed. From then on we were able to work together with the ladino comrades. We also united with students, with workers, with Christians, and with residents of all the shantytowns on the outskirts of the cities, a majority of whom are Indians in various places.

We saw that we must not be separated, since all of us make up the people, and that our organization therefore has to be everywhere. We know that we will win respect only if we are involved in the same process as the people, if we are inside the struggles, if we show that we know how to think and lead and make decisions.

There are different roads through which people become leaders in Guatemala. You don't become a leader just by reading many books. People have to learn through practice, in the school of daily life, in order to become comrades who can lead our people.

As a result, I can say that in Guatemala, Indians and ladinos, men and women, young and old — all have their part to play in the process.

Q. What organizations are involved in the revolutionary struggle?

A. In early February 1982 we established our undisputed vanguard, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG). The URNG was formed from an alliance of the four political-military organizations: the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), the Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), and the Leadership Nucleus of the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT).

The URNG formulated a five-point program of government that we think encompasses the feelings of our people [see *Intercontinental Press*, March 8, 1982, p. 184, for major excerpts from this program].

We do not propose to do a lot, because there is a lot we cannot do. We propose only what can be done.

And we feel that this unity resulted from the massive incorporation of the people into the different fields of struggle. We have shown in practice that when the government tries to defeat our political-military organizations, we respond with our barricades, our propaganda bombs, our lightning meetings, our wall posters. All these things force the repressive forces to spread themselves thin, so they cannot concentrate their forces to strike against the political-military organizations.

We do the same thing when the enemy tries to massacre people.

Q. What is the URNG's strategy?

A. The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union is carrying out the strategy of revolutionary people's war. Revolutionary people's war means just that: the participation of the people, from the youngest to the oldest, from those who can contribute a few centavos to the full-time fighters.

Our people are giving everything for the revolution because in Guatemala we are convinced that we have no choice but to carry out the war.

In addition, the Guatemalan Patriotic Unity Committee (CGUP) was set up as a united body composed of people from the different sectors making up Guatemalan society. It is a broad group that includes workers, peasants, students, slum-dwellers, professionals, intellectuals, writers.

In the CGUP there are also many artists, journalists, and members of political parties who are tired of elections that never change anything in Guatemala.

This is a broad united body composed of all sectors. We do not reject anyone in advance, because we know that the revolutionary people's war is also fought with words. What I am doing right now is waging revolutionary people's war. It contributes to the seizure of power.

We feel that patriots and democrats have a place in the process because what we want is peace, justice, equality for all.

Q. Does the CGUP include mass organiza-

tions in its ranks as well as individuals?

A. The CGUP is gradually developing unity among all the sectors and organizations that are now still dispersed. For example, I am a member of the January 31 People's Front (FP-31).* I am also a member of the CGUP as an individual. I have the endorsement of my organization as do other members of the CGUP, but the organization itself is not in the CGUP.

We believe that the special characteristics of the revolutionary process in Guatemala make it necessary to establish gradual unity among the different organizations, bodies, and sectors, in order to later establish a big national patriotic front. We have great hope that the National Patriotic Front will arise very soon, bringing together all the mass people's revolutionary organizations that exist, bringing together all the sectors making up Guatemalan society — all those whose hands are not stained with the blood of our people.

At the same time our vanguard puts forward an attitude of nonalignment [in foreign policy] because we want a new society where no one imposes conditions on our being able to choose our destiny.

Q. Are you concerned about the Reagan administration's intervention in Guatemala?

A. This is a danger faced by all of Central America, not just Guatemala. The recent change of faces in the Guatemalan government is aimed at making it possible for the United States to increase its economic aid to Guatemala, which will go to support paramilitary groups, soldiers, and the regime that kills its own people.

They do not want us to be able to choose our own destiny. Up to now we have always been subject to intervention from one or another reactionary government. For example, in the past year Israel has offered large amounts of ammunition for the army's weapons. Also, Arava airplanes arrived from Israel last year for use in counterinsurgency. These can take off or land in very confined places, and the army is also using them for bombing.

Since 1979, as often as in the past, we have seen foreign counterinsurgency advisers in the country. There are military and intelligence advisers from the United States, Israel, Chile, Argentina, and Taiwan. This is absolute fact. We have many comrades who have undergone torture and testified upon their release that for-

*The January 31 People's Front takes its name from the January 31, 1980, massacre of 27 people who were occupying the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City to call attention to the massacres perpetrated against the peasants of El Quiché Province by the Guatemalan army. (See *Intercontinental Press*, February 11, 1980, p. 128.)

The FP-31 includes the following organizations: Peasant Unity Committee (CUC); Felipe Antonio García Revolutionary Workers Centers (NOR); Trinidad Gómez Hernández Neighborhood Coordinating Committee (CPD); Vicente Menchú Christian Revolutionaries (CRVM); and the Robin García Revolutionary Student Front (FERG Secundaria).

eign advisers were present.

They are ready to spill blood not only in Guatemala, but in the whole region, especially the blood of the fraternal Salvadoran people, the fraternal Nicaraguan people, the peoples of the Caribbean and elsewhere in the world, who also dream, as we do, of justice and peace.

With increased U.S. intervention the number of human lives lost and the amount of blood spilled would be much greater than at present.

But imperialism could not defeat the people of Vietnam, and we in Central America are many peoples. The eyes of the world are on our peoples, on our Central America. But we must unite, because our enemies are united.

Q. How do you see the role of international solidarity with the struggle in Guatemala, especially solidarity from within the United States?

A. In a war many things are needed because a war is not a simple thing. We need economic support, political support, and moral support. We need people who can explain our people's

struggle, who can give voice to our pain and suffering.

We also think that the best solidarity is to wage our own struggles in our own countries. In Guatemala we understand that the best form of solidarity with the fraternal Salvadoran people, with the fraternal Nicaraguan people, and with the other peoples of the world who are fighting for their freedom is to step up our own struggle, to weaken our enemies, to show our enemies that we exist and are one people.

We would ask the people of the United States to pressure their government through their struggles. They should pressure their government to give the people of the United States what they need, because there is also tremendous poverty there.

There is unemployment in the United States. There is great hunger. Your government is using your taxes to kill people in Central America and in other parts of the world. That is not right.

We feel that the people of the United States are like our people in Guatemala, and that the government of the United States is also like the government of our own rich people. □

STATEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Wave of repression in Poland

[The following statement was issued on September 17 by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The hundreds of thousands of people who participated in the street demonstrations on Tuesday, August 31, to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the Gdansk agreement in 1980* clearly showed the strength of Solidarity. Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski and his police did not hesitate to kill five demonstrators.

However, on Monday, September 13, the date on which Poland entered the tenth month of the state of war, thousands of workers again took to the streets. At the Huta Lenina steel-works in Krakow — the biggest workplace in the country — the young workers formed a contingent at the factory gate to go to the town. In Wroclaw the police were assailed from all sides by groups of demonstrators.

All this is witness to the desire of the masses to end the state of siege, the working class's determined rejection of the bureaucratic military dictatorship, and the deep desire of the masses to reconquer the gains they won from August 1980.

The worsening of the economic situation

*The Gdansk agreement was signed on August 31, 1980, at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. It followed a two-month countrywide strike wave, and recognized the workers' right to form their own independent and democratically-run trade unions. — IP

can only increase the exasperation of a working class, which, for eighteen months, denounced the parasitism of the bureaucracy and stated its wish and its ability to take affairs into its own hands. The "normalization" policy of the Military Council of National Salvation (WRON) has already led to a drop of 30 percent in buying power. Everything indicates that this will continue.

The bureaucracy has proven that it has nothing to offer to workers, except bloody and brutal repression. The ZOMO (motorized police reserves) do not hesitate to shoot at point blank range on workers and crowds as they did at the Wujek mine on Wednesday, December 16, 1981, or in Lubin on August 31. Fierce new confrontations are looming on the horizon. Warsaw and Moscow are preparing themselves.

The regime is stepping up repression. More and more convictions are being handed down. For distributing leaflets, or participating in strikes or demonstrations, more than 2,000 militants have been sentenced to 4, 5, indeed 10 years in prison.

Thousands of workers have been sacked for having said no to the despotism of the bureaucrats by go-slows at work, by supporting the demands of Solidarity, and by showing their solidarity with their companions suffering the repression.

In the camps fenced with barbed wire, the regime has begun to "arrest" militants — at the

moment primarily those from the KOR (Committee for Social Self-Defense) — and started trials of them. The junta accuses them of conspiracy aiming to "overthrow the government of People's Poland by force."

Once more these attacks against Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Jan Litynski, Henryk Wujek, and Jan Jozef Lipski show General Jaruzelski's wish to find scapegoats, and to do everything to divide the movement between the advisors of Solidarity, intellectuals, and workers. In accusing Jacek Kuron and his comrades of "terrorism" the bureaucracy is trying in vain to present them as provocateurs, responsible for the present repression and the maintenance of the state of war.

But the Polish workers have shown more than once that they have not been fooled by these maneuvers. The underground leadership of Solidarity, the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK), has already declared, in taking up the struggle for liberty for the former members of the KOR, "This measure opens the way for other show trials, which aim to put trade union militants out of social life for many years. The KOR affair is only a beginning. Afterwards other internees will be called to appear before the tribunals under false accusations."

The Polish workers and Solidarity should find support within the international workers movement that is as strong as their own determination. For some months it has been proven that only the workers are prepared to actively help the struggle of the Polish workers and the underground trade union. What is surprising in this? Attacks on trade-union freedoms and the workers movement are the outcome of the bourgeoisie's policy of austerity. The only preoccupation of the bankers and their allies is that "order" be definitively reestablished to assure the payment of the interest due on the Polish debt.

The interests of Polish workers converge with those of workers throughout the world. But for a real solidarity campaign to exist it is necessary to build it, to break from routine. Those who limit themselves to declarations of good intent must be forced to act. We should denounce the hypocrisy of those who refuse to actively mobilize because they have in their heads a project of reconciliation between the Polish workers and the junta, aiming ultimately to make them accept the bureaucratic yoke.

The leaderships of the workers organizations are today put to the test: the breadth of the campaign against the intended trials of the KOR leaders and for the freeing of all political prisoners will gauge the desire to give resolute and unconditional support to the demands and struggles of millions of Polish workers.

In the workers movement, revolutionaries must do everything to launch concrete solidarity initiatives, to attain a broad and united mobilization against repression.

Free Lech Walesa, Jacek Kuron, and all their comrades!

Lift the state of war!

Restore democratic and trade-union rights!

New textbooks push militarization

Whitewash of imperialist aggression stirs outcry

By Ernest Harsch

As part of a broader propaganda drive to justify rebuilding Japan's military might, the Japanese ruling class is seeking to rewrite history.

According to new school textbooks approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Tokyo's military aggression against China, Vietnam, Korea, the Philippines, and other Asian countries during the 1930s and 1940s is no longer considered an "invasion," but an "advance."

This and other revisions of Japanese history textbooks have prompted a storm of protest and outrage throughout the region, particularly among those peoples who were the victims of the mass slaughter and destruction carried out by Japanese imperialist troops.

The changes are all intended to gloss over the brutality of the Japanese conquest of much of Asia — and even to provide some justification for it. The revisions are numerous:

- The 1937 "rape of Nanking," in China, is no longer portrayed in the textbooks as a massacre. The previous figure of 200,000 Chinese killed by the Japanese is dropped entirely, as are references to the Japanese army's plundering of the city. Attempting to shift some of the blame for the massacre onto the Chinese who resisted the occupation, the new version claims that it took place "in the midst of the confusion of the occupation of Nanking."

- Mention of the forcible conscription of tens of thousands of Korean workers to labor in Japan between 1939 and 1945 is completely dropped.

- Accounts of a Japanese massacre of hundreds of Okinawans in the closing days of World War II have been deleted. (Although Okinawa is today officially considered a prefecture of Japan, it is, in fact, a colony.)

- The March 1, 1919, uprising in Korea is no longer described as a revolt against Japanese colonial rule, but as a "riot." The fact that more than 7,000 Koreans were killed when the Japanese suppressed the rebellion has been dropped.

Military buildup

These textbook revisions are not just indications of the Japanese ruling class's efforts to deny responsibility for its past aggression against the peoples of Asia. They are closely linked to its moves to build up Japan's *current* military forces and prepare for future attacks on revolutions in Asia.

An article in the September 6 issue of *Sekai Kakumei* (World Revolution), the weekly newspaper of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth

International, pointed out that "the reactionary strengthening of the textbook approval system is an integral part of the broader policy of the regime and big business."

According to *Sekai Kakumei*, it is part of the Japanese ruling class's "attack on people's livelihoods" within Japan, and another step on the road toward changing the Japanese constitution, which places restrictions on the level of Japan's military forces. The textbook changes, the newspaper noted, also portray more favorably the U.S.-Japanese Security Treaty and the Japan Self-Defense Forces (the official name for the Japanese military).

On July 23, just as the news of the textbook revisions was coming to light, the government of Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki adopted a five-year \$64 billion weapons program, the largest since World War II. It did so at the urging of the U.S. government, which has been seeking to shift more of the military burden of policing imperialist interests around the world onto its allies.

This weapons program will concentrate on building up Japan's air and naval capabilities. As part of it, the Japanese government intends to nearly double the number of F-15 jet fighters in its arsenal, from 80 to 155.

This \$64 billion program will require yearly increases in military allocations of between 6.5 percent and 8 percent. Increases in military spending in recent years have already outstripped the yearly increases for practically all other key budget items.

Washington is pressing Tokyo to go even further. It has been urging the Japanese government to take responsibility for helping to defend imperialist interests within a radius of 1,000 miles from Japan's shores — an area that not only covers important parts of China, but also most of the Philippines and all of the Korean Peninsula.

Broad protests

It is moves such as these that have accounted for the extent of the protests against the textbook revisions. Angry responses have come from China, Taiwan, North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, the Philippines, and other countries.

A commentary in late July, in the *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party, attributed the textbook revisions to Japanese "militarists" who "cannot dispel the painful memories of their aggressions, killing and torture and plunder from the minds of the Chinese people." It warned that Sino-Japanese relations could be affected as a result.

On September 8, *Nhan Dan*, one of the main

Vietnamese dailies, condemned the "attempt to whitewash the crimes committed by the Japanese militarists against the people of Asia and the Pacific before and during World War Two, including their unpardonable atrocities against the Vietnamese people." It noted, "The revision of school textbooks and other efforts in the same vein are part and parcel of a scheme to step up the arms race and revive militarism."

The September 2 *Rodong Sinmun*, the newspaper of the Workers Party of Korea published in Pyongyang, North Korea, called the changes "a mockery of and insult to the Asian peoples." It noted that Japan's "large-scale arms buildup" was being reinforced by "preparations in the ideological, educational and cultural fields, too."

On September 15, thousands of students in South Korea held mass meetings and demonstrations to protest the revisions. At Seoul University, about 1,500 students demonstrated for four hours, chanting, "Denounce Japan's distortion of history," "Oppose Japanese neomilitarism," and "Away with Japanese capital." Nearly 400 riot police stormed the campus. The same day, 600 students at Songgyungwan University held a demonstration. Other student actions have also hit the dictatorship of Gen. Chun Doo Hwan for its subservience to Japanese imperialism.

This widespread sentiment in South Korea has forced the Chun regime itself to come out formally against the textbook revisions.

Within Japan, the printer's union and various local organizations, including many antinuclear groups, have organized protests against the textbook revisions. In Okinawa, unions and women's groups have organized a campaign to collect 100,000 signatures on a petition demanding that the revisions be reversed. The Ainu people, an oppressed minority in northern Japan, have also protested.

Sekai Kakumei commented, "It is necessary to fight for the demands of the Chinese, Korean, and other Asian peoples — as well as the Okinawan and Ainu peoples — for an immediate rewriting of the textbooks and abolition of the system of textbook control."

In face of these widespread protests, the Suzuki regime made some concessions. It said that it would change the new passages in the textbooks. It did not, however, specify how they would be changed, and claimed that new textbooks could in any case not be prepared for at least two years.

Whatever happens on the textbook issue, the Japanese government has every intention of pressing ahead with its plans to build up its military strength. That is the real danger lurking behind the textbook revisions. □