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Bill of Rights Under Attack

United States: SWP Goes on Trial



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U.S. SWP goes to trial

By Will Reissner

By setting a March 1 trial date for a lawsuit against the Socialist Workers Party in federal court in Los Angeles, Judge Mariana Pfaelzer has dealt a blow to the constitutional rights of every progressive organization in the United States.

At issue are fundamental questions. Can the U.S. government force the Socialist Workers Party, or any other political group, to accept an avowed enemy into membership?

Can the courts decide which members may or may not be elected to leadership posts?

Does the government have the power to decide if a political group's activities conform to its stated program and historic goals?

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is a key provision of the Bill of Rights. Under this amendment, the SWP and all other political organizations are supposed to be free from governmental interference in their internal life.

After the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1789, it took two years of struggles by small farmers and urban working people to force the adoption of the Bill of Rights in 1791.

Ever since, workers and small farmers have had to wage constant battles to force the government to recognize these rights, while the ruling rich have persistently tried to restrict political freedoms.

Today, in Judge Pfaelzer's court, another round of this battle is being fought. By allowing this suit against the SWP to go to trial, Pfaelzer is trampling on the First Amendment.

The legal action was brought against the SWP by Alan Gelfand, an attorney employed by the Los Angeles county government, who is an outspoken opponent of the SWP's policies. He was expelled from the organization in 1979.

Gelfand is asking that the court order his membership restored. He further wants his expulsion judged a violation of the party's rules. And he wants the court to remove those responsible for his expulsion (including some of the SWP's national leaders) from the positions they were elected to by the party's membership.

Judge Pfaelzer has repeatedly refused to throw the case out of court, even though it violates the most basic political rights of the SWP.

Judge was top cop

On February 12, SWP attorneys filed a motion in federal court demanding that Pfaelzer disqualify herself from the case due to her "bias and prejudice" against the Socialist Workers Party. This charge stems from the recent discovery that from 1974 to 1978, while Pfaelzer was a member of the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners, she was directly involved in authorizing police spying

and disruption operations against the Socialist Workers Party and its members, as well as against dozens of other political and religious groups.

The motion that the judge disqualify herself points out that by authorizing these police attacks against the SWP's right to freedom of association, she "has already decided a central factual issue in this case: whether the SWP is protected by the First Amendment from governmental interference and inquiry."

In addition, during the trial two Los Angeles police agents — who infiltrated the Socialist Workers Party during Pfaelzer's years of overseeing police spying — are scheduled to be star witnesses against the SWP. The party's attorneys have charged that Pfaelzer cannot be unbiased about undercover operations she personally okayed as police commissioner.

Despite these facts, however, the SWP's motion on disqualification was turned down, and Pfaelzer will preside over the trial.

The history of this case began four years ago, while the SWP was involved in a major offensive to expose and combat government spying and disruption against political organizations. Part of that offensive involved a lawsuit, *Socialist Workers Party v. Attorney General*.

In the course of that case, which is now awaiting a decision by Federal Judge Thomas Griesa, the SWP was able to expose the decades-long campaign by the FBI, the CIA, and other government agencies to harass and disrupt the SWP and other political groups opposing governmental policies.

In late 1978 the government had been forced onto the defensive by the SWP's campaign against the political police. The U.S. attorney general had been cited for contempt of court for refusing to release FBI informer files. That contempt ruling was being appealed by the government.

At that point, Alan Gelfand intervened in the legal proceedings in his capacity as a lawyer and without the SWP's knowledge, filing his own personal brief on the case.

Gelfand claimed in his brief that he could not be adequately represented in the case by the SWP's attorneys, because his interests were different from, and indeed adverse to, those of the SWP. He suggested in his brief that certain long-time SWP leaders had been agents of the Soviet secret police and/or the FBI.

When the elected leadership of the SWP learned of Gelfand's action, they initiated proceedings against him. In January 1979 he was expelled from the SWP for "undisciplined and disloyal behavior in violation of the organizational principles of the Socialist Workers Party."

In July 1979 Gelfand filed his current suit in

U.S. District Court in Los Angeles against the SWP and individual party members. He charges that the SWP deserves no protection under the First Amendment's guarantees against hostile governmental interference because the party is actually controlled by the government!

Gelfand claims that the SWP was taken over by government agents decades ago, and that these agents expelled him because he sought to expose them. By his twisted logic, it was Gelfand's First Amendment rights that were violated by the government, whose agents expelled him from his organization.

'Not a shred of evidence'

Judge Pfaelzer has repeatedly refused to throw Gelfand's case out of court, despite her own admission in court that in the nearly four years since Gelfand filed this suit, he has been unable to provide any evidence for his claim of a government takeover of the SWP.

At one point in the case, Pfaelzer categorically acknowledged: "There isn't one shred of evidence whatsoever that the persons who engineered, as you say, all of this were government agents. There isn't any evidence."

Nonetheless, Pfaelzer has allowed the legal attack on the SWP to continue for nearly four years. To defend itself, the party has had to divert huge amounts of money and time from the political objectives the SWP is organized to advance.

Already, members of the SWP's leadership have been forced by court orders to submit to 160 hours of questioning by Gelfand and his high-priced lawyers. Thousands of additional hours have been spent in preparation for this questioning and in handling other legal work involved in this case.

Pfaelzer has given Gelfand a blank check to question SWP leaders at great length about any subject he chooses, no matter how irrelevant to this case.

People have been asked questions such as: "What are the laws of the development of matter as expressed by the preeminent philosophers of dialectical materialism? . . .

"Can you give examples of how each of these three laws manifest themselves? . . .

"How does it apply to that glass of water? . . .

"Is thought matter? . . .

"Is thought space? . . .

In addition, SWP leaders have been questioned at length about their personal lives and family backgrounds, including their social life while still in high school, activities in the Boy Scouts, and the political and religious beliefs of their parents.

Questioning has even extended to the sex lives and other personal relationships of SWP members.

To date the SWP has already been forced to spend more than \$30,000 on travel expenses and transcript costs alone, not to mention the legal fees involved.

And the case has not even gone to trial yet!

Using the powers of the court, Pfaelzer has

accomplished the same kind of harassment and disruption of the SWP's activities that the FBI, CIA, and other police agencies have been carrying out for decades under cover.

Healyite cult funds case

Yet the only significant fact established in all the hundreds of hours of pretrial questioning is Gelfand's own admission that the funds to pay for his enormously expensive battle against the SWP are being raised by the national secretary of the Workers League (WL), a minuscule organization that carries out virtually no activity in the U.S. workers movement. It is linked to the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of Britain.

Gelfand has admitted that both before and after his expulsion from the SWP, he acted in consultation with these two organizations. He also made at least two trips to London to meet with WRP officials about his suit. And since at least 1980, two representatives of the WL-WRP have been working as "investigators" for the law firm handling Gelfand's litigation.

The Workers League and the Workers Revolutionary Party broke from the Trotskyist movement in the early 1960s. They refused to support the Cuban revolution, denounced the rise of Black nationalism, and abandoned Marxism for a cult existence around their guru, Gerry Healy.

At a January 31 hearing, Pfaelzer made clear that at the March 1 trial she will give Gelfand a green light to continue the abuse of justice she has already allowed in the pretrial period.

Gelfand charges that government control of the SWP began many decades ago when, he claims, such veteran socialist leaders as Joseph Hansen — editor of this publication until his death in 1979 — and George Novack — currently a contributing editor — supposedly engineered the takeover.

Anything goes

Pfaelzer ruled against an SWP motion that Gelfand be obliged to establish the relevance of any evidence before he submits it to the court. "They can put in what they want," Pfaelzer ruled.

She noted that Gelfand's attorneys admit they have no direct evidence of any 40-year-old government takeover of the SWP. But she ruled they can present any circumstantial evidence they want to, no matter how far back it goes or how irrelevant it is.

The judge also assured Gelfand's lawyers that even if their claim of a longstanding government takeover of the SWP falls apart, she will decide whether the SWP followed proper procedures in expelling Gelfand.

Pfaelzer has decided that the U.S. courts, not the SWP membership, have the final say over the party's organizational rules and practices. Moreover, this decision opens the door to permanent court supervision of the SWP's internal functioning.

The SWP's attorneys point out that "an injunction requiring readmission of an admit-

tedly hostile individual into the ranks of the SWP would have to be followed up with regular supervision of his treatment by the party."

In that case, "the district court, and not the membership of the party, will then be the final arbiter of who can belong to the SWP, and what internal procedures may be used to expel a disloyal member from the party's ranks."

But even if the district court rules in the SWP's favor, tremendous damage has already been done to the SWP's First Amendment rights. The court has conducted a far-reaching inquisition into the SWP's ideology and methods of operation.

It has accepted the principle that the courts can intervene in the party's internal life.

It has forced the party to spend tremendous amounts of money and time to defend itself from this attack.

As SWP National Chairperson Mary-Alice Waters points out in the February 18 *Militant*, "The scope of the issues posed in this lawsuit against the Socialist Workers Party is clear. The court's actions constitute a threat not only to the political liberties of every single opponent of government policies in the United States but to every defender of the Bill of Rights as well." □

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Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.
Managing Editor: David Frankel.
Editorial Staff: Sue Hagen, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.
Business Manager: Sandi Sherman.

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White House rejects talks

As morale of Salvadoran army breaks down

By Ernest Harsch

Claiming that Salvadoran freedom fighters are "creating hell" in El Salvador, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz declared February 16 that Washington would never support negotiations with the liberation forces. "To now say, let them shoot their way into that government," he said. "No dice!"

Shultz's sharp rejection of any talks comes at a time when the proposal for opening negotiations between the Salvadoran regime and representatives of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) is gaining greater support.

In October 1982, the FDR and FMLN proposed an immediate dialogue with the regime, without any prior conditions. The campaign they launched around this question has been an important weapon in deepening the Salvadoran dictatorship's political isolation, by placing the onus for continuing the war on the regime and its backers in Washington.

In an interview in the February 9 Paris daily *Le Monde*, FDR leader Guillermo Ungo reiterated this stance. "We are making this offer at a time when our forces on the ground are on the way to proving that they hold the initiative," Ungo said, referring to the FMLN's recent military advances. "We are making this offer not out of weakness, but because we are conscious that we cannot lose time in responding to the expectations of the greater and greater number of people in our country who are hoping for peace."

The Committee of Trade Union Unity (CUS), which encompasses unions representing half a million Salvadoran workers, has come out in support of the FDR-FMLN negotiations proposal. A CUS representative was quoted in the January 27 issue of the Mexico City daily *Uno más Uno*, "The greatest problem facing the Salvadoran working class is the insecurity, the absence of even the most minimal respect for human rights. We believe that an agreement between the government and the guerrillas can put an end to the climate of terror that we have had to endure for more than three years."

The Catholic church hierarchy has likewise been pressing the government to open negotiations, and acting Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas has been speaking out more sharply against the dictatorship's repression. Even the Christian Democratic Youth, affiliated to the former ruling Christian Democratic Party, has declared itself in favor of a dialogue. And a group of junior officers in the Salvadoran army has issued an open letter urging the government to open talks.

Internationally, the governments of Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, Cuba, Nicaragua, and other countries have come out in favor of negotiations, as has the Nonaligned Movement.

By ruling out such talks, the U.S. government is defying the right of the masses of Salvadoran people to determine what happens in their country. This stance, of course, is nothing new. The U.S. imperialists have been imposing their will on El Salvador for decades, and they have no intention of giving up their domination now.

That is precisely why the Salvadoran workers and peasants have been forced to take up arms: to get rid of the bloody U.S.-backed dictatorship and to free their country of the imperialist stranglehold that has kept them impoverished for so long.

But the Reagan administration's rejection of talks is not just an expression of imperial arrogance. It is also a reflection of Washington's very real fears.

It is concerned that the opening of negotiations between the Salvadoran dictatorship and the FDR-FMLN will give the liberation forces greater international authority as the legitimate representatives of the Salvadoran people, and thus provide further political obstacles to U.S. military intervention.

Washington is also painfully aware of the weakness and isolation of the Salvadoran regime. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee February 2, Thomas Enders, the assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, admitted, "If we attempt to force the government of El Salvador to negotiate with the guerrillas as equals, we risk its collapse."

The Salvadoran army is showing signs of growing demoralization among its ranks, especially in face of the military offensive launched by the FMLN in October. Many of the troops are young people who have been picked up off the streets in forcible army "recruiting" drives, and are reluctant to engage the rebel forces in combat.

The guerrillas have consciously sought to further weaken the troops' morale by appealing to them to surrender, treating prisoners of war well, and then quickly turning them over to Red Cross officials. Word of the prisoners' treatment has spread among the army ranks. "All of this contaminates their mentality," one high-ranking Salvadoran officer complained. "It's dangerous, but that is the guerrilla strategy: to win a battle without firing a shot."

The effects of this have been cumulative. Between October and December 1982, the

FMLN forces took 293 prisoners of war. But in a one-month period in January and February, they took nearly 250 prisoners.

To try to cut down on the troops' opportunities to surrender, the army has pulled them back from dozens of smaller towns and outposts, thereby enlarging the zones under FMLN control. "If we put 20 or 30 soldiers up there," a Salvadoran officer said about northern Chalatenango Province, "100 or 200 guerrillas are going to come, and before we can send reinforcements, they are going to surrender — with all their arms."

Although U.S. officials often complain that the Salvadoran commanders are not using appropriate military tactics, their real problem is political: the Salvadoran regime, which is protecting the interests of imperialism and the country's small class of wealthy landlords and businessmen, is opposed by the vast majority of the population. It is the rebels who have the popular support.

That has been demonstrated repeatedly during the FMLN's recent military offensive. In Berlín, San José Guayabal, and other towns that the guerrillas have been able to take and briefly hold, they have organized rallies and demonstrations to explain their aims, mobilize popular support, and recruit hundreds of new fighters.

It is obvious that the Salvadoran dictatorship cannot survive on its own. That is why the Reagan administration is moving toward greater direct U.S. military intervention.

At the same time, however, the political cost that such intervention would entail, both in Latin America and within the United States, has caused tactical rifts within the U.S. ruling class over how to pursue its goals in El Salvador. There have been many editorials in the big-business press urging Washington not to reject the possibility of negotiations.

Yet the Reagan administration is pushing ahead. It has proposed a massive increase in military aid to the Salvadoran regime. The White House has approved a shipment of Claymore mines, and has admitted earlier shipments of white phosphorous rockets and grenades (which the Salvadoran forces have used to bomb civilian areas).

Even more ominously, the Pentagon has explicitly floated the idea of sending in U.S. ground troops, in addition to the several dozen advisers who are already there. Gen. Wallace Nutting, according to the February 3 *Miami Herald*, "said categorically that although he was not advocating direct involvement of U.S. military personnel, he thought the Salvadoran armed forces would never be able to achieve total military victory without it."

The Salvadoran people are sure to resist such intervention with the utmost determination. But they are also looking to the people of the United States to help check Washington's moves. In his *Le Monde* interview, FDR leader Ungo stressed the danger of U.S. intervention and asked, "But is public opinion in the United States ready to accept the loss of its boys in an armed conflict in Central America?" □

Unionists back struggle in El Salvador

'International solidarity of workers really exists'

[Salvadoran union leader Alejandro Molina Lara, an official of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers (FENASTRAS) and general secretary of the Fishing Industry Union, toured the U.S. states of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio last November and December. He addressed numerous union audiences.

[In Erie, Pennsylvania, he spoke to hundreds of unionists. The coordinator of his tour there was Al Hart, a worker in the Erie General Electric plant and an executive board member of United Electrical Workers (UE) Local 506.

[The following interview with Hart was conducted by Ginny Hildebrand, a correspondent for the U.S. socialist weekly *Militant*. It appeared in the February 18 issue.]

* * *

Question. How did Alejandro Molina Lara come to address the November meeting of UE Local 506?

Answer. A few of us in the local helped set it up because we thought that the ideal way to get our members to understand the situation in El Salvador was for them to hear a unionist from that country. This turned out to be even truer than we thought.

Q. Would you describe the reaction of your local members?

A. Well, Alejandro gave a good general picture of the situation in his country. But what really struck the crowd was when he described the "free trade zones." That's where North American companies set up plants and pay no taxes and where unions have always been outlawed. There was an audible sound of dismay throughout the crowd when he told them that workers for these companies earn only \$2.50 per day. When he described the disappearances and jailings of union activists, it had a moving effect on the membership.

When Alejandro was done speaking, everyone was on their feet applauding. We took up a collection to cover the expenses of his trip and aid the work of his union federation, FENASTRAS. The guy who won the local drawing at that meeting donated most of his winnings.

Our local treasurer left the meeting when he heard that Alejandro had no winter coat. He came back a little later with a brand new parka that was to have been a gift for his father, who recently died. He gave the jacket to Alejandro.

One other thing Alejandro did was have an interview with Channel 35 TV. It was a short piece on the evening news but the anchorwo-

man did a beautiful job. The item before it was about layoffs at Bucyrus Erie, so she picked up on that and said, "While union members in Erie are fighting for their jobs, in El Salvador union members are fighting for their lives. Last night Alejandro Molina Lara spoke at United Electrical Workers Local 506. . . ."

Q. Alejandro returned to Erie a few weeks later. You helped to organize that tour also, right?

A. Yes. His first trip to Erie was organized so hastily that there was no time to set anything else up. Myself and some other union people and people I knew in the peace movement felt we could get him to meet with other constituencies and do more in the Erie media. The dates we were able to schedule him for turned out to coincide with the December Erie Central Labor Council meeting. So a talk before the council was set up.

Then members of the local CARD [Committee Against Registration and the Draft] and the nuclear freeze group planned a public meeting for Alejandro at Gannon College. A professor at Behrend College invited him to one of his classes. He also had interviews on two more TV stations.

Q. What was the reaction to Alejandro at

the Central Labor Council meeting?

A. You wouldn't believe it if you weren't there. Compared to his speech to UE 506 he just cut loose. He described why the working class in El Salvador had to turn to armed struggle. He explained how every other means for working people to deal with their problems — strikes, elections, etc. — had been blocked by the government, which is controlled by 14 wealthy families.

For example, he described how strikes are met with armed repression. So to prevent strikers from being killed they adopted the tactic of kidnapping the bosses and holding them in the plant with them.

He also described how elections were stolen. When candidates supported by workers were elected, the military voided the results.

To my surprise that line of argument was well received by the delegates. The whole place was on its feet. The officers had their pictures taken standing arm and arm with Alejandro. Delegates all along the aisles shook his hand. The hat was passed among the 50 people there and they donated \$100. The council donated another \$100 from its treasury. Also, they adopted a resolution calling for an end to all U.S. aid to El Salvador.

One council member got up and said some-



Aris Haras/Militant

Molina Lara speaking at meeting in New York City February 11. Some 225 people turned out despite worst blizzard in 36 years. During a weeklong tour of the New York-Northern New Jersey area, Molina Lara spoke to members and officials of the United Electrical Workers Union, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, United Auto Workers, and to transit workers, hospital workers, government employees, and teachers.

thing like, "I grew up in the coal country and back in the '20s and '30s the state police used to come in on horseback and beat people down when they went on strike. And now these big cartels are doing the same thing around the world."

I wish we had a videotape of that meeting to send to Lane Kirkland [president of the AFL-CIO, the U.S. trade-union federation] to show him what unionists in Erie think of U.S. policy in El Salvador.

Q. Why do you think unionists responded to Alejandro with such enthusiasm?

A. From the most immediate, self-interest point of view, we realize that our jobs are being exported. Right here at General Electric the company is planning to close the foundry and some of that work is going to Brazil. The cheapest labor they can get is in countries where workers have no rights, where right-wing military dictatorships supported by the U.S. government create a business climate that is best for runaway shops. When people in my local read over the list Alejandro had of companies investing in El Salvador, they saw the connection.

Also, I saw that the reaction Alejandro got from the two union meetings was stronger than that at the campus meeting. There is a strong emotional identity, solidarity that workers here have with another worker living under extreme repression. Things that American union members would never tolerate here are being done in countries where our government has a lot of say, in our name, with our tax money.

To hear Alejandro describe how and why workers are fighting in El Salvador makes people understand, see, and feel that the working class is a class. It breaks down international boundaries. To hear him describe it you know that workers, no matter the country, are on the same side and bosses are on the other side. The thing that was so exciting to me about the Central Labor Council and UE 506 meetings was that you could see that international solidarity of workers really exists. Alejandro was really able to strengthen the class consciousness of the people he spoke to.

Q. What do you think organized labor should be doing to oppose U.S. intervention?

A. In January, my local sent a letter to our congressmen and senators telling them about Alejandro's talk to our local meeting. Then the letter said:

"U.S. military and economic aid is supporting this repression of human rights. U.S.-based multinational corporations that operate in El Salvador benefit from these policies that allow them to exploit cheap labor. We as American workers are paying taxes that finance the repression of our brother and sister unionists, and that subsidize the export of our jobs.

"President Reagan's certification of human rights progress by the government of El Salvador is a lie which completely ignores the true

conditions in El Salvador. We urge Congress to hold hearings and reject Reagan's certification.

"All U.S. military aid and intervention in El Salvador and Central America should be halted. We need money for jobs here at home, not more guns and more bloodshed in Central America."

I'd like to see the labor movement as a whole oppose Reagan's policies. I'd like to see us acting and demonstrating against U.S. policy in El Salvador, Nicaragua, etc. The way to

turn labor in this direction is to let the rank and file hear workers from these countries explain what's going on and how U.S. policy is supporting the most antilabor forces in these countries.

We're American workers and it is the U.S. government that is the major force holding up the Salvadoran dictatorship and every other dictatorship in Latin America. We have a greater responsibility than workers in Germany or England because it is our government intervening. We have to oppose it and stop it. □

Libya

New U.S. military threats

Fail to provoke Libyan regime

By Will Reissner

The Reagan administration's latest military provocation against Libya is part of the ongoing U.S. campaign of threats and economic and political pressure against the government of Muammar el-Qaddafi. The U.S. aim is to compel Qaddafi to pull back from Libya's support for the Palestinian and other anti-imperialist struggles.

The latest U.S. probe involved the dispatch of four AWACS radar planes to Egypt, along with the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Nimitz* to Libyan waters in the Gulf of Sidra. In August 1981 carrier-based U.S. aircraft shot down two Libyan planes over the Gulf of Sidra.

U.S. officials claim that these moves were in response to the discovery by Egyptian intelligence agencies several weeks ago that Qaddafi was plotting to overthrow the tottering regime of Gaafar el-Nimeiry in the Sudan.

Qaddafi has categorically denied this charge, stating that any revolution in the Sudan will be carried out by the Sudanese people.

According to Washington's story, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak asked Reagan to respond to the discovery of Qaddafi's plot by rushing the AWACS planes to Egypt to scan the skies for Libyan warplanes. Egyptian officials, however, deny they ever asked for the AWACS to be sent to their country. Moreover, they state they never believed there was any real evidence of a Libyan plot to overthrow Nimeiry.

Defense Minister Abdel Halim Abu Gharzala told reporters February 20 that he had not seen "any signs of a crisis or a possible aggression on Sudan at present."

Regarding the U.S. threats against Libya, one Egyptian official tried to take his verbal distance from Washington's policies, stating his country "has nothing to do with what the United States or other parties is doing."

The Libyan news agency Jana reported that demonstrations were held throughout Libya to protest the "provocations of the U.S. Sixth

Fleet" and the slander of Libyan involvement in a coup against Nimeiry.

Unable to provoke the Libyan government into an adventure that would give Washington an excuse for further military intervention, Secretary of State George Shultz announced the retirement of the latest frame-up of Libya in a February 20 television interview.

Dripping with racist arrogance, Shultz stated that, "at least for the moment, Qaddafi is back in his box where he belongs."

Since the alleged threat had receded, he explained, Washington will pull back the four AWACS February 22, and withdraw the U.S.S. *Nimitz* from the Gulf of Sidra.

Over the past three years, the Reagan administration has leveled a steady barrage of unsubstantiated charges, backed up with threats, against Qaddafi.

He was accused of preparing an invasion of the Sudan in October 1981. Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig initially claimed Qaddafi was behind the assassination of Egyptian President Sadat.

The administration provided reams of copy for sensationalist newspapers with its claim that Qaddafi had sent "hit squads" to the United States to murder President Reagan. Libya was also supposed to be the center of a world terrorist conspiracy.

Washington has used these claims to justify its military buildup in the Middle East and to impose economic sanctions against Libya.

The latest manufactured crisis fits into a pattern. Without evidence, Washington charges that Libya is planning some terrible thing. It threatens military action if that thing is done. And when that thing is not done, in this case the invasion of the Sudan, Washington boasts to the American people that U.S. military muscle has contributed to world peace and stability.

As Secretary of State Shultz put it this time around, "the president of the United States acted quickly and decisively and effectively." □

On the Atlantic Coast war front

People of Puerto Cabezas mobilize against U.S. threat

By Michael Baumann

PUERTO CABEZAS — If the week-long U.S.-Honduran show of military force just north of here was intended to spread fear and demoralization, this correspondent can personally testify that Pentagon planners were handed a big disappointment.

On Nicaragua's northern Atlantic Coast, the area closest to the site of the maneuvers, the reaction among the population demonstrated how deep opposition runs to U.S. intervention. This includes among the Miskito Indians whom Reagan is so fond of portraying as "victims" of the revolution.

Several thousand Nicaraguan Miskitos, English-speaking Blacks, and other, Spanish-speaking coast residents marched together through the streets here February 1 to protest the opening of the maneuvers.

Chanting slogans in all three languages, nearly one quarter of the city's population marched to protest the presence of more than 5,000 U.S. and Honduran troops 60 miles to the north.

The response was particularly noteworthy since the Atlantic Coast is the area where the Sandinistas have historically been the weakest, and where the counterrevolutionaries have had the greatest success in sowing confusion among the population.

Protests against the U.S.-Honduran maneuvers continued the following night. Neighborhood bonfires made of scrap tires were lit — a tradition of the Sandinista Revolution against Somoza. Again, speeches, songs, and slogans were in all three languages.

Particularly warm greetings were extended to a visiting delegation of 26 U.S. citizens who had come to the area to join the protest, as a representation of the great majority of the American people who oppose U.S. military intervention in Central America.

The U.S. visitors, of whom this correspondent was one, were able to see firsthand some of the impact of Washington's war against the Nicaraguan people.

Organized by actor Drew Katzman, the group included a number of people who work in the U.S. film industry as well as representatives of antiwar and religious organizations. Argentine novelist Julio Cortázar and Salvadoran poet Claribel Alegria also took part.

Our arrival at Bizmuna, the scheduled observation site 10 miles south of the border, was delayed for a day by heavy fighting. Two hundred counterrevolutionaries, armed with U.S.-supplied mortars and artillery, attacked the village.

Six Sandinista soldiers were killed in the battle, seven were wounded. No medical facilities are available in the area, and the same

flights that flew us in carried the wounded out.

Several of the huts that had been prepared for us to sleep in were burned to the ground.

Bizmuna is by no stretch of the imagination a military target. A former Miskito settlement, its huts had stood empty for more than a year. For their own safety, the villagers were among the thousands evacuated to a new settlement, Tasba Pry, 100 miles further in the interior.

Not all members of the visiting U.S. group had previously been convinced of the necessity for moving the civilian population out of the area. Their views changed, particularly after hitting the trenches in a midnight alert. During our stay, renewed fighting took place a few miles to the east, leaving seven Nicaraguan soldiers wounded.

In five days spent sharing the lives of the Sandinista border guards and reserve battalions

— both of which are all-volunteer forces — we were able to see for ourselves the depth of commitment of these young fighters.

This is one of the most remote areas of Central America, with access only by river or small biplanes capable of landing without a runway. Conditions are harsh. Supplies are scarce.

The emergency mobilization of forces to meet both the maneuvers and the increasing *contra* attacks had clearly stretched supply lines even tighter.

We saw an entire reserve unit of volunteers that did not have pots to cook in. Their only food consisted of meat from stray cattle and fruit picked from abandoned orchards. The river provided their only water for bathing and drinking.

Although it rains here 10 months of the year, we did not see a single soldier with raingear. Several soldiers had combat boots but no socks — a recipe for torment in an area infested with *garrapata*, a voracious cattle tick that can make you forget about the mosquitos. In a situation of military emergency, these are the conditions that tens of thousands of young Nicaraguans volunteer to fight in and perhaps sacrifice their lives to defend the revolution. □

Coffee harvest the largest ever

Volunteers defeat counterrevolutionary sabotage

By Jane Harris

MATAGALPA — "Whose victory is this?" asked Commander Jaime Wheelock, minister of agrarian reform. He was speaking to a celebration of 11,000 people from all over the country. They had just been demobilized February 5, after two months of volunteer work on the coffee harvest.

The victory that Wheelock was referring to was that this year's coffee crop had not only been saved, but had been the largest ever — more than seven million tons. In mid-December it became clear that if all forces were not mobilized immediately to pick coffee, a large part of Nicaragua's largest cash crop would be lost.

"The victory is that the coffee has been harvested. But whose victory is it?" Wheelock continued.

"It is a victory for the people," he answered, "but this victory is going to mean the well-being of the people and it is going to mean the accomplishment of a revolutionary responsibility; at the same time, the happiness that goes with that accomplishment."

Furthermore, he explained, it was a victory because the counterrevolutionaries, who had attacked the coffee pickers continuously, kidnapping dozens and killing eight workers, had been defeated in their efforts to sabotage the harvest.

At the celebration, vanguard brigades and individual coffee pickers were singled out for special awards. Among them was Mario Bar-

reda, whose parents were kidnapped during the harvest. A single mother with five children was also honored and cited as an example of the revolutionary Nicaraguan woman.

Wheelock used his address to explain the world economic picture to the 11,000 volunteers. After contributing two months of hard work to the reconstruction of Nicaragua's economy, they listened attentively to the 70-minute speech.

Wheelock described the sharp drop in production in the imperialist countries, the high level of unemployment, the billions of dollars of foreign debt owed by Latin American countries, and the dramatically lower prices received for crops grown in Latin America.

"To give you an example, if we could sell today's coffee harvest at 1979 prices, we would get \$280 million. However, selling the harvest at today's prices we are barely going to get \$150 million; that is to say, only about half the price."

On the brighter side, Wheelock described the tremendous growth in production of basic foodstuffs needed for internal consumption, as well as the growth of export crops. However, he pointed out that for all its exports this year, Nicaragua would only take in \$460 million, whereas in 1979 prices, the figure would have been \$740 million.

Wheelock described at length the camaraderie that developed in the coffee fields over the course of the two months. He said that

one 87-year-old canecutter, who had lost a son in the war, had gone with the Sandinista Youth organization to pick coffee and felt "reborn" in Matagalpa because of the gratitude that was shown him by the volunteers from all over the country.

The old man was among those who received vanguard awards. Inspired by the experience, he told *Intercontinental Press*, "I'm going home now, but I'm ready to do anything the Sandinista leadership asks me to do."

The conditions volunteers experienced on the *fincas* were a far cry from what they were used to in the cities where most came from. They slept on the floor and ate rice and beans

three times a day for 60 days. After New Year's Day, on some *fincas* the large number of volunteers stretched thin the distribution of beans. They had to make do with rice alone.

Referring to the conditions in the countryside that the volunteers had coped with, Wheelock predicted that they would hate Somozaism and imperialism even more; that they would be better defenders of the revolution for what they had experienced.

But most important of all, he concluded, it was demonstrated that "the revolution has the capacity to mobilize the population for defense, for production, and for other revolutionary tasks — all at the same time." □

content. Another example of how the Cubans have advanced the struggle against imperialism through the Nonaligned Movement was their attempt to rally support for Argentina when it came under attack by British imperialism last April. Most recently, there was the special session of nonaligned ministers held in Managua, Nicaragua, January 10–15. That meeting approved an explicit denunciation of U.S. intervention in Central America.

With the approach of the New Delhi meeting, Washington and its allies are hoping to push back some of the gains that have been made as a result of Cuba's leadership. Nossiter, in the *New York Times* article quoted earlier, approvingly cites "passages critical of both superpowers" in the document that has been drafted for the upcoming summit. For instance, the Indian draft attacks "the inflexible positions adopted by the most powerful nuclear weapons states," and calls for a bilateral nuclear freeze.

Because of the character of the Nonaligned Movement as an organization of nations oppressed by imperialism, evenhanded criticism of "the two superpowers" has always been the way the right wing of the movement has attempted to push its line.

By focusing on this aspect of the Indian draft, Nossiter is also attempting to drive a wedge between the Indian government and the wing of the movement led by Cuba. The Indian government has, in fact, protested publicly against Washington's attempts to split the Nonaligned Movement.

However, whatever kind of initial draft the Indian government presents to the New Delhi meeting, the character of the document that finally emerges from the gathering will be determined by the overall relationship of forces in the Nonaligned Movement and the pressures that the participating governments are under from working people in their own countries.

Since the 1979 meeting of the nonaligned countries, the imperialists have scored one big victory through Israel's invasion of Lebanon, although at tremendous political cost. But the socialist revolution is continuing its advance in Central America. The peoples of Indochina have made important gains in their struggle against imperialist aggression. In southern Africa, Zimbabwe has been established as an independent country. And the people of the entire world have lived through three years of the deepest economic and social crisis since the 1930s.

We can expect to see a proliferation of propaganda pieces such as Nossiter's as the New Delhi summit gets underway. But it will take more than propaganda to change the objective situation that the imperialists face. As a system of world domination, imperialism is weaker than at any time in its history, and a larger percentage of humanity than ever before understands that this system of class and national oppression can and must be fought. Until that reality is changed, the Nonaligned Movement will continue to be a thorn in Washington's side. □

FEATURES

Nonaligned summit meeting

Imperialists sigh with relief as Cuban presidency ends

By David Frankel

New Delhi, India, will host the Seventh Summit Meeting of Nonaligned Countries on March 7–11. The New Delhi gathering will mark the end of Fidel Castro's three-and-a-half-year presidency of the Nonaligned Movement — a fact that is already producing sighs of relief in Washington and other imperialist capitals.

A front-page article in the February 6 *New York Times* expressed the hopes of U.S. policymakers with the headline: "3d-World Group Appears to Ease Radical Stance." The article, by Bernard Nossiter, argued that the main document that has been drafted for the New Delhi meeting reflects "a move from radical to more moderate leadership" because it "implicitly blames the Soviet Union as well as the United States for most of the world's tensions."

When the Cubans assumed the presidency of the Nonaligned Movement at its Sixth Summit Meeting, held in Havana in September 1979, there was no dramatic change in the formal positions of the movement. Support for national liberation movements such as the ones in southern Africa, and for the rights of the Palestinian people, were already part of the movement's program.

But under Cuban leadership these positions were advanced in a new way. To begin with, the anti-imperialist positions of the Nonaligned Movement were no longer blunted by condemnations — implicit or explicit — of the Soviet Union. Imperialism was the enemy.

As Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez explained in a January 1982 interview (see following article), Cuba's nonalignment "is not a 'neutral' nonalignment. . . . We do not at all believe in neutralism."

"We are nonaligned in Cuba," Rodríguez explained, "because we have no military pact, because we are fighting to liquidate the blocs. But in the historic contradictions between



Castro speaking before United Nations October 12, 1979, on behalf of Nonaligned movement.

capitalism and socialism, we try to orient not only our small piece of land, but also all those we can influence, toward socialism."

Rodríguez gave the example of how Castro filled in the vague idea of a new international economic order with specific anti-imperialist

An interview on Cuba's foreign policy

'We should make history move toward socialism'

[The following interview with Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez appeared in the January 29, 1982, issue of *Révolution*, a magazine published by the French Communist Party. The interview, conducted by Jean Lamore, has been translated from French by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Question. In the face of the Reagan administration's threats of blockades and aggression against Cuba, the Cuban people have again mobilized to ensure their defense. Under these conditions, it is vital for the Cuban government to lay out or reaffirm its positions on the big questions of international politics. If you agree, let's begin with the way in which Cuba views peaceful coexistence.

Answer. This is indeed vital: I want, therefore, to repeat that we believe in peaceful coexistence. But it is necessary to understand it in a dialectical manner, meaning a coexistence that does not mean a halt to the struggle. Cuba does not envision a neutral coexistence. This means that the day the problems between Cuba and the United States are ironed out, with an exchange of ambassadors and sales of Cuban sugar to the United States, we will not stop being anti-imperialists.

To live in peace, to reject resorting to war to solve problems, yes, but while remaining aware that the problems exist. We are ready to live in peace with the United States, but in the context of respect. We are for cultural, athletic, and scientific exchanges. We are not hostile to ideological exchanges on common problems, but never forgetting that we are socialists and they are imperialists. We will be in solidarity, not with the U.S. bankers, but with the workers, not with the minority of racists, but with the Black, Chicano, and Latin American majorities.

Q. But in the event of overall negotiations between the two "Great Powers" . . .

A. In speaking of Cuba, we must keep in mind special, historic circumstances.

We have always maintained that if the tensions between the USSR and the United States become sharper, our own situation becomes more dangerous. But the opposite is not true: if the tensions between the two Great Powers disappear or diminish, that does not mean that relations between the United States and Cuba are going to get better. On the contrary, within the framework of certain global negotiations, relations between the United States and Cuba could worsen.

At this moment what do we have? We face a person who believes that the Caribbean is an

American lake, a *mare nostrum*. We face a person who cannot conceive that something might impede the "American destiny," someone who cannot accept the existence of a Fidel Castro who rejects the "American doctrine." He considers Fidel a "monster" who must be eliminated.

So for now we don't see possibilities for agreements in the short run. For our part, our principles remain unchanged: we are ready to negotiate whenever the Americans want to.

Q. OK, but for Cuba, what is "negotiable" and what is not?

A. As I said, we must negotiate on the basis of mutual respect, by beginning with the elimination of an embargo, since that is a real sword of Damocles hanging over our heads. We want to be respected.

If we can have trade with them, we will carry on trade. If we cannot do it, too bad: we have trade with Europe, Japan, Canada, Latin America, and we can live without the United States. We have shown that. But they must not prevent us from trading with others. In other words, they must respect us! These are the bases of a possible accord.

But it seems to us that on ideological grounds Mr. Reagan would not be able to accept it. In sum, we view the future from a pessimistic perspective in the short run, and an optimistic one in the long run.

We are pessimistic in the short run because we are convinced that there is a real danger of world war, nuclear war. In our view of international relations, this figures as one of the elements of the situation. To the extent that this threat disappears, to the extent that we pass from confrontation to negotiation, then our historic optimism would reappear, even if Reagan maintains his aggressive attitude toward Cuba. Reagan's political and economic principles lead him unavoidably toward failure. He will run aground.

So, in order to negotiate — mutual respect. On the other hand, we cannot negotiate principles (Fidel made this point in closing his report to the Second [Cuban Communist Party] Congress). What does that mean? That means, for example, that at a particular time Cuba might withdraw from Africa. But this withdrawal would not be the result of negotiations with the United States. This must be a decision by the Angolans, the Ethiopians, etc.

This does not mean that we are always going to remain in Africa. We don't want to remain forever because the cost to us in effort is too great for our capabilities. But our withdrawal will not be dictated to us by the Americans.

Our solidarity with Latin America is not

negotiable either. We can — as we are doing in El Salvador — support a political solution in lieu of an armed solution. But we do it because we think, in accord with the revolutionary forces of El Salvador, that that's the best solution for the Salvadoran people, and not because the Americans want to prevent a solution through arms.

Q. Where is Cuba's foreign policy decided? In other words, have the exceptional relations between Cuba and the USSR made Cuba a "satellite country" as some have written, or is there a specific character to Cuban policy?

A. Exceptional is the word: we must in fact stress the exceptional character of these relations. Because the most important thing is that the Soviets have never tried to impose a solution on us or demanded that we adopt an attitude incompatible with our own situation and our own interests. They have treated us as equals and that is exceptional in relations between a big country and a little one.

So, on the character of our cooperation: you said it, many people write erroneous things. They figure that because 60 percent of our trade is with the USSR, this leads to the same situation as when, earlier, 70 percent or 80 percent of Cuba's trade was with the United States. And they tell us "you are dependent on the Soviet Union."

That's obvious, in one sense. But it is an interdependence characteristic of present international relations. If, for example, you removed Britain's ties with the United States, the British economy would go bankrupt. But the most interesting thing is that previously, the entire economic policy of the United States was aimed at preventing Cuba's economic independence.

To take an example: one day the idea arose of setting up a mill to convert wheat to flour here in Regla, on the other side of Havana Bay. This nearly cost us our sugar exports because a senator from Florida stated that it was incompatible with the interests of the owners of U.S. flour mills, and that we had to buy flour, not wheat, from the United States. So, no factory in Cuba.

Similarly, it was out of the question for us to produce rice, because the Americans were opposed. All this was aimed at keeping our economy subsidiary, without the least industrialization.

Well, what did the Soviets do in Cuba? They promoted industrialization. Some have charged that the Soviets had an interest in making sure that no one found oil in Cuba, to keep Cuba at their mercy. The truth is that they sweat buckets under our sun to try to find oil in

Cuba, and they will surely find it one day. They have furnished us with factories to produce steel, cement, etc. These are our relations.

People reproach us for having convergent views with the USSR. Certainly — because we have the same compass, which is Marxism-Leninism. If you use the same diagnostic tool, you usually arrive at the same conclusions.

But there are variations. We do not, for example, have the same views on the treaty on nonproliferation of atomic weapons. The Soviets have signed it and call on others to sign, which we understand from their standpoint. But we have not signed it because 90 miles from our shores we have the United States armed with atomic weapons.

This does not necessarily mean that we want to have these weapons, but we do not want to renounce the right to have them. So there are numerous aspects of concrete policy where there are differences between the Soviet and Cuban positions, stemming not from conflicts, but from what you have called the specific character of Cuban policy.

Q. Of the broad principles that guide Cuban foreign policy, it seems that anti-imperialism dominates all the others. Is this correct?

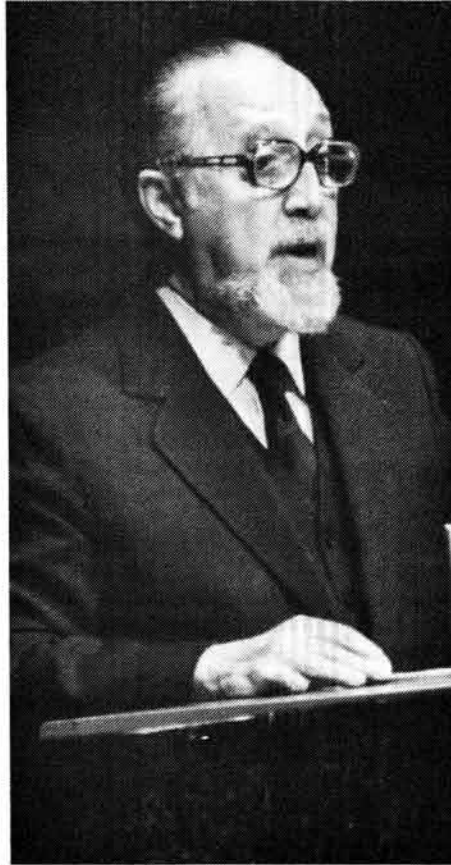
A. The first principle of the Cuban revolution is to work for socialism. This is the fundamental strategic line. Naturally, anti-imperialism flows from the very nature of the revolution, which was antioligarchic and anti-imperialist: if it had been otherwise, we would not have been able to make a socialist revolution.

So I think that anti-imperialism not only goes hand in hand with the building of the nation, but that the building of the nation proceeds through anti-imperialism. [José] Martí had already seen this in his own way — although he did not describe imperialism the way Lenin later did. But Martí realized that the establishment of an independent Cuba could only take place through liberation, not just from Spain, but also from the United States. To become a national Cuba, a Cuban Cuba, Cuba had to liberate itself from the American imperialist yoke.

Q. Is the Latin American aspect of the Cuban revolution still so important? To what extent is there a commonality of interests between Cuba and the Caribbean and Latin America? To what extent does Cuba have a real influence in these areas?

A. The Latin American aspect of the Cuban revolution is very strong. I remember a very sharp argument I had in 1950 with [Roger] Garaudy [a onetime leader of the French Communist Party who later became a "Eurocommunist"]; he had discovered the Americas and arrived very impregnated with Western ideas. He set himself to combating the references that we were making to Latin America viewed as a whole.

Garaudy, who ended up defending the idea of "Europe," did not accept the idea that we could be Latin Americans. And I tried to explain to him that even in its diversity there was a universal aspect to Latin America, that while one could not say that Cuba and Mexico were



CARLOS RAFAEL RODRÍGUEZ

identical, nonetheless very intimate relations exist that derive from historical events, from situations built up over time within the framework of a struggle for independence, with a common enemy, etc.

The reality is that we are *first of all* Latin Americans. But also Latin Africans, and I do not say Latin Asians because the moment has not yet arrived. But we also feel, despite our cultural differences, a connection with the interests of the peoples of Asia.

Of course, at this time, we are again a little cut off from Latin America. But it is very curious — and I have personally experienced this feeling — that in the Latin American assemblies like CEPAL [Economic Commission for Latin America], SELA [Latin American Economic System], etc., even our enemies expect us to speak with the "voice of Latin America," because they do not dare to speak with the "voice of Latin America."

They hope that Cuba will lead the battle that they dare not lead, and there is often even mutual sympathy, cordial exchanges, since often these are honest officials who serve dishonest governments. It turns out that they tell

us their ideas so that we can express them.

Q. Jamaica, following Washington's injunctions, has just broken with Cuba. By contrast, Brazil refused to align itself with Reagan's aggressive policies. Is there a change in the U.S. influence over the countries of Latin America?

A. Historically, in this regard, we are optimists, even though Jamaica broke its relations with us, thereby returning to the situation of the 1960s. But Latin America is not going to follow the paths that U.S. imperialism has traced out for it.

The case of Brazil is actually very interesting. For a long time, Brazil was a big satellite of the United States. But the abnormal development, the deformed growth of the Brazilian economy gave birth to obvious contradictions. And the historic factors that separate Brazil from the United States and that draw together the people of Latin America with Portuguese-speaking Africa are much larger than the similar positions Brazil might have had with the United States in the Southern Cone. Today, this role has disappeared, because Brazil thinks of its own interests. One can say the same thing about all of Latin America. There are changes.

The Jamaican case? What took place? Reagan invited, or rather ordered, this Mr. [Edward] Seaga to break relations with Cuba. Seaga could have done it right after his election. Why didn't he do it? Because he realized that this was not proper.

Today, he breaks with Cuba, but at the same time asks the Soviet Union to implement the contract it signed with [former Prime Minister Michael] Manley to import Jamaican bauxite, which the United States does not want it to buy.

In reality, the United States does not have a viable solution for Latin America. Reagan proposes private enterprise and the multinationals as a remedy. But since this is the remedy that Latin America has taken since 1890, the Latin Americans end up realizing that it has only retarded, deformed their economy, and increased poverty.

At least Kennedy offered something, a reformist policy, and Rockefeller also offered some changes. But what does Reagan offer? Those who, like Seaga, agree to be his valets, can only commit political suicide. Seaga has just broken with us and at the same time asks that the Cuban doctors stay in Jamaica. That's really strange! This is new, and this clearly shows that this type of servant of imperialism is condemned to disappear.

We do not consider the Caribbean and Central America as an area of special influence because we do not see international political life from the point of view of influence or lack of influence. Now, if one defines the Cuban influence as a body of ideas represented by the revolution, we can accept that.

As a result of the revolution, our country always embodies a series of principles and certain ways to solve problems. And, of course,

the situation in Central America readily lends itself to this, because the structures there are very similar to those that we had in 1959. The types of economic domination are the same.

Cuba's influence will therefore be more easily felt in Jamaica, Grenada, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, than in Argentina. But what we represent will have a certain value in Brazil and Argentina, despite a different economic history.

At this time, if the Brazilian revolutionaries know how to take advantage of the present situation marked by the monopolistic concentration of capital, the Brazilian revolution could be closer than one might think and the future of Latin America could be completely different in the short run. That depends on the Brazilians, and we wish them success.

Q. For several years a sea of ink has been used to write about the Cuban policy in Africa. Can you tell us about this policy in order to point out, with some background, its real character?

A. It is clear that within the framework of the international solidarity that we practice, Africa occupies a special place, and for well-known historical and traditional reasons. People here feel their African roots in the color of their skins.

Moreover, we see Africa as one of the basic theaters of the battle between development and underdevelopment, between independence and imperialism. Since the beginning we have had a sense of solidarity with Africa, and that commitment has led us to more serious commitments in Angola and in Ethiopia.

Some think that we are in Angola and in Ethiopia "to pay back so-and-so" or "at the service of so-and-so." We have categorically stated in recent years that our solidarity in Africa is governed by the very clear principle that it is the people who make revolutions. One does not export revolution, and we are not in Africa to make anyone's revolution.

We are in Africa quite simply to defend the national independence of two countries that have asked for our aid in this regard. We have never intervened in the internal problems of Angola — or Eritrea, where we have never had a military presence.

Similarly, high British and French officials constantly repeated that they feared that Cuba might place the strength of its thousands of men in Angola and in Ethiopia at the service of Zimbabwe's independence. We said that Cuba would not intervene in the affairs of Zimbabwe, and now we say the same thing about Namibia: the independence of Namibia is the business of SWAPO and Namibian forces. We may have thousands of soldiers close by, but they are not there to liberate Namibia. They are there to prevent South Africa from invading Angola.

That is the very clear principle of our policy in Africa. This principle also governs the attitude we have regarding all the peoples who, like us, are emerging from underdevelopment. Our cooperation is provided free when they

don't have resources to pay for it, and they provide us with modest compensation when that is possible for them. We are a small country and we cannot maintain thousands of technicians abroad with our own resources.

Angola pays for a portion of our technical assistance. Libya, Iraq pay for it because they have the means. This civilian, technical, and economic solidarity is a very important aspect of our internationalism.

Q. Cuba has become leader of the nonaligned countries and defends the principle of "committed nonalignment," which some, like the Yugoslavs, challenge and others don't understand well.

A. Our nonalignment, you are completely correct, is not a "neutral" nonalignment. For us, nonalignment is a historic thrust embodied in our conception of the historical process.

What is the difference that we have with the Yugoslavs? If one views history from a Marxist point of view, one acknowledges that it is necessary to make history move toward socialism, because nothing moves toward anything on its own. We should make history move toward socialism.

That is why one cannot be "neutral" between what are called the "blocs." It is necessary to recognize the existence of the blocs. There is a military pact on one side and a military pact on the other. The NATO Pact led to the one called the Warsaw Pact. It is necessary to struggle for the disappearance of these blocs. But this does not mean that for us it makes no difference whether the United States has superiority or whether the socialist bloc has superiority.

We are nonaligned in Cuba because we have no military pact, because we are fighting to liquidate the blocs. But, in the historic contradictions between capitalism and socialism, we try to orient not only our small piece of land, but also all those we can influence, toward socialism.

There is, in fact, a big polemic taking place on the principles of nonalignment. I think that Cuba's principal contribution was Fidel Castro's exposé at the United Nations [see *IP*, Oct. 22, 1979], to which we should add the speech he made to the meeting of the Interparliamentary Union in Havana in 1981 [see *IP*, Oct. 26 and Nov. 2, 1981]. Starting from the principle that there should be negotiations there rather than confrontation, he presented a program that undoubtedly resembles the idea of a new international economic order. But it is more integrated, more consistent, in establishing the basis and even a possible financial plan for a common fight. He also showed that it was possible to achieve this program with the support of progressive forces in the capitalist countries, including certain capitalist governments, and of course, with the participation of the socialist countries.

We want to state our differences with certain members of the movement who want to make it a neutralist movement. We do not at all believe in neutralism. The movement of the

nonaligned is heterogeneous; there are divisions. It was born heterogeneous. It became increasingly heterogeneous.

Moreover, there is a problem regarding the nature of countries accepted as new members. The movement is on a path where it is becoming increasingly synonymous with the totality of countries on the road to development.

This has negative repercussions because it increases the specific weight within the movement of countries that are in a state of underdevelopment because they are led by governments that do not sincerely fight to get out of it. This makes the struggle more difficult: those who want to make the movement into an appendage of imperialism are working against the interests of the nonaligned.

Although no one could say, for example, that Algeria or India or Nigeria are in Moscow's orbit, we consider them to be countries that — like Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, or Mozambique — have another concept of nonalignment. They want the movement of nonaligned to become an instrument for peace and coexistence.

These then are the basic forces coexisting within the nonaligned. The differences could be resolved through a split. But that would not be the best solution. If the vanguard contributes to breaking up the movement, it will lose its strength. The important thing is that the group of vanguard countries maintain their cohesion and extend their political influence in the movement.

Q. It would be worthwhile to focus on the Cuban government's position regarding the idea of the "new international economic order," which is now advanced by many non-socialist countries.

A. The new international economic order is a starting point. When we approach it, we must remember the old Leninist distinction between reformists and revolutionaries. All of them, reformists and revolutionaries, support reforms. But reformism makes reforms into an end, while the revolutionaries make them into a starting point toward the revolution.

Many people see this new international economic order as an end in itself, within a reformist perspective. We look at it from a revolutionary vantage point because we know that when everything the "new order" calls for is achieved, the contradiction between imperialism and national independence, between capitalism and socialism will remain. In fact, there is a lot of idealism in the new international economic order. It is a catchall into which each person throws their own projects and aspirations. If one reads the resolutions of the nonaligned, or those of the United Nations, one sees that this is not a consistent program but a sum of aspirations without a precise orientation. Some of our comrades want to denounce that. For our part we don't do that because what is involved is an inconsistent, but progressive program.

Our point of view is therefore very realistic:

we are supporters of the new international economic order in general. We know that one cannot obtain all of it through negotiation, but we support negotiations as an element of the historic reform-revolution dialectic.

Q. In your personal opinion, after 22 years of the Cuban revolution, what do you think most faithfully characterizes this revolution's domestic and foreign policy?

A. In our revolution there is undoubtedly a powerful "moral" ingredient. It is a certain ethical sense that basically comes to it from

José Martí. This way of approaching problems does not make the revolution a "moral" revolution detached from the material base, but reconciles and harmonizes the fundamental elements of any revolution with their ethical principles.

That is why no one can say that our revolution easily accepts the idea that the ends justify the means. And Fidel always expresses this very firmly: one must never forget the character of the means themselves. This is fundamental and, in both international and national policy, is a constant that characterizes the Cuban revolution. □

Cuba

José Martí's ideas still relevant

Cuban leader on national liberation and socialism

By Mike Taber

Delegates from 89 countries attended a seminar held in Havana December 14-16 to discuss the ideas of the great 19th century Cuban revolutionary José Martí and his relevance today.

Martí, Cuba's national hero, was born 130 years ago in January 1853. A leading intellectual, he was the founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Party and led the 1895 uprising against Spanish rule. He was killed in battle that same year.

Jesús Montané, a member of the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Cuba and head of its General Department of Foreign Relations, gave the opening address to the seminar. Montané's speech was printed in the January 9, 1983, *Granma Weekly Review*.

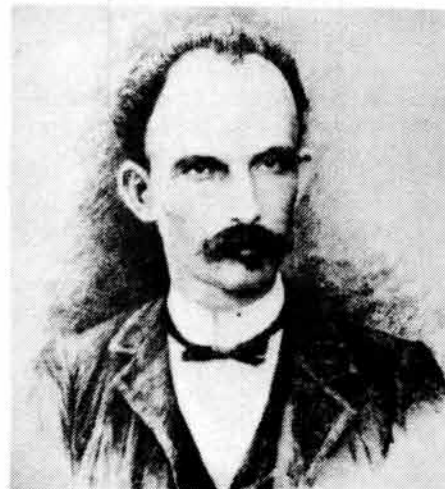
One of the milestones in the fight against the Batista dictatorship in Cuba was the 1953 attack on the Moncada Garrison, led by Fidel Castro and Abel Santamaría. A veteran of that action, Montané spoke of Martí's influence on the young people who participated in it, and how the survivors of that unsuccessful attack studied Martí's works when they were in prison.

'An ideology from very beginning'

Montané also mentioned some of the misconceptions that exist about the political development of that generation of Cuban revolutionaries. "Some say that Fidel and those of us with him had no defined ideology," he stated. "Others say that the leader of the Revolution and his closest comrades were simply liberal democrats. . . .

"Even today there are those who, while friendly to our country, echo the version according to which the cause for the Cuban Revolution's having taken the socialist path is to be found in the hostile policy of harassment and aggression implemented by successive U.S. administrations."

"Our Revolution did have an ideology from



JOSÉ MARTÍ

the very beginning. The reason we did not reveal it as a form of doctrine or theory was due, as Fidel has often explained, to a series of political and tactical considerations and to our innermost conviction that we should devote all our energies to the struggle itself and to the unity of all revolutionaries around concrete objectives."

"What ignorance and prejudice prevented our people from understanding in other circumstances, life itself enabled them to understand when their eyes were opened to reality. The revolutionary struggle became a vast school of ideology for millions of our workers and humble people. The ideology that was our guide even before the Moncada, the ideology in which the leaders of our movement sought the answers to understand and transform the situation in Cuba, could be none other than the ideology of the working class, the ideology of socialism, integrally linked to the most advanced Cuban patriotic and revolutionary thought." □

Montané went on to pose a question: "Was it possible to take up Martí's thought and at the same time embrace the universally just ideas of socialism? For us there has never been the slightest contradiction between the one and the other. . . . A profound and dialectical continuity is what united Martí's Revolution with the Revolution that our people are now building and defending. Both are, essentially, one and the same Revolution."

In examining the Cuban independence struggle of the 19th century, Montané pointed out that the Cuban working class was not then in a position to take the lead. The fight for independence "was, thus, to be carried out by the middle classes in the urban and rural areas. José Martí was the most fitting and radical representative of the revolutionary feelings of these classes and a pillar of revolutionary strength, in contrast with the usual unstable, vacillating nature of leaders of the petit bourgeoisie."

Nevertheless, Martí recognized that "the cause of national sovereignty could only be taken up by first taking a stand on the social problems and taking up the cause of the great mass of the nation's poor and dispossessed."

Martí saw U.S. threat

Martí was also one of the first to recognize the threat of U.S. imperialism to Cuba's independence. "While some illustrious Latin American politicians were still dreaming of copying U.S. formulas to eliminate the caudillism, provincialism and backwardness of Spanish America," Montané explained, "Martí was a horrified witness to the inner inequality, intolerance, racism, exploitation, social struggles and political wheeling and dealing that existed in the United States."

"Paradoxically as it may seem," Montané continued, "the frustration of Cuba's independence in 1898 projected Martí's thought onto subsequent generations, as a dream yet to be fulfilled, as an aspiration for which it was worth fighting. The postponed tasks of national liberation and the new tasks of class liberation of workers exploited by capitalism and imperialism became one in history. The patriotic and anti-imperialist struggles and the workers' and peasants' battles against their oppressors became one. Only this time the struggle no longer lay within a strictly national framework. The independence of our country would have been unattainable without the closest ties with the world revolutionary movement."

"Today, armed with a vanguard ideology and a truly scientific concept of the world, we are carrying forward the program that Martí was unable to complete. We are validating his most profound and lofty aspirations."

At the conclusion of the three-day seminar, a declaration in solidarity with the Cuban revolution was adopted along with a statement condemning the U.S. government's plan to set up a counterrevolutionary and proimperialist radio station directed at Cuba and misnamed Radio Martí. □

Teachers face fierce attack

80,000 strikers defy union-busting legislation

[The following is an editorial that appeared in the February 21 *Socialist Voice*, the weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the Revolutionary Workers League, the Canadian section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

As we go to press, Quebec's 80,000 teachers remain on the picket line — the 17th day of their illegal strike. By a margin of 64 percent, they have voted to defy union-busting legislation — Bill 111 — passed February 17 in the National Assembly by the Parti Québécois (PQ) government. Other public sector workers who went back to work may go back on strike against the bill. This response, in turn, has opened a major social crisis in Quebec. The PQ is threatening to call a general election on the question.

Quebec teachers are currently waging the most important battle in defense of union rights that Canada has seen in many years. The Quebec government's union-busting measures are a deadly threat to the rights of every unionist and every union across the country. The teachers deserve the support of the whole workers' movement, because they are fighting for us all. They need our active solidarity right now.

The scope of Bill 111 is unprecedented in North America. From the first day of defiance, teachers are subject to extremely heavy fines, up to \$200 per day. The unions face fines up to \$50,000 per day.

Workers' rights trampled

Teachers who "hinder" anyone returning to work (i.e. picket line activity) can be fired immediately. If the government of René Lévesque finds these measures aren't working, the bill allows it to fire teachers at the stroke of a pen, to cut three years' seniority from any teacher for each day of defiance, to suspend the automatic union dues checkoff for six months for each day the union leads the strike, and other measures.

To enforce these terms, the bill says unionists are considered guilty unless they can prove their innocence. To make this stick, Article 28 of the bill suspends the application of the Quebec Charter of Rights and Liberties to this law. It also invokes the infamous "notwithstanding" clause of the new Canadian Constitution giving provincial legislatures the power to suspend parts of the Canadian charter of rights for up to five years.

Bill 111 is the worst attack on democratic rights in Quebec and Canada since the imposition of the War Measures Act by Prime Minis-



Will Reissner/IP

Common Front march in Quebec City on January 29.

ter Elliot Trudeau in 1970. But the connection goes deeper than that. Trudeau gave Lévesque his marching orders for the antilabor offensive.

In a speech in Montreal, December 13, 1981, Trudeau denounced Quebec public sector workers as a "new bourgeoisie . . . which has enriched itself at the expense of the working classes, which uses public taxes to pay itself higher wages than public sector workers in other provinces." And he added, "It's been quite a payoff for the 'Québécois pride' of the Quebec union federations."

Following the speech, Trudeau and the banks teamed up to put the financial squeeze on Quebec. The federal government cut \$600 million in transfer payments to the province, used to finance social services, and the banks lowered Quebec's credit rating, charging higher interest on all its loans. The bankers threatened harsher measures unless the PQ government implemented further budget cuts.

Bill 111 reduces trade-union rights to nothing. By Bill 111, and bills 105 and 70 which preceded it, the right of public sector unions to negotiate and strike has been abolished, the workers have become little more than slaves,

with no possibility of defending themselves collectively against the bosses. It's a return to the reactionary era of former Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis. During the 20 years he ruled Quebec, until 1959, there were hardly any union rights in Quebec.

Common Front battle for union rights

The teachers' strike is a continuation of the struggle of Quebec's Common Front of 210,000 public sector workers in defense of basic union rights.

In December 1982, the Quebec National Assembly passed Bill 105, which unilaterally imposed contracts on public sector unions. It wiped out the right to strike or negotiate wages and working conditions for three years. It imposed severe wage cuts and a major deterioration in working conditions. Eleven thousand teaching positions will be cut, making a mockery of job security, imposing a much-increased workload on teachers, and putting the quality of education in jeopardy.

The Common Front was set up to fight these measures. The teachers went out on strike January 26. But the province's 82,000 hospital workers were forced back to work January 31 after one day on strike by the threat of measures like those now contained in Bill 111. Later in the week, 6,500 government professionals were likewise forced back to work.

But the teachers have hung firm. Speaking before a meeting of 4,000 members of the Montreal Teachers Alliance February 15, Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ) President Yvon Charbonneau recalled that in 1970 the unions were the main force able to stand up to the federal government's imposition of the War Measures Act and to roll it back. Today, he said, the unions are once again in the vanguard in defense of democracy.

Workers stand for democracy

There is a striking contrast between the undemocratic and repressive acts of the government and the democratic functioning of the striking teachers.

On the one side, there is the government, hidden away in its fortress (the National Assembly), surrounded by policemen.

On the other side, there are, for instance, the 4,000 Montreal Teachers Alliance members meeting into the early hours of the morning in Verdun Auditorium here February 15. After a long and democratic discussion, they decided by a 64 percent majority to continue the strike despite Bill 111.

The teachers have waged an exemplary fight, based on mobilization of their member-

ship: mass meetings, picket lines, demonstrations, strike bulletins, and daily ads in the newspapers.

As Yvon Charbonneau pointed out, it's in this type of democratic mass action that the future lies, the future of "a society where human rights are respected by the laws."

In its public statements, the CEQ has clearly drawn out the stakes in the struggle for the Quebec population as a whole. At issue is nothing less than the system of public education in Quebec.

It wasn't until 1964 that Quebec established a Ministry of Education. Prior to that time the church was responsible. The development of public education reduced the gap between the French-speaking Québécois and Quebec residents whose first language is English.

But the gap remains quite large. In 1978, only 10.2 percent of Quebec Francophones held university diplomas, as opposed to 23.4 percent of the Anglophones.

As alliance President Rodrigue Dubé emphasized in the meeting February 15, the PQ government has no mandate to destroy the

gains which Quebec workers have won through 20 years of struggle. It was elected to bring social progress and lead Quebec out of the straitjacket of confederation.

Today it is the teachers, not the government, who are fighting in the interests of the Québécois.

Full support for the teachers

At the meeting of the alliance, Yvon Charbonneau and Rodrigue Dubé made a strong appeal for the union movement and the population as a whole to back the teachers' struggle. It's a fundamental responsibility of every self-respecting worker. The Lévesque government's attack has serious consequences for the whole labor movement.

Union solidarity is beginning to develop. The Common Front has already received significant support from workers in English Canada.

The Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) executive recommended that the junior college (CEGEP) teachers, who are CSN members, defy the special law. The CSN

is calling on the population to support the teachers' picket lines. A one-day walkout of the 82,000 CSN hospital workers is being organized for February 21.

Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ) President Louis Laberge called the law "infamous, vile, iniquitous, appalling." He called on "every worker who has any guts to go to the picket lines, to reinforce the picket lines."

That's just what must be done. Now more than ever, industrial workers must support the teachers. If the Quebec government succeeds in crushing them, industrial workers will be next on the list.

In Quebec we must join the picket lines in force. All across Canada, it's time to vote resolutions of solidarity and send messages and financial aid to the teachers.

Everything possible must be done to help them win this historic battle.

Send messages and financial aid to: Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec, Yvon Charbonneau, President, 2336 Chemin Ste-Foy, Quebec, Quebec, Canada, G1Z 1S5.

France

Immigrant workers lead auto strikes

Stand up to racist campaign by Mitterrand government

By Duane Stilwell

The most important battles in 15 years have been taking place in the French automobile industry. Strikes and shop occupations hit two huge factories of the nationalized Renault Co. in Flins and Billancourt early in January, and lasted three weeks. Now other factories are following their example.

A relatively small number of workers, the majority of them immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East, took the lead in scoring important victories in the form of higher wages and improved working conditions. The gains they made will ultimately benefit all of the more than 100,000 hourly workers at Renault.

Throughout the strike the immigrant workers stood firm against a virulently racist media campaign that the government and the bosses used to try to isolate them from other French workers.

Immigrant workers the motor force

The combativity of the immigrant workers was the most important factor behind the unity of the different unions that organize auto workers. In France, where workers at a single plant can be organized by many different unions, united action by the unions is essential for any effective fight.

The two major unions involved in the Renault strikes are the General Confederation of

Labor (CGT), led by the French Communist Party (CP), and the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), which is under the influence of the French Socialist Party (SP). The SP currently heads the French government.

And it was the immigrant workers who moved the unions into action, despite the pro-government SP and CP leaders.

"The conflict at Flins and Billancourt has shown," wrote Michel Noblecourt in the January 27 *Le Monde*, "that the unions are not the masters of the game." He quotes a union official as saying that "it is the workers who unleashed the strike and they are the ones who must decide if they are going to return to work."

These indomitable workers, continues Noblecourt, "have imposed their own will." Speaking patronizingly of what he calls "the excesses of a rather maximalist rank and file," Noblecourt says "the unions" — he means their bureaucratic leadership — "have the formidable task of finding a solution without severing themselves irremediably from the strikers."

It is clear that the immigrant workers at Renault and other auto plants are seeking ways to utilize the power of these large unions to defend their interests, and are setting an important example for all French workers.

In an article in *Le Monde* on January 20,

Jean Benoit explains how meetings were being conducted every two hours by union delegates to keep workers informed of any developments in the negotiations: "On a microphone of the CFDT, a CGT representative harangues the strikers in French. His CFDT companion translates into Arabic. Placed almost side by side, the flags of the two organizations illustrate this unity in action that is so seldom seen at Flins."

Combativity against racism

Another crucial aspect of this struggle by immigrant workers to defend their standard of living from the ravages of inflation is their resolute fight against the racist campaign by the government and the employers.

Heading up this campaign against what he called the "uncontrollable" immigrant workers was Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy. In an interview published in the French daily *Nord Eclair*, Mauroy declared: "The most important difficulties that remain are those posed by the immigrant workers, whose problems I don't ignore but who, I must say, are stirred up by religious and political groups that are impelled by criteria that have little to do with French social realities."

Mauroy's charge that immigrant workers are being manipulated from the outside by "foreign interests" dovetails with the government's racist campaign against the Iranian rev-

olution, which includes propaganda against Muslims, and Shi'ite Muslims in particular. The French government, which has been in the forefront of the imperialist campaign to strengthen NATO's nuclear forces in Europe, has also sold more than \$4.1 billion in arms over the past two years to aid the Iraqi war of aggression against Iran.

The French CP and SP argue that it is wrong to elect the workers parties to head the government and to then go out on strike against that government. But the immigrant workers in France have been distrustful of President François Mitterrand's regime from the beginning. The immigrant workers know the history of previous social-democratic governments as staunch defenders of colonial domination in their countries of origin. And they know that they get the worst jobs, are subjected to discriminatory layoffs, and that they cannot rely on the government to defend them.

Because of their struggles, the immigrant workers have been fiercely attacked by the press, which has accused them of causing unemployment, of being greedy, and of not caring about the welfare of French society in general. They are also accused of blackmail and of "undermining the anti-inflationary policies" of the government.

But by waging a determined fight — and by winning a wage increase that shattered Mitterrand's austerity program — they not only cut through this racist campaign, but they have also showed what the unions can accomplish when their power is set in motion.

How the strike unfolded

On January 6, some 200 spray painters out of a paint shop of 1,000 went out on strike at Flins. They shut down production almost completely at the huge Renault factory that employs a total of 18,000 workers. Of these workers, 7,000 are immigrants of 26 different nationalities.

These spray painters, almost all of them from North Africa, did not limit their demands to the issue of discriminatory job classifications that affect them directly, but also demanded a wage increase of 300 francs a month for all of the workers in the plant. By the following Monday, four days later, more than 10,000 workers were put on layoff. This action was denounced by the CGT and the CFDT as a "scandalous antistrike lockout," and as an "unacceptable use of force by the bosses."

The day after the lockout was imposed, the Renault plant in Billancourt, which employs 5,000 workers, was also paralyzed by a strike. After a union representative held a meeting to explain the demands of the Flins spray painters and to ask for solidarity, dozens of spray painters and other paint shop workers at the Billancourt plant walked out calling for the same wage increases.

By January 20 the Flins strike, which continued to bottleneck production, was beginning to have an effect on the rest of the auto industry. Workers from different shops at other Renault plants, and at Citroën, Chausson and Fiat



Workers carry out shop occupation at Chausson factory.

plants, were going out on strike and slowing production down to a trickle. They also began putting forth their own demands.

On January 27 the management of Renault reached an agreement with all but one of the unions that organize workers at its Flins plant, and two days later the spray painters voted to return to work.

Important gains

The gains registered by this agreement are significant. The immigrant workers at the Renault plants not only wrested immediate gains from the company, but also hampered the efforts of the Mitterrand government to impose a strict austerity program on all French workers. Previous offers by the bosses of the nationalized industries were directly inspired by the government. In the case of Renault, wage increases for 1983 were to be limited to 7 percent, with an additional 1.5 percent tied to production quotas and worker efficiency.

The wage agreement won at Flins includes a wage increase of 8.25 percent for all workers and a clause to protect the purchasing power of that wage increase. If inflation rises by more than 8 percent, the company must negotiate a further increase in September. The Renault workers also got rid of the clause tying wages to worker productivity.

The Mitterrand government wants to keep French industry profitable in the midst of the current world economic crisis. That is why — besides holding wage increases down to 7 percent, well below the rate of inflation — it has also launched a big "buy French" campaign.

This campaign to "recapture the internal market" is designed to protect the profits of French industrialists. Through tariffs and import quotas, the government forces working people to buy French-made merchandise for a

higher price than similar merchandise available on the world market. The result is a lower standard of living for all French working people.

So these strikes and shop occupations unleashed by immigrant auto workers at Renault were seen as an important test by all French workers. These recent strikes have been the most important in the French auto industry since 1968, when 10 million workers went out on a general strike.

On that occasion the first factory occupations broke out at the Renault plants in Cléon, LeMans, Flins, and the Parisian suburb of Billancourt — the latter being the two factories that have been at the center of the latest struggles.

'A social victory'

Henri Krasucki, the general secretary of the CGT, was quoted in the Paris daily *Le Monde* of January 30-31 as saying that the agreement with Renault is "the best we have gotten from the company in 10 years," adding that it represents "an authentic social victory."

Now that the pace has been set by the Renault workers, others are following in their footsteps. Workers at the Chausson plant in Gennevilliers and at the Citroën plants in Saint-Ouen and Levallois are now on strike demanding a wage increase of 300 francs a month, the original demand of the Renault spray painters. Also, all French auto workers affected by lockouts are still fighting for back pay for the days of work they have lost, as well as against having to work on Saturdays to make up for lost production.

"How can I live," asked one of the immigrant workers on strike, "with 4,000 francs a month and five children? After 10 years at the factory, should I become a thief?"

Clearly not, if these workers have anything to say about it. □

Election statement by LCR

French Trotskyists announce joint campaign

[In January, the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR — the French section of the Fourth International) and Lutte Ouvrière (which also describes itself as Trotskyist) concluded an agreement to present joint lists of candidates for the municipal elections to be held in France in March. Together, they will present some 4,000 candidates. The following are major excerpts from a joint statement issued by the LCR and Lutte Ouvrière, which appeared in the January 14–20 issue of the LCR's weekly newspaper, *Rouge*. The translation is by *International Viewpoint*.]

* * *

The municipal elections in March 1983 will be a political test. In some ways it will be the first large-scale sounding of opinion after two years in which Mitterrand has been president, and there has been a large majority of Socialist Party and Communist Party deputies in the Assembly. Every day the demagogues of the French Democratic Union (UDF) and the RPR (Rally for the Republic) show their barefaced effrontery. On one side, they cry "scandal" at the slightest reform which touches the privileges of the capitalists and big owners. And then they use the excuse of popular discontent to shed crocodile tears over the fall in buying power and the rise of unemployment. But what did they do when they were in government? Did they not attack buying power, the right to work, the rights and liberties of the workers?

Today the bosses are congratulating themselves about the presents they get from the government, and continuing to shut down factories that do not bring them enough profits. They are banging their fists on the table and demanding that the workers tighten their belts still more.

The exploiters, and the right-wing party politicians, would like to be able to use a favorable electoral result for themselves to give credence to the claim that the workers regret the departure of their government. Indeed not! The workers do not shed a tear for them. They saw them at work for 23 years, and they know that nothing good can come from these people because they are their intransigent enemies.

Next March then, no worker, no voter, of the left will give any endorsement to the representatives of the right.

But is the way to stop the capitalist and bourgeois parties to give a stamp of approval to the government, and the Socialist and Communist parties that uphold it, as their leaders claim today? Together the SP and CP have two-thirds of the deputies in the National Assembly. The left — with control of the presi-

dency, the government, and parliament — have considerable powers in their hands. And what have they done with these possibilities?

First of all the leaders of the SP and CP have not kept their promises. They claim that they cannot do so because of the difficulties of the situation they inherited from [former President] Giscard [d'Estaing], and the effects of the international economic crisis. Not simply have they been quite content not to change very much. They have begun to attack the living conditions of the whole working population, including the most disadvantaged, the retired, the unemployed, the minimum-wage earners.

The government, in which Socialist and Communist party representatives sit, is implementing a brutal and cynical austerity policy, hoping that they can put it across because of the credibility they have with the workers.

On the international level, the government is continuing to hold the people of the so-called DOM-TOM (overseas departments and territories) under the thumb of the French colonizers. It keeps its paratroopers as cops for the big companies and the dictatorships in Africa and Lebanon. It faithfully holds its place within the alliance of the imperialist powers that dominate the world.

The workers who wanted a new course after May 10, 1981, the left voters, do not see any reflection of their concerns in this policy. They cannot consider themselves enthusiasts of a government that reserves its heaviest blows for them.

Happily, in many towns there will be another choice. We workers and left workers can make ourselves heard, say truly what we think. There is the opportunity to vote against the right, and clearly for the left, condemning openly a policy that serves only the interests of the capitalists and their politicians. It is to vote for the slates presented by the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire and Lutte Ouvrière.

We are speaking to the socialist voters, to say to them that they must express their disagreements with a government that imposes sacrifices on those who elected it, while dishing out its favors to those who want to bring it down. Many people do not want to see their hopes for a better life exploited as a smoke-screen for slipping through a policy that protects the big fortunes, and worsens the standard of living for the people.

We are speaking to the Communist voters who do not agree with the leaders of their party supporting putting into practice a policy that goes against all the demands that they are fighting for daily in their factories and in their localities.

Many will no longer support actions that are

unacceptable and scandalous for those who claim to be part of the working class.

We address ourselves to all workers. In voting for the slates presented by the LCR and LO, you will give voice to your desire to defeat the right, while expressing opposition to the austerity policies of the government. In this way, you can show you have less confidence than ever in the friends of Giscard and [right-wing opposition leader Jacques] Chirac and you do not have confidence in the representatives of the SP and CP who have deceived you.

Certainly, on its own, a paper ballot cannot change the fate of the workers. But it can make itself heard. Many of us have to say, loud and clear, that we do not want the left to continue to carry out this policy, which we condemn, policies that pave the way for the return of the right.

To make a world free of exploitation and oppression, to change their destiny, the workers can only count on their own determination, and their capacity to defend themselves, together, in the workplace, in the streets, by struggle. The municipal elections can at least show that many are ready to do this. □

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Protests hit trials of unionists

'Solidarity continues to exist'

By Ernest Harsch

Although the Polish government of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski began easing some martial law restrictions in December, it is continuing to employ widespread repression against the country's working class.

Some 2,500 activists of the Solidarity union movement remain in prison, sentenced for their union activities. The official news media regularly carries reports on new arrests.

In an effort to further intimidate working people, the regime has also initiated a series of show trials of key Solidarity leaders.

'A symbolic act'

The central trial will be that of seven members of Solidarity's National Committee: Andrzej Gwiazda, Seweryn Jaworski, Marian Jurczyk, Karol Modzelewski, Grzegorz Palka, Andrzej Rozplochowski, and Jan Rulewski.

All were detained in December 1981, when martial law was declared, and remained in various detention camps — without being charged or tried — until December 23, when the authorities formally arrested them. They are now accused of having undertaken "concerted action aimed at forcefully overthrowing the government and weakening the Polish state."

The charge is a blatant frame-up. Like other Solidarity leaders, the seven constantly stressed the need for massive, peaceful action. In the eyes of the privileged bureaucracy that governs Poland, it was their championing of workers' rights that constituted their real crime.

Just a few days after the charge was lodged against the Solidarity leaders, some 20 of Poland's best known writers, artists, and academic figures issued a declaration condemning it. "By arresting the seven members of Solidarity's National Committee," they said, "the government has committed a symbolic act that cannot go unanswered. We also consider this question to be symbolic. We demand their release."

On January 20, Lech Walesa — Solidarity's national chairperson — and 13 other top-ranking union figures made a similar point. In an appeal to the government to free the seven, they declared, "Charging them means charging the union, and their trial would be the union's trial."

They concluded, "We call on the entire society to support our appeal by demanding: amnesty for all prisoners, freedom for all those arrested during the period of the state of war, an end to all repression, and the securing of the civil and trade-union rights of the working class."

Several other important trials are also under way or being planned.

Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Zbigniew Romaszewski, and two other members of the former Committee to Defend the Workers (KOR) were falsely charged in September with conspiring "to overthrow the political system by force." Like the seven National Committee members, they, too, are actually being tried for supporting and helping to build Solidarity.

'Radio Solidarity lives'

On January 24, a separate trial involving Romaszewski, along with eight other Solidarity activists, opened in Warsaw. Because of their role in establishing Radio Solidarity, the union's underground station in Warsaw, they have been accused by the authorities of broadcasting "false information about the country's social and political situation and helping to foment public unrest and disturbances." If con-

Polish report admits workers' protests justified

The Polish working class, according to a recent internal report of the governing Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), was justified in rising up in 1956, 1970, 1976, and 1980.

Such admissions by Polish officials — which were common in the period when Solidarity was able to function legally — have not been publicly uttered since martial law was declared in December 1981.

Copies of the 157-page report, which was commissioned by the PUWP's July 1981 congress, were shown to foreign journalists in Poland, according to a January 23 Associated Press dispatch from Warsaw. The report sharply criticized the policies of previous regimes headed by Wladyslaw Gomulka and Edward Gierek, who displayed "arbitrariness" and "incompetence" and who "failed to allow or encourage the participation of the working classes" in governing Poland.

Because "the working people were bearing the burden of poor economic planning by the ruling team," the report said, Polish workers were justified in their protests against the government.

"As the crises of 1970 and 1980 particularly showed," the report went on, "the working class demonstrated itself to be the only force capable of coming out against the conservative social structure."

victed, they could face up to 10 years in prison.

On the very day the trial began, Radio Solidarity was back on the air in Warsaw, after several months of silence. During the seven-minute evening broadcast, the announcers noted, "Our trade union was outlawed, but Radio Solidarity lives and functions quite well." They called on Warsaw residents to demonstrate outside the martial-law court where Romaszewski and the others are being tried, and to send messages of support to the Rakowiecka Prison where they are being held.

Around the same time as the broadcast, about a thousand Solidarity supporters held a protest demonstration in Warsaw, the first in the capital since the failure of Solidarity's November 10 general strike. After attending a mass to commemorate the anniversary of the January 1863 national uprising against Russian tsarist rule, the demonstrators began marching toward the downtown area. The march was attacked and broken up by club-wielding riot police.

Workers boycott new unions

This demonstration was one of the rare instances in recent months of public opposition to the government. For the most part, the resistance is now taking less dramatic and visible forms.

Workers have been massively boycotting the new government-created trade unions, which the bureaucracy is seeking to impose in place of Solidarity.

According to official figures released on January 26, provincial courts have now registered 4,524 of the new unions. Most of these, however, have few members. At the Warsaw Steelworks, for instance, which employs 17,000 workers, only 300 belong to the new union.

The official Warsaw daily *Zycie Warszawy* reported on January 18 that some 900,000 workers had joined these unions around the country, that is, just over 6 percent of Poland's entire nonagricultural work force of 14 million. (In contrast, Solidarity had recruited nearly 10 million workers within a few months of its formation in 1980.)

The Polish authorities are not very optimistic about breaking this boycott in the near future. "If after a year we get 10 to 15 percent of the workers to join, then that will be a success," said an official of the new unions.

The scope of this boycott is also an indication of the continued support for Solidarity, despite the fact that it has suffered some serious blows and has now been outlawed.

"We lost a skirmish, but not the battle," Bogdan Borusewicz, a Solidarity leader in Gdansk, said in an interview in the Gdansk underground newspaper *Solidarnosc*.

Despite continued arrests and the seizure of some underground printshops, hundreds of union bulletins are still being published and distributed in factories and cities around the country.

Among the union's leadership and ranks,

wide-ranging discussions about program, strategy, and tactics are also continuing.

While the Solidarity leaders are still far from agreement about what to do next, there is a general consensus that the struggle ahead will be prolonged.

In an interview in the January 6 Warsaw *Tygodnik Wojenny* (War Weekly), the chairman of Solidarity's Provisional Regional Com-

mittee in Bialystok pointed to this. "We have to be ready for a long struggle," he said. "The situation in the factories is very difficult."

However, he went on, "Solidarity, as a social movement, continues to exist. Its name and its ideas are deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, and are accepted by a majority of society." □

Italy

Workers pour into streets

Massive mobilizations against bosses' takebacks

By Claudio Giuliani

[The Italian government's austerity program — combined with a drive by the employers to take back gains in wages and working conditions that had previously been won — has provoked a massive mobilization of the Italian working class. Throughout January, the country was rocked by strikes, occupations, and huge street demonstrations.

[In the midst of this upsurge, the three main trade unions — the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL), the Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions (CISL), and the Italian Workers Union (UIL) — signed an agreement with the employers federation on January 22. Although the employers had to drop some of their demands, the union bureaucrats accepted a cut of 15 percent in cost-of-living increases.

[Nevertheless, some spontaneous strikes continued, in Brescia, Milan, and Genoa.

[The following are excerpts from an article, written before the agreement was signed, that appeared in the February 7 issue of *International Viewpoint*, an English-language fortnightly published in Paris.]

* * *

At the end of December, the new government led by veteran Christian Democratic politician Amintore Fanfani adopted a series of measures sharply increasing taxes and the cost of essential public services, such as electricity and transport. The overall effect was a deep cut in the standard of living of the masses.

"This is a whopping loss of 6,600 billion lira (about US\$5.5 billion) at one blow, an unprecedented kick in the stomach," the most prestigious bourgeois daily, *Corriere della Sera*, wrote in its issue of January 2, 1983.

On January 7, other measures were adopted. For example, new taxes were introduced on [charcoal briquettes used for cooking], along with a 5 to 20 percent increase in the initial payment on medicines whose cost is reimbursed by the social security system and on consultations with medical specialists.

However, the measures announced at the

end of the year were already the straw that broke the camel's back. On January 4, strikes and demonstrations began to spread quickly throughout the entire peninsula.

Wave of spontaneous mobilizations

On January 4 in the Genoa area, the workers at the Ansaldo plant in Campi launched a strike, which was then joined by the workers at the plant in Sampierdarena owned by the same company. This spontaneous strike spread to thousands of workers, who came into the streets. The Sampierdarena train station, one of the three main ones in Genoa, was blocked for hours. Street barricades were set up in the city.

On January 5, demonstrations continued in Genoa. Workers from the Oscar Sinigaglia plant, numbering in the thousands, occupied the airport. This was the first time an airport has ever been occupied in Italy. The Socialist Party mayor of Genoa was among the passengers waiting to leave for Rome. He tried to convince the workers to clear the runways, without success. He had to set out for the capital in a car. In Palermo in Sicily, shipyard workers mobilized and blocked the train station.

On January 6, the airport was occupied again in Genoa and barricades went back up. About 8,000 workers came out to a demonstration.

In Tuscany, the workers at the Piombino steelworks organized a demonstration. In the south, there was a demonstration and barricades in Bari.

Strikes broke out at the same time in Pontedera, Pozzuoli, Palermo, Gela, and Terni. In Venice, 1,000 dockers, whose jobs are seriously threatened, blocked the bridge connecting the city to the mainland with bulldozers for five hours. The local airport was also paralyzed by a strike.

On January 7, for the fourth consecutive day, there were demonstrations in the streets of Genoa. Four hundred workers delegates from various plants held an assembly that lasted 10 hours. A lot of speeches stressed that forms of

struggle used in the preceding days were exceptional, but that it had been correct to resort to them in order to make the powers that be sit up and take notice.

Milan began to mobilize. About 50,000 workers came into the streets. "It was almost a general strike," *Corriere della Sera* wrote. "No one called it. A work stoppage had been announced only by the engineering and chemical workers, but other workers also struck in the industrial sector, government offices, and the services."

In Naples, 3,000 workers from various plants blocked the central train station. Workers from Alfa-Sud occupied the Naples-Bari highway for an hour. In Palermo, the Engineering Workers Union (the FLM, the single union of the engineering workers) decided to do something before the strike scheduled for January 13. A long procession wound through the downtown streets, and barricades snarled traffic for hours.

In Rome, 500 factory delegates met in the center of the city in front of the government palace. The police attacked the crowd violently. The FLM proclaimed a protest strike.

In Florence, the factory councils and engineering union launched a three-hour strike, which drew the support of other sections of industrial workers. Several thousand workers marched in the streets. The central train station was occupied.

Over the heads of the bureaucrats

On January 10, also in Naples, 400 workers from Alfa-Sud occupied the central station and read communiqués explaining to the travellers the reasons for their struggle. The Naples-Bari highway was again blocked, as well as the Naples-Caserta highway. There were new barricades on the rail lines in Palermo. Rejecting the instructions of their union leaderships, 1,500 workers from the shipyard came into the street. A thousand students joined them.

In Leghorn, a three-hour general strike was organized by the United Trade-Union Federation (which combines the three main labor confederations). There was a march of several thousand persons.

In Genoa, the craft workers came out to demonstrate. In Trieste, the unions planned a two-hour assembly in the San Marco shipyard. But the workers decided to demonstrate in the center of the city.

In Bologna, engineering workers stopped work for three hours. In Rome the demonstration organized by the unions against police repression spilled over into a blocking of several platforms at the central train station. In Savona, workers from Italsider and Magrini marched in the streets and distributed photocopies of their pay slips to passersby.

On January 15 in Genoa, strikes began in a few industries — engineering, chemicals, gas — and grew into a sort of general strike. About 80,000 workers demonstrated. In Bologna, 20,000 workers came into the streets following a strike called by the United Trade-Union Federation.

In Naples, there were four demonstrations, with barricades and blocking of the port area.

In Florence, a rally organized by the unions culminated in a march of 15,000 workers.

Thus, a veritable wave of workers mobilizations and struggles swept the country. These actions tended to have a spontaneous character inasmuch as in most cases the initiative was not taken by the United Trade-Union Federation either at the national or local level. The leading role was played once again in most cases by the factory councils. In addition, there were initiatives by intermediate trade-union leadership bodies under the strong pressure of the ranks.

The Engineering Union (FLM), moreover, distinguished itself on this occasion by an attitude that was less opportunist than that of the trade-union bureaucracy as a whole.

The mood of the ranks everywhere was very militant. An indication of this is the statement of a leader of the Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions (CISL, the Christian Democratic-dominated confederation) made after an assembly of delegates in the western suburbs of Genoa: "They [the delegates] don't want to listen to, they aren't interested in, an assessment of the political situation. The only thing they want to discuss is how to carry out actions that can shake the government and make an impact on TV."

Six million workers on strike

The wave of struggles deepened the divisions in the unions at the various levels. The United Trade-Union Federation explicitly condemned the most radical forms of struggle (the occupation of railroad stations, for example). It tried to divert the movement into safe channels and cool it down. For example, it expressed the wish that there be no more marches in the week beginning January 10. As we have seen, this pious hope was fruitless.

It was primarily the CISL and the Italian Workers Union (UIL, dominated by the Socialist Party), which are led by currents linked to the government parties, that tried to block the movement. They accused the CP and the far left of being the real instigators. The UIL launched a particularly furious attack against the factory councils, which it wants to see done away with.

The CISL leader, Carniti, went so far as to give the green light for police intervention, when he said about the airport occupations, "That's a matter for Rognoni" (the minister of the interior).

Rognoni was in fact alarmed. He had called a meeting of the leaders of the United Trade-Union Federation, who declared their opposition to the more radical forms of struggle. But that did not stop the occupations of train stations and airports or the blocking of roads.

In some cities, there were open divisions in the United Trade-Union Federation. This happened in Taranto, for example, on January 12, where the strike was launched by the CGIL on its own.

The tension became very strong after Janu-

ary 12, including among the union leaders. Finally, an agreement was reached for a four-hour general strike in industry on January 18.

The watchword of the national leadership of the United Trade-Union Federation was to try to reduce the demonstrations and the marches to the minimum. In any case, the demonstrations should be silent and not end with rallies. The only statement was to be the reading of an anodyne appeal from the federation. Last but not least, the strike was to be directed solely against the bosses' organization and not against the government.

It was easy to foresee that the appeal for silence would not be heeded. The Milan bureaucrats planned to set up powerful loudspeakers throughout the demonstration that would broadcast classical music. But this did not prevent the demonstrators from creating an enormous roar, shouting all sorts of slogans and mainly against the government. To be sure, in some cities, the workers contingents were silent. By way of protest, they marched gagged.

Despite the gap between the intentions of the leaders and the militant mood of the workers, the January 18 mobilization was an enormous success for the working class. Six million workers participated in it. A significant sign was that for the first time since their defeat in the fall of 1980, the Fiat workers mobilized also (about 80 percent came out).

The demonstrations were very powerful. There were 100,000 persons in Rome, 80,000 to 100,000 in Florence, 10,000 in Bari, and 30,000 in Palermo, for example. In Milan, the

demonstration that brought people from throughout the region had 200,000 participants.

'A human river'

The Milan demonstration was described in the following terms by *Corriere della Sera*: "Without any doubt, this was an extraordinary demonstration. It was perhaps the longest, the most massive, and the most imposing march that has ever gone through the streets of Milan.

It was a human river, close to three miles long. More than a strike of industrial workers, it seemed a general strike. . . .

Already an hour before the official assembly time, a crowd of workers had gathered. Delegations had arrived from Brescia, Lecco, and Como. There were minibuses from the Proletarian Democracy [DP], from the Democratic Party of Proletarian Unity [PdUP], and from the Revolutionary Communist League [LCR — the Italian section of the Fourth International]. They were broadcasting slogans over their loudspeakers. Engineering workers were there with thousands of placards."

At the time of this writing, the negotiations between the bosses and the unions are in their crucial moments. If there is not agreement, after February 1 the bosses will no longer apply the 1975 accord on the sliding scale of wages. How will the union leaderships react, and more important what will be the response of the millions of workers who mobilized with such power over these unforgettable last two weeks? □

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Belau upholds nuclear ban

Vote is blow to Pentagon plans

By Will Reissner

Residents of Belau, a U.S.-controlled island group in the South Pacific, voted February 10 not to revise a section of their constitution banning all testing and storage of nuclear weapons on Belau's territory. The constitution also bans all nuclear power and all dumping of nuclear wastes on the islands and within their 200-mile territorial waters.

The vote was a blow to Washington, which plans to build a base to service Trident nuclear submarines and a storage site for nuclear and conventional weapons in Belau.

Since 1979, when the constitution was ratified by 92 percent of Belau's voters, the U.S. government has been campaigning to overturn the antinuclear provisions in the document. In July 1981, despite heavy U.S. pressure, the constitution was again approved by a 78 percent margin. This time, 51 percent of the voters accepted Washington's demand to overturn the antinuclear provision. But the measure needed 75 percent support to take effect.

Belau and other Micronesian island groups have been under U.S. control since they were captured from the Japanese in World War II. Although formally United Nations Trust Territories, the Micronesian islands are ruled directly from Washington by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

After World War II, the Pentagon set up military bases throughout Micronesia and carried out more than 60 tests of nuclear weapons there. Residents of several islands in the Marshalls group were forcibly removed from their homes so nuclear tests could take place. Some islands were wiped off the face of the earth. Others were rendered uninhabitable by the tests.

Although the Pentagon stopped nuclear testing in the South Pacific in 1963, Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands has been used as the target area for test firings of the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile. It is now being prepared to serve as the missile range for tests of the newest U.S. ICBM, the MX. The missiles are fired at Kwajalein Atoll from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, 4,200 miles away.

To prepare Kwajalein as the target for the missile tests, the Pentagon evicted residents from several of the islands in the Kwajalein Atoll. Eight thousand people were crowded onto 66 acres of the island of Ebeye, where they live in appalling conditions, totally dependent on U.S.-supplied food for survival.

For more than 13 years Washington has been negotiating with representatives of the four Micronesian island groups — the North

Marianas, the Marshalls, Belau, and the Federated States of Micronesia — over a new political status for them.

In 1975, Washington rushed through an agreement with the North Mariana Islands, making them a U.S.-ruled commonwealth, similar to Puerto Rico. Under this agreement, the Pentagon got a 100-year lease on two-thirds of the island of Tinian, on which it maintains a naval and air base. The Pentagon pays the North Marianas about \$10 per acre per year to rent the base.

It was from Tinian that the atomic bombing of Hiroshima was carried out during World War II.

The U.S. government has proposed that the other three Micronesian island groups accept compacts of "free association," whereby the islands would achieve a degree of internal self-rule, while leaving the Pentagon in total control of all military affairs and guaranteeing the maintenance of U.S. military bases for 30 to 50 years.

On February 10, Belauans were the first Micronesians to vote on a Compact of Free Association. At the same time that they voted to maintain the nuclear ban in their constitution, Belau voters passed the Compact of Free Association by a 56 to 44 percent margin.

U.S. officials have stated, however, that they will not accept the compact as long as the

ban on nuclear weapons remains in force.

In a related "straw vote" held the same day, Belauan voters were asked to choose a political status in the event that the Compact of Free Association does not go through. In that poll, 61 percent voted for complete independence, while 39 percent expressed a preference for closer ties with the United States.

Under the terms of the Compact of Free Association, Belau would receive about \$20 million annually in economic aid from Washington for 50 years and would gain home rule. In return, the United States military would take control of one-third of Belau's 190 square miles of land, and would have access to its major airfields and its main port.

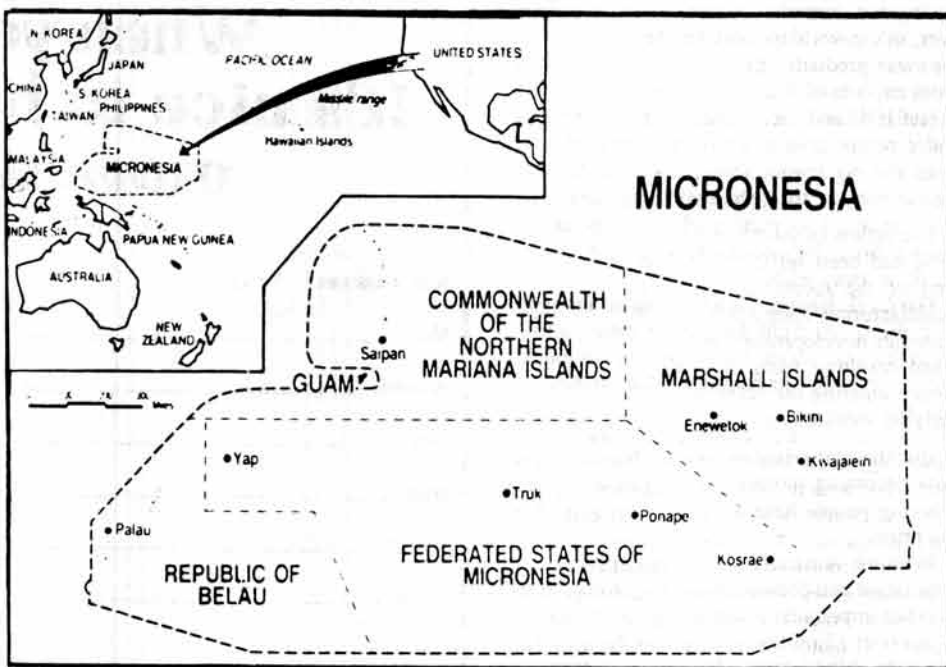
The Pentagon hopes to make Belau, which lies 500 miles east of the Philippines, into a major military base and staging ground. Among the Pentagon's concrete plans are:

- Construction of a base for Trident nuclear submarines;
- Establishment of a 30,000-acre jungle warfare training base on the largest island, Babeldaob. This would comprise more than a quarter of the island's total area. The base, if constructed, is expected to be used to train troops from Southeast Asian countries, as well as U.S. forces, in counterinsurgency techniques.

- Use of an additional 2,000 acres of Babeldaob for storage of nuclear and conventional weapons;

- Expansion of two airfields for use by U.S. military planes.

Voters in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands will have to decide whether to accept similar compacts of free association in the near future. □



Micronesia is made up of over 2,000 small islands scattered over a vast expanse of the Pacific. There are about 115,000 inhabitants, 15,000 of them in Belau.

Bosses step up offensive

Demand wage freeze as recession squeezes profits

By Jonathan West

SYDNEY — The Australian ruling class entered the current world recession with the naïve belief that an investment boom in the economy's resource sectors — particularly mining — would insulate it from the world crisis.

As late as July 21, 1980, the *Australian Financial Review* thought it possible to exclaim in an editorial:

"Australia is in the grip of investment fever. Fired with the bullish statements from Federal politicians, the nation has leapt from the sheep's back to that of the Organisation of Petroleum-Exporting Countries and is riding off into a new era of prosperity."

However, this dream was shattered in the second half of 1982.

Investment fell off to a trickle. Unemployment skyrocketed and is now equal to the levels in many other imperialist countries. From an official figure in June 1982 of just over 6 percent, by the year's end unemployment had jumped to almost 10 percent. In 1983 it will go much higher.

Raw material prices decline

The resource developments are no longer shielding the economy from the world downturn.

The much-trumpeted Australian resources boom was based upon substantial investment in the production of minerals and energy-producing raw materials like coal and oil. However, as the world recession deepened, demand for these products fell. Prices for the raw-material exports of Australia dropped off sharply in late 1981 and early 1982. With this in mind, and a perspective of long-term world stagnation, the big corporations cancelled or postponed many of their most important projects.

The inflow of investment between 1980 and 1982 had been sufficient to postpone the impact of the recession. Increased orders for manufacturing companies supplying the raw-materials developments, plus the increased demand resulting from such large amounts of money entering the economy, masked the underlying weakness of Australian industry.

But the real crisis of Australian industry is now becoming more evident every day. And working people here are being forced to pay the price.

Because Australia has a relatively small population and domestic market in comparison to other imperialist countries — its population is just over 15 million — Australian capitalism has been able to develop a secondary industry base only under heavy tariff and quota protection. Australia has one of the most protected

economies in the capitalist world.

The resulting lack of competition has produced an outdated and inefficient, and therefore uncompetitive, industry.

Without the shield of a boom in the primary sector, Australian industry is now entering a long-term structural crisis. It cannot compete with the products of more advanced industries from other imperialist countries such as Japan and Western Europe. It has to maintain the high tariff barriers to survive, yet so long as these remain high it has no incentive to upgrade its outdated technology.

Employers on the offensive

The attempts of the Australian ruling class to make working people pay for the crisis produced important changes in Australian politics in 1982.

The employers launched in quick succession a series of coordinated attempts to win back concessions they had been forced to concede during the short-lived resources boom.

One of the key gains for Australian workers had been the widespread introduction, after a sustained fight by workers in most major industries, of a shorter workweek. In many industries weekly working hours were reduced from 40 to 38; in the sectors where the most-determined campaigns had been waged, weekly hours were reduced to 35.

The employers responded to this when the crisis hit by either renegeing on the agreements altogether, or with the introduction of a four-day week with loss of one day's pay. This form of short week became particularly common in 1982 throughout the metal industry, in direct contravention of the court-sanctioned legal awards for those workers.

In other areas, however, the employers responded with the more usual practice of mass layoffs. Particularly hard hit were workers in the steel industry, which in 1982 entered its worst crisis since the Great Depression. Unemployment in steel industry-based cities such as Wollongong is now close to the 1930s level, with figures of around 25 percent out of work.

Escalating this offensive late in the year, the Liberal-National coalition government of Malcolm Fraser announced that it favored a 12-month wage freeze. With inflation currently running at around 12 percent, a year's wage freeze would mean an across-the-board cut of 12 percent in workers' wages.

However, because the Australian constitution does not give the federal government the power to institute controls over wages or prices, the federal government had to win agreement for its plan from the six state governments, the three most important of which are

headed by the Australian Labor Party (ALP).

After initially denouncing the scheme as a "gimmick" and a "fraud," and demanding that it be implemented only in conjunction with a price freeze, the Labor state premiers agreed to legislate for a six-month freeze.

This stance was opposed for a time by national Labor Party leader Bill Hayden, but he also soon changed his position under pressure from business circles.

As Australia's powerful oil industry workers, backed by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, prepared to go into action in January this year to win wage rises, Hayden stated to the press regarding the wage freeze:

"I hope to the maximum extent possible that the trade union movement will try and make this gimmick work."

The rapidity with which the Labor Party leaders reversed their opposition to the wage freeze highlighted the response of the official labor movement leadership to the crisis.

Rather than leading and inspiring a *working-class* response to the crisis, the Labor Party and union leaders have put themselves forward as "responsible managers" of the system.

They have accepted that the way to deal with the crisis is to reduce wages so that profits will rise.

The ALP parliamentarians share the basic outlook of the major capitalist party in Australia, the Liberal Party, concerning the causes of the crisis and what to do about it. They agree that workers should bear the burden.

Their "answer" to the recession is the same as that of the trade-union bureaucrats: Cut real wages, shore up profits through protectionist measures and government handouts, and wait for events in the world economy to restore capitalist prosperity.

The ALP leaders no longer speak of socialism, even in the remote future; now mere reforms within the framework of capitalism have taken on the status of a "maximum" program for some long-distant epoch.

Central to the Labor leaders' program for managing the capitalist crisis is a "prices and incomes policy" — a social contract between a future Labor government and the trade-union movement in which workers sign away their right to use their union strength to fight for increases in the living standards in return for vague promises of taxation reform and other social reforms.

Aim of social contract

The explicit aim of the social contract is to raise capitalist profitability, and the Labor leaders have been selling this scheme to the employers as a more painless way of reducing wages and managing the crisis than the Liberals' reliance on the demoralizing effects of unemployment in conjunction with ever-tighter antiunion laws.

However, because working people see little difference between the policies of the two major parties — the Liberals and Labor — and because both are telling them profits must be

restored as the basis of any return to prosperity, Labor has gained little ground electorally. With national elections due later this year, opinion polls show that at present Labor would not win. And in December, the party made no headway in a by-election for a seat it was widely expected to win from the Liberals.

Nor is the right wing of the Labor leadership alone in pushing for a social contract.

Key to winning the acquiescence of the trade-union movement was the support of the Labor Party "left" and the Communist Party.

The Communist Party has a major influence in the leadership of the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights' Union, Australia's largest union. This union concluded an agreement with metal industry employers in late 1981 for a six-month period of no strikes in return for inadequate wage rises.

This agreement was widely seen as a trial run for the social contract. The idea was to convince big business that if the metalworkers, traditionally one of the most militant sectors of Australian workers, could be "tamed" by a social contract-type agreement, then the scheme could work on a national scale.

Metalworkers' union leader and Communist Party national committee member Laurie Carmichael toured the country supporting the idea of an "agreement" between the unions and the Labor Party.

When the actual scheme was announced he maintained some criticisms, but urged its adoption as a "step forward."

Signs of resistance

But as 1983 opens, there are increasing signs that Australian working people will not sit idly by while their livelihoods are slashed by the capitalist offensive, even if that offensive has the support of the official leaderships of the Labor Party and trade unions.

Workers in the oil and building industries have already indicated that they will not accept the freeze and will use their considerable industrial muscle to break through it.

The oil industry workers have the official endorsement of the Australian Council of Trade Unions executive, although the executive is trying to keep the claim bogged down in lengthy legalistic machinations in the arbitration courts.

Australian workers are not beaten or demoralized.

If the oil workers are able to defeat the wage freeze, they will set an example that is likely to be taken up by many other sectors. Nineteen eighty-three could be a very hot year for an Australian ruling class already reeling under the sudden impact of a crisis to which they believed themselves to be immune. □

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Australia

Socialists hold conference

Chart course for 1983

By Jonathan West

SYDNEY — The Australian Socialist Workers Party (SWP) held its largest-ever national conference here from January 5 to 11. With almost 300 people in attendance, the conference was able to record some important successes for the party over the last two years and chart an ambitious course for the coming year.

The theme of the conference was optimism: optimism about the party's prospects and about the struggles of workers in Australia and around the world.

In the last two years the SWP has grown significantly. In 1981 it grew by 16 percent and in 1982 by 35 percent.

The party's optimism reflects new openings for socialists in the Australian class struggle.

Since the SWP took the decision several years ago to base itself in the industrial working class, the overwhelming majority of its members have been industrial workers. This has also been the party's major area of work.

In his report to the conference on the political resolution, "The capitalist recession and the fight for socialism," SWP National Secretary Jim Percy made the assessment that Australian workers were becoming more open to radical ideas and socialist solutions as a result of the deepening crisis.

He stressed that the party should throw itself into this opening and take every opportunity to link up with the working-class forces moving into action, and to help them see the way forward.

The reason Australian workers are not engaging in the determined fight needed to defeat the bosses is not that they have been beaten, but that they do not yet have confidence in their unions to win. The primary reason for this is the timidity of the class-collaborationist official leadership of the trade unions and Labor Party.

Reassessment of work in unions

Much discussion at the conference centered on new work for the party that opened up in the trade unions after the party reassessed its view of this work last year.

Whereas in the past the party held the view that revolutionaries should seek to take leadership positions in the trade unions only after a significant rise in the consciousness of workers, in September of last year the party leadership decided that this view had been incorrect and that revolutionaries should participate actively in the trade unions, up to and including struggles for control of the union apparatus itself.

These struggles can be important in helping point the way forward for workers in the fight to defend their living standards against the

capitalist offensive. By removing the conservative leaderships wherever possible, they can also push aside a major obstacle to workers' mobilization.

The conference adopted a resolution entitled "Revolutionary strategy and tactics in the trade unions" that outlined this new approach.

After the report on this document to the conference by National Executive member Sue Reilly, discussion centered on SWP members' participation in struggles and union election campaigns in the car and steel industries, and on the railways.

In the steel industry, SWP members joined with a group of steelworkers called the Militant Action Campaign in an attempt to overturn the right-wing leadership of the main steel union, the Federated Ironworkers Association. The campaign received an average of around 20 percent of steelworkers' votes in the national union ballot late last year.

In the car industry, SWP members were able to link up with the shop-steward leaders of one of the most important strikes over the last few years in Australia, the six-week strike in 1981 at the Melbourne Ford plant.

These shop stewards mounted a challenge to the bureaucratic leadership of the auto workers union that received a significant percentage of the vote, even though much of its base had been ruled ineligible on a union rules technicality. SWP members participated in this challenge, including in one case as a candidate.

Opposition to war

The conference also assessed the party's work in the growing antiwar movement demanding an end to nuclear weapons. It resolved that the party should step up its participation and fight to have the movement adopt an anti-imperialist, class-struggle approach, including demands to break all ties with the U.S. war machine, and oppose the wars imperialism is waging today against liberation movements in semicolonial countries.

To help the party take advantage of the new receptiveness of Australian working people to socialist ideas, the conference also decided to run 38 candidates in this year's federal election. This will be the largest socialist election campaign for the House of Representatives (lower house of parliament) in this country since the 1950s, and will cover one-third of the federal constituencies, including all major centers of the industrial working class.

To finance this and other expansion projects, including the purchase of a new three-story building for the Melbourne branch, the conference decided to launch the biggest fund appeal in the party's history: for A\$80,000 (A\$1 = US\$0.96).

A feature of the conference was its internationalism. Special talks were presented on the class struggle in the United States, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Sri Lanka, and Hong Kong by guests from those countries.*

One of the highlights of the conference was to have been three talks by Pedro Camejo, a fraternal member of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International. However, Camejo was prevented from attending the conference by the Australian immigration authorities, who delayed granting him a visa until it was too late for him to fulfill his speaking commitments.

The conference decided to campaign against this undemocratic exclusion and, if possible, tour Camejo later this year.

As well as considering the Australian political situation and mapping out an ambitious schedule of activities for the coming year, the conference also included rich discussions on big international issues such as the Cuban, Grenadian, and Central American revolutions, and Poland and labor movement solidarity tasks.

The final report to the conference was on the theme "Building an international revolutionary leadership," by National Executive member Larry Douglas.

The report traced the history of the Marxist movement's attempts to build a world party of socialist revolution through the first three internationals, focusing on the methods employed by Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders to build the Communist International.

He explained that Leon Trotsky used essentially the same method in his attempt to build a fourth world organization of revolutionary parties:

"The problem facing the Trotskyist movement in the 1930s was similar to that confronting us today: how to link up with new class-struggle forces that could transform our small cadre organizations into mass revolutionary working-class organizations."

International Left Opposition

Douglas described how most of Trotsky's energy from 1933 onwards was devoted to turning the International Left Opposition outwards toward mass work in the labor movement.

This was the approach needed to win over those working-class forces that under the impact of the capitalist crisis were breaking from

the influence of social democracy and Stalinism.

"Trotsky didn't approach this task by insisting on full agreement with the program of the International Left Opposition and excluding those who disagreed with any particular aspect.

"He began by distinguishing hopeless centrists and reformists from all those that were even potentially revolutionary. He sought to unite those forces — whatever their origin — that were being increasingly forced by events to adopt clear class-struggle positions in practice."

Trotsky had learned this method of party building from Lenin.

In building the Third International, the Bolsheviks sought to involve a wide range of revolutionary working-class forces, among them the anarcho-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World and the Shop Stewards Movement in Britain.

"It is true," Douglas said, "that when the Fourth International was finally founded in 1938 it consisted only of Trotskyists. But that was not from choice. It was the result of the fact that the massive defeats suffered by the working class internationally meant that the pressures bearing down on leftward-moving currents were too strong to enable them to come all the way over to a consistent revolutionary position."

The situation today, however, is dramati-

cally different. For the first time since the years 1917–23, there exists a country in which state power is in the hands of a revolutionary internationalist leadership that consciously uses that state power to aid the extension of the world revolution.

This revolutionary current and the central role it is playing in world politics today means that enormous steps forward are being made in the single most important task facing the world working class: rebuilding the kind of revolutionary leadership that is needed for victory.

Douglas summed up:

"How to take advantage of such historic opportunities, to link up with revolutionary working-class currents that will emerge increasingly from the new rise of the world class struggle, is at the heart of the discussion we are having in the Fourth International today.

"Our job is to approach these new revolutionary currents with the same openness, honesty, enthusiasm, and confidence with which Lenin and Trotsky before us set out to build the Third and Fourth Internationals.

"The issue is not whether we are to form a new international party today with other revolutionary currents. This is not on the immediate agenda. The issue is whether we orient ourselves today so that we will be marching on the road to a new mass Leninist international."

The conference concluded by expressing the party's willingness to take that path. □

Peruvian regime's cover-up in trouble

The Peruvian government's attempt to cover up its complicity in the massacre of eight journalists in the Andean village of Uchuraccay January 26 has run into serious trouble.

Five of the journalists were from major opposition dailies in the Peruvian capital of Lima. They had traveled to the province of Ayacucho to investigate government claims that villagers there had killed seven members of the peasant-based guerrilla group known as Sendero Luminoso (SL — Shining Path).

Colleagues of the slain journalists who visited the scene of their deaths have established the following, according to the February 11 *Latin America Weekly Report*:

- The Indian peasants of Uchuraccay acknowledge the killings. However, "In seven or eight interviews the *campesinos* refer to 'strangers' in the area for ten days right up to the Thursday of the massacre. These 'strangers' had, according to the *campesinos*, told them that 'friends come by air, enemies by land' and instructed them to kill and mutilate any strangers as a warning to the terrorists. . . . These strangers can only have been Sinchi anti-subversive police, soldiers or marine infantry who were in the vicinity."

- After the killings, the villagers awaited the arrival of the authorities without fear of punishment. "On the contrary, according to

some journalists, they appeared to be awaiting their reward." After the seven SL members were killed in the neighboring village of Huaychau, residents there "had received tons of food, medicine and alcohol" from the army.

- The journalists had been received at the home of the lieutenant governor of the district, Fortunato Gavilán, before their deaths. "The *campesinos* unanimously indicated that Gavilán and his wife ordered the attack on the journalists."

- Two of the journalists spoke Quechua, the Indians' language, and were known personally in the area. "The theory that the *campesinos* mistook them for terrorists is therefore virtually untenable."

The district where the journalists and the SL guerrillas were killed is one which the rebel group had only begun to try to penetrate. Elsewhere in Ayacucho Province, the SL has gained extensive support among the impoverished Indian peasants. More than 2,000 army troops and counterinsurgency police have been sent there to put down the growing rebellion.

When the journalists were buried in Lima on February 2, some 20,000 persons marched to denounce the regime's complicity and to demand that the military be withdrawn from Ayacucho. □

* An article on the Australian SWP conference by Jenny O'Donnell, which appeared in the January 25 issue of the SWP's weekly newspaper, *Direct Action*, named the following international guests at the meeting: Nan Bailey of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party; Mike Tucker of the New Zealand Socialist Action League; Rajan Pathmasingham of Sri Lanka; Francis Young of the Hong Kong Revolutionary Marxist League; and Mickaella Briand of the Progressive Melanesian Union. In addition, Mac Warren of the U.S. SWP attended the conference and presented greetings on behalf of its Political Committee. — IP

50 years since Hitler's triumph

Why workers movement was defeated

By David Frankel

Fifty years ago, on Jan. 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany. Within two months Hitler had suspended the constitution, assumed dictatorial power, and begun rounding up the leaders of the German workers movement.

The worst defeat ever inflicted on the world working class took place without a fight. The enormous power of the German workers movement — the strongest in Europe — was never mobilized to confront the Nazi threat.

The tragic events in Germany confirmed the crucial role of revolutionary leadership in the class struggle. During the Russian revolution of 1917, the existence of a mass revolutionary workers party, the Bolsheviks, enabled the working class and its allies to take political power and begin the construction of a new society. In Germany, the crisis of capitalist society was if anything even deeper than in tsarist Russia, and the working class far stronger and better organized. But no revolutionary party with a program that could lead the working class and its allies out of the impasse existed.

Two mass workers parties

There were two mass workers parties in Germany. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) was the largest of these, and the largest party in Germany until it was overtaken by the Nazis in 1932. It dominated the union movement and it ran the government of Prussia — with two-thirds of Germany's population — almost without interruption from 1920 to 1932. For much of this period the SPD was also part of the central government.

Although the masses of workers in the SPD wanted to fight the Nazis, they were held back by their leaders. The Social Democratic leaders sought to block the Nazis by parliamentary combinations with various capitalist parties rather than by mobilizing the masses. Amid a social and economic crisis that was driving millions to desperation, the SPD stood for business-as-usual within the capitalist order.

While the SPD leaders opposed unity in action by the workers movement against the fascists from the right, the other mass workers party in the country, the German Communist Party (KPD), opposed a united front against the Nazis from an ultraleft perspective. The Social Democrats were denounced by the KPD as "social-fascists."

The theory of "social-fascism," adopted by the Communist International at the end of the 1920s, was explained by Stalin as follows: "Fascism is the militant organization of the bourgeoisie which bases itself on the active support of Social Democracy. Objectively, Social Democracy is the moderate wing of fas-

cism. . . . Those organizations do not contradict but supplement one another. They are not antipodes but twins."

This blindly sectarian approach, which led the KPD to denounce the Social Democrats as being an equal danger to the Nazis, let the SPD leaders off the hook and made it impossible to unite the ranks of the working class in joint action.

Trotsky's role

The Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky was among those Bolshevik-Leninists who saw the danger represented by the Nazi movement from the very beginning. He sought to arouse the German workers to the threat and to convince the Communists in particular to abandon the disastrous line of "social fascism."

Calling the fascist movement "a razor in the hands of the class enemy," Trotsky appealed to the KPD in September 1930 to follow "a policy of closing ranks with the majority of the German working class and forming a united front with the Social Democratic and nonparty workers against the fascist threat."

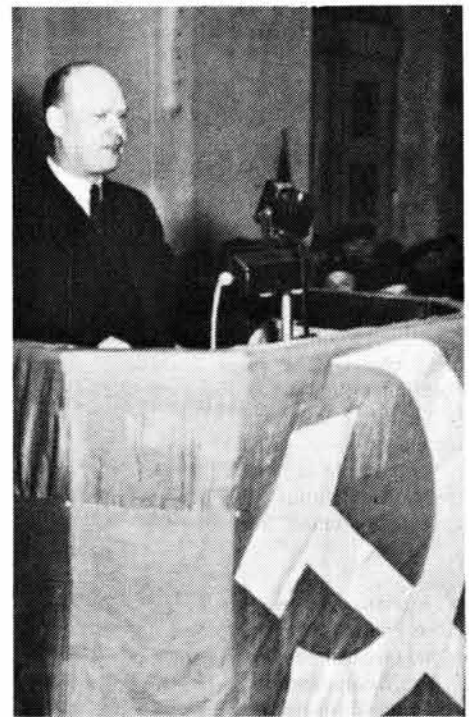
"The coming to power of the National Socialists," Trotsky wrote in November 1931, far from being comparable to a social democratic government, "would mean first of all the extermination of the flower of the German proletariat, the destruction of its organizations, the eradication of its belief in itself and in its future. Considering the far greater maturity and acuteness of the social contradictions in Germany, the hellish work of Italian fascism would probably appear as a pale and almost humane experiment in comparison with the work of the German National Socialists."

Unlike other forms of military or police dictatorship, fascism is a *mass rightist movement of the petty bourgeoisie*. The capitalist rulers were able to use the millions of shopkeepers, schoolteachers, government functionaries, clerks, and other middle-class elements driven to desperation by the social crisis as a battering ram against the organizations of the working class.

Fascism, Trotsky explained, "raises to their feet those classes that are immediately above the proletariat and that are ever in dread of being forced down into its ranks; it organizes and militarizes them at the expense of finance capital, under the cover of the official government, and it directs them to the extirpation of proletarian organizations, from the most revolutionary to the most conservative."

KPD rejects united front

Nevertheless, Ernst Thaelmann, the principal leader of the KPD, replied to the pleas for



KPD leader Ernst Thaelmann speaking at 1932 rally in Berlin.

a united front by saying at a September 1932 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International:

"In his pamphlet on how National Socialism is to be defeated, Trotsky gives one answer only, and it is this: the German Communist Party must join hands with the Social Democratic Party. Either, says he, the Communist Party makes common cause with the Social Democrats, or the German working class is lost for ten or twenty years. This is the theory of an utterly bankrupt Fascist and counter-revolutionary."

Even after Hitler had taken over as chancellor, the SPD and KPD together received more than 30 percent of the vote in elections held on March 5, 1933, under conditions of terror and demoralization for the workers movement. But the KPD leaders were already in hiding, in exile, or in jail, and within two months the Nazis had taken over the unions and sent their leaders to concentration camps.

In summing up the lessons of the defeat, Trotsky wrote: "It is undoubtedly true that the Social Democracy, like fascism, stands to defend the bourgeois regime against the proletarian revolution. But the methods of the two parties are entirely different.

"The Social Democracy is unthinkable without parliamentary government and mass organizations of the workers in trade unions. The mission of fascism, however, is to destroy both. A defensive union of Communists and Social Democrats should have been based on this antagonism. But blind leaders refused to take this approach. The workers were left divided, defenseless, without plans or prospects before the attacking enemy." □

For a united front against fascism

A 1931 article on the struggle against the Nazi menace

By Leon Trotsky

[The following are major excerpts from an article written by Trotsky on Dec. 8, 1931. It is taken from *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, a collection of Trotsky's writings on this subject. The book is available from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y., for \$8.95 plus 75 cents for postage and handling.

[The article on the previous page presents the context within which Trotsky wrote this appeal for a united front.]

* * *

Germany is now passing through one of those great historic hours upon which the fate of the German people, the fate of Europe, and in significant measure the fate of all humanity, will depend for decades.

If you place a ball on top of a pyramid, the slightest impact can cause it to roll down either to the left or to the right. That is the situation approaching with every hour in Germany today.

There are forces which would like the ball to roll down towards the right and break the back of the working class. There are forces which would like the ball to remain at the top. That is a utopia. The ball cannot remain at the top of the pyramid. The Communists want the ball to roll down toward the left and break the back of capitalism. But it is not enough to want; one must know how.

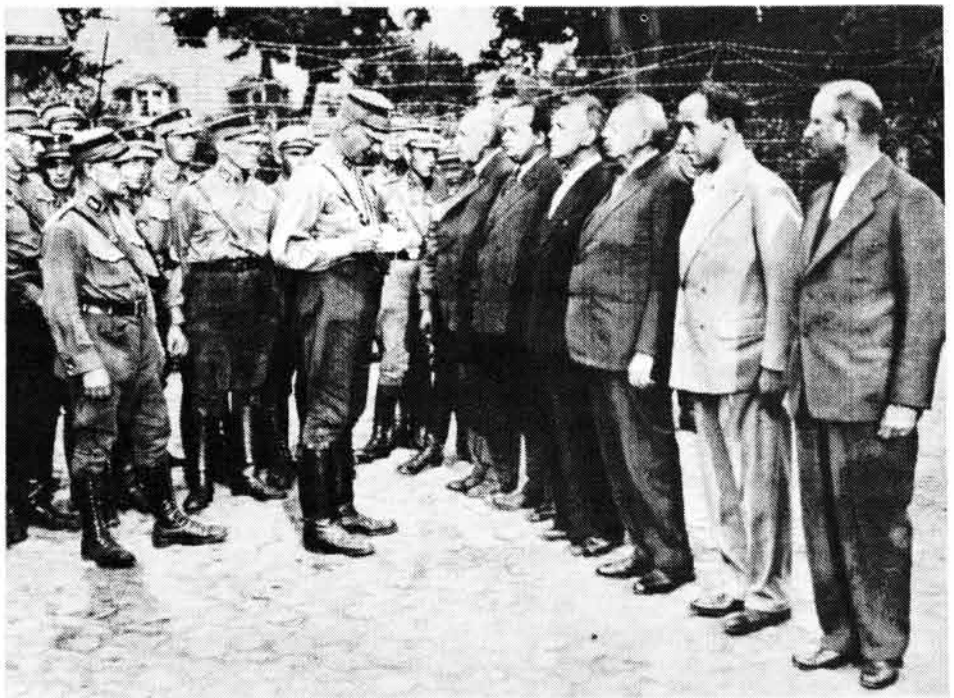
Let us calmly reflect once more: is the policy carried on at present by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany correct or incorrect?

The fascists are growing very rapidly. The Communists are also growing but much more slowly. The growth at the extreme poles shows that the ball cannot maintain itself at the top of the pyramid. The rapid growth of the fascists signifies the danger that the ball *may* roll down toward the right. Therein lies an enormous danger.

Thaelmann considers the victory of fascism inevitable

A correct policy is necessary in order to achieve victory. That is, we need a policy appropriate to the present situation, to the present relationship of forces, and not to the situation that may develop in one, two, or three years, when the question of power will already have been decided for a long time.

The whole misfortune lies in the fact that the policy of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, in part consciously and in part unconsciously, proceeds from the recognition of the inevitability of a fascist victory. In



Social Democratic leaders in Nazi concentration camp following banning of SPD in 1933.

fact, in the appeal for the "Red United Front" published on November 29, 1931, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany proceeds from the idea that it is impossible to defeat fascism without first defeating the Social Democracy. The same idea is repeated in all possible shades in [CP leader Ernst] Thaelmann's article.

Is this idea correct? On the historical scale it is unconditionally correct. But that does not at all mean that with its aid, that is, by simple repetition, one can solve the *questions of the day*. An idea, correct from the point of view of revolutionary *strategy* as a whole, is converted into a lie and at that into a reactionary lie, if it is not translated into the language of *tactics*.

Is it correct that in order to destroy unemployment and misery it is first necessary to destroy capitalism? It is correct. But only the biggest blockhead can conclude from all this that we do not have to fight this very day, with all of our forces, against the measures with whose aid capitalism is increasing the misery of the workers.

Can we expect that in the course of the next few months the Communist Party will defeat both the Social Democracy and fascism? No normal-thinking person who can read and calculate would risk such a contention.

Politically, the question stands like this: Can

we successfully repel fascism now, in the course of the next few months, that is, with the existence of a greatly weakened, but still (unfortunately) very strong Social Democracy? The Central Committee replies in the negative. In other words, Thaelmann considers the victory of fascism inevitable.

Once again: the Russian experience

In order to express my thought as clearly and as concretely as possible I will come back once more to the experience with the Kornilov uprising. On August 26 (old style), 1917, General Kornilov led his Cossack corps and one irregular division against Petrograd. At the helm of power stood Kerensky, lackey of the bourgeoisie and three-quarters a confederate of Kornilov. Lenin was still in hiding because of the accusation that he was in the service of the Hohenzollerns [the German royal family]. For the same accusation, I was at that time incarcerated in solitary confinement in Kresty Prison.

How did the Bolsheviks proceed in this question? They also had a right to say: "In order to defeat the Korniloviad — we must first defeat the Kerenskiad." They said this more than once, for it was correct and necessary for all the subsequent propaganda. But that was entirely inadequate for offering resis-



Nazi storm troopers occupy trade-union offices in Berlin in 1933.

tance to Kornilov on August 26, and on the days that followed, and for preventing him from butchering the Petrograd proletariat. That is why the Bolsheviks did not content themselves with a general appeal to the workers and soldiers to break with the conciliators and to support the red united front of the Bolsheviks. No, the Bolsheviks proposed the united front struggle to the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries and created together with them joint organizations of struggle. Was this correct or incorrect? Let Thaelmann answer that.

In order to show even more vividly how matters stood with the united front, I will cite the following incident: immediately upon my release after the trade unions had put up bail for me, I went directly to the Committee for National Defense, where I discussed and adopted decisions regarding the struggle against Kornilov with the Menshevik Dan and the Social Revolutionary Gotz, allies of Kerensky who had kept me in prison. Was this right or wrong? Let Rimmelle¹ answer that.

Is Bruening the "lesser evil"?

The Social Democracy supports Bruening,² votes for him, assumes responsibility for him before the masses — on the grounds that the Bruening government is the "lesser evil." *Die Rote Fahne*³ attempts to ascribe the same view to me — on the grounds that I expressed myself against the stupid and shameful participation of the Communists in the Hitler referendum.⁴ But have the German Left Opposition

1. Hermann Remmele was a key leader of the German Communist Party (KPD). — IP

2. Heinrich Bruening was appointed Chancellor in March 1930. He ruled by decree from July 1930 until his dismissal in May 1932, restricting freedom of the press and assembly and virtually annulling all union contracts in December 1931. — IP

3. "The Red Flag" — the newspaper of the KPD. — IP

4. In 1931 the Nazis, together with the right-wing Nationalist Party and the Stahlhelm, a rightist veterans' organization, launched a referendum to oust the coalition government in Prussia which was headed by the Social Democrats.

The KPD initially opposed the referendum. Then,

and myself in particular demanded that the Communists vote for and support Bruening?

We Marxists regard Bruening and Hitler, Braun⁵ included, as component parts of one and the same system. The question as to which one of them is the "lesser evil" has no sense, for the system we are fighting against needs all these elements. But these elements are momentarily involved in conflicts with one another and the party of the proletariat must take advantage of these conflicts in the interest of the revolution.

There are seven keys in the musical scale. The question as to which of these is "better" — do, re, or sol — is a nonsensical question. But the musician must know when to strike and what keys to strike. The abstract question of who is the lesser evil — Bruening or Hitler — is just as nonsensical. It is necessary to know which of these keys to strike. Is that clear?

For the feeble-minded let us cite another example. When one of my enemies sets before me small daily portions of poison and the second, on the other hand, is about to shoot straight at me, then I will first knock the revolver out of the hand of my second enemy, for this gives me an opportunity to get rid of my first enemy. But that does not at all mean that the poison is a "lesser evil" in comparison with the revolver.

The misfortune consists precisely of the fact that the leaders of the German Communist Party have placed themselves on the same ground as the Social Democracy, only with inverted prefixes: the Social Democracy votes for Bruening, recognizing in him the lesser evil. The Communists, on the other hand, who refuse to trust either Braun or Bruening in any way (and that is absolutely the right way to

on July 21, 1931, the KPD leaders, in a sudden departure from their previous stance, presented an ultimatum to the Social Democratic leaders: make a united front with us at once, or we will make one with the Nazis. When the Social Democrats rejected the proposal, the KPD switched its position and came out in favor of the referendum, only giving it a new name — the "red referendum." — IP

5. Otto Braun was one of the leaders of the Social Democratic government in Prussia. — IP

act), go into the streets to support Hitler's referendum, that is, the attempt of the fascists to overthrow Bruening. But by this they themselves have recognized in Hitler the lesser evil, for the victory of the referendum would not have brought the proletariat into power, but Hitler.

To be sure, it is painful to have to argue over such ABC questions. It is sad, very sad indeed, when musicians like Remmele, instead of distinguishing between the keys, stamp with their boots on the keyboard.

It is not a question of the workers who have already left the Social Democracy, but of those who still remain with it

The thousands upon thousands of Noskes, Welses, and Hilferdings⁶ prefer, in the last analysis, fascism to Communism. But for that they must once and for all tear themselves loose from the workers. Today this is not yet the case. Today the Social Democracy as a whole, with all its internal antagonisms, is forced into sharp conflict with the fascists. It is our task to take advantage of this conflict and not to unite the antagonists against us.

The front must now be directed against fascism. And this common front of direct struggle against fascism, embracing the entire proletariat, must be utilized in the struggle against the Social Democracy, directed as a flank attack, but no less effective for all that.

It is necessary to show by deeds a complete readiness to make a bloc with the Social Democrats against the fascists in all cases in which they will accept a bloc. To say to the Social Democratic workers: "Cast your leaders aside and join our 'nonparty' united front," means to add just one more hollow phrase to a thousand others. We must understand how to tear the workers away from their leaders in reality. But reality today is — the struggle against fascism.

There are and doubtless will be Social Democratic workers who are prepared to fight hand in hand with the Communist workers against the fascists, regardless of the desires or even against the desires of the Social Democratic organizations. With such progressive elements it

6. Social Democratic leaders. — IP

is obviously necessary to establish the closest possible contact. At the present time, however, they are not great in number. The German worker has been raised in the spirit of organization and of discipline. This has its strong as well as its weak sides. The overwhelming majority of the Social Democratic workers will fight against the fascists, but — for the present at least — only together with their organizations.

This stage cannot be skipped. We must help the Social Democratic workers in action — in this new and extraordinary situation — to test the value of their organizations and leaders at this time, when it is a matter of life and death for the working class.

We must force the Social Democracy into a bloc against the fascists

The trouble is that in the Central Committee of the Communist Party there are many frightened opportunists. They have heard that opportunism consists of a love for blocs, and that is why they are against blocs. They do not understand the difference between, let us say, a parliamentary agreement and an ever-so-modest agreement for struggle in a strike or in defense of workers' printshops against fascist bands.

Election agreements, parliamentary compromises concluded between the revolutionary party and the Social Democracy serve, as a rule, to the advantage of the Social Democracy. Practical agreements for mass action, for purposes of struggle, are always useful to the revolutionary party.

No common platform with the Social Democracy, or with the leaders of the German trade unions, no common publications, banners, placards! March separately, but strike together! Agree only how to strike, whom to strike, and when to strike! Such an agreement can be concluded even with the devil himself,

with his grandmother, and even with Noske and Grzesinsky.⁷ On one condition, not to bind one's hands.

It is necessary, without any delay, finally to elaborate a practical system of measures — not with the aim of merely "exposing" the Social Democracy (before the Communists), but with the aim of actual struggle against fascism. The question of factory defense organizations, of unhampered activity on the part of the factory councils, the inviolability of the workers' organizations and institutions, the question of arsenals that may be seized by the fascists, the question of measures in the case of an emergency, that is, of the coordination of the actions of the Communist and the Social Democratic divisions in the struggle, etc., etc., must be dealt with in this program.

In the struggle against fascism, the factory councils occupy a tremendously important position. Here a particularly precise program of action is necessary. Every factory must become an antifascist bulwark, with its own commandants and its own battalions. It is necessary to have a map of the fascist barracks and all other fascist strongholds, in every city and in every district. The fascists are attempting to encircle the revolutionary strongholds. The encirclers must be encircled.

On this basis, an agreement with the Social Democratic and trade-union organizations is not only permissible, but a duty. To reject this for reasons of "principle" (in reality because of bureaucratic stupidity, or what is still worse, because of cowardice) is to give direct and immediate aid to fascism.

A practical program of agreements with the Social Democratic workers was proposed by us as far back as September 1930 (*The Turn in*

7. Albert Grzesinsky was the Social Democratic police chief of Berlin. — IP

the Comintern and the German Situation), that is, a year and a quarter ago. What has the leadership undertaken in this direction? Next to nothing.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party has taken up everything except that which constitutes its direct task. How much valuable, irretrievable time has been lost! As a matter of fact, not much time is left.

The program of action must be strictly practical, strictly objective, to the point, without any of those artificial "claims," without any reservations, so that every average Social Democratic worker can say to himself: what the Communists propose is completely indispensable for the struggle against fascism. On this basis, we must pull the Social Democratic workers along with us by our example, and criticize their leaders who will inevitably serve as a check and a brake. Only in this way is victory possible.

But it is necessary to *desire* this victory. In the meantime, there are among the Communist officials not a few cowardly careerists and fakery whose little posts, whose incomes, and more than that, whose hides, are dear to them. These creatures are very much inclined to spout ultraradical phrases beneath which is concealed a wretched and contemptible fatalism. "Without a victory over the Social Democracy, we cannot battle against fascism!" say such terrible revolutionists, and for this reason . . . they get their passports ready.

Worker-Communists, you are hundreds of thousands, millions; you cannot leave for any place; there are not enough passports for you. Should fascism come to power, it will ride over your skulls and spines like a terrific tank. Your salvation lies in merciless struggle. And only a fighting unity with the Social Democratic workers can bring victory. Make haste, worker-Communists, you have very little time left! □

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Marcos cracks down on opposition

Deepening economic crisis spurs discontent

By Fred Murphy

A crackdown on the workers movement and the antidictatorial opposition in the Philippines has been under way since August.

President Ferdinand Marcos's dictatorship has launched successive attacks on the trade unions, radical currents inside the Catholic church, and opposition news media, in an effort to halt a growing challenge to his rule.

Behind the repressive drive is first of all a worsening economic situation.

The Philippine foreign debt stands near \$16 billion at a time when income from major exports such as coconut products, copper, timber, and sugar has dropped dramatically. While prices of these goods have fallen on the world market, the cost of vital imports such as oil and raw materials for industry has risen sharply.

Austerity and strikes

The austerity policies Marcos has imposed to deal with this crisis have brought further attacks on the living standards of Philippine working people. Under the martial-law regime of 1972-81, real wages had already been reduced by 40 percent. Workers now face massive layoffs and speedup as the employers try to maintain profit rates.

After Marcos lifted martial law in 1981 in hopes of polishing his image internationally, a big strike wave broke out. The high point of these struggles came last June, when 20,000 workers in the Bataan Export Processing Zone struck in solidarity with a fight against speedup at one of the 55 factories there.

Led by the May 1 Movement (KMU), a militant union federation with some 800,000 members, the strikers won a total victory. The speedup move was canceled. Fifty-four unionists jailed during the strike were released.

The economic plans Marcos has adopted at the behest of the World Bank were endangered by this upsurge. The regime aims to maintain and attract foreign investment in export-oriented final assembly plants located in free trade zones such as the one in Bataan Province. The cheap labor Marcos offers investors is incompatible with militant strikes and powerful trade unions.

So in August, Marcos cracked down on the KMU and other opposition union federations. He announced that a plot against his regime had been discovered, and ordered the arrest of dozens of labor leaders, including 79-year-old Felixberto Olalia, chairman of the KMU. Olalia and 38 others are still being held on charges of "inciting sedition and rebellion."¹

Police raids were carried out on the head-



MARCOS

quarters of the KMU, the National Federation of Labor Unions, the Philippine Alliance of Nationalist Labor Organizations, and the Association of Democratic Labor Organizations. Strikes were banned in the semiconductor industry. Laws authorizing government intervention in labor disputes and a ban on picketing were brought into force. One thousand security agents were sent into the Bataan export zone.

Priests and nuns arrested

In September and October the focus of the regime's attack shifted to the Catholic clergy. Priests were arrested in three provinces, and one, Rev. Zacarias Agatep, was killed by government troops. According to the December 4 *Economist*, "About a dozen priests and nuns in various parts of the Philippines are on the run from the army. Another 13 are in prison awaiting trial."

The dictatorship accuses most of these clerics of belonging to or even being leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines² or the CPP-led New People's Army (NPA).

1. An international campaign is being waged to demand the release of Felixberto Olalia and other trade-union prisoners in the Philippines. Messages should be sent to Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, Camp Crame, Philippines, or to Philippine embassies.

2. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) was established in 1968 as a Maoist formation. It de-

scribes itself as "reestablished" to claim the legacy of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), a pro-Moscow party formed in 1930. The PKP discredited itself by supporting martial law, holding that Marcos could be won to anti-imperialist positions.

The CPP, which arose out of the student and nationalist upsurge of the 1960s, has gradually moved away from Maoism in practice. It hailed the victories of the Nicaraguan and Iranian revolutions, which were seen by the current Peking regime as victories for "Soviet social-imperialism." Peking's withdrawal of support from national liberation struggles in Southeast Asia and its support for the U.S. bases in the Philippines have accelerated the CPP's trajectory.

3. *Ang Katipunan* is the English-language newspaper of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP). According to Rene Cruz, the KDP is "a socialist organization in the United States. Given the stratification of the American working class, we feel that particular work has to be done among certain minorities. We have assigned ourselves the responsibility of organizing the Filipino community to assume a socialist viewpoint."

"We feel that the issues that are at the heart of the community's interests are the liberation of the Philippines and the struggle against racial and national-minority discrimination in the United States."

Subscriptions to the monthly *Ang Katipunan* are US\$10 a year in the United States and US\$15 a year for readers in other countries. Write to Ang Katipunan, P.O. Box 2759, Oakland, California 94602, USA.

While it is true that some priests have joined this growing guerrilla movement, many others fall afoul of the regime simply by speaking out against repression or by joining their poor and working-class parishioners in demanding such necessities as potable water, paved streets, electric power, or sewage disposal.

Rene Cruz, editor of the U.S. Filipino socialist monthly *Ang Katipunan*,³ told *Intercontinental Press* in a recent interview that Marcos's troops have also mounted raids on the Catholic church's "social action centers — church programs ministering to the poor. Most of these are run by progressive priests and nuns." Also, Cruz says, "The conservatives in the church hierarchy have begun redbaiting the social action centers. And there is a bill before parliament that would classify the pulpit as communications media and thereby subject it to press censorship."

The attacks on the church have forced the hierarchy itself into growing conflict with Marcos. In a pastoral letter scheduled to be read in local churches throughout the Philippines in February, the country's bishops warn Marcos that his policies are providing "fodder to revolutionary groups."

"What disturbs us is the growing support for the dissidents because of poverty, military abuses and unemployment," said Bishop Federico Escaler.

In mid-January Marcos announced an 18 percent across-the-board cut in government spending. His 1983 budget, which also included a 3 percent tax on all imports, was aimed at meeting the demands of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) for reduced deficits and less foreign borrowing. But domestic credit remains tight, and many businesses are failing as a result. This means still higher unemployment and social discontent.

New People's Army

Food shortages have begun to affect the Philippine countryside, a leading businessman told a Foreign Correspondents Association luncheon in Manila January 18. "There is disenchantment, and you hear talk of joining the rebel New People's Army," said Enrique Zobel, president of a land development firm. "The Government must move quickly to provide rural people with a means of livelihood."

According to Rene Cruz, "The NPA grew three times faster in 1982 than it did in 1981. It is operating in 50 of the 72 provinces of the Philippines." While the NPA is based mainly among the peasants, Cruz says, "a lot of attention is being placed on the cities. The flow of people from the countryside requires refining one's strategy. That is why a lot of work is being done among labor, among the semiproletariat, among farm workers."

Marcos's own National Intelligence and Security Authority estimates that the NPA has some 6,000 full-time fighters (as against 1,500 in 1972) and 150,000 active supporters. The police agency also admits that the NPA controls 2 percent of the country's *barangays* (the smallest unit of political organization, usually a rural village or urban neighborhood).

The NPA has close ties to the broad opposition bloc known as the National Democratic Front (NDF), which includes the KMU labor federation, peasant organizations in many parts of the countryside, and organizations of women, students, health workers, teachers, lawyers, and journalists. A group of radical clerics called Christians for National Liberation is also part of the NDF.

More than a quarter of a million Filipinos took part in NDF-called demonstrations in May and June 1981 to protest Marcos's one-man presidential "election" that year.

"The NDF," Rene Cruz says, "calls for a national democratic coalition government and has a classic national liberation program: distribution of the land, nationalization of imperialist property, and toleration of native businesses, especially those not so tied to imperialism. But from the point of view of the CPP, this is merely a political stage since socialism is really on the agenda."

The NDF has at times been able to unite in action with the traditional bourgeois opposition to Marcos — as in the 1981 election boy-



cott, for example. Discontent is now rising among local manufacturing capitalists who are being squeezed out by the recession and by Marcos's preferential treatment for foreign investors and his own cronies.

"The Carter administration kept an opening to these opposition bourgeois groups," Cruz says. "With Reagan in office, they do not have any real leverage. They are getting desperate. This is why their movement to the left is so important."

Journalists jailed

In December, Marcos's police swooped down on one of the main press organs of the opposition bourgeoisie, the thrice-weekly tabloid *We Forum*. The publisher, Jose Burgos, and nine members of his staff were taken to jail and the newspaper's printing plant was temporarily confiscated. The arrested journalists were charged with "involvement in the conspiracy to overthrow the government through black political propaganda, agitation and advocacy of violence."

The *We Forum* staff, the regime claimed, was part of a broader plot to overthrow Marcos by force, involving a series of leading members of the capitalist opposition who live in exile in the United States.

The December arrests were the first direct attack on the Philippine press since martial law was lifted in 1981. They were intended as a warning to the discontented middle-class lawyers who made up the bulk of the *We Forum*'s readership.

Marcos's repressive moves have dealt some real blows to the movement against his dictatorship. On the other hand, as the *Wall Street Journal* reported December 28, "opponents and some foreign observers say the crackdown is an overreaction and could backfire, especially if it convinces moderate opponents that non-

violent opposition is futile.

"He has bolstered the argument of the radicals that there isn't any way to effect peaceful change," says Salvador H. Laurel, a former senator and moderate opponent."

Big stakes for U.S.

The *Journal* also warned that "the U.S. has a big stake in Mr. Marcos's tactics, in part because President Reagan has more closely identified U.S. interests with Mr. Marcos than had recent administrations."

The United States is the Philippines' largest trading partner, with two-way trade valued at more than \$3.5 billion. About half the foreign investments in the Philippines are U.S.-owned, and U.S. banks hold a considerable portion of the country's \$16 billion foreign debt.

Beyond these interests, Washington is especially concerned about maintaining its two huge military bases in the Philippines, Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base. The latter is a key staging point for the Pentagon's projection of sea power to all of Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, and the Persian Gulf.

According to Rene Cruz, U.S. government specialists at a Georgetown University conference on the Philippines last September stated that U.S. control over Subic Bay was simply not negotiable. "So if the Philippines were to fall under a government which is even mildly nationalistic, the U.S. would have no other choice but to wrench power away," Cruz concludes. "What they are saying is that they are not going to tolerate any threat to the security of those bases."

Washington has grown more concerned over the stability of the Marcos regime as the dictator's health has begun to deteriorate. He was hospitalized with a kidney disorder shortly before visiting the United States last September, and during the visit, Cruz says, Marcos "had to undergo a physical examination at Walter Reed Hospital so Washington could get its own intelligence."

Marcos has begun to prepare his exit by appointing a 15-member executive committee that will supposedly hold power collectively after he is gone. This unwieldy arrangement masks a power struggle inside the regime.

"There is an ongoing rivalry," Cruz says, "among Imelda Marcos, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, and security chief Gen. Fabian Ver over who is to succeed Marcos. Another contender is Prime Minister Cesar Virata, who is a good choice from the U.S. point of view because he is a technocrat who supposedly is not so tainted by the dictatorship. But he would have to share power with someone from the military."

However the internecine conflicts are resolved, Cruz says, Washington "is concerned that the succession not be messy. And the last thing it wants is unrest, especially in the cities, while the squabbling is going on."

Fear of such intervention by the oppressed and exploited is behind the regime's current crackdown. □

'Large-scale aggression is being prepared'

Interview with Nicaraguan leader Tomás Borge

[The following interview with Commander Tomás Borge, Nicaraguan minister of the interior and member of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), was conducted by Peruvian journalist Ricardo Gadea and published in the December 12, 1982, issue of the Lima daily *La República*. The translation was done for *Intercontinental Press* by Michael Taber.]

* * *

Question. Could the upcoming maneuvers by Honduras and the United States mark the beginning of a war against Nicaragua?

Answer. For some reason they have given the maneuvers a name in the Miskito language that means "Big Pine" [*Ahuas Tara*]. They want to base the operations among the Miskito population of Zelaya Norte. People there are backward and confused, tending to take positions contrary to the revolution.

Q. How serious is the Miskito problem?

A. We have never hidden the truth about this. Despite the efforts we have made, part of the population of Zelaya Norte remains confused. This can be explained by the backwardness of this population, their unmet expectations, the campaigns of the "September 15" radio station that broadcasts from Honduras, and the attitude of many Moravian clergymen who have turned religious questions into elements of separatist ideology.

The revolution is struggling to provide concrete responses to the problems of the Atlantic Coast. We have finished the highway that runs from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Telephone lines are being installed through tremendous sacrifices by the compañeros of Telecommunications. We are planning to bring television, health centers, and schools to the region. We also intend to expand the agrarian program between Waslala and Siuna in order to distribute thousands of hectares of land among the peasants. This will necessarily affect the largest landlords of the zone.

With such new measures we have succeeded in substantially raising the living standards of the Miskito population. But there is still much to be done.

Q. What factors point to the imminence of direct aggression against Nicaragua?

A. All along our northern border is camped an army of several thousand ex-Somozaist National Guardsmen, trained and armed by the imperialists. They continually attack our territory with the complicity of the Honduran armed

forces.

We must also note the activities of the Honduran army and the accelerating increase in its firepower, as well as its joint maneuvers with the United States, the construction of three military air bases very close to the border, the aggressive language of Honduran military leaders, and the ridiculous excuses that country's government gives for refusing to speak with Nicaraguan government leaders.

Using official figures, I can affirm that between August and October, Nicaragua suffered 58 violations of its air space, 37 attacks on border posts, 5 ambushes, 4 acts of sabotage, 3 attacks on patrols, 14 infiltrations, and 19 incursions. As a result of these acts of aggression originating in Honduran territory, we have suffered nearly 120 casualties, counting dead, wounded, and kidnapped.

To this escalation of foreign aggression must be added the campaign launched by the United States against Nicaragua, using religion as a pretext; the systematic aggression; the sabotaging of credits for Nicaragua; and the open U.S. fight to prevent our country's election as a member of the United Nations Security Council. In our view, all this indicates that a large-scale military aggression is being prepared.

Q. What form would that aggression take if it were to actually come about?

A. A direct aggression is indeed being prepared, but its form remains to be seen. Perhaps the entry of all the guardsmen at one time, in a military thrust, along with the utilization of the Honduran army to provoke conflicts at other points along the border.

Perhaps they will not dare to put the Honduran army deep into our territory. That would be a stupidity.

But, all right, it is very likely that the CIA, which is frequently affected by subjectivity, has convinced itself that the Nicaraguan people are against the revolution. They could be such imbeciles as to believe that.

They are making a mistake, because here there is gut hatred against the National Guard murderers. Any foreign army that invades this country will cause the entire Nicaraguan people to rise up in struggle to defend their homeland and their revolution!

Q. How will the Nicaraguan people respond if the North Americans intervene directly in an invasion?

A. The Yankees came here in 1926, in 1912, and in 1856. Each time they have attacked us, our people have risen up in arms.

We defeated William Walker in 1856, and Zeledón heroically confronted the U.S. marines [in 1912]. Sandino's story is widely known: for six years he fought and defeated them. A small army, ragged and barefoot, defeated the Yankee marines!

If the U.S. army attacks us directly, it's possible that we won't be able to beat them militarily, because their power is very great. But they will never conquer our will to resist any aggression. What would happen? They would have to kill every single Nicaraguan and rule over a cemetery!

It could be that the Yankees won't come directly — that they will try to send the armies of their Central American friends to the front lines. It seems to me that this would be a serious error. In trying to devour one dish they consider tasty they could lose the whole Central American buffet. That is what could happen!

The imperialists should think twice because we are not going to simply resign ourselves to being invaded. The peoples of Central America are not going to resign themselves to a new aggression. It's sufficient to remember what happened in Guatemala, what happened in Chile, what happened during 50 years in our own Nicaragua.

Q. How would an aggression affect the radicalization of the process and private enterprise?

A. I don't know exactly. We think, however, that the original plans for a mixed economy and political pluralism should remain intact. If there are problems with the businessmen right now it is because they have become disoriented with respect to history.

Mixed economies in other countries that have not had revolutions are not the same as the one in Nicaragua. There are more private enterprises here, relatively speaking, than in Venezuela, for example, but here political power is not in the hands of the businessmen. The revolution wants to cooperate with them in production and economic planning.

In Nicaragua there does exist a truly mixed economy, within the revolution. We provide the businessmen many concessions, credits, facilities, but many of them remain discontented. They will not resign themselves to losing political power!

We honestly do want them to participate in running the economy; it is a promise that we have repeated publicly many times and we insist on it again.

If a war breaks out here, the businessmen will continue to enjoy the same consideration, except for those who conspire and participate

in the aggression against Nicaragua. Those who do conspire will fall under the weight of the revolutionary laws.

Q. What kind of new society is being built in Nicaragua? What is the dominant ideology?

A. Here there is a democracy that has a popular, anti-imperialist, and internationalist character. I make this last point because I think we seek to look outward, with open arms to other countries.

We have similarities with other revolutions, and also some differences with them. In Nicaragua the predominant ideology is not one of those that are already well-known — socialist, social democratic, or social Christian. What is our ideology? We have said many times that we are Sandinistas.

What is Sandinism? It is the thought of Carlos Fonseca and Augusto Sandino, applied together with worldwide revolutionary experience and the concrete realities of Nicaragua.

At some point we are going to lay out our own characterizations. For now we are trying to find, through world experience and through our own experience, the best road, the one most appropriate for Nicaraguans, taking into account the interests of Central America and of Latin America as a whole.

Q. How does political pluralism function under these conditions?

A. The FSLN and the Revolutionary Patriotic Front (FPR) are currently holding discussions with a body known as the Democratic Coordinating Committee, in which various opposition political parties are represented.

I believe that we have to have discussions on a realistic basis: the reconstruction of Nicaragua, the defense of the country, and the plans for general elections in 1985. We agree on the first two points. And we agree that there have to be elections in 1985.

The discussions with the opposition parties are taking place because we understand that it is one thing to belong to a party that is an adversary of the revolution from the ideological and political standpoint, but another thing to conspire against the revolutionary state.

Some believe or claim that we persecute the church. That is completely false. We have never persecuted the church or opposition political parties. We have persecuted conspirators who at times disguise themselves as Christians or as political activists.

Q. Does the state of emergency limit democratic freedoms and pluralism?

A. A state of emergency does in fact exist. It has been indispensable for the revolution to have legal instruments to defend itself against the continual attacks.

It is clear that within Nicaragua the forces opposed to the process are insignificant. For this reason there is no repression here of the kind that exists in many other Latin American countries. Under no circumstances do the people suffer any repression. The Nicaraguan



Michael Baumann/IP

TOMÁS BORGE

people have never enjoyed more democratic freedoms and rights than they do now.

This is a revolution that has never used tear gas, a revolution without executions or torture, where the police don't use clubs. Thus there will never come a moment when the people suffer the weight of repression, for a simple reason: because it is the people themselves that control it. The people are not going to repress themselves.

Now, clearly, the people in the streets, the militias, the voluntary police, the armed people in the streets, may instill terror. In whom? In the enemies of the people, those who are opposed to the changes and the transformations that favor the majority.

Q. How are norms for political activity and the news media to be set in order to guarantee the institutionalization of the process?

A. The FSLN used to be a kind of outlawed political-military organization, and we were always suspicious of political parties — to the point of being opposed to them. For many years we were preoccupied with how to defeat Somoza and how to carry out the war. Since then, we have had to turn our attention to raising the country up from the ruins and laying the initial foundations of a revolutionary state.

Today, as political leaders of this nation, we have had to draw up regulations that establish norms for political parties and a law on the communications media. These are questions that are being discussed within the National Directorate.

We are studying the laws of other countries to help serve as points of reference and to help us find the most appropriate measures for Nicaragua. We seek to guarantee complete political pluralism and authentic freedom of expression. Obviously, not the kind peddled by the Inter-American Press Association [an organization of U.S. and Latin American

capitalist publishers].

Q. Would the FSLN be willing to hand over power to an adversary if it were to lose the 1985 elections?

A. A little while ago I talked with Günter Grass, a very renowned German writer, and I told him that we could not even conceive that as a possibility. If the Nicaraguan people were to choose as their ruler a Fernando Agüero or a Robelo* or some such figure, I would at that moment cease to believe in history. I would become the most skeptical man in the world, to the point of ceasing to believe in humanity.

How could a people that has recovered its freedom, that did away with tyranny, want to retreat and return to the past? That is contrary to common sense!

So I can't answer that question because it is not going to happen. If Agüero or Robelo or any other figure of that ilk were to come back to Nicaragua they would be met with rocks instead of votes. We would have to give them an army for protection.

Q. Nevertheless, in the early period of the revolution the FSLN maintained good relations with Robelo.

A. Well, it's just that some of us thought that Robelo would be able to evolve to the point of becoming a human being. Unfortunately, he is one of those who does not evolve, either ideologically or mentally.

Q. What about the spirit of the Nicaraguan people in the face of the threats and difficulties?

A. Under the worst conditions, even if a war were to come about, the Nicaraguan, born to be happy, will be joking, laughing with joy. They are not going to see terror on the faces of our people. They are going to see happiness and love for the future.

Q. A message for the Peruvian people?

A. I am very fond of the Peruvian people. I lived there for several months during Velasco's time. I encountered enormous affection on the part of Peruvians whom I had the privilege and the good fortune to know. I have good friends in Peru, individuals from among the people, including journalists. Some political and religious leaders I could speak of are excellent personal friends, among them Father Gustavo Gutiérrez and others whom I'm not going to mention. Peru has a special place in my heart. □

* Fernando Agüero was a bourgeois politician from the Conservative Party who ran for president against Somoza in 1967 and later made a pact with the dictator. He fled the country when the revolution triumphed. Alfonso Robelo was a leading bourgeois opponent of the dictatorship and served on the first Junta of National Reconstruction until resigning in April 1980 in protest against the pro-working class course of the revolution. — IP

Storm over report on massacre

Attempt to end debate over Lebanon fizzles

By David Frankel

A new chapter has opened up in the political fight that has been shaking Israel ever since its invasion of Lebanon last June. On February 8 the commission of inquiry into last September's massacre of Palestinian civilians in West Beirut released its report. It charged that top Israeli officials, in particular Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, were "indirectly responsible" for the slaughter in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

Release of the report was quickly followed by street demonstrations. Both opponents of Prime Minister Menachem Begin's government and supporters of Begin mobilized. On February 10 a hand grenade was thrown at a group of antigovernment demonstrators outside Begin's office, killing one of them.

Although Sharon was forced to relinquish his post as defense minister, he is continuing as a member of Begin's cabinet. Far from ending the political debate over the invasion of Lebanon and the Beirut massacre, the commission of inquiry's report has only intensified it.

Origin of commission

Originally, Begin had resisted any official inquiry into the massacre. He argued that charges of Israeli responsibility for the atrocity were a "blood libel."

But even before the slaughter in the refugee camps, opposition to the invasion among working people around the world, sympathy for the heroic Palestinian fighters, and anger at the murderous bombing and shelling of West Beirut by Israeli forces had been massive. After word of what had happened in Sabra and Shatila got out, worldwide outrage and revulsion — including within Israel — made it impossible for Begin to simply stonewall.

In setting up the commission of inquiry, Begin hoped to quiet the political debate over Israeli actions in Lebanon and to repair Israel's tattered image. That was also the aim of the two judges and the retired general who composed the commission.

The actual argument put forward by the commission is worth looking at. It admitted that "everyone who had anything to do with events in Lebanon should have felt apprehension about a massacre in the camps if armed Phalangist forces were to be moved into them. . . ."

Grave mistakes and blunders?

Explicit warnings of such a massacre had been repeatedly voiced, not only by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), but even by Israeli officers and officials. Logic indicates that when these warnings were disregarded and the Phalangists turned loose, the Is-

raeli government knew exactly what it was doing.

The basic aim of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was to smash the PLO. But the PLO is a mass organization based on the Palestinian people as a whole. Smashing the PLO meant dispersing and terrorizing the Palestinian population.

That was why the refugee camps throughout southern Lebanon were bombed and bulldozed. That is why the Israelis carried out their savage bombing and shelling of West Beirut. And that is why they organized the massacre in Sabra and Shatila.

All this is denied by the commission of inquiry, which asserted that "no intention existed on the part of anyone who acted on behalf of Israel to harm the noncombatant population." Israeli responsibility, the commission insisted, was limited to "indifference," "grave mistakes," and "blunders" on the part of individuals such as Sharon.

In one section of its report, the commission takes great pains to argue that the massacre was not visible or audible from the Israeli for-

ward command post, situated on the roof of a five-story building overlooking the Shatila camp. The command post was equipped with binoculars and a powerful telescope.

Yet the report admits that radio conversations between Phalangist units that were monitored at the command post within one hour after the Phalangists entered the camps made it quite clear that a massacre was in progress. In the days and nights that followed, Israeli troops lit the refugee camps with flares, turned back groups of Palestinians trying to escape, and enabled the Phalangists to rotate their units carrying out the massacre.

Such was Israel's "indirect responsibility."

Sharon, the big enchilada

The commission's report was greeted with rave reviews in the U.S. mass media. "A tribute to the vitality of democracy in Israel and to the country's moral character," gushed an editorial in the *Washington Post*.

"A remarkable document that could only have been produced under a democratic government ruled by the due process of law," applauded the *Wall Street Journal*.

William Safire, a veteran of the Nixon White House and an unswerving supporter of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon, gave his approval as well.

"No crystal ball was needed, months ago, to see that Ariel Sharon would have to bear personal responsibility" for the massacre, Safire declared.

As Nixon put it when he threw his attorney general to the wolves during the Watergate crisis, a "big enchilada" — a prominent scapegoat — was essential.

But it turned out that the commission's recommendation of Sharon as the big enchilada put Begin's government in danger. Dumping Sharon completely would probably have cost Begin enough votes from the right wing of his coalition to cause him to lose a vote of confidence in the Israeli parliament. Therefore, a compromise was worked out, with Sharon giving up his post as defense minister but remaining in the cabinet. The compromise saved Begin's government, but deepened the divisions in Israeli society over the ongoing occupation of Lebanon and Begin's hard-line stance toward the Arab world.

Although the Labor Party, a capitalist party that ruled Israel from its formation until mid-1977, has tried to make the most of Begin's predicament in hopes of electoral gains, what underlies the debate in Israel is a fundamental class polarization. War and economic crisis are beginning to break up the previous political consensus in Israeli society.

It is clear that masses of Israeli working people have begun to understand that it is their government that is the aggressor in Lebanon, and they have begun to demand a change. Instead of putting a lid on this process as the Israeli rulers had intended, the report by the commission of inquiry has led to an intensification of political debate and the further discrediting of the Begin government. □



SHARON