

# **INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS**

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## ***As CIA Presses Aggression Against Nicaragua* Reagan Peddles War Policies During Latin America Tour**



Ronald Reagan, Salvadoran troops. President's swing through Latin America came as signs mounted of a new escalation in Washington's war in Central America.

**GATT Trade Talks  
End on Bitter Note**

**Israel Tries to  
'Disappear' Palestinians**

**'A War That Never Ended' — Report from Indochina**

# CIA presses war on Nicaragua as Reagan tours Latin America

By Fred Murphy

Ronald Reagan's imperial tour of four Latin American countries came amid mounting signs that Washington's war against the Nicaraguan revolution was about to be escalated further.

As the Sandinista daily *Barricada* noted in a November 24 editorial, Reagan scheduled his final stop for Honduras "in order to make quite clear that in the two remaining years of his term Nicaragua will have to go on living with the danger of war at any moment."

The visit to Honduras, *Barricada* said, would be "a very expressive way of dissipating the doubts raised by *Newsweek's* report as to whether what is being done in Honduras results from uncontrolled initiatives by the CIA and [U.S. Ambassador John] Negroponte, or whether Reagan himself is the one responsible for the entire policy."

Throughout his tour, Reagan repeatedly attacked the "counterfeit revolutions" in Cuba and Nicaragua and accused those countries of "protecting guerrillas and exporting violence."

But that charge is most applicable to Reagan's own client regime in Honduras, which shelters the secret army of Somozaists and other counterrevolutionaries that is waging war on Nicaragua. That force is armed, trained, and directed by the CIA.

What is under way in Honduras, CBS News correspondent George Crile wrote in the December 3 *New York Times*, is "one of Washington's most ambitious attempts to bring down a foreign government since the Kennedys unleashed the Central Intelligence Agency against Fidel Castro."

## Somozaists on the move

Among the signs of a step-up in the anti-Nicaragua war was a report from southern Honduras in the December 3 *Washington Post*. Correspondent Edward Cody found that the Somozaist camps in that region had recently been abandoned. "They are all inside" Nicaragua now, one counterrevolutionary told Cody. "That is where the war is. That is where it must be fought."

"They have gone in to stay," a Nicaraguan woman told Cody, speaking of her four sons, who were all fighting in a counterrevolutionary unit.

In El Salvador, Defense Minister Gen. José Guillermo García and army chief Gen. Rafael Flores Lima held a news conference December 2 and charged that four foreign guerrilla commanders — one Cuban, two Nicaraguans, and a Honduran — had been killed there in recent fighting.

Because El Salvador's civil war "has been imposed on us from outside the country," García declared, the regime had decided "to un-

dertake an action that tries to end everything that is happening."

"In the next few days determinant actions of the armed forces will be underway that will need the absolute collaboration of the Salvadoran people," García said, without giving details.

These new threats of stepped-up attacks on Nicaragua were in line with details that had come out previously. *Newsweek* magazine's November 8 exposé of Reagan's secret war had pointed to what the Somozaists call their *plan número uno* — "to move the contra camps that remain in Honduras across the border into Nicaragua, then move the camps already established in Nicaragua farther down toward Managua and, finally, past the capital into the south. When the time is right, the Somocistas say, they will draw their loose circle of camps together in toward Managua and force the Sandinistas out."

Further data on Washington's war were offered at a Mexico City news conference November 30 by a defector from Argentine military intelligence. Héctor Francés asserted that the CIA's "vast plan" to bring down the Nicaraguan government had entered the "invasion" stage in mid-October (see page 852).

The December *New York Times* implicitly corroborated Francés's revelations as to the CIA's key role in directing the counterrevolutionary war. "With more than 150 agents based in Honduras and dozens more in neighboring countries," the *Times* said, "the C.I.A. has devoted a large part of its special operations staff to the Central American effort."

## Earlier invasion postponed

CBS News correspondent Crile's article in the December 3 *Times* revealed that Washington had nearly launched a full-scale invasion of Nicaragua in the early months of this year.

"According to intelligence sources who have proved highly reliable," Crile wrote, "the C.I.A. pulled a number of its most seasoned operatives from assignments around the world and rushed them into Honduras to direct a 'quick strike' attack on Managua which was set for the beginning of March."

Crile continued:

... the plan was built around several hundred elite commandos — at least half trained by the Argentines, with a sizable contingent said to have been trained by the Israelis. They were apparently to have moved in a coordinated series of attacks on the nerve centers of Nicaragua's capital city and serve as the spearhead of a larger effort. The key to the success of the plan, however, was the unspecified military support of several neighboring countries. Across

the Gulf of Fonseca, in El Salvador, more than 1,000 of the late President Somoza's Guardsmen who had enlisted in the Salvadoran Army, along with some 200 serving in the Guatemalan security police, were rehearsing to move on a few hours' notice to join the attack.

The full nature and dimensions of the plan are unclear. But certainly back in February and March something very big and very risky was being considered and, as Guatemala's most powerful general, Benedito Lucas, told me at the time: "For it to begin and for it to succeed, there must be a green light from Washington."

The Argentine government's April 2 decision to restore sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands came just as this plan was in its final preparatory stages. Buenos Aires's move against the imperialist outpost, and London's subsequent U.S.-backed war against Argentina, set back Washington's plans for an anti-Nicaragua offensive. The Malvinas War galvanized public opinion against U.S. imperialism throughout Latin America. The Reagan administration saw no hope then of lining up support for counterrevolution in Central America, especially at a time when the Sandinistas and Cuban leaders were taking the lead in calling for solidarity with the Argentine people.

The Malvinas War bought Nicaragua precious time. In the past eight months the Sandinista People's Militias have been greatly expanded and steered in combat against the counterrevolutionary bands. The Sandinista Defense Committees have been reorganized to deal with the concrete tasks of securing the revolution from sabotage and infiltration. Sixty thousand residents in Managua alone take part each night in standing watch over neighborhoods, factories, and government installations. A diplomatic offensive has been waged to bring the truth about Washington's counterrevolutionary drive to the world's peoples and governments. A big victory was scored on this front in October with Nicaragua's election to a two-year term on the United Nations Security Council, despite a vigorous opposition campaign by Washington.

The Sandinista leadership also used the time gained to deepen the masses' understanding of the revolution's perspectives. In mobilizing the workers and peasants for their class interests, they have made clear that the aim of the revolution is socialism, a society where exploitation and oppression have been eliminated and where the toilers rule.

## Fence-mending tour

Washington remains determined to stamp out this example the Nicaraguan people are setting for all Latin America. A major aim of Reagan's tour was to get in a better position to do this by repairing some of the damage done to U.S. relations with the region during the British-U.S. war against Argentina.

But the tour was less than successful.

Before stopping in Costa Rica and Honduras, Reagan visited Brazil and Colombia, whose regimes had been among the least supportive of Argentina during the Malvinas War. In Brazil, Reagan presented a \$1.2 billion loan

to President João Figueiredo — money that will go straight to the imperialist banks that hold Brazil's \$89 billion foreign debt.

Reagan had high praise for Figueiredo's recently announced austerity measures, which were imposed at the behest of the International Monetary Fund. He likened them to his own antilabor economic program.

While Figueiredo was glad to get the loan and gave Reagan a warm welcome, he declined to line up publicly with Washington's anti-Cuba, anti-Nicaragua campaign. He said only that in Central America, "the right of the peoples and the sovereignty of governments must be respected without foreign interference or pressures." Figueiredo also praised the efforts of the Mexican, Venezuelan, and Colombian regimes to foster negotiated solutions to the conflicts in Central America — efforts that Washington has ignored.

#### Blunt talk in Bogotá

The reception on Reagan's brief stop in Colombia was far less agreeable. President Belisario Betancur scolded Reagan for his attempts to "isolate" and "exclude" Cuba and Nicaragua from the rest of the hemisphere. He called for "nondiscriminatory aid" to Latin American countries and warned that the region's dire economic straits meant that Latin America "could see itself swept along by social forces to declare itself insolvent."

Betancur's predecessor, Julio César Turbay, had broken relations with Cuba and taken an openly hostile stance toward Nicaragua. Turbay also refused to back Argentina against London's aggression. But Betancur publicly reminded Reagan that U.S.-Latin American relations "have deteriorated considerably ever since" the war over the Malvinas.

In El Salvador, Betancur went on, the "30,000 graves" ought to "shock the drowsy conscience of leaders." Reagan gave no sign of being shocked at this statistic, but the *New York Times* did report that the president and his aides were in a mood "of extreme anger" after Betancur's toast. In a private meeting later, the *Times* reported, the Colombian president even "explicitly told Mr. Reagan that Cuba should be restored to full O.A.S. [Organization of American States] membership."

Trade unionists and students held protest demonstrations in several Colombian cities during the visit. "Anti-Reagan slogans were scrawled on downtown walls along the route of the motorcade from the airport into Bogota and there were unfriendly shouts at his only public appearance," the *Washington Post* reported.

#### Democracy, Guatemala-style

In Costa Rica and Honduras, Reagan deepened his public commitment to Central America's most brutal and reactionary regimes.

After a meeting with Salvadoran President Alvaro Magaña, Reagan declared that he had already decided to certify to Congress in January that "progress" is being made in remedying human-rights violations in El Salvador — de-

spite the fact that all evidence is to the contrary.

After talks in Honduras with Guatemalan dictator Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt — whose armed forces have been slaughtering Indian peasants by the thousands — Reagan said this butcher had been getting "a bum rap."

Reagan enthusiastically told reporters later that Ríos Montt is "totally dedicated to demo-

cracy in Guatemala" and that U.S. military aid to the country should be resumed.

The Guatemalan dictator summed up his notion of democracy to journalists who wanted to know if his army was pursuing a scorched-earth policy against rural guerrillas. "We have no scorched-earth policy," Ríos Montt replied. "We have a policy of scorched Communists." □

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# 'Silent war, strategy of terror'

*Argentine defector reveals CIA's plan of attack*

**By Fred Murphy**

Extensive revelations by a former Argentine intelligence officer assigned to Costa Rica have shed new light on the Reagan administration's escalating war against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Speaking by videotape to a Mexico City news conference November 30, Héctor Francés — until late October a member of Battalion 601, Argentine military intelligence — detailed his government's role in helping Washington to arm and train a military force of Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen, Miskitu Indian refugees, and other counterrevolutionaries that is trying to topple the Sandinista government.

Francés's revelations were front-page news in the Mexican press, and in Nicaragua the entire tape of his statement was broadcast on national radio and television. The full text was published the next day in the Sandinista daily *Barricada* under the headline "Reagan heads the war of terror."

In explaining why he had decided to desert his post and reveal the Argentine role in Reagan's secret war, Francés pointed to "the massacre of Argentine soldiers in the Malvinas, brought about through the betrayal by the United States." He said he had also come to understand "that Latin America is kept in a state of poverty, underdevelopment, and permanent crisis through misrule directed and controlled by the United States."

When the British government launched a war against Argentina last April to recover its colony in the Malvinas Islands, Nicaraguan leaders were among the first to speak out in defense of Argentine sovereignty and to denounce Washington's support for London's aggression. They also pointed out how Buenos Aires's complicity with U.S. intervention in Central America could only weaken the anti-imperialist struggle of the Argentine people.

As the war over the Malvinas went on, the Argentine intervention in Central America was curtailed. Washington's support for the British aggression threw a monkey wrench into its efforts to line up capitalist governments in Latin America behind its counterrevolutionary efforts. Francés's statements make it clear that Argentina's involvement in the drive against Nicaragua has again been stepped up.

## **CIA directs general staffs**

The deserter described a command structure centered in Honduras under "permanent vigilance and orientation by the CIA, conveying the orders of the State Department." General staffs of Argentine intelligence advisers and

officers of the Honduran military — including Defense Minister Gen. Gustavo Alvarez — "dominate a Nicaraguan general staff."

The main force of counterrevolutionaries bankrolled and armed by Washington is the Nicaraguan Democratic Forces (FDN), Francés said. The FDN's military commander is ex-National Guard Col. Enrique Bermúdez, once Somoza's military attaché in Washington. Political leaders include Nicaraguan construction magnate José Francisco Cardenal and Mariano Mendoza, ex-leader of the CUS, a small proimperialist union federation in Nicaragua with ties to the CIA-backed American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD).

The Israeli ambassador in Costa Rica has provided the Somozaists with false passports, Francés said.

Many of the Argentine advisers are themselves trained in the United States. Upon returning to Central America, Francés said, "they bring . . . not only mockups of the targets to be bombed, but also photographs taken by satellite." He noted that such data is obtained by "the same satellite that helped the English pirates massacre Argentines in the Malvinas."

Francés sketched out what he termed a "vast plan" to bring down the revolutionary government in Nicaragua. This plan entered the "invasion" stage on October 14, he said.

## **Three-prong strategy**

According to Francés, the stepped-up infiltration and attacks inside Nicaragua that began on that date "aim at achieving domination in the northwestern [provinces] so as to allow the declaration of a liberated zone . . . which would be fundamental for achieving [diplomatic] recognition from the United States, Honduras, El Salvador, and Argentina, through the formation of a government in exile. This would permit that government to request military aid and support that the United States is already in a position to provide" as a result of a series of joint military exercises with the Honduran armed forces.

"Cells" of counterrevolutionaries have been infiltrated into 14 Nicaraguan cities and towns, Francés continued. Their role is to implement a plan that has been labeled "Silent War, Strategy of Terror," planting bombs and identifying and assassinating managers of productive enterprises, leaders and members of the Sandinista Defense Committees, and State Security officials.

A third part of the strategy calls for a diversionary attack on the Atlantic Coast by a force

of between 2,000 and 10,000 Miskitu Indians, with the dual aim of dispersing the Sandinista People's Army and laying the basis for fresh propaganda charges that the Nicaraguan government is repressing the indigenous population of the coast.

Francés also said he had met in October with officials of the Costa Rican foreign ministry to plan an anti-Nicaraguan provocation. A phony Nicaraguan attack on Costa Rican islands in the Caribbean was to be staged, he said, after which the Costa Rican government would charge aggression and call for foreign military assistance.

"All this has an integrated framework," Francés said, "in which the aim is to destabilize Nicaragua through terror, the dispersal of its forces, impoverishment, and the paralysis of its means of production."

## **Role of Pastora**

The Argentine deserter also revealed that the CIA had made efforts to bring the renegade Sandinista commander Edén Pastora into the operation. Since 1979, he said, Pastora had been "informing the State Department about the course of the Nicaraguan revolution because he saw that he was not going to have the quota of power he thought he deserved." Francés described Pastora as "a man who cast aside his revolutionary mystique for a deeper one — that of money and power."

Because Pastora balked at joining up with the Somozaist-dominated forces backed by Washington, Francés said, plans had been made to assassinate him and lay the blame on the Sandinistas.

Francés closed his lengthy statement with the following appeal:

"It is important that public opinion make its voice be heard in order to halt this bloodshed. . . . It is important that public opinion recall — in the case of the United States — the massacre of a generation in Vietnam. In the case of Argentina, it is important that Argentine mothers and fathers appeal to the military elements who have not dirtied their hands in this shameful complicity." □

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# PLO says no to Reagan Plan

*Demands independent Palestinian state*

By David Frankel

For U.S. policymakers, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has offered a golden opportunity for tightening Washington's grip on the Middle East. "The circumstances for progress in the Middle East are the best I can remember," Henry Kissinger crowed in an interview in the November 13 *Economist*, a British big-business weekly.

But there has been a major stumbling block to Washington's plans. Reagan has come up against the refusal of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to give up its struggle for national liberation and go along with imperialist dictates.

To the dismay of the U.S. rulers and of proimperialist regimes throughout the Middle East, that refusal was expressed once again by the PLO at its Central Council meeting in Damascus, Syria. The Central Council is the broadest and most representative body of the PLO to meet since the evacuation of the PLO forces from West Beirut last August. Its November 25-26 meeting specifically rejected the plan put forward by President Reagan September 1.

Reagan called for Arab governments to recognize Israel; for negotiations between Israel and Jordan's King Hussein over the future of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, with their 1.3 million Palestinian inhabitants; and for some form of vaguely defined "association" between these areas and Jordan.

The aim of the proposal was to strengthen the political position of the Israeli colonial-settler state by getting additional Arab governments to join Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in recognizing Israel. In addition, the U.S. rulers hoped that after the defeat in Lebanon, at least some sectors of the PLO would be demoralized enough to succumb to pressure from Washington in return for promises to support an end to the Israeli occupation.

U.S. attempts to split the PLO have been supported by a spate of articles in the imperialist press alleging that various sectors of the PLO leadership are in favor of accepting the Reagan proposal and are banking everything on gaining diplomatic recognition from Washington.

But in a statement read at the end of the National Council meeting by its president, Khaled al-Fahoum, and circulated by the PLO press service, Wafa, the Council declared that "the Reagan project does not meet the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. This project ignores the right of our people to self-determination and the right to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO."

In answer to the imperialist attempts to split the PLO, the National Council "reaffirmed the necessity of Palestinian national unity. All members of the Council stressed that this factor serves as a strong shield for the struggle through which we wrought the legend of steadfastness in Lebanon. The council stressed the importance of consolidating unity in order to achieve the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people."

Referring to the attempts to have King Hussein replace the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people in any negotiations, the National Council rejected "the attempts to manipulate the representative status of the PLO." It pointed out that both Arab summit conferences and "the will of the Palestinian people" have confirmed the PLO as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories."

The PLO's refusal to capitulate to Reagan's demands and give up its struggle for Palestinian self-determination brought an angry reply from the *New York Times*. In a November 28 editorial, the *Times* argues that "the scattered four million Palestinians . . . have never been democratically consulted about such a leadership."

The *Times* editors fail to mention that King Hussein, who they support, does not allow elections in Jordan.

Nor do these champions of democracy report that it is a criminal offense to have PLO literature inside Israel, and that not only the PLO, but any Palestinian nationalist parties are effectively banned from running in Israeli elections.

And the *Times* editors were hardly unaware of the fact that elected mayors on the West Bank, who the Israeli regime accused of being PLO supporters, were removed from office by Israeli occupation authorities.

Dropping its mask of concern for the rights of the Palestinian people, the *Times* turned to threats. "If defeat in Lebanon, the futility of Soviet and Arab support and the dispersal of its guerrilla forces cannot rouse the P.L.O. from its fantasies and shake its commitment to violence, there is, sad to say, only one remaining source of pressure: the relentless absorption by Israel of the West Bank and Gaza, where 1.3 million Palestinians can still make a plausible territorial claim."

Revealing the true hypocrisy behind the Reagan plan, which merely attempts to use the plight of the Palestinians in the occupied territory as a club to force them to concede their national rights, the *Times* warned that "even this territory will soon be out of reach."

Such threats, however, do nothing to solve the basic problem that the imperialist rulers now face. As a result of its heroic defense of West Beirut, the PLO came out of the war in Lebanon with its standing among the Arab masses greatly enhanced. The prestige of the Arab regimes, on the other hand, took big blows because of their inaction in the face of the Israeli aggression. King Hussein and the Saudi royal family are afraid of the reaction among working people at home if they break with the PLO and knuckle under to Washington's demands.

Thus, despite the pretense of the *Times*, the Palestinian people, and the organization that represents them, remain in the center of Mideast politics.

PLO chairman Yassir Arafat, addressing the National Council, reaffirmed, according to Wafa, "the pledge to the Palestinian people and martyrs of Sabra and Shatila to continue the strenuous march to achieve Palestinian national goals." □



PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat.

# Israel tries to 'disappear' Palestinians

*Violates Geneva Conventions on treatment of civilians and prisoners*

By David Frankel

Six months after their invasion of Lebanon, Israeli forces are busy constructing permanent base camps, improving roads for military use, and instituting the kind of occupation regime that was previously set up in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Attempts by Lebanese authorities to begin negotiations for the withdrawal of the Israeli army have been effectively stalled. The Israelis have tacked on political demands to prevent the first meetings from even taking place.

Meanwhile, reports Judith Perera in the November issue of *The Middle East*, the Israeli government "has appointed David Brodet as Director of Commerce with Lebanon inside the Trade and Industry Ministry. Brodet says he sees 'great potential' in Lebanon, especially for exports of food, textiles, building materials and plastics. Significantly, these are the mainstay of Lebanon's own infant industry, especially in the south, and many economists see this as a deliberate attempt to destroy this aspect of Lebanon's economy as a prelude to de facto annexation of the south."

The Israeli government, of course, strenuously denies having any territorial designs on Lebanon. Similar protestations were made in regard to the West Bank following the Israeli aggression in June 1967.

## Israel wants Palestinians out

An essential part of the Israeli drive to absorb southern Lebanon is the attempt to force out a substantial part of the Palestinian population there. The same thing was done in 1948, when the establishment of the Israeli state was made possible by the expulsion of 700,000 Palestinians from their homeland, and again when Israel gobbled up the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, creating hundreds of thousands of new Palestinian refugees.

Thus, on December 1, the Israeli Foreign Ministry organized a news conference at the government press headquarters in Jerusalem for Etienne Saqa. Saqa, the leader of the Guardians of the Cedars, the ultraright wing of the rightist Phalangist coalition in Lebanon, declared, "We don't accept any more Palestinians in Lebanon. My duty is to put them out of Lebanon" (*New York Times*, December 2).

Saqa, who had just spent two days meeting with Prime Minister Menachem Begin and other top Israeli officials, told reporters, "We are very grateful and thankful" for Israel's "generous intervention" in Lebanon.

When asked about the massacre in Sabra and Shatila, Saqa replied, "Look, this is an interior problem in Lebanon. We have the full right to deal with our enemies in Lebanon in

the manner we find suitable."

Since the massacre in September, the Lebanese army has rounded up thousands of Palestinian men, conducted constant identity checks and searches in West Beirut as a form of harassment and intimidation, and destroyed homes and shops in many Palestinian and poor Muslim neighborhoods. Just a few days before Saqa's statements, on November 27 and 28, soldiers of the Lebanese army confiscated more than five truckloads of medical supplies from the Palestinian-run Gaza Hospital, located at the edge of the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut.

But in southern Lebanon, it is the Israeli army that is in charge. There are currently an estimated 70,000 homeless Palestinian refugees in southern Lebanon, mainly around Sidon and Tyre.

## Smashed housing and malnutrition

During the first part of their invasion, Israeli forces systematically destroyed Palestinian refugee camps, including those that had already surrendered. In the Ain al Hilweh camp, near Sidon — the biggest in Lebanon — bulldozers were brought in by the Israelis after the fighting to flatten the remaining houses. Palestinians reported that the bulldozers went to work while wounded victims of the fighting were still buried alive in the rubble.

Since then, the Israeli occupiers have not lifted a finger to help the Palestinian population under their rule.

Dr. Rio Spirgi, who worked as the medical coordinator of the Palestine Red Crescent Society in Lebanon up through the siege of West Beirut, discussed the situation in an interview that appeared in the November 1982 issue of the Israeli monthly *Derech Hanitzotz*, which is published by supporters of the Revolutionary Communist League (Turu) in Israel.

Dr. Spirgi pointed out:

"The Geneva Convention determines unequivocally that the occupying force is responsible for specifically four categories: shelter, food, medical care, and protection. The refugees are already suffering from malnutrition. As early as August it was reported that 15 percent of the children were undernourished."

Yet Israeli Economics Minister Yaacov Meridor, who was placed in charge of relief efforts in southern Lebanon, was quoted in the August 3 issue of the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* as saying that "life in south Lebanon has returned to normal and I can definitely terminate my job."

But housing is an even bigger problem, especially with the Lebanese winter coming up.

According to Dr. Spirgi, one member of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), Ya'ir Zaban, proposed a five-point plan to deal with the crisis. Zaban's plan, Spirgi explained, called on Israel to make bulldozers available to clear the ground for the rebuilding of houses; to set up temporary homes to take care of big families and sick people; to give each family 20 sacks of cement to rebuild its destroyed home with; to allow Palestinians inside Israel to accommodate their relatives from Lebanon; and to mobilize Israeli volunteers to help with the work.

Even this modest proposal, however, was too much for the Knesset, which shunted Zaban's resolution to a committee, thus guaranteeing inaction.

According to *New York Times* correspondent James Clarity, who visited Ain al Hilweh on November 9, 25,000 people are still living in the camp's ruins. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has set up 14 tents, accommodating about 100 people, according to Clarity.

Angry Palestinians slashed and burned the first tents put up by UNRWA. As *Derech Hanitzotz* explained, "Tents symbolize temporariness, a state of no civil rights, a transition period until expulsion comes, besides being an inadequate shelter for the cold Lebanese winter."

One Palestinian, pointing to a 12-foot-square, 5-foot-high tent, told Clarity that five people were forced to live in it. "It's cold," he said. "It leaks. There is no heat, only blankets."

## No medical care

Medical care is nonexistent for most Palestinians in southern Lebanon now that the Israeli authorities have banned the operations of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. "One of our demands today is to let us return and help with the medical reconstruction, we don't care under which name," Spirgi told *Derech Hanitzotz*. "Some of the medical staff were released from the detention camps, but are not allowed to work. . . . We must reconstruct the medical system in the south. Today the hospital in Tyre is closed, in Saida it was looted, in Damur there is no access to Palestinians now, and in Nabatiyeh it was turned into a private hospital."

The Palestine Red Crescent Society, Spirgi explained, was "part of the International Red Cross. . . . We took care of all the needy who came to us regardless of their race, nationality, or religion. The truth is that most of the time the majority of our patients were Lebanese — poor Shi'ites, landless agricultural workers, sharecroppers, and so on. Of course

we treated wounded Palestinian fighters as well."

Israeli forces repeatedly shelled the Red Crescent hospitals. "Our hospitals were well marked with the Red Cross emblem on the roof, but to no avail," Spirgi said.

Although there is a private hospital in Saida, a Palestinian woman bringing her child there for emergency treatment after the invasion was asked to pay a deposit of 1,000 Lebanese pounds, and was turned away when she could not pay. Such treatment is typical, Spirgi explained.

"The Lebanese central government gave almost no social services to the poor people in the south. . . . All the educational and medical facilities were private and cost a fortune. The government simply took care of the rich and abandoned the poor and the south in general to their misery."

The same policy suits the political goals of the Israeli government.

#### **Ansar concentration camp**

What makes the situation of the Palestinians in southern Lebanon even worse is the fact that virtually all the able-bodied men have been rounded up and thrown into concentration camps by the Israelis.

"There appear to be virtually no Palestinian men between the ages of 16 to 60 free in southern Lebanon," reported the July 28 *Washington Post*.

"Every young man over 14 had been taken away," said *Time* magazine July 5.

The Israeli army admitted holding between 7,000 and 9,000 prisoners in mid-July. But despite the release of 212 boys under the age of 16 on July 18, more people were being arrested in the cities and villages of southern Lebanon every day in July and August. According to Palestinian sources, the Palestinians arrested by the Lebanese army in Beirut during the roundups there in October were also handed over to the Israelis. It is estimated that some 15,000 Palestinian prisoners are now being held at the Ansar concentration camp in southern Lebanon.

The prisoners in Ansar concentration camp have not been charged with any crime, except for the fact that they are Palestinians. Their families are not allowed to visit them, nor are their relatives notified by Israeli authorities.

An indication of the conditions in Ansar came from the testimony of a soldier, which was reported by Amnon Denknar in the November 5 issue of *Ha'aretz*. The soldier, who spent his reserve duty as a guard at Ansar, was never actually in the camp, only in the watch-towers and barracks outside. Nevertheless, he said, when his unit was assigned to a nearby roadblock, "It was good to get away from the camp, from the human mass of 'the ones brought in,' not to hear the screams of pain from the men under interrogation."

#### **Protests in Israel**

Amnesty International has called on the Israeli government to account for all of the pri-

soners it has taken in Lebanon and to treat them "in conformity with internationally accepted standards."

The International Commission of Jurists has urged that Palestinian prisoners be accorded prisoner-of-war status under the Geneva Conventions, which recognize "organized resistance movements." But the Israeli government has refused.

The inhuman treatment of the Palestinian population in southern Lebanon has become an important issue in Israeli politics, particularly among the Arab population in Israel and the

occupied territories, but among many Israeli Jews as well. The Committee Against the War in Lebanon and for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, which was organized by the Arab population during the invasion of Lebanon, has adopted a resolution expressing the readiness of the Palestinians in Israel to accept the 500,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in their homes and villages.

"The peace forces in Israel," declared *De-rech Hanitzotz* in its November editorial, "should adopt the demands of the refugees . . . and turn their struggle against a plot to deport and annihilate them. . . ." □

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# Trade parley ends in bitter discord

*Imperialist rivalries grow as economic crisis deepens*

By Will Reissner

The recent conference of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) ended in Geneva on November 29 in an atmosphere of bitterness.

The conference, convened at the urging of the Reagan administration, resolved little and reflected the growing trade rivalries between U.S. big business and its major competitors as the world capitalist crisis deepens.

Washington made two major demands at the conference: an end to European Economic Community (EEC) agricultural export subsidies; and elimination of restrictions on U.S. foreign investments and the international operations of U.S. banks.

As the conference was still meeting, new statistics on U.S. foreign trade revealed the reason for the Reagan administration's demands. The U.S. Commerce Department predicted that the U.S. foreign trade deficit in merchandise for 1982 will surpass \$42 billion. This deficit reflects the declining ability of major sectors of U.S. industry to compete in world markets.

But U.S. agriculture remains far more productive than its capitalist rivals. If European subsidies on agricultural exports were ended, U.S. farm products would be less expensive than those from Europe on the world market and more could be sold abroad. This would narrow the U.S. trade deficit.

Moreover, with an increased share in world agricultural trade, Washington would be in a still stronger position to use food exports as a political weapon to further its foreign policy goals.

U.S. negotiators in Geneva openly threatened to begin dumping food stockpiles on the world market at subsidized prices unless the EEC agreed to begin phasing out their export subsidies.

The EEC refused, however, and on November 28 U.S. officials told the *Wall Street Journal* that no final decision had yet been reached on whether or not to go ahead with the dumping threat.

In the battle against EEC farm export subsidies, other major agricultural exporters such as Australia and New Zealand lined up with Washington.

## Open door for foreign investment

The second major demand of the U.S. delegation in Geneva — elimination of restrictions on foreign investment and banking operations — is also important to U.S. capitalist interests. Although the United States has a permanent deficit in its foreign merchandise trade, that shortfall is more than made up by the billions

of dollars that flow into the United States in profits from direct investments around the world and from the usurious foreign loans made by U.S. banks.

In recent years a number of countries have imposed conditions and restrictions on foreign investment in an effort to gain greater control over their own economies.

The Reagan administration hopes to use the current worldwide economic crisis and the desperate financial situation of the semicolonial countries to eliminate these restrictions, thereby giving U.S. finance capital greater freedom to exploit the wealth produced by working people worldwide.

Here too the Reagan administration met stiff resistance at the GATT conference, which held over the question for further study.

The bitter fights at the GATT conference reflect growing interimperialist rivalries, fostered by the capitalist economic stagnation of the past decade.

This marks an important shift from the nearly three decades of rapid economic growth, marked by only brief and shallow recessions, that followed the end of the Second World War. The postwar growth of the major capitalist economies was accompanied by a tremendous expansion in international trade.

This economic expansion was fueled, paradoxically, by the fact that much of European and Japanese industry lay in ruins as a result of World War II. The rebuilding effort provided enormous markets for U.S. industry.

## Multinationals and transnationals

In the years following the war, vast amounts of U.S. capital were invested abroad.

A new euphemism — "multinationals" — was coined to describe these imperialist corporations, whose operations spanned the five continents.

During the decades of rapid economic growth and expanding world trade, many observers concluded that a new era of international capitalist economic cooperation had dawned. This impression was reinforced by U.S. imperialism's emergence from the war as the unchallenged leader of the capitalist world — economically, financially, and militarily.

Academics and journalists assured us that narrow economic nationalism had been supplanted by an integrated world economic system, under the tutelage of the so-called multinational and transnational corporations.

Similar arguments about an end to interimperialist rivalries had been advanced in the European socialist movement on the very eve of World War I. Karl Kautsky, for example, argued that "from the purely economic point of

view it is not impossible that capitalism will yet go through a new phase, that of the extension of the policy of the cartels to foreign policy, the phase of 'ultraimperialism,'" when competition and war under capitalism would be replaced by "the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital."

But V.I. Lenin, in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, showed the impossibility of such a development in real life, and this judgment is being reconfirmed today.

Capitalist harmony and cooperation may appear normal when expanding markets mean rising profits for all. But when markets begin to stagnate and then shrink, the capitalists of each country call upon their own state to further and protect *their* interests and profits.

Today shrinking markets and declining profit rates are fostering an intensification of interimperialist rivalries. One of the early casualties has been world trade.

In the heady days of postwar economic expansion, tariff barriers and other impediments to international trade were reduced, under the umbrella of GATT, which was formed in 1948.

Capitalists in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan all supported the easing of trade restrictions in that period.

U.S. capitalists, with the highest productivity in the world, benefited because their products could meet those of any competitor if given equal access to markets.

For Western European and Japanese capitalists, expanded international trade gave them access to markets beyond their relatively limited internal markets. The establishment of the EEC, for example, led to the elimination of most tariff barriers between 10 of the capitalist economies of Europe, providing capitalists there with a "domestic" market comparable to that of the United States.

For the capitalists of *all* the imperialist countries, the trend toward fewer trade restrictions also stifled the rise of potential competitors in the semicolonial world, who could not survive without the protection of high tariff walls.

Today, however, with more than 30 million workers jobless in the advanced capitalist countries, and with all the capitalist economies mired in economic crisis, rival capitalists are increasingly turning to protectionism and trade wars.

## Turn to protectionism

In this intensified interimperialist competition, the United States enters the fray with im-



portant advantages. Although U.S. economic strength has markedly declined *relative* to its European and Japanese rivals, American capitalism remains by far the largest single economic power and is unchallenged in its military strength. With its huge internal market, tremendous energy resources, unmatched agricultural productivity, U.S. imperialism has potent economic weapons to wield against its rivals.

The steel and automobile industries — where the relative decline of U.S. economic power has been most notable — are two arenas where competitive warfare is being waged most openly.

The steel industry is in crisis throughout the capitalist world. U.S. steelmakers are operating at barely 40 percent of capacity. Their West European counterparts are now working at 60 percent of capacity, with plans to cut capacity by up to 35 million metric tons by 1985!

Japanese steel mills are doing little better, operating at barely 66 percent of capacity, with crude steel production now 16 percent below 1973 levels.

On October 21, under intense U.S. pressure, EEC steel producers "agreed" to limit exports to the United States.

In turn, West European steel companies demand reductions in EEC steel imports from Eastern Europe, South Korea, and Brazil. Japanese producers also complain of competition from South Korea and Brazil, as well as Mexico.

#### Differences over Soviet pipeline

As in the case of the GATT conference, a major conflict developed between Washington and its European allies over participation in building a new Soviet natural gas pipeline.

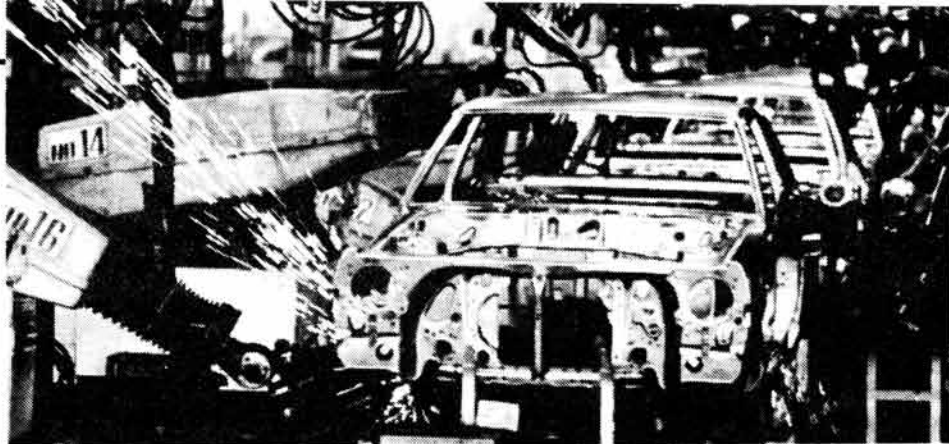
Reagan's European allies support the bipartisan U.S. policy of boosting imperialist military strength, including the decision to deploy in Europe new U.S. nuclear missiles targeted on Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

But all of them, including the right-wing Thatcher government in Britain, rejected Reagan's demand that they halt sales of pipe and other materials for the Soviet pipeline, despite the imposition of severe U.S. sanctions against participating companies.

Trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is vital to Western Europe. The pipeline project alone will mean \$11 billion in sales for European manufacturers, especially in the depressed steel industry. And once the pipeline is finished, EEC countries will have access to large amounts of cheap Soviet natural gas.

The European capitalist governments were quick to point out that while Reagan was pressuring *them* not to sell to the Soviet Union, Washington was also urging the Soviet government to buy more U.S. grain.

Facing the determined resistance of the European governments, the Reagan administration had to drop its sanctions. The relationship of forces among the imperialist states has changed since two decades ago. At that time,



Robot welders in Japanese auto plant. Japanese auto companies have been pressured to limit sales in United States and Western Europe.

the Kennedy administration was able to force West Germany to pull out of a similar Soviet pipeline deal, even though West German steel mills had already signed contracts to deliver pipe. (That pipeline was built despite the West German pullout.)

With the U.S. auto industry operating at only 55 percent of capacity and headed for its worst sales year since 1958, the Reagan administration forced Japanese automakers to extend for another year their supposedly voluntary agreement to limit sales in the U.S. market.

With the limit on their sales in the United States, Japanese auto companies tried to compensate by boosting sales in Western Europe, prompting European demands for similar "voluntary" sales ceilings.

While U.S. capitalists complain of Europeans dumping steel and Japanese dumping autos, the EEC has penalized U.S. chemical companies for dumping *their* products in Western Europe.

World trade restrictions are also proliferating in textiles, electronics, and many other products.

#### Semicolonial countries hard hit

The capitalist economic crisis is hitting the semicolonial countries especially hard. With markets for their exports in the advanced capitalist countries drying up, the semicolonial countries cannot earn enough foreign currency to maintain purchases of vital imports.

For a time, many countries tried to cover this shortfall by increasing their borrowing from imperialist banks. They gambled that if the depression were short, they could pay for maturing loans with increased exports as the world economy revived.

Instead, the depression continued to deepen. Many countries now cannot even pay the *interest* on their staggering foreign debts, much less finance imports.

In country after country, the imperialist bankers have forced the application of austerity policies against workers and farmers to drive down their living standards, boost exports, and curtail imports in order to insure that loans can be repaid.

But these measures further limit the volume

of international trade and threaten to undermine any chance of economic recovery in the capitalist world.

#### Free trade?

The issues raised by intensifying imperialist competition are often posed in the capitalist press as a conflict over divergent philosophies — protectionism vs. free trade.

Such lofty stuff is hardly what is at stake in this cutthroat rivalry, however. Capitalist sectors that have an edge on their foreign competitors are so-called free traders; those on the losing end are protectionist. The various capitalist governments seek to mediate among the conflicting needs of big-business sectors within their own boundaries, while looking out for the overall interests of the capitalist class.

Moreover, the employers try to convince workers and farmers that part of the solution to their economic problems lies in one or another trade policy. In this way, they seek to point the finger of blame at foreign workers and farmers, rather than at the capitalist system and austerity policies of the employing classes.

Japanese capitalists tell auto workers there that they have a stake in helping their bosses batter down trade barriers in the United States and Western Europe; the auto companies in the United States and Western Europe tell workers there that they have a stake in backing protectionist measures against Japanese imports.

Capitalist farming interests in the United States, especially the giant grain monopolies, try to convince working farmers that they have a stake in fighting the European farm subsidies; European governments pretend to champion the interests of working farmers there by defending these subsidies against dumping by U.S. farmers.

The class-collaborationist trade-union officialdom in all these countries cooperates with the management to push either for increased protection or free trade, whichever "their industry" needs to pursue expanded markets and greater profits.

On this, there is nothing to add to what Karl Marx had to say to a gathering of working people in 1848 — that whatever trade policy their exploiters carry out, the workers "go to the wall." □

# A discussion at Siglo XX mine

*Workers defend gains, reject austerity*

By Anders Vilstrom

LLALLAGUA, Bolivia — It was almost dark. The last dayshift had just come out of the mine when the meeting began. About 500 union members had gathered, along with women from the Housewives Committee. The staff of La Voz del Minero (Miner's Voice), the union's radio station, was on hand to broadcast the meeting.

All the participants were tin miners from the Siglo XX mine here in Llallagua, the heart of Bolivia's tin district. Many had fought, dynamite in hand, against a succession of military dictatorships. Many could remember the massacre of San Juan Night in 1967, when elite U.S.-trained army units invaded Siglo XX and gunned down 20 striking miners. (San Juan Night, June 23, is a traditional religious festival in Bolivia.)

All could remember the efforts the miners' union had made to resist the most recent coup in July 1980, when Gen. Luis García Meza seized power to block the installation of a newly elected civilian government.

But the theme of discussion at this meeting was not the past but the present — what to do next; what can be expected from the new president, Hernán Siles Zuazo, and his Democratic and People's Unity (UDP) coalition; what demands shall we raise?

Still, one of the first speakers did reflect on the past. An older miner, nearly 40 years old, took the floor. It is unusual for a tin miner to still be working at that age; silicosis takes a heavy toll.

"Do you remember how it was two years ago?" he asked. "We were standing here at the Plaza del Minero, 6,000 of us — miners, women, peasants who had come in from the countryside. García Meza had just taken power, and we wanted to fight. We had built barricades all over the streets, and we were demanding that our leaders launch an attack on the Santa Lucía Barracks.

"We wanted to fight — do you remember? But we couldn't, because our leaders came out of the mine and explained that there were only 11 old Mauser rifles in all of Siglo XX and Llallagua.

"So it's obvious to me that one of the main tasks of our new leadership is to use this dem-

ocratic period we have won to guarantee that there will be more than 11 old Mausers here the next time the military tries to launch a coup."

## A workers government?

Two days earlier, the new vice-president of the country, Jaime Paz Zamora, had discounted any coup threats. He said in an interview that "during these first four years we will prepare the ground for the basic changes we will implement after the next elections [in 1986]. Then we will have a stronger majority in congress than we do now." (In fact, the UDP is now in a minority in congress.)

There was an astonishing difference in the miners' estimation of the military threat and that of Paz Zamora.

It was not simply that the miners had no confidence whatsoever that the military would allow the democratic process to run its course, while the government leaders seemed oblivious to that danger. There were deeper differences.

Vice-president Paz Zamora considered that the UDP regime was itself a workers and peo-

ples government. He backed up this opinion by saying, "This government represents a revolution that is as deepgoing as the Nicaraguan revolution. Just as in Nicaragua, the workers understand that this government cannot solve their problems immediately. They know that when the workers take power they receive a state that is in crisis. That's almost an historical law, isn't it?"

But none of the trade-union leaders in La Paz nor the activists in Siglo XX shared Paz Zamora's views.

"No, this is not our government," said Juan Lechín, executive secretary of the Bolivian Workers Federation (COB). The veteran union leader seemed astounded that the question was even asked. "This is not the workers government. It is a democratic government that we have put in power because we didn't want the military any more, and because it was the one voted in by the people in the last elections."

Víctor López, leader of the tin miners federation (FSTMB), the main component of the COB, had the same answer:

"Oh, no, this is not the workers government. A workers government exists when the workers are *in* the government, changing the economic system so that it is no longer possible for anyone to exploit another."

Here in Llallagua most miners were enthusiastic about the new regime. It represented a real change compared to the military dictatorship. Everyone felt that it had been put in power as a result of the workers' mobilizations.

## Cuban leader recalls Che's struggle

When President Hernán Siles Zuazo was inaugurated in Bolivia on October 10 after a working-class upsurge forced the end of the military dictatorship, Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez was among the invited guests.

The following day, Rodríguez addressed a special session of the Bolivian Senate. "Bolivia has given us an inspiring Latin American lesson, and small and distant Cuba will always stand shoulder to shoulder with the Bolivian people," Rodríguez said.

The Cuban leader referred directly to the efforts made by Ernesto "Che" Guevara and a number of Cuban revolutionaries in 1967 to help launch a guerrilla struggle in Bolivia against the dictatorship of Gen. René Barrientos. The Cuban people have always felt solidarity and affection for the Bolivian people, Rodríguez said. "Cuba's support is not new, since in this country, and I take the liberty of recalling it, Cuban blood has been shed.

"Cuban young people came to this country under the leadership of a great Latin American — who was Cuban as well as Argentine — a man of universal thought, and they did not come, as we know you un-

derstand, to interfere with the sovereign will of the Bolivian people."

Rodríguez said that the young Cubans who shed their blood in Bolivia "came to this country humbly to cooperate in the Bolivian spirit, because Bolívar and Sucre, the founders of Latin America, viewed solidarity as a necessity, an obligation and a duty.

"The battle of our peoples does not take place in just one place; it must be undertaken where duty calls and that was the spirit of their presence here."

Rodríguez said that while Cuba could not "contribute the wealth which we don't have" to aid the people of Bolivia, it did have "many thousands of young doctors, engineers, agronomists and economists, and Bolivia will need doctors and agronomists. They are at your disposal whenever you request them."

The Cuban leader also expressed his belief that "controlling the forces which for years have prevailed over the Bolivian people and their democratic organizations won't be easy." Above all, he said, this "will require unity of the sort that led to the events in Bolivia which we are now celebrating."

\*Siles Zuazo took office October 10 after a nationwide general strike and workers' mobilizations forced an end to the military dictatorship. The UDP includes Siles's party, the bourgeois Left Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNRI); the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), which is affiliated to the Socialist International and is headed by Vice-president Jaime Paz Zamora; and the pro-Moscow Bolivian Communist Party (PCB). — IP

But no one was calling it a workers government, as Paz Zamora had.

The discussion at the meeting of the Siglo XX miners centered on how to utilize the recently won democratic rights to strengthen the workers' position for coming struggles. All agreed that this could be done only through organization and mobilization of all the workers around concrete demands. The Siglo XX miners considered their most immediate need an "adequate minimum wage with a sliding scale" — that is, a provision guaranteeing wage increases commensurate with rising living costs.

The workers had thought carefully about this demand. "As I see it," one miner explained, "the 'adequate minimum wage' cannot be simply a figure that is higher than the lowest wages today. It must be a wage on which a normal worker's family can live. And the only ones who know how much that is are we ourselves. We have to do an investigation to see what the adequate minimum wage should really be."

An older miner, his cheek filled with a ball of the coca leaves the miners chew to ward off the Andean cold, spoke next. "I want to make clear that if the government accepts the adequate minimum wage but not the sliding scale, that doesn't really mean anything. We know that prices are rising so fast the new 'adequate minimum wage' soon wouldn't be worth more than half. So we must have the sliding scale as well."

The next speaker was Ascencio Cruz, one of the young miners just elected to the new Siglo XX union leadership:

"Yes, it's true that without the sliding scale the minimum wage doesn't mean anything. But to make sure the sliding scale is correctly calculated and applied, our unions must have control over the calculations on which it is based. We can't leave that to others, because we know they will always cheat us. They always do."

The discussion was lengthy. Many miners talked. The various political currents — at least seven different ones — presented their views openly, as they always have in the Bolivian trade unions. But there were no sharp polemics. The whole discussion was quite concrete and constructive. The meeting reflected the deep traditions of political consciousness and united struggle that have marked the Bolivian workers movement.

The meeting concluded with a decision to make the fight for an adequate minimum wage and a sliding scale the center of workers' mobilizations in the coming months. This will serve to test the new government's professed commitment to the workers, and will pose a direct challenge to its calls for austerity.

The last one to speak was the old miner who had talked earlier about the workers' frustration at being unable to resist the coup in 1980. "Don't forget," he said, addressing the new union leadership, "it is you who must guarantee that next time we have at least 200 rifles here at Siglo XX. Then we can take the offensive, and win over the soldiers." □

## Caribbean

# Summit 'a success for Grenada'

By Baxter Smith

CASTRIES, St. Lucia — Assessing the results of the three-day summit conference of the English-speaking Caribbean Community (Caricom) in Jamaica November 16–18, the November 20 issue of the Grenadian *Free West Indian* ran the front-page headline, "A Success for Grenada."

In the weeks leading up to the conference, several proimperialist Caribbean governments, backed by Washington, conducted a major propaganda campaign against Grenada, accusing it of human rights violations. At the conference itself, Prime Minister Tom Adams of Barbados attempted to amend the Caricom charter to exclude any country that did not have a parliamentary system of government.

At a news conference on the opening day of the conference, Grenada's prime minister, Maurice Bishop, took these charges head on. (See *Intercontinental Press*, November 29, p. 839.)

Despite intensive lobbying by U.S. officials throughout the proceedings, Adams's proposal was not included in the final conference document. Bishop termed the defeat of these proposals "a victory for the forces of progress over the forces of reaction and imperialism."

The Caricom meeting was directly preceded by a meeting of the Organization of East Caribbean States (OECS), which was held here in St. Lucia. The OECS includes Antigua, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

Besides these countries, Caricom also includes Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. The Bahamas, though not a Caricom member, attended as a participating country. Surinam attended as an observer.

The conferences took place at a time when the Caribbean countries are beset with problems of growing hunger, poor health care, and unemployment rates close to 30 percent in some islands.

The worldwide capitalist recession, the worst since the 1930s, has struck particularly hard at Caribbean countries. Prices for the crops and natural resources they export have dropped, while the cost of imported goods has risen. Unemployment has spiraled, and social conditions have deteriorated.

Only in Grenada, where the 1979 revolution brought in a workers and farmers government, has the impact of the recession been softened by the pro-working-class policies of the governing party, the New Jewel Movement.

At a rally in Grenada prior to the two conferences, Grenada's Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard explained that the Grenadian government viewed them "as meetings where the masses of the Caribbean are expecting their

leaders to come together to discuss how we can reduce the high cost of living, how we can deal with the unemployment situation, how we can deal with getting better prices for our exports — cocoa, nutmegs, sugar, bananas, bauxite, and so on.

"We are going there to discuss serious business, to discuss the people's business, to discuss the bread and butter issues affecting the poor peoples of our countries."

Rather than concentrating on fostering regional ties and collectively tackling common economic problems, however, government officials from some countries — in particular Adams from Barbados, Jamaican Prime Minister Edward Seaga, and Prime Minister Eugenia Charles from Dominica — sought to use the conference for reactionary political goals that point away from cooperation beneficial to the Caribbean workers and farmers.

But these attacks were not only turned back by Grenada at the Caricom meeting, but also answered by public displays of support for the Grenada revolution among its backers in the region.

While the Jamaican government has been hostile, thousands of students and workers on the island gave Bishop an enthusiastic welcome. He was greeted upon his arrival by hundreds of people, including members and supporters of the Workers Party of Jamaica.

On November 19 thousands turned out to hear him at the University of the West Indies. "The attempt by one government in particular to isolate and discredit the Grenada Revolution and force it out of Caricom has failed," Bishop declared to prolonged cheering and chants of, "Back off, Adams!"

A welcoming rally for Bishop also occurred here in St. Lucia at the opening of the OECS gathering.

No other government officials got welcoming rallies at either conference.

Opposition parties, labor unions, and several prominent figures in the region urged the summit to turn away from attacks on Grenada and, instead, focus on economic issues.

Making it clear that Grenada had no intention of being sidetracked from the important economic issues facing the conference, Bishop told a rally before he left for Jamaica:

"We have always believed, and we still believe, that what is good for us is good for the entire Caribbean, although we have never forced our views on any of our sister islands. But we all suffer from the same underdevelopment, the same scars of colonialism, the same trade imbalance, the same exploitation."

Alone among the English-speaking Caribbean islands, Grenada has made strides in health care, housing, education, and agriculture. This has earned it respect among working people throughout the Caribbean. □

# Workers oppose draft labor law

*Discontent rising over firings, other attacks*

**By Nader Avini**

Discussion and debate between Iranian workers and the government have sharpened in recent weeks. The focus has been the draft of a new labor law that the Labor Ministry put before the cabinet in September.

The law has been in preparation for almost a year, and has long been a center of controversy. While the proposed draft has still not been made public, Labor Ministry officials have set out to sell it to the workers. For their part, workers have held a series of conferences and seminars to air their criticisms and voice their own demands. Such gatherings have taken place around the country, and especially in Tehran, the capital, where half the Iranian working class is concentrated.

## Workers confront labor official

One such meeting took place November 9 at the Tobacco Industry Club in Tehran. More than 500 representatives of factory *shoras* (committees) and Islamic *anjomans* (societies) attended.\* A high-ranking official from the Labor Ministry, Motamed Rezaei, was present, and the proposed agenda placed him as the main and final speaker. Little time was set aside for the workers themselves.

The workers had a different agenda, however. They took the floor one by one, putting forward their criticisms of the Labor Ministry and the government's policies, and raising their demands for improvements in working conditions.

A worker from the Arj factory was the first to speak. He began by attacking the current labor law — a shameful legacy of the shah's regime. Article 33 of this law gives employers the unconditional right to dismiss any worker without cause at any time. The speaker went on to criticize all the governments since the shah's overthrow for not repealing such anti-working-class legislation, which is still being used against militant workers.

Another representative took the floor to express the view that "the workers of this country

have been victimized, and everyone but the leader [Ayatollah Khomeini] has tried to take advantage of this victimization." He called on the labor minister, Ahmad Tavakkoli, to "listen to what the workers have to say." But he added that the minister should "not expect any thanks from me and those like me."

A member of the Islamic *anjoman* from a Benz truck assembly plant in south Tehran blasted the Labor Ministry's friendly attitude toward the capitalists. He attacked the notion put forward by leaders both inside and outside the government that there are good capitalists and bad capitalists.

"We cannot fool ourselves," he said. "It is vain to expect that the leech-like capitalists will grant fair conditions to the workers." He continued, "These leech-like capitalists are supporters of terrorism. So our officials should act and legislate in an Islamic way above all, and make it unambiguously impossible for the capitalists and management to use [the labor law] against the workers."

## 'No government secrecy'

Next, a member of the Islamic *anjoman* from the Minoos candy factory in Karaj, an industrial city just west of Tehran, took the floor. He attacked the secrecy surrounding the draft labor law and added, "On behalf of the workers I demand that the officials come and see how workers whose children are fighting at the front give from their low wages for the war effort. Shouldn't our officials ask the workers' views first and only then prepare a draft? More than that, shouldn't they defend workers who have faith in the revolution from the managers and capitalists?"

The Minoos representative criticized certain factory managers by referring to Ayatollah Khomeini's statements on behalf of the poor and his proclamation that the workers are "the real managers of society."

## Redbaiting

Motamed Rezaei of the Labor Ministry was the final speaker. He said the entire cabinet was responsible for the failure to publish the draft labor law and went on to explain that even President Ali Khamenei is interested in the workers' confidence and would attend the special cabinet meeting where the labor law was to be taken up.

Rezaei then proceeded to attack the workers, exposing the nature of the Labor Ministry and its proposed law. "In Islam," he contended, "there is no contradiction between wealth and poverty. But there is a contradiction between Islam and atheism. I personally know capitalists who have helped the revolu-

tion greatly, but I have also seen the emblems of Workers House in Moscow. This is the work of leftists."

Workers House serves as a coordinating center in Tehran for the *shoras* and *anjomans*. Its leaders have close ties to the ruling Islamic Republican Party (IRP). The Central Council of Workers House has itself spoken out against the draft labor law.

Rezaei refused to answer questions or hear any reply from the *shora* and *anjoman* representatives at the November 9 meeting.

The gathering concluded with the adoption of a 13-point resolution. Among other things, this document affirmed the centrality of the war effort against Iraqi aggression and called on the prime minister to put a halt to firings and to the hoarding of essential goods.

The resolution also demanded the adoption of a proworker labor law that would include insurance, unemployment benefits, retirement pensions, and other provisions so as to conform to the 1979 constitution, which upholds the right to housing, health care, and education.

Other demands centered on the need for workers to participate in the drafting of the labor law. The resolution also called on the news media — especially the state-run radio and television — to devote more attention to working-class issues, demands, and events.

## Growing resistance

The fight for pro-working-class labor legislation has been going on for some time in Iran. The raising of this demand by the *shoras* and *anjomans* reflects the efforts of workers to gain greater control in their workplaces against the owners of the means of production — the state and the capitalists — and their representatives, the managers and foremen.

At the same time, the ruling class has been trying to rebuild its domination in the workplaces. Pressure has mounted on the government to guarantee the indisputable rule of management, both in the nationalized industries and in the private sector, in order to boost capitalist profits.

As this class conflict has sharpened, pressure has also mounted on the leadership of Workers House — from the ranks of the workers on the one hand, and on the other from the capitalists and their politicians in the government, who want to do away with all workers organizations, including Workers House itself.

After the recent series of meetings and seminars of workers representatives and the red-baiting attacks by labor ministry official Rezaei, the Central Council of Workers House

\*The *shoras* are committees of workers that arose in many factories and workplaces during the upsurge against the shah's regime and became widespread during the first year of the revolution. *Shoras* continue to exist in most major workplaces, despite a ruling in late 1981 by the Labor Ministry that no further *shora* elections could take place. The *anjomans* were initiated by the regime itself to compete with the *shoras* for the allegiance of workers. The *anjomans* have often collaborated with management, but they have also responded to pressure from the mass of the workers. Leaders of both *shoras* and *anjomans* have been the victims of arbitrary firings by management.

met and resolved that the draft labor law "cannot be implemented."

Two central leaders of Workers House, Mahjobi and Hossein Kamali (the latter an IRP member of parliament), were then interviewed by the leading Tehran daily *Ettela'at*. Mahjobi said that "the fundamental question" regarding the labor law "is that of relations in the workplace." He charged that the draft is not based on "existing realities."

#### Firings by management

Mahjobi took up some of the major questions facing Iranian workers today. "During the last year," he said, "some 800 shora members, especially those from Islamic anjomans, have been fired from various factories. This trend continues." He added that "a majority of the firings have centered on the Islamic anjomans and shoras, and while the Labor Ministry could have affected this trend in the interests of the workers, it has not done so."

Mahjobi also referred to the problem of unemployment. The government's own statistics say some 3 million Iranians are out of work, about 30 percent of the workforce. "Our next problem is that of unemployment. . . . When a worker has no job security, he has to accept the management's conditions. And this, in fact, will amount to a violation of Article 40 of the constitution" (which calls for decent living conditions for all).

Mahjobi discussed other questions that are also on workers' minds: "Another problem is that of social security. From the day such insurance was abolished we have received many letters on the subject daily, all of which are pessimistic. Meanwhile the draft labor law contains no such provisions for the workers, even though providing social security to all citizens is the state's duty, one that is recognized as a universal right by the constitution."

Regarding women workers, Mahjobi said: "In the constitution women are granted equal

rights with men, but in the draft law no attention is paid to widowed women or aged women workers, even though there are many women workers in different sectors. If we cannot provide for these women in the labor law we will have committed a great injustice."

Mahjobi summed up by saying, "We demand that workers' views, as expressed in their many seminars and conferences, be taken into account in the new labor law."

It is unlikely that the Labor Ministry will get away with its aim of imposing an anti-working-class labor law. During the last week of November the cabinet decided not to vote on the law or send it on to the parliament.

Little by little, Iranian workers — who have successfully confronted the shah, U.S. imperialism, and the Iraqi army — are learning that they cannot rely on the capitalist government and its officials. The debate around the draft labor law is providing further education in this regard. □

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## Sweden

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# Social Democrats call for austerity

## Capitalists pleased by new government's performance

### By Ingrid Hedström

BORLÅNGE — The Social Democratic victory in the Swedish elections this September was greeted with quiet satisfaction rather than with spectacular outbursts of joy.

There was one notable exception, though: The Stockholm Stock Exchange surprisingly welcomed the new government with a leap of happiness. In the week following the election it recorded one dazzling all-time high after another.

And the new government has justified the confidence of the stockbrokers. With its first measures it has managed to reduce the standard of living of working people by more than 10 percent.

This election was the second since 1976, when the Swedish Social Democrats lost control of the government for the first time in 44 years. In the previous election, in 1979, they came within 4,000 votes of regaining their parliamentary majority. In the 1982 election the so-called Socialist Bloc — the Socialist Democratic Party and the Swedish Communist Party (VPK) — totalled 51.5 percent of the vote, while the three main bourgeois parties won 45 percent.

#### Class polarization

During the six years the bourgeois parties were in control of the government, the working people of Sweden have suffered a 14 percent decline in their standard of living, increasing cuts in social expenditures, and rising unemployment. The capitalist crisis hit the mining, steel, shipbuilding, and textiles industries,

and led to the loss of thousands and thousands of jobs.

Although scattered resistance to the bourgeois austerity drive has developed, there has been no massive, generalized fightback. But Swedish society is nevertheless seeing the beginning of a polarization between classes, and the election results can be said to reflect this nascent polarization.

This is obvious first of all from the division of the bourgeois vote. The top vote-getter on the bourgeois side was the right-wing Moderate Party, the most outspoken advocate of austerity, the most outspoken enemy of labor and union rights. This party has grown steadily over the past decade. Its vote went from 20.3 percent in the 1979 election to 23.6 percent in 1982, making it by far the biggest of the bourgeois parties.

The bourgeois loser, on the other hand, was the liberal People's Party. Only 20 years ago the biggest of the bourgeois parties, it went from 10.6 percent of the vote in 1979 to a measly 5.9 percent in 1982.

Polarization between social classes was also evident in the campaign waged during the election by the bourgeois parties and by various employers' and capitalist organizations against the Social Democratic proposal for "wage-earners funds." This was a proposal to take money from the workers to aid capitalist industry, but it called for giving the workers some voice — at least in theory — over the use of these funds.

This reformist proposal aroused a furious

reaction from the bourgeois forces. In a gigantic campaign — with posters, full-page advertisements in the press, pamphlets, leaflets, and tape recordings — the capitalists maintained that the fund proposal, if adopted, would destroy the capitalist market economy and take Swedish society straight to socialism and a planned economy.

Part of the reason for this reaction was that the proposal, modest as it is, would amount to a further institutionalization of the collaboration between capitalists and labor leaders that marked the preceding three decades in Sweden. Such collaboration is ill-adapted to the crisis-ridden capitalism of the 1980s, when the rulers need to take back gains that have been won by the labor movement in the past.

But the campaign against the fund proposal was also an *ideological* campaign — a violent defense of capitalism and free enterprise, a vicious attack on the ideas of socialism, and on the trade unions as enemies of capitalist liberty.

As for the Social Democratic election campaign, it was not an adequate response to this bourgeois offensive. On election night, Social Democratic leader Olof Palme gave his summary of the election.

Despite the violent campaign against the labor movement, Palme said, we have not answered in the same way, but have consistently offered our outstretched hand. That is what gave us the support of the voters.

It is certainly true that the Social Democratic campaign offered an outstretched hand rather

than a clenched fist to the bourgeoisie. The attacks on the fund proposal were continually answered with protestations of the reformist leaders' undying commitment to capitalism.

Yet Palme's interpretation of what led to the electoral victory was hardly adequate. Rather, the Social Democratic victory represented a rejection of bourgeois austerity policy, a "No" to cuts in social spending, to shutdowns and layoffs. The vote for the Social Democrats also represented approval of the four promises the party actually made during the campaign.

These promises called for rescinding four of the most unpopular measures of the outgoing bourgeois government: its cut in sick pay; its cut in cost-of-living allowances for old-age pensioners; its reduced allotments for childcare centers; and its cut in unemployment benefits. (To finance the restoration of these cuts, however, the Social Democrats called for a 2 percent increase in direct taxes.)

Also, toward the end of the election campaign, the speeches of the Social Democratic leaders tended to put aside the austerity policy they actually favored and would adopt. They seemed to promise an end to austerity and a policy of trying to get industry going by increasing the buying power of working people.

This shift of emphasis, together with the "four promises," accounted for the size of the victory of the Socialist Block.

#### Revolutionary candidates

The Communist Party chose during the election campaign to appear as a slightly more radical junior partner of Social Democracy. The task of putting forward a socialist answer to the crisis was left to the small Socialist Party, Swedish section of the Fourth International.

The Socialist Party ran candidates for parliament all over the country as well as participating in some local government elections. In their campaign, the Socialists called for a workers fightback against the bourgeois offensive, beginning with a firm rejection of all austerity measures.

Capitalist blackmail should not be yielded to, the Socialists said, but should be met with firm anticapitalist measures such as nationalization of the banks and big companies and a reduction of the workweek to combat unemployment. The Socialists also took up the need for solidarity with the fighters in El Salvador and with the Polish workers.

As racist disturbances erupted during the campaign, the Socialists took up a firm defense of immigrants' rights, calling for solidarity between Swedish and immigrant workers.

The Socialist campaign was a success. The party more than doubled its nationwide vote from the 1979 election — from 1,819 votes to 3,936. Furthermore, the Socialist vote was concentrated in the working-class suburbs of the big cities. In Tensta and Rinkeby, two working-class and immigrant suburbs of Stockholm, the Socialists received between 1 and 2 percent of the vote in most of the districts in the municipal elections. (Immigrants who

are not Swedish citizens are allowed to vote in municipal elections.)

The new Social Democratic government was formed in the first week of October. It immediately came forward with a package of "anti-crisis" measures, fully justifying the Stock Exchange's confidence in Palme.

Most prominent among these measures was the decision to devalue the Swedish currency by a drastic 16 percent in order to help the capitalists boost Swedish exports. The effect of this for working people is an estimated 6 percent drop in buying power.

Together with the 2 percent rise in direct taxes, supposedly needed to finance abolition of the outgoing government's cut in sick pay, and other similar decisions, things ended up with the Social Democratic government reducing the buying power of working people by 12 percent at one fell swoop!

In passing, the government coolly stated that the sacred promise to reinstate the cost-of-living indexation for old-age pensions, did *not* mean that pensioners would be compensated for the 6 percent rise in consumer prices caused by devaluation.

At the Stock Exchange these decisions were greeted with outbursts of joy. The business paper *Dagens Industri* quoted one stockbroker asking, "Where can you buy one of those Social Democratic buttons with a red rose on it?"

#### Government demands wage restraint

There have been no conspicuous reactions from the workers so far. But the contracts between the unions and the employers' organizations are running out and a new period of collective bargaining is about to begin. The Social Democratic government is putting pressure on the union leaderships to see to it that their members are *not* compensated for the drop in living standards caused by the economic measures.

Union leaders have indicated their readiness to exercise "restraint" on behalf of their members in the struggle for new contracts. At a recent conference of the union of printing workers, Rune Molin, secretary of the central union federation, promised that "wage earners will accept a 4 percent reduction in real wages."

The Social Democratic government is gambling on its long-standing position as the leadership of the workers movement to push through these antiworker, procapitalist measures. Finance Minister Kjell-Olof Feldt put this rather clearly in an interview with the London *Financial Times*:

"We have been told by international organizations to cut the fat out of our economy. . . . I think other governments would like to take similar action, but they do not dare. It is a difficult operation but a Social Democrat government has an enormous asset in the support it can call on from the trade unions. We would be irresponsible if we did not try to use this asset, the confidence we have created within the unions over the past half century."

But with the Social Democrats in govern-

ment this confidence will more and more be stretched to the breaking point.

For years, the reformists have used the perspective of an electoral victory to divert the workers from struggle against the bourgeois offensive:

In the big strike of 1980, the Social Democrats advised workers being locked out to keep trade-union matters and political questions separate.

In 1981, when protests were growing against the bourgeois government's economic policy, the Social Democrats proposed new elections several times without doing anything to mobilize workers to force them.

In 1982, the Social Democrats counterposed the elections to the demand for political strikes against the bourgeois government and its proposal to cut sick pay.

Now they *are* in government, and will no longer be able to resort to such arguments.

#### Reformists on the spot

So what will the Social Democrats tell the thousands of working-class families that are squeezed to the limit already and don't see why they should continue to get poorer while capitalist speculators get richer? A recent survey by the state consumer institute indicated that 30 percent of households no longer have any margin for reducing expenses.

What will they tell the iron miners in the north, who are threatened with extensive layoffs? What is at stake in the northern iron fields is the survival of whole communities — but all the Social Democratic government has had to say about that so far is that the decisions of the mining company are none of the government's business.

And what will they tell all the other workers who are threatened with shutdowns and layoffs? Or the local union leaders who think that things will be better now that all they have to do to get help is to "pick up the phone and make a call to Kjell-Olof Feldt"?

Socialist workers told fellow workers and Social Democratic union officials the day after the election: "Now you Social Democrats run the unions, run the municipalities, run the government. What excuse is there now for not fighting back against the bourgeois offensive?"

Or as *Internationalen*, the Socialist Party weekly, put it:

"Now the Social Democratic leaders have every legal opportunity, every established means of power, to stop layoffs, to stop the lowering of real wages, to stop cutting social services, to stop the plunder of working people that serves only to fatten an unproductive, parasitic, outlived social class.

"The polarized election of 1982, with the employers' campaign, the success of the Moderate Party, the decline of the bourgeois center, the lack of clarity from the Social Democratic leaders, and the beginning of a strengthening of Socialist forces — all this foreshadows the '80s to come: the decade of class struggle and socialism." □

# One year of 'state of war'

## Bureaucracy and workers in a standoff

By Ernest Harsch

WARSAW, Nov. 5 — Across a square from the main gate of the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk stands a 10-foot-high wall. Shortly after the declaration of martial law last December, a team of painters covered over the political slogans on it with a thick coat of white paint. But it was poor paint. Subverted by the weather and the Baltic air, much of it has since peeled off, revealing the outlines of the large black letters underneath: "Free all political prisoners."

Martial law itself has not eroded so drastically, but neither has it been able to keep the explosive political tensions in Poland from breaking through to the surface.

Nearly a year after Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski proclaimed a "state of war" against the Polish working class, the bureaucracy that governs this country is still far from its goal of crushing the workers movement or banishing its symbol, Solidarity.

As a result, political life in Poland today is full of ironies and apparent contradictions.

The government hates everything that Solidarity represents, yet it feels compelled to continue masking its intentions and proclaiming its support for the "ideals" put forward by the workers during the July-August 1980 strike wave.

Patrols by the ZOMO, the notoriously brutal riot police, are a common sight here in Warsaw, in Gdansk, in Wroclaw, and in many other cities: large burly men, dressed in grey combat fatigues, rubber truncheons at their sides, light machine guns strapped across their backs. People glance at them warily, but there is little overt display of fear. Often they are just ignored.

Formally, censorship is all-encompassing. But in reality political discussion and the exchange of ideas is still the liveliest anywhere in Eastern Europe. The authorities have been powerless to stop it.

Despite penalties for the possession or distribution of Solidarity literature that range from one to several years in prison, the country is flooded with underground leaflets, bulletins, newspapers, and even books. In some cities, one can tune in to occasional broadcasts by Radio Solidarity.

Though the generals have sought to bring cultural life under control, there has been a recent explosion of "new wave" rock bands, clearly inspired by Solidarity, with songs that are sometimes explicitly critical of the authorities. Young audiences at officially sanctioned concerts sometimes burst out into chants of "Solidarity!" and flash V-for-victory signs. Songs lambasting the governing Polish

United Workers Party (PUWP) can even be heard on official radio channels: "Party man, monkey in the zoo," declares a lyric in a song by the rock band Perfekt.

Beneath such contradictory surface impressions lies something much more fundamental: not only has the workers movement not been crushed, but a sharpening political polarization also runs through the whole country, reaching from the largest cities into the smallest and most remote towns. It is a polarization that separates the governing bureaucracy from the immense majority of the population.

Despite over-blown claims in the official press, the government lacks any significant base of popular support or social acceptance. More than ever before, its backing has been reduced largely to the bureaucracy itself — the generals, party officials, factory managers, administrators, and other bureaucrats who enjoy substantial material privileges and who govern the Polish workers state against the interests of the working class and its allies.

The imposition of martial law has bought the bureaucracy some time, but it has not resolved this basic problem. If anything, it has only worsened it.

### Police clubs and television cameras

To many people here, Jaruzelski's imposition of martial law is simply known as the "war." While that is something of an exaggeration, it does reflect the popular perception that the government can now maintain itself in

power only through an open and visible reliance on force.

On a day-to-day level, the extent of the repression is not always that apparent. There are few roadblocks and identity checks, the curfews have been lifted, travel restrictions are no longer in force, and most people are preoccupied with solving the problems of daily life.

Yet there are also constant reminders that the country *is* under martial law. Besides the frequent patrols by small groups of soldiers and ZOMO, army vehicles filled with troops are occasionally seen rumbling down the main streets, as are regular municipal buses packed with ZOMO. In central Warsaw, two hotels have been commandeered to house the ZOMO (one of them, Dom Chlopa, had previously been the site of the national offices of Rural Solidarity, the farmers organization allied with Solidarity).

Whenever someone makes a telephone call, they hear a recorded voice in the background repeating over and over again, "rozmowa kontrolowana" (conversation monitored). The authorities do not have the resources to listen in on all phone calls, but this practice does have an intimidating effect. In addition, mail to and from abroad is often opened by the censors.

Of course, for political and union activists or those who participate in street demonstrations or strikes, the repression is much more acute.

The number of people killed by the police since the imposition of martial law is still far less than during the suppression of the 1970 strikes on the Baltic coast (when several hundred died). But the deaths have been adding up. According to underground union bulletins, 37 people are known to have been killed so far. Some were gunned down, as were 12 strikers at the Wujek coal mine in December 1981 and several during the August 31 demonstrations in various cities. But most died of injuries received during the ZOMO's vicious beatings of demonstrators.

Several hundred national and local leaders of Solidarity remain in special detention camps. They are being held without charge or trial, solely on the basis of their role in leading Solidarity prior to the declaration of the state of war or for speaking out against the bureaucracy's policies.

More seriously, some 2,500 union activists have been tried by martial law courts and sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to ten years. Unlike those interned, who are fairly prominent individuals, these are mostly rank-and-file unionists arrested since martial law was proclaimed, on charges of producing or distributing underground literature or organiz-



Ernest Harsch/IP

Patrol by ZOMO riot police in Warsaw.

ing strikes and demonstrations. Legally, there is no appeal against their sentences.

In some areas, the repression has been particularly intense, as in Silesia, the main mining region in the south where some of the longest and most militant strikes were held immediately following the proclamation of martial law. In general, trial sentences there have been much more severe than in Warsaw.

A special police force exists for the Silesian mines, the Internal Miners' Service (GSW). They are police who actually go down into the mines with the workers and keep constant tabs on them. According to one underground activist, who has visited Silesia twice since the imposition of martial law, there is an average of one member of the GSW to every five miners.

Within factories elsewhere in the country, other controls have been imposed on the workers. In large enterprises — like the Huta Warszawa steelworks, Ursus tractor factory, and FSO automobile plant here in Warsaw — workers from one department cannot freely go to another. They need special permission. Factory security guards also carefully check passes at the gates. In some factories, such as FSO, television cameras have been installed to monitor what happens on the shopfloor.

Following the various protest strikes called by the underground Solidarity leadership, hundreds of workers have been fired from some of the most militant plants, such as the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, the Swidnik helicopter factory near Lublin, or the FSO auto plant. These workers then often find it impossible to get new jobs. This means extreme hardship for them and their families.

To add insult to injury, the government adopted a new law on October 26 providing for compulsory labor for "shirkers" and "social parasites," that is, any male between the ages of 18 and 45 who cannot prove that he is gainfully employed. So a worker who goes on strike can first be fired, then declared a "work-shirker" and assigned to whatever kind of job the government sees fit, including the most demeaning. If the worker refuses, he or she can be jailed. This law can also be used against the thousands of full-time union employees who lost their jobs following Solidarity's banning and who have not been able to find other employment since then.

#### 'Antisocialist' smears

On top of all this, the authorities have been preparing to stage a series of political trials of several prominent figures, including Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Jan Jozef Lipski, and others who were active in the former Committee to Defend the Workers (KOR).

They have formally been accused of conspiring to overthrow the government by force. The charges are a blatant frame-up. The government itself has made it clear that their real crime is the political views they put forward over the years. A recent book put out by an official publishing house, entitled, *The Import of Counterrevolution: The Theory and Practice*

of the KSS-KOR, focuses almost entirely on the ideas of the KOR leaders and on how some of those ideas influenced Solidarity.

In effect, the trial of Kuron, Michnik, and their colleagues will be a trial of Solidarity itself.

Since the bureaucracy is incapable of answering its critics politically, it has resorted to the crudest Stalinist smears to justify the imposition of martial law and the crackdown on Solidarity.

The book on the KOR is full of adjectives like "counterrevolutionary," "antisocialist," "adventurist," and "extremist." The fact that KOR statements had been published in the West, including by Polish émigré organizations, was seized on as proof that the KOR was in collaboration with U.S. and West European intelligence agencies.

In a speech on October 7, a day before the banning of Solidarity, Deputy Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski charged that the line followed by Solidarity had been drawn up by a group of people "with clearly crystallized anti-socialist views."

Following the imposition of martial law, Rakowski went on, the underground leaders of the union "thought that they could still take over power, destroy the structure of the socialist state." He likewise charged that some were allied "with the most reactionary forces of the imperialist camp."

After Solidarity was banned, an article in the November 2 *Glos Wybrzeza*, the Gdansk regional organ of the PUWP, tried to justify the move by claiming that the union's outlawing had "blocked imperialism's overall plans and aims toward Poland."

Such charges are part of the government's frame-up. The bureaucracy simply equates its own privileges and repressive policies with socialism, and then accuses any opponent of bureaucratic rule of being "antisocialist."

It is true that many Solidarity leaders do not call themselves or consider themselves socialists — just as many workers in Poland today do not. This is in reaction to the hated bureaucracy's use — actually abuse — of socialist and Marxist terminology. But that does not mean that the workers are antisocialist or favor restoring capitalism. And that is certainly not the thrust of Solidarity's struggle.

What Solidarity is fundamentally fighting for is to allow working people themselves to make the decisions about how the country is run, democratically. What it is fighting for is the elimination of social inequality and bureaucratic privilege.

Before martial law, Solidarity was able to publicly answer the government's charges. For instance, a major article in the May 8, 1981, *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, the union's national weekly newspaper, declared, "The basic means of production — the factories, steelworks, mines, shipyards, railways, and banks — are not privately owned by capitalists and there is no one who would want to return this national property to the capitalists. There are not even any capitalists around who can lay

claim to it. Social consciousness is likewise socialist, something that has had an enormous influence on the course of events over the past months. Workers want their factories to be more socialist, genuinely socialist."

With the union's banning, Solidarity has now been forced to take up the accusations through underground bulletins and declarations.

In an October 17 statement, the Solidarity Interfactory Workers Committee, which includes representatives of 20 of the largest factories in the Warsaw region, stated, "To prevent any misunderstanding, we should point out here that the military junta is not fighting to defend socialism. It is fighting to protect its rule and its privileges. It is for this reason that it has no interest in dialogue with Solidarity. If there are any who still believe that what is at issue in Poland is defense of 'people's power' or 'collective ownership of the means of production,' they are, if we may be permitted to speak plainly, 'hopeless idiots.'"

#### Economy on the skids

As serious as the government's repression is, for many working people it has become overshadowed by the effects of the extremely severe economic crisis. The struggle to make ends meet is getting more and more difficult.

Predictably, the government has continued to blame Solidarity for the wretched state of the economy. But as everyone knows, the roots of the crisis go back well before the 1980 strikes and the union's emergence.

During the early 1970s, the regime of Edward Gierk launched a series of massive industrial expansion projects financed by huge loans from U.S. and West European banks and governments and dependent on growing trade with capitalist countries.

The capitalists, at the same time, were evincing a greater economic interest in Poland and other workers states after the first signs of stagnation and increased interimperialist competition. They were eager to try to exploit the workers of Eastern Europe through the interest they charged for loans and through acquiring greater access to those markets.

But as the stagnation deepened in the capitalist world, the impact was sorely felt within Poland as well. Foreign markets shrank, and Polish products could not be sold abroad. Poland thus could not earn foreign currency to repay its enormous debts or buy the spare parts and raw materials it needed to keep industry functioning efficiently.

These objective difficulties were greatly worsened by bureaucratic mismanagement and waste. And it was the faulty economic planning of the Gierk regime that made Poland so vulnerable to the fluctuations of the capitalist market in the first place. Since the workers had no voice in the making of economic decisions, there was no way they could participate in correcting these mistakes.

When Solidarity arose, it pressed for the institution of sweeping economic reforms. It demanded the establishment of democratically





Shopping line in Warsaw. High prices and shortages have hit workers' living standards.

elected workers councils in the factories to oversee their management and to participate in the elaboration and implementation of the overall national economic plan.

Solidarity members began to wage numerous concrete struggles to alter the government's economic priorities. They forced the closing of an aluminum plant in Krakow because of the damage it was causing to the environment. They fought for greater budgetary allocations for education and health care, and demanded that special police hospitals be turned over to public use. Workers at the Ursus tractor factory offered to work Saturdays if the tractors they produced would be turned over directly to individual farmers who needed them.

While Solidarity acknowledged that sacrifices might be necessary, given the depth of the economic crisis, it insisted that the population as a whole be able to discuss and decide on them. The privileges of the bureaucracy, it pointed out, should be the first to go.

In an attempt to gain some degree of support for the imposition of martial law, Jaruzelski initially promised to carry out the economic reforms that it had previously agreed to under pressure from Solidarity. Yet all it has done is raise the prices of most foods by three or four times.

During the first six months of 1982, overall industrial production fell by 7.8%, compared to the first half of 1981, itself a period of sharp decline. In some sectors of industry this fall was particularly striking: a 39.5% drop in the production of aluminum, 28.9% in motor vehicles, 32.7% in televisions, 24.8% in washing machines, 20.8% in refrigerators.

During the first nine months of 1982, there were 23.6 percent fewer apartments completed than in the same period of 1981, worsening an already severe housing shortage.

Entire departments of factories have come to a standstill because of a lack of raw materials or parts. Workers go to work, but are often not able to carry out their jobs.

This decline has been seriously aggravated by the U.S.-imposed economic sanctions on Poland, which have decimated even the limited opportunities for credits from and trade

with the capitalist countries.

Only in the coal mining industry has production improved significantly — thanks to the abolition of work-free Saturdays and the militarization of the mines. But the lower prices for coal on the world market have undercut the higher income that this might otherwise have generated.

Productivity in many sectors has likewise declined, largely because of inefficiencies, but also because of the low morale of the workforce. In October, the newspaper *Głos Szczeciński*, in the port city of Szczecin, quoted one youth as saying, "Solidarity was a force that could draw millions of workers and their families to work for the country, to work hard. Martial law has ruled out everything."

The policies of the martial law authorities — on top of the economic crisis as a whole — have also done nothing to encourage farmers to grow more food. While the prices paid to the farmers have been increased by 20 percent, the prices of commodities that farmers need to buy in the cities have jumped by two, three, or four times. Tractors that break down can often not be repaired because the parts are unavailable. Throughout the country, there is a shortage of 1.5 million scythes.

Rural Solidarity, the organization that sought to defend the farmers interests and correct such problems, was banned the same time Solidarity was.

While the shortages of meat and some other food staples do not seem as severe today as they did a year ago, they are still serious. There is a little bit more in the shops now because rations have been cut back further and the higher prices mean that people cannot afford to buy as much.

Chicken, however, is now almost totally unavailable. Because of a cut-off of U.S. credits for feed imports, Poland's broiler industry was wiped out by March, resulting in a loss of 350,000 tons of meat.

The high prices and shortages translate into real hardship for many working class families. Ration cards often are not enough to cover basic needs for an entire month. Those who have savings dip into them to buy additional food or other consumer goods on the black-

market, where prices are even higher. Sometimes half of a family's entire income is spent on food alone, and the rest gets eaten up by rent, utilities, child-care, and a few basic household items.

According to *Prawo i Życie*, the journal of the jurists' association, some 11.5 million Poles — nearly one-third of the entire population — are eligible for government poverty assistance.

In the midst of this decline in the living standards of working people, the bureaucrats have been careful to maintain their own special privileges.

Exclusive shops and stores still exist where party officials can get access to scarce goods, at much cheaper prices. While there is a severe shortage of medicines of all types in the public health clinics, the party, police, and various agencies maintain their own hospitals, where better treatment is available. Mercedes Benzes and other luxury cars can occasionally be seen speeding through the streets of Warsaw.

"I don't know what your capitalists are like," one Solidarity supporter commented to me late one night over the last of his rationed vodka, "but these people here are real pigs."

### Government isolated

Although the bureaucracy was already very unpopular before the imposition of martial law, it has become even more despised since then.

The government itself is extremely isolated politically. "Never since the end of the Second World War has Poland had a government with so little support among the people," a former Solidarity leader in Gdansk commented. "Without Soviet support, it wouldn't last a day."

Certain of the bureaucracy's institutions are the sources of particular opprobrium: Jaruzelski's Military Council of National Salvation (WRON), the ZOMO, the PUWP.

Since the acronym for the military council is close to the Polish word for crow (*wrona*), it is a source of endless jokes and wordplay. Slogans painted on the walls proclaim, "The crow will not conquer the eagle [Poland's national symbol]," "The crow to Moscow," or simply, "The crow stinks."

Since the imposition of martial law, tens of thousands of rank-and-file members of the PUWP — and even long-time activists — have handed in their membership cards. Entire branches and factory cells have fallen apart. In some enterprises, PUWP members held mock funerals at which they deposited their cards in symbolic coffins. Many of those who did not resign were expelled for having pro-Solidarity sympathies.

At the Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, the local PUWP branch has a special bulletin board in a glass case for party announcements. The glass is constantly covered with fresh spit.

In a letter circulating among party factions critical of Jaruzelski for not cracking down on Solidarity hard enough, Tadeusz Grabski, an

ultra-Stalinist, complained that the PUWP has become "moribund." Describing the situation in a PUWP branch at one enterprise in Poznan, Grabski said, "Our ranks have been diminished by almost one half. Some of the members, including the first secretary of our organization, renounced their membership in the party by signing a protest against the proclamation of the state of war."

Other sectors of the population that had rarely been drawn into political activity before have now been impelled to by the imposition of martial law. As a protest against repression and censorship, most television and film actors are now boycotting the official media. Some prominent journalists, poets, and writers have decided to set aside their pens for the time being, or to begin writing for underground publishing houses or periodicals.

Perhaps the single most hated institution in Poland is the ZOMO. The ZOMO units have been the backbone of the bureaucracy's attempts to physically crush the workers' resistance. It was the ZOMO who stormed the strike-bound factories right after the declaration of martial law. It has been the ZOMO who

have beaten-up, shot, and killed strikers and demonstrators in the months since then.

"ZOMO murderers!" declared one chalked slogan overlooking General Swierczewski Avenue here in Warsaw recently.

Unlike the regular police, who are formally under the control of the provincial authorities, the ZOMO are a national force that can be easily sent from one end of the country to the other to deal with unrest. Its approximately 30,000 members receive special military training and, in addition to the standard crowd control gear, are equipped with heavier weapons and armored vehicles.

The ZOMO are also accorded many special privileges and have access to exclusive stocks of food and consumer items. They are also well supplied with alcohol (and rumor has it, drugs). In Gdansk, this reporter saw four uniformed ZOMO so drunk they could barely negotiate the sidewalk. People made a special point of avoiding them.

In contrast to the hatred heaped on the ZOMO (and to an extent the regular police), the army troops remain very popular. That is because the bureaucracy has generally held

back from using the army to try to physically attack strikes or demonstrations. While the ZOMO is a relatively reliable elite force, the bulk of the army is made up of conscripts, drawn overwhelmingly from the workers and farmers. When the government has sent troops into action, they have sometimes shown open sympathy for the strikers and demonstrators. (See box.)

#### 'Majority Identify with Solidarity'

The government's unpopularity is directly related to the continued — and widespread — support for Solidarity.

Because of the restrictions of martial law, that support can often not be openly expressed. The wearing of Solidarity insignia, for example, is now illegal.

Sometimes the support is very visible, however. During the August 31 demonstrations, several hundred thousand people poured into the streets, despite the common knowledge that the ZOMO would attack. (A total of seven demonstrators are known to have been killed in police attacks on that day.) The government itself admitted that protests were staged in 66 cities and towns.

The Institute for the Study of Basic Problems of Marxism-Leninism — a PUWP institution — has conducted a series of public opinion polls in large industrial plants around the country. Describing the findings, one member of the Sejm (parliament) declared in an October 17 speech, "The overwhelming majority of those polled strongly identify themselves with Solidarity, assess its efforts as an advocate of workers' interests as effective, or highly effective, and insist that the union's activity should be resumed."

This support for Solidarity has also been reflected in the proliferation of underground union committees. Practically every large factory and university has some form of Solidarity organization, as do many other institutions, schools, and hospitals. The best organized workplaces have formed union bodies called Provisional Factory Committees.

These committees help victims of repression. They organize strikes and protest actions, issue petitions and declarations, and distribute leaflets and other literature. Some publish their own papers and maintain libraries. They organize discussion clubs.

In some areas, occupational structures have also been formed, grouping teachers, health service employees, or construction workers in Szczecin, for example.

Many Solidarity members continue to pay union dues, averaging 1 percent of their wage, to fund the activities of these committees. Sometimes appeals are issued for additional contributions to help workers who have been fired from their jobs or for the families of those jailed.

In addition to these Solidarity committees, which are organized in specific workplaces, there are also numerous other formations: student clubs, professional associations, and many loosely organized networks of friends

## 'Army with the people!'

GDANSK — Although Poland is now formally governed by a military council, the army itself has not been used that extensively against the workers movement. The army's conscript troops are frequently seen patrolling the streets, or as back-up forces. But the job of breaking strikes and demonstrations has so far been left to the more reliable ZOMO.

Following the imposition of martial law, there were numerous reports and rumors about troop rebellions and desertions. Some soldiers are known to have been court-martialled for refusing to carry out orders. In Modlin, a group of soldiers issued a leaflet proclaiming, "We will not shoot at our fathers and brothers."

Participants in some of the protest actions against martial law told me of cases of open fraternization between Solidarity supporters and troops.

"I went to the Lenin Shipyard right after martial law," an artist here in Gdansk said. "There were tanks lined up, their guns pointed at the shipyard. But flowers were sticking out of the barrels. Strikers had climbed up on the tanks and hung Solidarity banners.

"I saw a soldier handing out leaflets. I thought they were government proclamations. But they turned out to be strike leaflets. 'Where did you get these?' I asked him. 'They gave them to me,' he said, pointing toward the strikers on the other side of the shipyard gate.

"It was incredible. The workers came out

and gave the soldiers sandwiches and hot coffee."

The Lenin Shipyard strike was eventually broken when the ZOMO came. According to unconfirmed reports here, the entire army unit that had been sent to the yard was subsequently assigned to punishment duty and the commander was imprisoned.

In Lublin, in eastern Poland, thousands of people demonstrated on May 3, to commemorate the anniversary of Poland's 1791 republican constitution. According to a participant — whose account was confirmed by two other people — the demonstrators marched down one of the main streets to the city's central park, where they hoped to rally around a monument to the May 3 Constitution.

"Across the street stood a line of soldiers and ZOMO, blocking the way. We stopped. The atmosphere was very tense. For a while there was a standoff. Then this girl went up and kissed one of the soldiers. She got other people to go up to them too. More kissing. Finally the soldiers stood aside and let us go through to the park.

"Later, we marched by a group of about 100 to 150 soldiers in four or five trucks parked in a sidestreet. We started chanting, 'Army with the people!' A girl climbed up and kissed some of the soldiers and gave them flowers. Someone put a Solidarity banner on the truck. The soldiers smiled and gave V-signs. It was wonderful."

—Ernest Harsch



Pro-Solidarity demonstration in Gdansk on May 3, 1982. Workers' support for union is still widespread.

and acquaintances who carry out political activities to one extent or another. Most of these groups look toward Solidarity's leadership, but some do not, especially those influenced by rightward-leaning nationalist currents like the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN).

One of the main activities of the underground union committees is the publication of bulletins, newspapers, and other literature. Many hundreds of such publications have appeared since the imposition of martial law. According to the August 1 *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, one of the main Solidarity weeklies in Warsaw, there are at least 250 regular periodicals. The largest number are in Warsaw, but Gdansk, Katowice, Wroclaw, Krakow, Lodz, Szczecin, Poznan, and other major cities also produce numerous titles.

Most of these publications are printed by rather primitive means, including hand-operated mimeograph machines and home-made presses. Some are printed on offset presses.

Their circulations range from several hundred to 30,000. The main Warsaw publications — *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, *Wiadomosci*, and *CDN* — are each printed in editions of 10,000 to 20,000. The actual readerships are much higher, since copies "are passed from hand to hand until the paper falls apart," as one Solidarity activist told me.

There are also a number of underground publishing houses — such as *Nowa*, *Glos*, and *Krag* — that print pamphlets and books. Among those published this year are a book analyzing the first three months of martial law, a biography of Lech Walesa, several collections of poetry and satire, and a booklet of essays by Adam Michnik (smuggled out of the internment camp where he is being held).

Union activists have turned to electronic means of communication as well, generally known as Radio Solidarity.

This includes the production of cassette tapes, which are then duplicated and sent to

local factory committees. They may contain speeches, resistance songs, and other material. One particularly popular tape included broadcasts from the police radio bands during the demonstrations in May.

Actual radio transmitters have also been set up in some cities. Shortwave broadcasts have been made in Warsaw, Poznan, Gdansk, Krakow, and Wroclaw. Unfortunately, the authorities are able to pinpoint the location of these transmitters over time, even though the broadcasts are brief and the transmitters are often moved from place to place.

During a government television report about the seizure of a transmitter in Wroclaw, the announcer stressed that it was "a professional transmitter system, with parts produced in capitalist countries." A Solidarity supporter watching it with me burst out into laughter. "And where do the police get their equipment? Their clubs come from Japan and their plastic shields from West Germany."

The numerous publications, cassette tapes, and Radio Solidarity broadcasts play an invaluable role in breaking the government's monopoly on information and its rigid censorship regulations. They also help maintain some form of regular communication between the different Solidarity bodies. The documents and appeals of the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK), which functions on a national level, are able to reach a majority of the union members in the major cities within a matter of days or at most a few weeks.

#### **Bureaucracy shifts gears**

This continued and massive support for Solidarity has forced the bureaucracy to shift its tactics in recent weeks, leading to the October 8 banning of the union and the government's attempts to set up new, bureaucratically controlled trade unions.

In the first few months of martial law, the WRON had hoped to break up Solidarity, to divide its ranks and leadership, to win over a sector of it. From the bureaucracy's viewpoint, this was preferable to an outright banning of the union, given the government's political isolation within the country.

The authorities tried bribery, coercion, slander, intrigue, and numerous forms of pressure to get at least a few prominent Solidarity figures to collaborate with the WRON. Their aim was to "reactivate" a rump Solidarity, keeping the union's name, but in a form that would not challenge the bureaucracy's rule. This, they hoped, would demobilize the workers.

The government failed. Not one Solidarity leader of any significance caved in. The ranks of union supporters showed their continued backing for Solidarity and for the leadership and program that it had before the imposition of martial law.

This has now prompted the bureaucracy to shift gears, to try a new approach. In his October 7 speech, Deputy Prime Minister Rakowski explained why the government had

finally decided to ban Solidarity outright.

"In the first weeks of martial law," Rakowski said, "the political and state leadership assumed that the masses of Solidarity members would manage to isolate the extremists. . . . We thought that they could dissociate themselves from the ideas and practices that affected, as they were bound to, the use of extraordinary measures. Such were our hopes. Life proved them to be groundless." The government, Rakowski added, had been unable "to take away the Solidarity banner from the hands of the extremists."

By itself, however, the banning of Solidarity solves nothing. The government continues to face the same fundamental problem: it is confronted with a highly politicized and militant working class that is not willing to passively accept bureaucratic rule. This it has already found out in its efforts to set up the new government-run trade unions — they are being almost universally shunned by the workers.

In addition, the new trade union law has alienated even more of the government's previous supporters. Because it banned not only Solidarity, but *all* existing unions, members of the former progovernment "branch" unions are also boycotting the new union committees in some factories.

#### A difficult road forward

While the bureaucracy is experiencing big problems in reasserting its control over the country, the workers movement itself is confronted with an enormously difficult situation.

"It's hard," is a constant refrain in reply to questions about the prospects for the resistance movement.

The biggest difficulty is the repression. Despite its selectivity and limited effectiveness, it has taken its toll.

Workers may be willing to distribute underground literature and participate in other Solidarity activities. The boldest may take part in some of the strikes and demonstrations that have been called. But there is also fear — fear of being arrested and sentenced to years in prison, fear of being beaten or shot, fear of losing one's job.

In recent months, the security police have become increasingly effective and have succeeded in tracking down several prominent underground Solidarity leaders, such as Zbigniew Romaszewski here in Warsaw or Wladyslaw Frasyniuk in Wroclaw. A number of the most active Solidarity supporters in the large factories have lost their jobs. Radio Solidarity in Warsaw and Gdansk have been silenced, at least for the moment, with the discovery of the transmitters and the arrest of those responsible for the radio stations.

It is hard to gauge the degree of demoralization among the population, but there is certainly some. Some people have become passive. Considering any hope of political change to be futile, they have withdrawn from active

opposition to the bureaucracy and are becoming either apathetic or following other pursuits. This apathy is known here as "internal emigration," a turning inward, away from concern for broader social issues.

Another difficulty is the serious economic situation. The problems of day-to-day life, of figuring out how to make the pay check last to the end of the month, of queuing up for scarce goods hours on end, all place an enormous drain on one's energies and time.

"There is no bread without freedom," a young woman active in printing an underground Solidarity bulletin commented, using an old slogan of the Polish democratic movement. "But without bread, it's also very hard to fight for freedom."

The conditions of martial law likewise place major restrictions on Solidarity's ability to organize and coordinate discussion and activity. Despite all the underground publications, communications are not easy. It is risky for activists to travel, to meet with people in other cities. The telephones and mails cannot be used for most organizing purposes. It sometimes takes weeks to find out what has happened in other parts of the country. Safe locations for printing presses and Solidarity leaders in hiding are becoming scarcer.

Thus while there is often considerable organization and activity on the local level, this has so far not been reflected in the emergence of a well-organized or authoritative national leadership.

Coordination of the Solidarity movement has proven extremely difficult. So far, there are regional coordinating bodies in about 13 regions. While some of these are fairly well-organized — as in Wroclaw and Gdansk — others are not. Warsaw is one of the most important regions, yet the activities of the many clandestine committees here appear rather disorganized and even chaotic.

In April, several Solidarity leaders from a few key regions established the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK) to try to provide some overall direction to the movement. It has issued a series of statements, declarations, and calls for national protest actions. But its authority is limited. There are many different criticisms here of the way it functions or of specific decisions it has made.

To an extent, this criticism is a result of the rather wide-ranging debate over strategy and tactics that is under way among the Solidarity ranks. Although it began months ago, there is still no consensus of what the best course for the workers movement is.

Some are calling on the TKK to initiate preparations for an indefinite general strike, although within this current there are differences over what its aim should be: to overthrow the government or to force it to reach a compromise? If a compromise, on what basis? Many others think such an approach is unrealistic, that the movement is not organized

sufficiently — or does not yet have a clear enough view of its goals — to try to carry out such a strike. For similar reasons, there is also much opposition to the TKK's November 10 general strike call to protest the banning of Solidarity. [The strike, which took place after this article was written, drew very little participation.]

No one here denies the importance of this discussion for the future development of the workers movement, but there is also a recognition that the current lack of agreement on Solidarity's immediate and longer-range goals has contributed to the disorganization.

"Of course it's not like before," a Solidarity activist here commented. "But we didn't have martial law before either. We could organize congresses, discuss things out in the open, elect whoever we wanted to represent us. Now things are different. Maybe this is the best we can do for now. Maybe we could do better."

To try to get around some of the organizational problems — and to facilitate discussion among the ranks — there have been several initiatives by shopfloor leaderships to establish direct contacts with other factories.

One example of this is the Solidarity Interfactory Workers Committee (MRKS) here in Warsaw, which has representatives of some 20 of the largest enterprises in the region, including the Huta Warszawa steelworks and Ursus tractor factory. Although the Solidarity committee at the FSO automobile plant is not formally part of the MRKS, it collaborates closely with it. The MRKS publishes its own newspaper, *CDN* (To Be Continued), with a circulation of more than 10,000.

A more ambitious undertaking began in August, when representatives of some of the largest factories around the country met to establish the Interregional Defense Committee (MKO). At a second meeting in September, participants came from 13 regions, including Gdansk, Wroclaw, Warsaw, Szczecin, Krakow, Silesia, Olsztyn, Lublin, Rzeszow, and Radom. Most were members of factory committees.

Whatever the difficulties of organizing opposition to the bureaucratic regime and forging a strong workers movement, one thing is obvious: the struggle here is far from over.

In the more than two years since the 1980 strike wave first aroused the workers' hopes, the face of the country has been irrevocably changed. Millions of working people have been mobilized into political activity in that period, and have gotten a taste of their collective strength. Their experiences, their consciousness, the lessons they have learned — no amount of repression or censorship will be able to wipe that from their memories.

"Listen," a young Solidarity activist said one evening. "Before Solidarity, we didn't know how to speak. Then we found our voice. Sixteen months of freedom. Can we now forget that? I don't think so. We have to keep on fighting. I know it may take a long time. But what else can we do?" □

# 'A war that never ended'

## Report on 9 weeks in Vietnam, Kampuchea

By Kathleen Gough

[The following is the text of a speech by Kathleen Gough at an October 30 meeting of the Socialist Forum in Vancouver, Canada, sponsored by the Revolutionary Workers League. Gough is a research associate in anthropology at the University of British Columbia. At the beginning of 1982, she spent nine weeks in Indochina at the invitation of the Committee for Social Sciences in Vietnam and the Kampuchean Foreign Ministry. She is the author of *Ten Times More Beautiful: The Rebuilding of Vietnam* and co-editor of *Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia*, both published by Monthly Review Press.]

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From January to March of this year, I spent six weeks in Vietnam and three in Kampuchea. I was studying political and economic developments there since 1975.

Since I came home, I've realized especially keenly how negative and hostile most of the Western press reports are towards both Vietnam and Kampuchea. Reading these reports, one gets a definite impression that the revolutions in Indochina were all fought in vain, and that the governments there are both malevolent and incompetent. From my two visits in the last six years, I know that these impressions are quite false.

There are, of course, reasons for these attitudes. They stem mainly from the United States government's continuing antagonism to the Communist forces in Indochina, and its relentless propaganda against them. Unfortunately, the Chinese government has also made an enemy of Vietnam in the last few years, apparently because of Vietnam's links with the Soviet bloc and its refusal to espouse Chinese foreign policies.

This means that a majority of the governments of the capitalist states, as well as China, have stopped giving aid to Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea, and have instituted trade blockades, preferring to retain their ties with China and the USA rather than with three relatively small and powerless Third World countries. Here in Canada, the fact that the biggest share of our trade is with the United States, and also that \$165 million a year is with Thailand and the other ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] countries, and about \$8 billion with China, influences our government to oppose the governments of Kampuchea and Vietnam and to support their enemies.

In addition, of course, a majority of countries in the United Nations still refuse to recognize the government of President Heng Samrin in Kampuchea, even though it has been in

power for almost four years and has done a great deal to rehabilitate the country. Instead, most governments outside the Soviet bloc still vote for the Khmer Rouge coalition led by the Pol Pot forces in the United Nations — a truly bizarre situation, considering that this government was responsible for the deaths of about one third of the Kampuchean people when it was in power in 1975-78.

### Danger of further military intervention

Things might not be so bad if the antagonism to Indochina meant only negative propaganda, or even trade blockades. I'm afraid, however, that the evidence is now clear that all these policies, by both the United States and China, are bent towards further military intervention in Indochina and a strenuous effort to overthrow all three governments in the region.

In fact, I think one has to conclude that the war in Indochina has never ended. It is going on every day — sometimes covertly, sometimes openly — with China and the United States currently on the same side instead of in opposition to each other.

Ever since 1975, sabotage against the revolutionary government has continued in Vietnam, with small groups, backed by the CIA, periodically assassinating party members and government civil servants, burning stocks of

books, or blowing up trains or buildings. Since early 1979, both China and the United States have given massive aid to the Pol Pot forces, based along the border of Kampuchea and Thailand, for their efforts to overthrow the Heng Samrin government and re-establish their own rule. This aid has increased in the last few months with the formation of a shaky coalition between the former monarch, Prince Sihanouk, the right-wing leader of Son Sann, and the Pol Pot forces. In February and March of 1979, with United States approval, a Chinese army actually invaded northern Vietnam in force, ostensibly to punish its government for aiding the Kampuchean revolutionaries in overthrowing the Pol Pot regime.

Most recently, the Vietnamese government has obtained definite evidence from captured spies that counterrevolutionary Vietnamese are being sent back to Indochina from the United States. There, they try to recruit new rebels, especially among the dissident tribespeople. They then send these recruits to China for guerrilla training to prepare them to fight against the established governments.

I do not think that any of these forces can overthrow the governments of Indochina, which are too popular and too firmly established. But these forces can do a great deal of damage, kill a lot of people, and impede the Indochinese in their tasks of rebuilding and developing their countries.

### Problems and challenges

I want to suggest the extent of the trials undergone by the people of Vietnam and Kampuchea in the past seven years, and their own and their governments' efforts to overcome them. I can't speak of Laos, since I wasn't able to visit that country, but all three Indochinese



Vietnamese soldiers, Kampuchean militiamen.

peoples are united in their struggles to ward off invasion and to build socialism.

Vietnam suffered grievously from the invasion of eight southwestern provinces by forces of the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea, backed by China, in 1975–78, and of six northern provinces, by as many as 600,000 Chinese troops, in February–March of 1979. Thousands were killed in both areas, hundreds of villages wrecked, more than 100,000 hectares of cultivated land laid waste, and more than 2,000 schools, hospitals, and other public buildings razed.

A further strain on Vietnam results from the government's decision (which I think was unavoidable) to assist the liberation forces of Kampuchea, and to stop Pol Pot's invasion of Vietnam, by sending some 200,000 troops into Kampuchea in December 1978. These troops helped to oust the Pol Pot regime and to stabilize the country under the new revolutionary government of Heng Samrin. Perhaps 150,000 Vietnamese troops remain in Kampuchea to fight off the remnants of the Pol Pot forces and to aid in reconstructing Kampuchea. About 40,000 Vietnamese troops are also in Laos to protect its small population from Chinese incursions. In Vietnam itself, large numbers of troops are stationed throughout the country, especially near the border with China. They are there in readiness against China's threat to "teach Vietnam another lesson."

The cost to Vietnam's people is great, because defense makes demands on a large part of its national income as well as its workforce. Partly as a result, the country has been unable to fulfil most of the economic targets set for the five year plan of 1976-81. Food is scarce; probably most people, especially in the cities, are undernourished; and there are serious shortages of raw materials, medical supplies, and consumer goods.

Yet with all the problems, this is a hopeful, invigorating society. I was struck by the sense of order and purpose in social life, the people's belief in a future of social justice and international cooperation. There is also an absolute determination to maintain Vietnam's independence and freedom, to hold out against attempts to upset its integrity and its movement to socialism.

One must also not underestimate the progress. Vietnam *is* developing, thanks to its own efforts and to international, mainly Soviet, aid. Unlike Thailand, India, or a host of countries richer than Vietnam, Vietnam is a place where the poor do not get poorer. Every year they become slightly better off, more educated, and more competent. Except for the few remaining wealthy traders, the highest income is little more than four times the lowest; cooperation and solidarity are the norms.

#### Kampuchea today

Turning to Kampuchea, I think it illustrates the self-sacrifice of Vietnam, and also the courage and will to survive of the Kampuchean people. It is in truth a phoenix rising from the



Mass grave of Pol Pot's victims in Kampuchea.

ashes. As most Kampuchean will tell one, "For three years, eight months, and twenty days under Pol Pot, we lived in hell."

The Vietnamese and the present government of Kampuchea estimate that in its fanatical efforts to create a "pure" brand of primitive communism, the Pol Pot regime killed more than 3 million out of 8½ million residents through overwork, starvation, neglected disease, and massacres. Every one of the 112 districts has one or more mass graves containing 2,000 to 50,000 victims — soldiers and government civil servants of the Lon Nol regime, intellectuals, religious and ethnic minorities, revolutionaries returned from abroad, Buddhist monks and nuns, cabinet ministers of Pol Pot's own government, local officials and cadres who rebelled against the genocide and the invasion of Vietnam, and many thousands of peasants and city workers.

In the capital, Phnom Penh, I spent two days in the Tuol Sleng death camp (formerly a high school) where more than 16,000 prisoners were tortured and massacred. Dossiers were kept on them, usually with their photos before and after death. Some were pregnant women; many were the wives and babies of so-called "traitors." Behind the prison is a graveyard of pits each containing 40 to 100 skeletons. The rest were killed with others in a field in Cheuong Ek district outside Phnom Penh. 8,982 skeletons have been unearthed there; in a larger area of bush nearby, it is believed that up to 30,000 more may be buried. But this tells only a part, for almost every village had its own "killing place," usually a pagoda or a spot in a nearby forest.

My interpreter and others told me that as opposition to the regime grew in 1978, a plan was conceived to slaughter everyone — except the most trusted cadres — living east of the Mek-

ong River, which was declared a "traitor region." Some whole villages were in fact massacred there and elsewhere. At a death camp in Kompong Speu township, a captured cadre revealed that orders had come down to massacre 200 people a day between April 1977 and December 1978. Many Kampuchean believe that in the end, Pol Pot had decided to kill all the Kampuchean except his cadres and bring in Chinese to replace them. Although I can scarcely credit this, it must be admitted that there were 20,000 to 30,000 Chinese advisors throughout the country who must have known what was happening; Chinese military experts were also photographed with Kampuchean generals at sites of mass slaughter inside Vietnam itself.

#### A nightmare

For most of those who survived in Kampuchea, life was a nightmare of hunger, fear, and overwork — a 12 to 16 hour work day with, at best, half an eight-ounce tin of rice with a little salt and vegetable. Most of the population were so hungry, my interpreter told me, that "We ate everything that had life — roots, leaves, worms, mice, lizards, cockroaches. A rat was a luxury."

Single people were forced to marry partners chosen for them by "Angkar" or "the organization." My interpreter, now aged 30, was compelled to marry a woman he had never seen, in a group ceremony involving 125 couples. Married pairs lived in tiny thatched huts with only a double mat to sleep on and a few pegs to hang tools. From 1977, private cooking was forbidden; people were known to have been killed for possessing a dish or for stealing a chicken or a mango. The "surplus" agricultural produce was shipped to China in return for military ware, or stored for army consumption in a fu-

ture war designed to conquer southern Vietnam. The general population ate in communal kitchens, their rations being reduced in 1978 to two spoons of rice a day. As early as 1976, many women lost their menstrual cycles and were unable to bear children.

Educated people were afraid to reveal their identities and pretended to be manual workers. I was told that if a person spoke a French or English phrase, or was caught with a book or a pair of spectacles, he was likely to be taken away at night and killed. The numbers of professional people before and after Pol Pot's rule provide confirmation. Out of 645 doctors, pharmacists, and dentists, only 69 survived. Out of 1,241 writers and artists, 121. Four fifths of the primary and secondary school teachers died. All the college professors and veterinary surgeons disappeared. And of 82,000 Buddhist monks, only about 500 remained.

In addition to a large part of the population, the economic infrastructure was largely destroyed, either during Pol Pot's reign or during his flight. Trains, buses, cars, banks, factories, post offices, power plants, and a hydroelectric dam were dynamited, as were schools, hospitals, market buildings, mosques, churches, pagodas, about 1 million houses, and libraries.

Kampuchea's recovery since the liberation of January 7, 1979, has been remarkable. In the famine of 1979, when the dispersed people, already weak from hunger, were walking back to their towns and villages, large-scale aid was provided by Vietnam, including food, medicines, hospital equipment, transport, cooking pots, and professional and technical help at every level. By late 1979 the famine was over, the people back in their communities. Factories, banks, hospitals, transport, and schools have been restored. Because Pol Pot's victims were mainly men, an estimated two thirds of the adult population were women, and in some villages up to 80 percent. The women form mutual aid teams of about 10 females each for agricultural cooperation. On weekends they are helped by government employees, ministers, foreign diplomats, international aid workers, and Vietnamese troops, to plough, transplant seedlings, build houses, mend roads and bridges, or bring in the harvest.

An impressive fact is that after liberation the new government stopped all killings. Following a few weeks in detention, the Pol Pot troops and cadres who surrendered or were captured were returned to their villages, where they are kept in line by the local authorities. Every month hundreds of new Pol Pot cadres, or peasants who were kidnapped by Pol Pot and taken to Thailand in 1979, escape back to Kampuchea and rejoin their families.

Kampuchea's thousands of orphans have mostly been adopted by parents whose own children were killed. But in Phnom Penh there are now four orphanages in which the care and education of about 2,000 children are of high quality. Once a week, the orphans in their blue

and white uniforms direct the Sunday traffic in Phnom Penh's crowded streets. A contrast indeed with the teenage professional killers trained by Pol Pot.

#### What Kampuchians think

I went to Kampuchea without my Vietnamese friends because I wanted to ask Kampuchians privately how they felt about the Vietnamese troops in their country. I talked to 54 people in all walks of life and in 7 out of 21 provinces. All said that the Vietnamese had saved them from death and were their chief allies and friends, and that their troops *must not* leave until the Pol Pot forces are banished; until China, the United States, and Thailand stop trying to subvert the new government; or until the Kampuchean liberation army is large and strong enough to defend the country. The Kampuchean government faces mountainous problems. It is short of everything, especially trained personnel, and its officials come from diverse political origins. But in three years it has shown that it can administer the country and effect a remarkable revival.

I think it is tragic that by its trade blockade, Canada is helping to "bleed" Indochina, and that it is trying to undo the Kampuchean revolution and return the Pol Pot gang to power. We should do all we can to help these countries and to let people know the truth. Thank you.

[During the discussion period at the Vancouver Socialist Forum, a question was asked about the role of Cuba in Vietnam and Kampuchea, and whether there is much consciousness or discussion about the revolutions in Central America. Below is Kathleen Gough's answer — *IP*.]

When they're speaking formally, Vietnamese spokespeople always equate all the countries in the socialist camp, and they're very fair about not favoring one over the other.

But when they talk informally to you or you meet them at a social function, you realize that they're very, very fond of the Cubans. Many Cubans are in Hanoi. In fact, the first hotel I stayed in was built by the Cuban government to celebrate the 1975 victory. It's called Victory Hotel.

One thing the Vietnamese do in the main towns is to have photographic displays every few blocks of events going on in the socialist countries or in revolutionary movements, along with writings and articles for everybody to read about these events. I saw many photographs of things going on in Cuba, in El Salvador, and in Nicaragua.

So, yes, Cuba has been of inestimable value in the recovery of Vietnam, and also Kampuchea.

One of the wonderful things in Kampuchea was that, although the United Nations doesn't recognize the government, Kampuchea itself is like a United Nations. Phnom Penh is full of international workers — some belonging to United Nations agencies or the Red Cross, but many who have come there from socialist

countries or simply privately through churches, charity groups, and so on. On Saturdays and Sundays, they all take to the fields to help the women in the villages to build roads, mend bridges, build houses, and get the harvest in. The Cubans are always very prominent among them.

One of the nicest things I remember was one night when the electricity went out. That happens all the time in Kampuchea, because so few electric power stations have been restored yet. I was staying one night in Siem Reap not so far from the Pol Pot forces. From our hotel we could hear occasional firing, and in the dark it was quite frightening.

One of the interpreters, a Kampuchean, came along, and he sang some Khmer and Vietnamese songs to the accompaniment of a Cuban guitar. □

#### Saharan fighters appeal for opposition to Moroccan war

The Saharan liberation movement, Polisario, has called on the people of Morocco and the United States to oppose their government's efforts to militarily crush the Western Saharan independence struggle.

Following a four-day congress of Polisario, held in a rebel-controlled region of Western Sahara in October, the front issued an open letter to the Moroccan people urging them to "act to end the criminal war imposed by the Rabat regime on the Saharawi people and halt the intervention of the United States, which jeopardizes the future of Morocco and all peoples of the region."

Polisario — the People's Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro — began its struggle for independence while the phosphate-rich Western Sahara was still a Spanish colony. In 1975, when the Spanish withdrew, the territory was occupied by Morocco and Mauritania. When Mauritania later withdrew, the entire territory was claimed by Morocco's King Hassan II.

Washington has provided the regime of King Hassan II in Rabat with considerable military assistance and sophisticated electronic weaponry for its war against the Saharan people. U.S. military advisers have been sent to Morocco, and Washington has concluded an agreement with the Moroccan monarchy permitting U.S. forces to use Moroccan military bases.

Because of this heavy U.S. role on the side of King Hassan, Polisario sent a second message to the people of the United States, noting that the Western Sahara would probably have won its independence by now if it were not for the U.S. intervention.

The Polisario congress, the fifth since the front's formation in 1973, was attended by 600 delegates. Polisario General Secretary Mohamed Abdelaziz was reelected to that post, and also chosen president of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic.

# What lies behind Moscow-Peking talks?

By Cindy Jaquith

The largest assembly of foreign dignitaries to set foot in the USSR attended the funeral of Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev. But the figure who attracted the greatest attention was Huang Hua, at that time China's foreign minister.

Huang's visit to Moscow, and his subsequent talk with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, were the highest-level contacts between the two governments since 1969. They represented the latest stage in the discussions between Soviet and Chinese officials over whether and how to normalize relations.

## Sino-Soviet rift

The Soviet Union and China — the world's two largest workers states — fell out in the early 1960s after the Kremlin cut off economic and military aid to China in a bid for better relations with Washington. The U.S. ruling class welcomed this schism, seeking to play off the Soviet and Chinese governments in line with its strategy of divide and rule. Maintaining and using this division has become a key goal of imperialist foreign policy.

Hostile relations between the Soviet and Chinese governments continued during Washington's war against Vietnam. This prevented a united front of the two most powerful workers states in defense of the revolution there. In fact, in 1969, in the midst of the Vietnam War, Soviet and Chinese troops engaged in a shooting conflict along the border between the two countries. Since then, both countries have maintained huge deployments of troops along their common border.

In 1979 the Chinese government invaded Vietnam in an unsuccessful effort to force the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. This invasion was carried out in direct collusion with Washington.

At about the same time, Peking made a call for a united front — to include the United States, Japan, and West European imperialist powers — against "Soviet expansionism." Chinese officials presented the Soviet Union as the central threat to world peace.

Last March, Brezhnev announced that his government was ready to improve relations with Peking. Some increased contact began, including a visit to the Soviet Union by three Chinese economists, as well as some sports competition. In April the two countries agreed to increased trade.

Then, on September 26, Brezhnev gave a speech in which he again appealed to Peking for talks. "We would deem it very important to achieve a normalization, a gradual improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China on a basis

that I would describe as that of common sense, mutual respect, and mutual advantage," he said.

Peking responded that the Soviet Union would have to first remove some "obstacles" to normalization: Its aid to Vietnam, its support to the current government in Kampuchea, its occupation of Afghanistan, its troops on the Chinese border, and its control of Mongolia, which Peking considers part of China.

At the beginning of October, the first talks between the two governments occurred. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Leonid Ilyichev went to Peking and met with Qian Qichen, a deputy foreign minister.

On October 17 the Chinese Communist Party resumed official relations with the Communist Party of France, which has strong ties to Moscow.

## Message on Brezhnev's death

When Brezhnev died on November 10, the official response in Peking marked a shift from the attacks on the Soviet president it had made in the past. The official Chinese news agency Xinhua carried an interview with Foreign Minister Huang Hua. He described Brezhnev as "an outstanding statesman" and said his death "is a great loss to his country and his people."

Huang's message of condolence was prominently featured in the Soviet press, including his statement, "Peace and friendship between China and the Soviet Union fully correspond not only to the interests of both peoples and both countries, but also to the interests of peace in Asia and the whole world."

A Soviet official said after Huang's visit that it was possible that the USSR's troops could be pulled back from China's northern border as talks progress.

Huang returned to Peking saying he was "optimistic" on future Soviet-Chinese talks. The next day, it was announced he had retired from his ministerial post. It was unclear what relationship his retirement bore to the trip to Moscow.

The following day, top Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping condemned U.S. "acts of interference" in Asia and reaffirmed that, "We are still making contacts with the Soviet Union." Progress toward normalization he said would have to be based on "one principle, namely opposition to hegemonism and preservation of world peace." Other Chinese officials reiterated their conditions for any agreement, emphasizing the issue of Soviet aid to Vietnam.

As of this time there is little information about the content of the Soviet-Chinese talks or whether any agreement will be reached between the two governments.

But some of the political factors underlying the dialogue are clear.

One factor is the evolution of Peking's relations with Washington. The U.S. rulers were dismayed by the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949 and by the loss of this huge country from the capitalist world market and imperialist system. Reversing this setback was their major hoped-for goal in initiating the Korean War, and Washington refused diplomatic recognition and kept up constant military threats against the Chinese government for the subsequent quarter century.

This began to change in the late 1960s. Losing the war in Vietnam, Washington began to look around for ways to enlist Peking's support in containing that revolution and others elsewhere in the world. This more collaborative relationship was symbolized by Richard Nixon's trip to Peking in 1972 at the height of the U.S. bombing of Vietnam. (Brezhnev also toasted Nixon in Moscow a few months later, as Washington was mining the harbors of North Vietnam. The U.S. government sought better relations with Moscow at this time for many of the same reasons it was pursuing a deal with Peking.)

In 1978 Washington extended formal recognition to China, along with promises of considerable technological and economic trade agreements.

During this period, Peking sharply escalated its support to proimperialist forces in the colonial world. It rushed to establish warm relations with the rightist military junta in Chile immediately after the 1973 coup there. It backed rightist guerrillas working with South African troops and the CIA to overthrow the government of Angola. It lavished praise on the shah of Iran in the midst of the first round of mass protests that led to his downfall. It hailed NATO as a force for peace against alleged Soviet designs on Western Europe. And it labeled revolutionary Cuba a dangerous outpost of Soviet expansionism in the Western Hemisphere.

Peking grew especially hostile to Vietnam as the socialist revolution progressed there after Washington was forced to withdraw in 1975. It began supporting the reactionary Pol Pot government of Kampuchea in its armed border attacks on Vietnam, which served the interests of U.S. imperialism. When Vietnam sent troops into Kampuchea to help Kampuchean freedom fighters overthrow Pol Pot, Peking responded by invading Vietnam. It was repulsed, although Vietnam paid a high price in human lives and destruction of its economy in the border region.

All these counterrevolutionary actions have led to extreme isolation of the Chinese regime among the oppressed peoples of the colonial and semicolonial countries. This marks a sharp change from the previous few decades, when the victorious Chinese revolution enjoyed enormous political authority and influence among fighters for national liberation around the world.

Meanwhile, the trade and infusion of capital



and technology from the United States has not panned out as expected by the Chinese government. The world capitalist system is stagnant, and investments in workers states — even those with cooperative governments — is low on the list of priorities for most capitalist investors. U.S. officials have recently held up technological and weapons orders to China.

Perhaps most important, it is clear that despite U.S. rhetoric and token moves, Washington intends to maintain its support to the Taiwan government and to continue arming it. Washington's "two China" policy, while gone in name, remains in fact.

In an apparent effort to reduce its isolation and increase its influence in world politics, Peking has recently hosted a large number of heads of state. These include Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi of Libya and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. The Arab League, which is making the rounds of major capitals including Moscow, is also expected to send top representatives from several Arab countries and the Palestine Liberation Organization to Peking soon.

Other recent visitors to Peking have included British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and top Japanese and West German officials.

#### Shift on international plane

The Chinese government has also made some shifts on foreign policy. Last spring it supported Argentina against the Washington-backed British aggression over the Malvinas Islands — a position in line with the great majority of national liberation movements and governments in the semicolonial world.

Peking has recently recognized the government of Angola. According to the November 15 *West Africa*, it "has denied it was still supporting opposition UNITA guerrillas" who are backed by Washington and South Africa. It has retreated on its position that Cuba must remove its troops from Angola before agreement can be reached on independence for Namibia.

Although statements by top Chinese officials continue to denounce "Soviet hegemonism," their denunciations of Washington's role in the world are becoming sharper and more frequent.

But so far there has been no backing off by Peking on the issue of Vietnam. As if to emphasize this, the Chinese demonstrably hosted the prime minister of Thailand about the same time Huang Hua was in Moscow. Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang told the Thai official China opposes the "Soviet Union's policy of hegemonism and expansionism as well as . . . Vietnam's policy of regional hegemonism." He said if Vietnam invaded Thailand, China would give "complete support to the Thai people in their just stand of opposing aggression."

A day later, Peking welcomed another visitor, Son Sann, a representative of the Kampuchean rightist coalition backing Pol Pot.

Some of what motivates the Soviet officials to improve relations at this time was outlined

in a speech by Brezhnev October 27. He said:

" . . . the international situation continues to grow more complicated. The ruling circles of the United States of America have launched a political, ideological, and economic offensive on socialism and have raised the intensity of their military preparations to an unprecedented level."

Brezhnev pointed to the U.S.-backed Israeli aggression in Lebanon and "the situation in a number of regions of Africa, Asia, and Central America," all of which he said characterized "adventurism" on the part of the U.S. government.

"In this situation it is very important, of course, how our relations with other countries



Huang Hua and Deng Xiaoping.

will shape up," he said. "Of no small importance are relations with China. We sincerely want a normalization of relations with that country and are doing everything in our power toward this end. In Peking they also say now that normalization is desirable. No radical changes in the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China are to be seen so far. But the new things which appear must not be ignored by us."

Brezhnev said, "Two lines now clash in world politics: the line of the U.S.A. and those who follow it — a line for deepening tension and aggravating the situation to a maximum. They are dreaming of insulating politically and weakening economically the USSR and its friends. . . ."

"Our line is a line for détente and strengthening international security."

The Soviet government is also eager to lessen the heavy economic burden of maintaining such a large military presence along the Chinese border — a factor of interest to Peking as well.

#### Class-collaborationist framework

While the concrete situations faced by the Soviet and Chinese regimes differ, the framework outlined in Brezhnev's speech accurately expresses how both approach world politics.

Although Soviet and Chinese officials govern in countries where the working class has overturned capitalism, they do not act from the standpoint of the interests of the working class. They represent a ruling bureaucratic caste that sits on top of the workers and denies them political power.

Since the material privileges of both castes derive from their parasitic relationship to nationalized property relations, they are forced to defend the workers states against imperialism and its goal of reestablishing capitalist property in these countries. But the bureaucracies do not do so by class-struggle methods. Rather they both seek what Brezhnev called "détente and international security" — maintenance of the status quo around the world in the hopes that imperialism will leave them alone.

This is what makes it possible for Washington to turn the divisions between these two workers states to its own advantage. Both Moscow and Peking have been willing to collaborate with imperialism against the other, to the detriment of the workers in both countries and around the world.

The Sino-Soviet split was born from Moscow's efforts to win favor from Washington at Peking's expense. The people of Indochina have suffered horribly from Peking's drive to cement relations with the U.S. government since the late 1970s. These are just two examples.

Détente between Washington and Moscow and Washington and Peking has not led to greater peace in the world, nor even to the permanent economic gains hoped for by Soviet and Chinese leaders.

Imperialism continues to pursue aggressive aims abroad and to engage in a massive military build-up; these expansionist and militaristic policies are built into the capitalist drive for profits, which requires exploitation and oppression of workers and peasants around the world.

At the same time, the oppressed and exploited in the colonial and semicolonial countries are continually driven to rise up against the miserable conditions imposed on them by the world capitalist system. Just in the past several years, a socialist revolution has triumphed in Vietnam, workers and farmers governments have come to power in Nicaragua and Grenada, and the proimperialist shah of Iran has been toppled.

This conflict between the world working class and the world capitalist class is the fundamental motor force of world politics. It constantly disrupts class-collaborationist efforts to preserve the international status quo, just as U.S. and Canadian auto workers recently disrupted efforts at "labor-management collaboration" by Chrysler and the United Auto Workers bureaucracy.

Whatever the outcome of the current Soviet-Chinese talks, it is this conflict — the international class struggle — that will be decisive for working people in the years ahead. □

# STATEMENT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

## The war in Lebanon: a turn in the Middle East situation

[The following resolution was adopted by majority vote of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on October 10. We are reprinting the resolution from the November 1 issue of the Paris magazine *International Viewpoint*.]

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1. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the siege and bombing of Beirut, the horrible massacres at the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian camps are all part of a political operation aiming to break up the Palestinian resistance as an independent political-military force, to stabilize the Zionist state as the imperialist policeman for the region, and to consolidate the proimperialist Arab regimes shaken by the shock waves of the Iranian revolution.

Zionist aggression is part of the international imperialist counteroffensive. It was started with the complicity and support of the United States. It took advantage both of the passivity of the Soviet bureaucracy, tied up with its own economic and political difficulties, and the powerlessness of the "nonaligned" movement institutions. During the two-month siege of Beirut the Arab League did not take the least initiative, the Organization of African Unity summit had to be adjourned for lack of a quorum, and the Baghdad Nonaligned Movement conference had to be postponed because of the Iran-Iraq war.

The operation that started with the entry of Israeli tanks into Lebanon continued with the Phalangists' arrival in power, the presentation of Reagan's "peace plan," and the results of the Fez Arab summit. Imperialism, Zionism, and the Arab regimes combined efforts to work out a new "American peace" for the region.

2. The Zionist state has once again been the strike force for counterrevolution in the Middle East. For months the Begin government had wanted this war and openly prepared for it. The "Litani" operation of 1978 today seems like a dress rehearsal for the June 6, 1982, aggression.

Signing the Camp David agreement with Egypt left Begin's regime free to develop its annexationist policy for the occupied territories, to move against the strongholds of the Palestinian resistance, and thereby impose by armed force a second Camp David with Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria.

The aims of the military offensive were clearly set out by the Zionist leaders:

- to break the backbone of the Palestinian resistance, facilitate the annexation of the occupied territories, and prevent the linkup between the rise of the mobilizations in the West

Bank and Gaza Strip and the resistance as a whole;

- to install a strong state in Lebanon allied to Israel, impose the withdrawal of Syrian troops, and force the Palestinian refugees out of Lebanon;

- to strike a strong blow against the Syrian army and thus weaken the last Soviet ally in the region.

Begin and Sharon in this way intended at the same time to prove Israel's irreplaceable role as the privileged ally of American imperialism in the region. An ally which, on the pretext of legitimate defense, is capable of militarily intervening when American imperialism, mobilized on several fronts and above all in Central America, finds it difficult to carry out many direct interventions. This is the context in which to understand Sharon's staggering declaration that Israel's zone of military interests will in the future stretch from the Sudan to Pakistan and Turkey.

The Zionist leaders also want to restimulate national unity in Israel itself, where it is more and more eroded and threatened by the effects of the economic crisis, galloping inflation, and the burden of military spending.

3. The Palestinian resistance and Lebanese progressive movement put up an admirable resistance to the armored invasion and intensive bombardments. The 79-day-long Beirut siege was an act of defiance against the Zionist war machine that no existing Arab regime has ever been capable of making.

By preventing a lightning victory of the Zionist army, the tenacious defense of Beirut permitted the modification of the relationship of forces, the diplomatic isolation of Israel, the development of contradictions among the Zionist leaders, and the affirmation of the legitimacy of Palestinian national demands.

Begin and Sharon hesitated over the military and political cost involved in an assault on Beirut. The repercussions of the Sabra and Shatila massacres in Israel and worldwide give an idea of the effects that would have been produced by the physical destruction of the Beirut "ghetto."

The Palestinian resistance was not physically crushed, but defeated, betrayed, and abandoned by the Arab regimes and the Soviet bureaucracy. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership also bears part of the responsibility for the defeat. No one can contest this abandoned and besieged leadership's right to negotiate. But from the beginning of the siege it got involved in secret negotiations with a "mediator" representing imperialism over the conditions for an "honorable" surrender. In effect its aim was to obtain diplomatic

recognition from the United States in exchange for the retreat of its fighters. By doing this it contributed to disorienting and demobilizing the resistance.

This choice fits in with a long political trajectory.

4. The Arab League waited until June 26–27, three weeks after the invasion of Lebanon, before meeting. This meeting rejected en bloc the 14 requests made by Yassir Arafat in the name of the PLO: aid for the armed struggle, radical condemnation of the USA, recall of ambassadors, freezing of contracts with the USA and withdrawal of funds placed in the American banks, etc.

The Arab regimes showed themselves more preoccupied with the Iranian offensive against Iraq than by the invasion of Lebanon. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates gave Iraq a credit of \$23 billion. Kuwait offered to provide rear bases for its army. Jordan, North Yemen, and Sudan sent volunteers, and Egypt supplied Soviet arms taken from its stock. It is true that Israel did not waste any time reselling to Iran a good part of the arms and ammunition seized in the Palestinian camps.

For its part Syria speedily concluded a unilateral cease-fire with Israel in the Bekaa Valley, leaving the Zionist army free to concentrate its efforts on Beirut. Later it grudgingly bartered the acceptance of a Palestinian contingent evacuated from Beirut in exchange for an increase in Saudi financial aid.

Everything happened, in the words of a high-ranking American official, "as if the PLO had been condemned to death by the whole of the Arab world."

It is true that this cold-blooded betrayal by the Arab bourgeoisies of the Palestinian people fits in with an already long tradition. It stretches from the Faisal-Weizman accords (January 3, 1919) opening up Palestine, to the establishment of the Jewish national homeland, to the Camp David agreement. In between there were the Abdallah-Ben Gurion agreement on the partition of Palestine, the massacres of the Palestinians ordered by King Hussein in 1970–71 in Jordan and the new massacres of 1976 in Lebanon carried out by the Christian Phalangists with Syria's blessing.

5. For its part the Soviet bureaucracy does not go beyond formal protests, on the pretext that it could not be "more Arab than the Arabs!"

The diplomatic support it gives to the PLO is still subordinated to the general interests of its alliances with the bourgeoisies of the region. It also has a long tradition of this from supporting the partition of Palestine in 1947 to the Gromyko-Vance 1977 declaration (with the UN Security Council Resolution 242 and the Geneva Conference in between).

One of the main PLO leaders, Abou Ayad, exclaimed during the Beirut siege: "We resisted the Israeli army more than all the Arab armies. . . . The Soviet attitude is even more inexplicable. We questioned Moscow publicly and in secret. We only received symbolic encouragement. How can the Soviet Union allow

such passivity when the United States takes sides in the battle in such a flagrant way? I don't understand it." However, while the Soviet attitude is unpardonable, it is not surprising: the Soviet bureaucracy is quite disposed to sacrifice regional allies in exchange for imperialist counteroffers concerning the arms race, economic negotiations, or its own problems in Afghanistan and Poland.

The attitude of the Soviet bureaucracy to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon shows once again that any strategy based on getting its support, and not that of the militant solidarity of the international workers and anti-imperialist movements, will always be at the mercy of a betrayal in the middle of the battle. The tragic lesson of Lebanon is valid for revolutionary movements of the whole world and particularly in Latin and Central America.

6. On the other hand American imperialism fully committed itself alongside its Zionist ally. Sharon publicly stated that Reagan was informed in advance of the Israeli government's intentions. The United States supported and covered the Israeli military expedition from the beginning to the end. It used its right to veto twice in the UN Security Council and unflinchingly maintained its diplomatic and military aid.

The European imperialist countries, which decided without batting an eyelid to boycott Argentina during the Malvinas War, did not take the slightest measure or lift a finger against Israeli aggression.

Only if one suffers from optical illusion can French government policy be seen as favorable to the PLO leadership. In fact Mitterrand was only opposed to the excessive zeal of Begin and Sharon's policy, which he considered could place the proimperialist Arab regimes in difficulty and create an uncontrollable situation in the area.

Mitterrand began by declaring himself for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon, putting the Zionist invading army on the same level as the Palestinian resistance, which has been forced out of its own country and condemned to exile. He finished up by supporting the Habib plan — a 100 percent imperialist diktat that organized the departure of the Palestinian fighters and the disarming of the resistance, set the conditions for the election of Bashir Gemayel, and ratified the prolongation of the Israeli occupation for an indefinite period. By its participation in the international "intervention" force, the French government furthermore through its presence gave its backing to the "election" in a barracks protected by Israeli arms, of the fascist, Bashir Gemayel, to the Lebanese presidency.

With the departure of the Palestinian fighters and the dismantling of the West Beirut defenses, the Habib plan "sanctioned" the modification of the relationship of forces imposed by the Israeli army. It opened the way to a strong-arm regime in Lebanon and to the terror against the now-defenseless refugee camps and progressive forces.

7. The presence of the multinational "intervention" force in the framework of the Habib plan has served to dismantle the Beirut defense lines, to guarantee the election of Bashir Gemayel, and to open access to the refugee camps to the Phalangist killers. Whatever the identity of the Sabra and Shatila butchers, they were only able to act with the agreement and complicity of the Israeli military command. And the imperialist governments knew perfectly well that this massacre was possible and probable after the evacuation of the PLO fighters.

The second mission of the multinational "intervention" force does not serve the interests of the Palestinians and Lebanese peoples any more than the first one did. Its presence aids the reconstruction of the Lebanese state around the Amin Gemayel Phalangists, storing up new threats for these peoples.

8. The Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Palestinian resistance has resulted in a serious defeat for the Arab revolution, the colonial revolution, and the whole of the anti-imperialist movement on a world scale.

The stronghold of the Palestinian resistance in London has been dismantled. Its fighters have been dispersed in a dozen Arab countries whose governments are careful to exert an even stricter control over them, since they fear the prestige of these resistance fighters among the oppressed masses of their own countries.

Nearly a half of Lebanon is still occupied by the Israeli army, which is now also within firing range of the Syrian capital. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are left defenseless against Phalangist hegemony in Lebanon and the Israeli desire to force them into a new exile.

It is true that it is not a defeat without a fight — the very fact of having resisted limits the demoralization and creates better conditions for drawing the lessons of the defeat and overcoming its consequences, as the mobilizations in the occupied territories show.

It is also true that imperialism has not obtained all its objectives. The PLO is defeated but not annihilated. The restoration of a strong state in Lebanon will not take place without difficulties. Cracks are appearing in the Zionist edifice in Israel.

These fractures are expressed in the rise of the antiwar movement, the radicalization of a current inside it, and the protests that have arisen inside the army. In addition there is the economic cost of the war, which already weighs on Israeli society as a whole.

These factors are not sufficient to transform the military defeat of the Palestinians into a political or diplomatic victory. The proof of this is that the PLO leadership at Fez accepted the principles of a solution similar to those of the Fahd plan, which had not been approved a year earlier. Arafat in person was reduced to calling on the protection by the imperialist armies of the refugee camps in Lebanon!

The 1982 war and the battle of Beirut register a radical evolution in the relationship of

forces in favor of imperialism in the region.

9. An important period has thus come to an end. All its lessons must be drawn for the future. Nothing will be like it was before, either for the Palestinian resistance or for the Zionist state.

The Palestinian resistance is going to be led to redefine its relations with the Arab regimes in the context of a new relationship of forces. The capitulation of these regimes faced with the invasion of Lebanon opens a new chapter in the crisis of Arab nationalism and its leaderships. The powerful rise of Muslim fundamentalism represents one consequence of the decline of Arab nationalism, in the absence of a consistently revolutionary anti-imperialist leadership. The authority won by Palestinian fighters in the struggle can, at the price of internal clarifications and differentiations, permit them to play a motor role in the formation of such a leadership. The other road is that of a growing alignment with the diplomacy of the Arab bourgeoisies and the renunciation of the resistance as an autonomous political force.

As for the Zionist state, it unleashed its war machine to crush a population of refugees, chased from their land, without country or state, an exiled people that throws back in the face of Israel an image of an oppression which was formerly that of the Jewish people itself. The demonstration, unmasked and without any alibis, of this state terrorism will inevitably begin to shake up the internal consensus established around the Zionist project since the foundation of the state of Israel.

#### The Palestinian movement at a crossroads

10. The PLO and its leadership now find themselves at a new crossroads in their history.

The Arab regimes are going to put on increasing pressure and use material aid as blackmail in order to push the Palestinian resistance definitively off the terrain of armed struggle and onto that of diplomatic compromise, to force it to recognize and accept the state of Israel and to be content in exchange with a formal administrative autonomy under Jordanian-Israeli tutelage with the patronage of American imperialism. This evolution will not proceed without conflicts within the Palestinian resistance.

The other road consists in drawing all the consequences of the internationalization of the Palestinian question to link it organically to revolutionary and anti-imperialist struggles in the Arab countries.

11. The final impasse in which the besieged leadership of the PLO in Beirut ended up is not only the result of being "dropped" by the USSR and the Arab countries. It is also the end result of its own political line. The particular characteristics of the Palestinian national liberation struggle pose two key strategic questions that this leadership has not been able to resolve.

On the one hand, in its struggle against the Zionist state, the Palestinian resistance must find its main support in the anti-imperialist

mobilization of the exploited and oppressed Arab masses. Only if their force is released can the relationship of forces with Zionism and its big imperialist patron be changed. Furthermore this mobilization inevitably comes into contradiction with the specific interests of the bourgeois Arab regimes, which for the most part are allied to American imperialism. On the pretext of a line of "noninterference" in the internal affairs of Arab states, the PLO has always wanted to avoid the organic liaison between the Palestinian resistance and the struggle of the exploited masses of these countries. It is a fatal illusion — it has not prevented the most brutal "interference" of these states into the history of the Palestinian resistance. From 1968 to 1982, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria continually intervened, including with armed force, against the resistance. The Arab regimes cannot tolerate on their territory the presence of a political and military force outside of their control and capable of encouraging the independent mobilization of the oppressed people of their own countries. The conflict between the Arab anti-imperialist movement and the local bourgeoisies and oligarchies allied to imperialism is inevitable.

On the other hand, the Palestinian resistance does not confront, with the state of Israel, a simple colonial occupation. The strength of the Zionist state does not relate only to the technical qualities of its armies. It relates also to the fact that Zionist chauvinism manages to divert the sentiment of self-defense of the Jewish population, which previously was still oppressed in its countries of origin, into setting up a national state on the basis of the expulsion of the Palestinian people and the denial of its rights. The war perspective, the permanent state of mobilization, and the specter of anti-Semitism constitute a necessary cement for national consensus and work against a development of class struggle in Israeli society. The struggle against Zionism, on the contrary, must mean the deepening of this struggle and the internationalist linkup between the Arab national liberation movement and the Jewish working masses.

Arafat publicly recognized that one of the main weaknesses of the PLO has been its inability to resolve this question: "We have not been able to explain our cause to the Israelis, we have not understood the Israeli mentality."

But this new consciousness can also lead to two radically different ways forward. Either accommodation with the Zionist state as it exists in the framework of the Camp David agreement or a revolutionary internationalist policy, the only one capable in the long term of winning the confidence of the Jewish proletariat.

12. The dual error of the PLO leadership in its relations with the Arab states and masses and in its approach to Zionism has led it inevitably to an impasse and a succession of defeats that are linked together and condition one another.

The 1967 Six-Day War resulted in a debacle for the Arab states and a strengthening of the

Zionist state — embodied in the occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Sinai, and the Golan Heights. This defeat brought about a renewal and reorientation of the Palestine Liberation Organization created by the Arab League. Its old leadership was subordinated to the Arab states and was prodigious in declarations that were both irresponsible and inconsequential. It was replaced by a new leadership under the hegemony of Fatah.

This leadership showed its willingness to free itself from the tutelage of the Arab states and set up rather effective military organizations in order to launch armed struggles from bases in Jordan and Lebanon. The gains made between 1968 and 1970 did not flow from military operations, but were due to the mass mobilizations that defeated the reactionary operations against the resistance in Jordan in 1968 and in Lebanon in 1969. The Palestinian resistance showed itself to be a vanguard for the whole of the Arab nationalist and revolutionary movement.

Neither imperialism nor the Arab bourgeoisies could let these developments pass without reacting. Their counterattacks combined diplomatic maneuvers and the most brutal repression. 1970 was thus marked by the Rogers plan, first step on the road to Camp David, and by the massacre of the Palestinian fighters in Jordan (Black September).

The 1975–76 Lebanese civil war registered a new stage in which the PLO played a frontline role. Thanks to its support and the mass mobilization, the Lebanese progressive movement achieved control of two-thirds of the country. Zionism and imperialism, but also the Arab regimes (both conservative and so-called progressive), were afraid of the dynamic of joint mobilization of the Arab and Palestinian masses. Syria intervened to stop and control the progressive forces. Under its pressure the PLO leadership — looking for diplomatic recognition — accepted the compromises that allowed the Phalangist counteroffensive exemplified in the Tel Zaatar massacre of summer 1976.

The civil war and the Syrian occupation contributed to provoking the disintegration of the Lebanese state and its military apparatus. The Christian militias profited from it to reinforce their control over whole regions. But also the Palestinians were able to exploit the situation by maintaining and consolidating their positions in the south of Lebanon and West Beirut.

The 1975–76 events spurred the imperialists and Arab bourgeoisies to look for a negotiated compromise giving a neocolonial answer to the Palestinian question. More than any other Arab state, Egypt had to bear the costs of four disastrous wars and the threat of social explosions. It took the initiative of a "rapprochement" with Israel under the patronage of the United States. Sadat signed the Camp David agreement to obtain American aid and appear in the eyes of the masses as the one who freed them from the haunting fears of periodic war.

For the Zionist state Camp David neu-

tralized the main enemy military force and introduced division in the Arab world without imposing any recognition of the PLO in exchange. The idea of a Palestinian state was ruled out and the autonomy of the occupied territories was seen in terms of a five-year process whose outcome would be the subject of new negotiations. While the United States played the decisive role in the operation, the USSR, already weakened by Sadat's about-turn ending their alliance, was even more marginalized and could only count on Assad's Syria as a dubious ally in the region.

The triple "no" of Begin to the withdrawal from the occupied territories, to the restitution of East Jerusalem, and to the Palestinian state, coupled with the resurgence of Jewish colonization in the occupied territories, enabled all ambiguity over the meaning of Camp David to be lifted and gives the measure of the defeat suffered by the PLO and the Arab nationalist movement as a whole.

Between Sadat's trip to Tel Aviv and the signing of the Israeli-Egyptian agreement, the Begin government launched a new military operation in Lebanon in March 1978. This operation permitted them to destroy the Palestinian bases and to push the resistance north while consolidating the positions of Maj. Saad Haddad in the frontier region. However, the main Palestinian positions were maintained.

The June 1967 defeat sanctioned the bankruptcy of the petty-bourgeois radical nationalist leaderships, just as the 1948 defeat had sanctioned the bankruptcy of the traditional conservative leaderships. The new leadership of the PLO, animated by the Fatah, broke with the previous line, which gave priority to the diplomatic terrain and proclaimed people's war against the Zionist state in the framework of the struggle of oppressed peoples against imperialism.

In practice it remained in the orbit of the Arab states, giving priority to one or the other of the states according to circumstances. It continued to function fundamentally thanks to the conditional aid and subsidies of the Arab governments, including from the most reactionary. It did not really try either to democratically organize the resistance or to link it up with the mass movements of the countries where hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees were living. It subordinated its solidarity with the national movements of the different host countries to the imperatives of "noninterference." In 1972 it outlined a turn, which was formalized in 1974, towards a compromise solution in the framework of an agreement between the Arab states and imperialism.

While its 1969 program traced out the perspective of a "democratic, secular state for the whole of Palestine," it now accepted an independent state limited to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, presenting it as a first step. Consequently it increasingly displaced the axis of its activity onto the diplomatic level.

13. These vacillations of the PLO leadership express the powerful political and social contradictions that run through the movement.

The struggle of the Palestinian people began as a national liberation, democratic, and revolutionary struggle against a Zionist state that is the agent of imperialism in the region. But to defend its national rights to the end, the Palestinian resistance needs a class leadership and orientation (to link up with the Arab masses oppressed by their own bourgeoisies) that is internationalist (in order to take advantage of the class contradictions of Israeli society).

Furthermore the PLO is the product of an experience of struggle, which is that of the refugee camps and of a population dispersed throughout the Arab countries. The Palestinian bourgeoisie is integrated in these countries and plays a decisive role there. It has no unified and stable territorial base nor a social base facilitating the wide-scale use of traditional proletarian methods of struggle.

Even after the 1967 turn the PLO remained the national movement of all classes of Palestinian society. It was to regroup the mass of socially marginalized refugees, the disinherited masses from the occupied territories, the workers and artisans established in the various Arab countries, and well-off petty-bourgeois layers and real bourgeois sectors economically active in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states. It is a front of organizations and personalities that stretches from the Islamic right to a far left identifying with Marxism and Marxism-Leninism.

To ensure the coexistence of all these forces without coming into conflict with the Arab regimes, it must stick to a democratic and anti-Zionist program that does not challenge capitalist relations of production. The result is a contradiction between the needs and aspirations of the masses, which constitute the principal basis of its forces, and the strategic objectives of its leadership. This contradiction is expressed by the formation and consolidation of an increasingly important military apparatus, which also develops a logic of its own. The material and financial aid of the Arab states reinforces the crystallization of this apparatus.

Diplomatically recognized by more than 100 countries and observers at the UN, the movement led by the PLO has thus become a sort of state apparatus without a state or its own territory. The disproportion between the material force of its apparatus and the reality of its social base makes it particularly vulnerable to the pressures of its financial backers — whether Arab governments or rich Palestinians.

These are the material roots of the evolution of the PLO leadership. The combination of its social composition, its programmatic conceptions, and the acceptance of the framework imposed by the Arab regimes, aligned with imperialism or influenced by the Soviet bureaucracy, has pushed it into a dead end.

To win and affirm its political independence from the Arab states and to sustain it, the PLO must reinforce its own social base by a dual turn, linking up with the Palestinian proletariat in Israel and the occupied territories on the one hand, and with the exploited masses of the Arab countries on the other. The upsurge of

struggles these last years in the West Bank and in Gaza, the election of Palestinian mayors, and the difficulty the Begin government has in finding puppet collaborators, constitute a challenge to the might of the state of Israel and show the potential militancy of this Palestinian population, which has been progressively integrated since 1967 into the Israeli productive process. Its mobilizations combine the awakening of a Palestinian national consciousness and the emergence of a class current inside the Palestinian movement.

14. In Lebanon, with the dismantling of their strongholds, the election of Amin Gemayel as president of the republic, and the repressive role of an army molded by American imperialism, the progressive forces are now paying the price for their conciliatory policies since the 1975–76 war.

Religious sectarianism then partially masked the social and anti-imperialist content of the civil war, permitting bourgeois Muslim leaders to place themselves in the so-called progressive front in order to preserve the support they had based on patronage, and to work for a compromise. The Palestinian-progressive front limited itself to acting defensively. Given the disintegration of the Lebanese state, they were called upon to carry out growing social, administrative, and military functions. But instead of presenting itself as an alternative power, it was content to shore up the breaches in the legal regime while backing up the legitimacy of the decrepit bourgeois state institutions.

The Lebanese Communist Party, whose responsibility was particularly large since it has a certain mass influence, is the consistent defender of this line. Faithful to a Stalinist conception of revolution by stages and alliances with the so-called national bourgeoisie, it fixed the framework of struggle as the defense of liberal capitalism. Constantly banking on the role the USSR might play, directly or by the intermediary of its ally Syria, it even went so far as to render homage to the body of the fascist Bashir Gemayel in the name of national unity.

In 1976 this policy of class collaboration allowed the Christian militias to regain the initiative. This time again the Lebanese National Movement remained attached to the respect and perpetuation of legal institutions — instead of making the Beirut resistance a springboard for sweeping away the collaborationist Elias Sarkis regime, which was in open collusion with the Zionist occupier; instead of putting forward the perspective of a Government of National Resistance based on the unification and centralization of the military forces resisting the occupation; and instead of developing a network of councils of people's resistance.

This constitutional legality ended up spawning — in an electoral farce produced in a corner of a barracks — a fascist president at the head of an occupied republic. The bourgeois forces of the so-called progressive camp ratified the election of Bashir Gemayel and di-

rectly contributed, still in the name of national unity, to that of Amin Gemayel, representative of the so-called moderate wing of the Phalangist Party, who is claiming a "Bonapartist" role.

All the imperialist governments have given good character references to this new strong-arm regime, which is looking to be a zealous partner of the United States.

To set up a strong state in Lebanon and to assure the return to order sought by the commercial bourgeoisie, Amin Gemayel has the hard task of reasserting an uncontested bourgeois regime. That is why, given the threat that the military regime established in Beirut will be extended to the whole country, the defense of democratic rights, above all the right of the workers movement to organize, is a priority.

#### Contradictions and cracks in Zionism

15. The Zionist project meant that the state of Israel from its formation was an advance post of imperialism, founded on the expropriation and expulsion of the Palestinian people.

After the bombing of Beirut and the Sabra-Shatila massacres, the imperialist governments tried hard to minimize the cruelty and responsibility of the Israeli state by presenting it as a model of democracy. In fact it is a confessional state defined by its own declaration of independence as "the Jewish state in the land of Israel." It is a state founded on anti-Arab discrimination, deformed by the weight of its enormous military-industrial apparatus, and largely subsidized by imperialism. Israel is the seventh-biggest arms supplier in the world — in this line it is the privileged partner of dictatorships in Latin America and South Africa. With its \$20 billion debt, Israel is a country with one of the biggest per-capita debts in the world.

While the state of Israel is organically tied to imperialism in its very structure and functions, it is not reduced for all that to a simple colonial detachment of an imperialist metropole. The uniqueness of the Zionist colonial operation is that its initial aims were not to exploit native Arab labor but to replace it with Jewish labor to form a completely Jewish society, with its institutions and also its division into antagonistic social classes. It is the collaborationist agreement made between the social classes of Israeli society in the framework of the Zionist project that gives it its force against the Palestinian resistance and that permits the Zionist state to ensure a bourgeois democracy for the Jews on the basis of a negation of rights for the Palestinians.

Any attempt or project to expel en bloc the Jewish Israeli population from the region or to deny its national existence can only help to weld it together and mobilize it behind the most aggressive and chauvinist Zionist leaderships. On the other hand, the class conflicts within this community give the possibility to the Palestinian resistance and the Arab revolution to intervene in these contradictions, on the

condition that it sees the Jewish proletariat as a potential ally.

16. After the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, a new chapter in the history of Zionism opened up. Originally Zionism meant the formation of an exclusively Jewish society by the expulsion of the Arab people. For that it had to impose "Jewish labor" and "freedom of the land." This operation was the basis of an alliance between the Jewish bourgeoisie and a powerful colonial "laborist" movement, of which the trade-union confederation, Histadrut, is the symbol.

The occupation of the West Bank and Gaza territories poses Zionism with a new dilemma between annexing new territory in the name of never-relieved security imperatives and bringing into Israeli society more than a million Palestinian Arabs in open contradiction with the Zionist project.

Israeli capitalists opt for using this cheap Arab labor (wages are about a half that of Jewish workers on average), who have no social security or other protection, combined with increased privatization of the economy.

With the Camp David agreement, Begin gave his response to the problem posed in 1967, with a line of annexation of the occupied territories under the form of a supposed "administrative autonomy," permitting the continued exploitation of Arab workers while excluding them from Israeli citizenship.

But no formal stratagem can prevent the proletarianization of the Arabs in Israel and the occupied territories, which combined with the awakening of their Palestinian national consciousness stores up an explosive contradiction for the Zionist state.

17. Zionist mythology maintains a permanent confusion between the existence of a national "Jewish"-Israeli community in Palestine and the existence of the Zionist state. It also tries to concoct a permanent equation between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

By claiming that the existence of an Israeli national community in Palestine cannot avoid having a state based on racial discrimination, an organic alliance with imperialism, and permanent expansionism, the Zionist leaders themselves feed the idea that the destruction of the Zionist state implies the liquidation of the community as such. Thus they are the people who risk creating a resurgence of anti-Semitism as the "anti-Zionism of idiots" after having been the "socialism of idiots" (Bebel).

It is up to Jewish workers to unmask this mystification in Israel by opposing the infamies committed by the Zionist leaders, not only in the name of the state of Israel, but in the name of the Jewish people as a whole. Unrelenting struggle against Zionist crimes is not at all contradictory with a tenacious struggle against any form of anti-Semitism, which targets not particularly the state of Israel but all Jews in their national identity.

In recent years divisions have emerged in Israeli society and fractures have appeared in the edifice of Zionism. This has been accentuated since the war of aggression in Lebanon. From

the first days, the Begin-Sharon policy has been challenged on a significant scale.

Broad layers of the population were troubled by the fact that the army was not able to carry out a blitzkrieg-type war, that it met stubborn resistance from the Palestinians (who were moreover isolated), and that losses were proportionately heavier than during previous campaigns. The invasion of West Beirut and the direct complicity in the Sabra and Shatila massacres provoked a wave of indignation that shook Israeli society and stirred its conscience.

The protest movements, whether peace demonstrations or soldiers' initiatives, expressed uneven levels of consciousness. All components of the antiwar movement are coming into contradiction with the logic of Zionism. It emerged at the end of the 1970s as a pressure group in the framework of diplomatic negotiations, and today it is mobilizing against a war while it is taking place.

The great majority of this current, as the gigantic September 25 demonstration after the Sabra and Shatila massacres showed, rallied around the slogans: "Withdraw the troops from Beirut," "Mutual recognition between Jews and Palestinians" and "Resignation of the Begin-Sharon government." But a radical pole was formed around the Committee Against the War in Lebanon, which demanded the "immediate withdrawal of troops from Lebanon" (and not only from Beirut) and unconditional recognition of the PLO.

The Labor Party, which openly supported the "Peace for Galilee" operation, was not at the origin of the antiwar movement. On the contrary, it has done all it can to oppose mobilizations during the war. But after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, it was obliged to channel the movement and to draw the best advantage it could from it. "Saving the honor of Israel" in this way means for it preparing an alternative leadership not implicated in the massacres and capable of taking over the baton from Begin in negotiations with imperialism. This position responds to the preoccupations of Zionist sectors more conscious of the real relationship of forces in the region and the global interests of imperialism. From the beginning of the war these sectors have displayed their worries concerning the Begin-Sharon adventures and their consequences.

Over and above these maneuvers, the breadth of the antiwar movement is a major event in Israel, even if this movement remains by and large within the framework of defense of Israel's security and is characterized above all by the absence of organized working-class participation. Its future is closely linked to the victories and defeats of the Palestinian resistance. After the Beirut defeat its immediate perspectives fundamentally depend on the continuation of mobilizations in the occupied territories and the capacity of its most conscious sectors to link up with these struggles.

In Israel the following democratic demands are in contradiction with the Zionist project and the foundations of the state of Israel: the abolition of all repressive and discriminatory

legislation against the Palestinians, the deconfessionalization of the state, the recognition of the right of return of all Palestinians expelled since 1948, and the recognition of the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

#### **International solidarity and imperialist plans**

18. After the Israeli armed aggression modified the relationship of forces, the diplomatic stage of the imperialist offensive started. The United States wanted to draw the best advantage from the military victory by preventing Begin from putting those Arab regimes willing to negotiate too much in a corner. Egyptian President Mubarak, furthermore, did not fail to remind Reagan what the real interests of the United States were: "As a superpower it has overall interests and responsibilities; it must not forget it is the main deposit holder of the oil producers' funds; in brief, the United States is the first to suffer from the extension of instability and insecurity in the region" (*International Herald Tribune*, August 25, 1982).

The plan proposed on September 1 by President Reagan sets out in complete clarity the hierarchy of imperialist preoccupations: first the stabilization of the region, then the security of Israel, and only in third place the Palestinian rights. Furthermore, these "rights" do not include the right to self-determination of an independent state, but only the perspective of "an autonomous government of Palestinians in association with Jordan." This perspective, with a transition period of five years, could result in the possibility of a Palestinian protectorate under the control of the Jordanian state and army or of a Jordanian-Israeli condominium on territories "granted" a formal "autonomy."

19. By unanimously adopting a project which recognizes the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and calls for the "creation of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital," the Fez summit wanted to save the face of the Arab regimes tarnished by their passivity at the Beirut siege.

Appearances suggest it as a project unacceptable to Israel and Begin quickly rejected it. But the imperialist governments are not mistaken about its real significance. The important bourgeois press echoed their satisfaction: "It is still too soon to define the Fez Summit as an historic turning point for the Middle East, but it represents at least a considerable victory for common sense over empty rhetoric. The Fez declaration seems for the first time since 1948 to recognize that the Palestinian people will never obtain self-determination through a military victory." (*Financial Times*, September 11, 1982). *Newsweek* underlined the point at this summit meeting, "the moderates finished by winning out over the radicals" (September 20, 1982). And the *International Herald Tribune* headlined, "Fez: Victory for the Arab moderates" (September 13, 1982).

Everybody underlines the continuity of this project with respect to the Fahd plan rejected a year earlier. Everyone draws out point 7, according to which the UN Security Council

"guarantees peace between all the states of the area, including the independent Palestinian state" — implying a de facto recognition of the state of Israel. Most opinion considers that the Fez plan, of which Saudi Arabia was the architect, constitutes the starting point and not the last word in a negotiation that is only beginning.

By stating on several occasions during the siege of Beirut that he recognized all the UN declarations, including those on the partition of Palestine, Yassir Arafat had himself announced his acceptance of the negotiating framework. To eliminate any ambiguity on this, Nayef Hawatmeh (Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — DPFLP) publicly committed himself to support of the Franco-Egyptian proposition at the UN, which is along the same lines.

20. On the other hand, Begin has vigorously denounced the Fez plan as well as the Reagan plan. He continually repeats that there is no question of Israel withdrawing from the occupied territories. On the contrary, he encourages the implantation of new colonies. Sharon and the Foreign Affairs Minister Yitzhak Shamir release statements for their part that the Palestinians "have already exerted their right to self-determination and have a state in Jordan." They all consider a sovereign Palestinian state in the occupied territories as a threat to the vital interests of Israel. They do not mean to go beyond the "autonomy" envisaged in five years of the Camp David agreement, and exclude the PLO from all negotiations.

The Labor Party, which presents itself as a "presentable" alternative leadership for the Zionist state, has been implicated in its colonial expeditions since the creation of Israel. They still supported the "Peace for Galilee" operation and limited themselves to criticizing the siege of Beirut. They voted for the war budget in the Knesset (parliament) and Shimon Peres accepted — at the height of the war — a special mission of presenting the Begin government's case to the imperialist governments. To cool Peres's indignation over the Sabra-Shatila massacre, Sharon did not miss the opportunity in the Knesset to remind him that the Labor Party lent a hand in the 1976 Tel Zaatar massacre.

Shimon Peres stated that the Labor Party supports the Reagan plan overall (about 70 percent of it), pointing out that the plan does not propose the self-determination of the Palestinians, but only a "leading role" in the choice of their future. Fearing the disruptive effect on Israeli society of annexing the occupied territories, it declares itself resolutely for what is called the "Jordan option." Shimon Peres makes it clear — not without a dose of cynicism, if one recalls the 1970 massacres: "Jordan has no interest in having a state within a state, an army within an army" (*Le Monde*, April 2, 1980).

21. The perspective of setting up a sovereign Palestinian state in the occupied territories has been raised since 1972–74. The

creation of such a state, limited to the occupied territories but really sovereign, would presuppose a significant defeat of the Zionist state and its imperialist ally and place decisive confrontations on the agenda.

Today, in the framework of negotiations opened by the Beirut defeat, such a state would not constitute a springboard for the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab masses. Neither American imperialism, nor Mitterrand and Mubarak, nor Saudi Arabia and Jordan envisage for a single moment the possibility of a really sovereign Palestinian state in the occupied territories. No Zionist leader, including the Labor ones, is ready to accept it. They all want to get the Palestinian resistance, submitted to increased pressure by the Arab states, to accept a formal autonomy under the direct tutelage of Jordan and Israel, with the guarantee of the Arab bourgeoisies and American imperialism.

22. The isolation of the Palestinian resistance and the Lebanese National Movement, faced with Zionist aggression, highlights the irreplaceable role of international solidarity from the workers and anti-imperialist movement.

While the Arab regimes and the Soviet bureaucracy remained compliantly passive, there were many support demonstrations, delegations, and public meetings in the imperialist countries, in certain Arab countries (despite the repression), and even in Latin America. However, these mobilizations as a whole, including in the Arab countries, were insufficient given the challenge posed by Zionist and imperialist aggression, by the bombing and massacres of Beirut.

The social-democratic parties are openly committed to the discussion and setting up of imperialist plans. The communist parties, in most cases, were content to denounce the evils of the imperialist warmonger without getting involved in really active solidarity with the Palestinian movement.

Revolutionary organizations and sections of the Fourth International played a dynamic role in these solidarity mobilizations.

This solidarity remains today very much an immediate task. Imperialism is continuing with the implementation of its projects for the Middle East. Thus on October 6, the French contingent of the multinational "intervention"

## Statement on Kurdish struggle

[The following statement was adopted October 10 by a majority of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

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Once again the Kurdish people are suffering the blows of savage repression.

In Turkey, the military regime is jailing and torturing hundreds of Kurdish activists, mounting bloody operations against villages, and sealing off the Kurdish areas from the rest of the world.

In Iraq, the Kurds are still being deprived of

forces was involved in "sweep" and disarming operations alongside the Lebanese army in Beirut. For their part the Arab regimes are doing everything to reinforce their hold over the Palestinian resistance. The breadth of international solidarity is therefore an important element in the relationship of forces that can safeguard the freedom of action of this resistance.

The axis of this solidarity remains the demand for the immediate and total withdrawal of Zionist troops from Lebanon and the unconditional support of the Palestinian resistance struggle.

Imperialism and Zionism are making more and more maneuvers to deny or reduce the representativeness of the PLO or to impose on it the recognition of the state of Israel on the pretext of "mutual recognition." The demand for the recognition without preconditions of the PLO as legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in Israel and in those imperialist countries where that is not yet the case, is in the present circumstances part and parcel of the unconditional support of the Palestinian resistance struggle against imperialism.

The Fourth International and its sections will play an active part in this solidarity campaign with the Palestinian people's struggle against Zionism and imperialism. It will support and publicize the activity of its sections in Israel and Lebanon.

- Immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Zionist troops from all Lebanon!

- Total and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territories occupied since 1967!

- Recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, i.e., its right to form a sovereign state on its territory!

- Solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian resistance against the Zionist state! Freedom of action for the Palestinian resistance in all the Arab states! Recognition of the PLO as legitimate representative of the Palestinian people!

- Solidarity with the struggles of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories and with the antiwar movement in Israel!

- Solidarity with the Palestinian masses in Lebanon and with the Lebanese anti-imperialist movement!

their most elementary democratic rights.

In Iran, in recent months a massive offensive has been launched against the Kurdish fighters. It has already claimed thousands of victims, the great majority of whom are civilians.

The Fourth International supports the struggle of the Kurdish people for self-determination. It condemns all the forms of repression against the Kurdish people being practiced by the states in the region, and supports the campaign in defense of the basic democratic rights of the Kurdish people.

## U.S. sides with South Africa

### *Bush demands Cubans leave Angola*

#### By Ernest Harsch

In defiance of the entire African continent, the Reagan administration is insisting that Namibia cannot be granted its independence from South Africa until Cuban troops leave Angola.

That demand was raised repeatedly during a two-week tour of Africa by Vice-president George Bush in mid-November. Previously, the White House had refrained from making this demand explicit. The tour by Bush — the highest-ranking member of the Reagan administration to visit Africa — marked a hardening of Washington's position and a further affirmation of its support for the apartheid regime.

At a state dinner in Nairobi, Kenya, November 19, Bush declared, "The withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola in a parallel framework with South Africa's departure from Namibia is the key to the settlement we all desire. . . . My government is not ashamed to state the U.S. interest in seeing an end to the presence of Cuban forces in Angola."

Implying that the presence of Cuban troops was the result of Soviet aggression, Bush went on, "Their introduction seven years ago tore the fabric of reciprocal restraint between the United States and the Soviet Union in the developing world."

In fact, however, the Cuban troops first entered Angola at the request of the Angolan government, after the country was invaded by thousands of South Africa troops in 1975, an invasion that was fully backed by the U.S. government. Washington and the apartheid regime in Pretoria had hoped to overthrow the governing People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Thanks to the Cuban troops, the invasion failed, and the South Africans were driven out.

Since then, the Cubans have remained in Angola to help defend it against continued South African attacks, which have cost thousands of lives and widespread destruction in the southern regions of the country.

At an October 5 news conference at the United Nations, Angolan Foreign Minister Paulo Jorge estimated that 5,000 South African troops were now inside Angola. "My country is occupied by South Africa as part of an aggression," he said.

Jorge termed the Reagan administration's demand that the Cuban troops leave as "a gross and inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of an independent and sovereign country."

It is also directed against the Namibian independence struggle itself. By focusing on the question of the Cubans, it serves to provide a political cover for the apartheid regime's continued illegal occupation of Namibia and its brutal war against the Namibian people.

For years now, tens of thousands of South African troops have been seeking to crush the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) and terrorize Namibia's Black majority. In the process, they have forcibly uprooted tens of thousands of Namibians from the region along the Angolan border, massacred villagers, tortured and killed suspected SWAPO supporters, and conducted repeated bombing raids against Namibian refugee camps in Angola.

Rather than condemning this vicious war, the Reagan administration has moved toward closer and closer ties with Pretoria. Meetings between U.S. and South African officials have become more frequent, criticisms of the apartheid system have been softened, and U.S. economic aid to South Africa has been stepped up. Recently, the White House approved a \$1.1 billion International Monetary Fund loan to South Africa.

Because of such ties, Bush ran into explicit criticisms of the Reagan administration's policies toward Africa in each of the seven countries he visited: Cape Verde, Senegal, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Zaire.

In Nigeria, Vice-president Alex Ekwueme, declared during an official toast to Bush that the apartheid regime's intransigence was not because of the presence of Cuban troops in Angola, but a "ruse" to delay Namibia's independence and prevent SWAPO's "inevitable triumph."

Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe insisted that the Cuban troops were in

Angola to protect the country from South African attacks.

President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, who is closely allied to Washington, termed Reagan's efforts to link the question of Cuban troops with Namibia a "delaying tactic in the eventual realization of independence for Namibia."

While Washington's warm ties with the apartheid regime have strained its relations with many of the Black governments, it has so far been willing to bear this political cost. Its stakes in southern Africa are too great not to.

The survival of the apartheid regime is a cornerstone of U.S. imperialism's policy toward the entire region. The emergence of an independent Namibia under SWAPO's leadership would be a major political blow to the apartheid regime and provide inspiration to South Africa's own rebellious Black majority. That is why Reagan has been siding with Pretoria and seeking to drag out the Namibia negotiations.

Rather than leading toward peace, the effect of this policy has been to heighten the dangers of war. Secure in the knowledge of U.S. backing, the South African racists have become emboldened to dig in their heels and escalate their attacks against other African countries.

Besides the attacks against Angola, South African-backed guerrilla forces in Mozambique have been seeking to destabilize the government there. And in early December large numbers of South African troops were massed on the border with Mozambique, raising the threat of an invasion of that country.

In October, South African Defense Minister Gen. Magnus Malan gave a speech in which he explicitly ruled out granting independence to Namibia under a SWAPO-led government. He admitted that SWAPO would win any elections now held in the territory, but insisted, "I believe SWAPO is communist." South Africa, he said, would not allow "the red flag to fly over Windhoek," Namibia's capital. □

## Tamil prisoner nominated for Sri Lanka parliament

One of two young Tamil activists sentenced to death in Sri Lanka under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has been nominated for a vacant parliament seat by the Tamil United Liberation Front. Although it is unlikely that Selvarajah Yogachandran — better known as Kuttimani — will be released from jail to take the seat left open by the death of a sitting MP, his nomination focuses attention on the PTA, which denies an accused the right to trial by jury and allows the introduction of confessions extracted under torture.

Kuttimani and Jegan were sentenced to death for allegedly murdering a policeman in March 1979. Following their April 1981 arrest, they were held in an isolated army camp until their trial in July 1982. During that time

they were not permitted to see lawyers, relatives, or friends, and were subjected to torture.

The two are supporters of the establishment of a separate Tamil state of Eelam for the 2.5 million Tamil-speakers in Sri Lanka, who suffer discrimination. Nine million Sinhalese make up the bulk of Sri Lanka's population.

The London-based Campaign for the Release of Eelam Political Prisoners in Sri Lanka has called on supporters of human rights to protest the planned execution of Kuttimani and Jegan and to demand the release of all political prisoners and the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Letters and telegrams should be sent to President J.R. Jayewardene, President's House, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka. □