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## **Opposition Grows in Labor Movement**

# **United States: Debate Mounts Over Reagan's War in Central America**



4,000 angry unionists in Pittsburgh greet Reagan, April 6, with demand of "Bread Not Bombs."

## **Imperialists Try to Bust OPEC**

# **Behind the Decline in Oil Prices**

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# USA: debate heats up over Reagan's war in Central America

By Ernest Harsch

As the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean continue to gain ground, a broad political debate is unfolding in the United States.

Hardly a week goes by now without a crop of new revelations about the Reagan administration's escalating military intervention in Central America. Working people are increasingly hostile to the government's war drive. They have no interest in defending the U.S. ruling class's economic and political stakes in the region and fear that Reagan is leading the country into a new Vietnam-type war.

Growing domestic opposition — combined with the strength and tenacity of the revolutionary forces in Central America — has thrown the capitalists and their political representatives in Washington into a quandary. An open split among the U.S. rulers has emerged over how best to safeguard imperialist domination in the region.

## Revolutions advance

Wall Street is haunted by the specter of what one White House document called new "Cuba-model states."

The working people of Nicaragua are armed and organized to defend their revolutionary government. They have been able to contain and drive back the attacks carried out by the U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary forces operating out of neighboring Honduras.

In Grenada, a small island in the Eastern Caribbean, Washington's threats, economic sabotage, and efforts to foment domestic opposition to the revolutionary government have also failed.

Meanwhile, in El Salvador, the dictatorship has been incapable of halting the advancing social revolution. Lieut. Gen. Wallace Nutting, the head of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama, recently told a U.S. congressional delegation that he was "very pessimistic" about the situation.

Washington's reverses on the ground have been compounded by political and diplomatic setbacks. The Salvadoran rebels have succeeded in winning widespread support for their proposal for unconditional negotiations in El Salvador. Similarly, as a result of the Nicaraguan-initiated debate in the United Nations Security Council on Washington's covert war against Nicaragua, the White House became more politically isolated on this issue, both internationally and within the United States.

Despite such reverses, the Reagan administration is pressing ahead with its military intervention in Central America. In fact, it is because of these setbacks that it is impelled to get more deeply involved to safeguard its political and economic stake in the region.

Recent weeks have seen an avalanche of revelations confirming the extent of this intervention:

- In March, U.S. and Honduran officials acknowledged that a new U.S. radar station was being set up just south of the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa. Its announced 200-mile surveillance radius will cover all of El Salvador and most of Nicaragua. More than 50 U.S. Air Force personnel are to staff the installation.

- On April 7, the *New York Times* published a previously secret National Security Council document outlining a wide range of moves against the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean (see page 221).

- A spate of news reports has detailed the U.S. role in organizing, arming, and training the counterrevolutionary forces attacking Nicaragua.

- On April 9, two administration officials confirmed to the *New York Times* earlier reports that Washington was planning to set up a new military base in Honduras for the training of Salvadoran troops. "One of the officials," the *Times* reported, "said the base would be staffed with about 100 United States military advisers. . . ."

## Worries in Congress

In face of this persistent drive toward deeper military intervention, sections of the U.S. ruling class are displaying considerable unease over the effectiveness of the White House's current policy. Overall, the U.S. imperialists are united around the need to halt and turn back the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean. But they differ on how best to do that, especially in a situation where everything Washington has tried so far has failed.

In recent weeks, there has been a flood of criticism of Reagan's policy in the editorial pages of major newspapers and from the floor of Congress.

An editorial in the April 10 *New York Times* reasserted the basic justification for U.S. intervention, declaring, "A proliferation of 'Cuba-model states' in the Caribbean and Central America could be a threat to America in its own backyard." But it then went on to cast doubt on the effectiveness of Reagan's policy.

A second editorial on April 18 declared, "The holes in the Administration's case are practical. Its secret army is big enough to arouse nationalist fury, but too small to overcome well-armed revolutionaries" in Nicaragua.

Various congressmen have visited El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and other countries in the region and come back to criticize Washington's aid to the Nicaraguan counter-

revolutionaries or to the Salvadoran dictatorship.

Representative Berkley Bedell told the House of Representatives April 13, following a visit to Nicaragua, "If the American people could have talked with the common people of Nicaragua, whose women and children are being indiscriminately kidnapped, tortured and killed by terrorists financed by the American taxpayers, they would rise up in legitimate anger and demand that support for the criminal activity be ended at once."

Numerous senators and congressmen — including Republican Senate majority leader Howard Baker — have questioned the legality of Washington's aid to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries. Citing the clear evidence of U.S. aid to these groups, they have pointed out that this is a violation of the so-called Boland amendment, passed in December, which prohibits the CIA or Defense Department from spending federal funds "for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua or provoking a military exchange between Nicaragua and Honduras."

On April 12, a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee voted to reject Reagan's request for additional military funds for the Salvadoran regime and to prohibit U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, unless it is approved by a joint resolution of Congress.

## 'It's doomed to failure'

However, beneath all their talk about violations of "legality" and "human rights," these ruling-class critics of Reagan's policy agree that the Central American revolutions have to be stopped.

Baker summed up this stance on April 13, when he declared, "I am never going to support an effort by this or any other Administration to subvert the law. But I also won't stand idly by and let Cuba and Russia have a free ride in Central America."

Their real criticisms of Reagan center on his policy's current ineffectiveness and the political costs and risks it is entailing both at home and internationally.

Referring to Washington's covert war against Nicaragua, Congressman Gerry Studds said April 12, "In addition to being illegal, inept and unnecessary, it's doomed to failure."

Congressman Michael Barnes complained, "Our policy has strengthened the Sandinists and rallied the country around them in the face of the external threat."

After a visit to Nicaragua and Honduras, Robert White, the U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador until 1981, expressed fear that Washington's military intervention would only lead to a further extension of the revolutionary struggles. "What has depressed me the most is to see what our intervention is doing to Honduras," he said. "We are radicalizing that country. . . ."

Clarence Long, the chairman of a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee, stressed the domestic protests that Reagan's policy is provoking. Referring to Reagan's request for additional military aid for El Salvador, he said,

"Right now, if we put this before the subcommittee, it would lose. It would be a public vote and I think the outcry against any money going to El Salvador without restrictions would be so great that I don't think even the President's party would vote for it."

Whatever its motives, however, the congressional opposition to Reagan's current policy does increase real difficulties for the White House. Similar congressional opposition contributed to cutting off funds for the CIA's covert war against Angola in 1975.

But the stakes for imperialism in Central America today are much greater.

Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz, and other officials have launched a campaign to answer their congressional opponents and justify Washington's policies. The White House's strategy is to push ahead.

If the Reagan administration is able to score any tangible successes, most of these same congressional critics will quickly drop their opposition. After all, Reagan has already poured hundreds of millions of dollars into its war against the Central American and Caribbean revolutions, all with the knowledge and approval of Congress.

Opposition among U.S. working people, however, will not be so easy to overcome.

Although that opposition is not now being expressed in massive, public demonstrations — as it was during the height of the Vietnam War — it is very much a reality of U.S. politics today. Workers in the mines and factories are eager to discuss the situation in Central America and are strongly opposed to U.S. intervention there.

A Gallup poll published March 31 revealed the extent of the opposition among the population as a whole. Although 75 percent of those polled thought it was very or fairly likely that a victory of the rebel forces in El Salvador would lead to similar developments elsewhere in Latin America, 68 percent opposed Reagan's request for additional military aid and 59 percent opposed any increase in the number of U.S. military personnel there.

This popular sentiment has put considerable pressure on the leadership of the AFL-CIO union federation. The bureaucrats who run the AFL-CIO have always supported Washington's foreign policy dictates, and have provided cover for the CIA's intervention into the Latin American trade-union movement. But in January, for the first time, the AFL-CIO tops voted to oppose Reagan's certification that the human rights situation in El Salvador was improving.

Shortly thereafter, three leading officials of AFL-CIO unions — Douglas Fraser of the United Auto Workers, William Winpisinger of the Machinists, and Jack Sheinkman of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers — wrote to Congress calling for negotiations and for "the termination of all military aid to El Salvador."

During the course of a speaking tour of the United States, Salvadoran trade-union leader Alejandro Molina Lara has found a good response among workers in many different parts

of the country. In four cities in Minnesota — Minneapolis, Duluth, Virginia, and St. Cloud — the central labor councils (which are affiliated to the AFL-CIO) helped sponsor his tour. The Central Labor Council in Erie, Pennsylvania, adopted a resolution calling for an end to all military and economic aid to the Salvadoran regime.

On March 16, the Milwaukee Central Labor Council adopted a resolution condemning the repression of trade unionists in El Salvador and opposing any further U.S. military aid to that country.

This resolution also pointed to a significant element in the massive opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America: the close connection between Washington's war drive and the social and economic suffering inflicted on U.S. working people by the capitalists'

policies at home.

"Working people in Milwaukee and the rest of the country are suffering the brunt of the economic crisis, including layoffs, mortgage foreclosures and utility cut-offs," the resolution said. It then called on the president of the labor council to "send a letter to all members of the Wisconsin delegation to Congress expressing opposition to military aid to El Salvador and stating that \$110 million can be much better spent providing jobs or preventing foreclosures for laid-off workers."

Fundamentally, it is because of this antiwar sentiment among working people that the ruling class is hesitant and divided over unleashing its military might against the Central American revolutions. To do so would risk a social explosion at home. □

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# New setback for Reagan plan

*PLO rejects blackmail by King Hussein*

By Will Reissner

President Reagan's plans for the Middle East took another blow April 10 when Jordan's King Hussein failed in his attempts to blackmail Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Yassir Arafat into going along with the Reagan proposals.

The Reagan plan was made public last September, right after the PLO's withdrawal from West Beirut. Washington hoped to take advantage of the blows that the Israeli army had dealt to the Palestinian people in Lebanon. Reagan's aim was to force political concessions from the Palestinians, split the PLO, and push Jordan into a separate treaty with Israel.

The struggle of the Palestinian people to regain their homeland would suffer a grave setback if Reagan succeeded with his plan to turn Jordan into a second Egypt. When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat signed a treaty with Israel in 1979, Arab resistance to Israeli expansionism was severely weakened, and the way was opened for the Israeli war in Lebanon. Reagan called on the Jordanian king to take the PLO's place as the representative of the Palestinian people in any Mideast negotiations. Reagan claimed that if King Hussein opened talks with the Israelis, Washington would pressure Tel Aviv to stop building new settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which Israel has occupied since 1967. He also promised to support some form of autonomy for the territories in loose association with Jordan.

But Reagan's plan specifically excluded the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, as demanded by the PLO and the Palestinian people.

## **PLO says no to Reagan**

At the nine-day Palestine National Council meeting in February, that body rejected the Reagan plan in no uncertain terms. The PNC declared: "The Reagan plan in its procedure and contents does not respond to the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights. The Reagan plan negates the Palestinian rights to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state. It also ignores the PLO as the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative and contradicts international legitimacy."

This view has been repeated time and again since then. As Yassir Arafat told a March 30 rally in Damascus, Syria, only days before his talks with King Hussein started, "if there is to be a solution, it will have to be on the basis of the Fez summit" meeting of Arab states. The Fez summit called for an independent Palestinian state and recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

As the talks with Hussein began, Khalil al-Wazir, a PLO leader often referred to as Abu Jihad, said the Reagan plan "does not satisfy Palestinian aims. Where is any mention of the P.L.O.? Where is any mention of an independent Palestinian state?"

The night before Hussein began his talks with Arafat, the Jordanian monarch received a telephone call from Reagan urging him to apply maximum pressure on the PLO to make it change its stance.

## **Hussein threatens PLO**

According to Herbert Denton, writing in the April 8 *Washington Post*, Hussein threatened to begin talks with Israel alone "if Arafat refused to allow him to bargain on behalf of the Palestinians." Denton adds that "Hussein also allegedly told Arafat that he would hold a referendum in Jordan and among Palestinians on the West Bank to gain support for such a move."

The PLO leader, however, refused to yield to these threats, and Hussein was forced to back down.

Following the breakdown in the Hussein-Arafat talks, Secretary of State George Shultz called on the Arab League to reverse its 1974 recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

An editorial in the April 12 *Washington Post* echoed Shultz's call for a more pliable Palestinian representation. Falsely claiming that "the statehood-or-nothing approach of the PLO has only feeble support among West Bankers," the *Post's* editors argued that "it would be foolish to chase further after the PLO. But it would be shortsighted not to continue the effort to draw out a Palestinian negotiating partner on the West Bank."

But Washington's hopes of splitting the PLO or developing a Palestinian force outside its ranks has run up against a basic problem. Even so-called "moderates" in the occupied territories recognize that the Reagan administration is not interested in forcing any real concessions from the Begin government, which has vowed not to give up an inch of the occupied territories.

On closer examination, Reagan's claims of pressure exerted on the Israeli government turn out to be nothing but window dressing. For example, the White House recently announced with considerable fanfare that it was pressing the Israelis to withdraw their 35,000 troops from Lebanon by postponing the delivery of 75 F-16 jet fighters to Israel.

But none of the F-16s are scheduled for delivery until 1985! The only thing the White House actually postponed was notification of

the pending sale that it is required to file with Congress.

One Jordanian politician pointed out that "if the U.S. cannot push the Israelis out of Lebanon, why should anyone believe it can get them out of the West Bank?"

Former Gaza mayor Rashad al-Shawa noted that "the United States has within its power sufficient influence to stop Israeli settlement in the territories. Merely to talk about doing its best to stop the Israeli settlements — I don't believe that is serious enough for us who call ourselves moderates."

## **Expansion of settlements**

Far from coming to a halt, the Israeli colonization in the occupied territories is accelerating as the Begin government continues its policy of de facto annexation. Tel Aviv recently announced an 18-month program to expand 68 existing settlements and to increase the Israeli population in the West Bank from 30,000 to 50,000.

Former Israeli Army Chief of Staff Rafael Eytan laid out the Begin government's policy in the clearest terms in the Israeli Knesset (parliament) on April 12. Eytan boasted that "when we have settled the land, all the Arabs will be able to do about it will be to scurry around like drugged roaches in a bottle."

Many Palestinians fear that the Israeli government is planning to drive most of them out of the territories as the next phase in its territorial expansion.

The Israeli government's attitude is illustrated by remarks made by the deputy speaker of the Knesset on March 17. Meir Cohen lamented that the Israelis had not expelled the Palestinians from the West Bank when they conquered it in 1967. Cohen said "we had the means in 1967 to make sure that 200,000 or 300,000 would move to the other side, as was done in Lydda, Ramla, and Galilee in 1948, but we made a calamitous mistake. Things would have been simpler today: no Palestinian problem, no stones, no demonstrations. We could have brought in 100,000 settlers and there would have been no trouble."

Hussein's threat to approach the Palestinian people over the head of the PLO if the talks with Arafat did not yield significant results was mere bluster. Both Hussein and Reagan know that the PLO represents the overwhelming majority of Palestinians. And they know that unless they can destroy the PLO, the Reagan plan is doomed to failure.

After all, demonstrators on the West Bank regularly carry PLO flags and pictures of Arafat when they confront Israeli troops. When was the last time demonstrators in the occupied territories carried pictures of King Hussein? □

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# Secret document exposes U.S. war plan

*White House seeks to stop spread of 'Cuba-model states'*

**By Steve Wattenmaker**

The U.S. government developed a sweeping master plan in 1982 designed to prevent the "proliferation of Cuba-model states" in Central America.

Prepared by the White House National Security Council (NSC), the highly classified document summarized an April 1982 policy review meeting attended by President Reagan and his top advisers. A copy leaked to the press was published in the April 7, 1983, *New York Times*.

The NSC paper dramatically confirms how far the U.S. imperialists are prepared to go in their effort to stop the spread of social revolution throughout Central America and the Caribbean.

"Our current strategy," the document says, "consists of building a sustained and effective commitment to the region by . . . improving the military capabilities of the democratic states to counter subversion by the extreme left."

"We have a vital interest in not allowing the proliferation of Cuba-model states which would provide platforms for subversion," eventually posing a threat "at or near our borders."

## U.S. view of 'democratic' forces

Crushing the popular rebellions in Central America will not come cheap, however. The document assumes a "resource availability at \$1 billion of economic and military assistance a year" for the region through 1984. (Emphasis added.)

Early in the NSC memorandum the authors make clear who they consider the "democratic" forces in Central America. These include the death-squad organizers running the Salvadoran government and the military chiefs who hold the real power in Honduras.

Guatemalan butcher Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt is also included in the list of Central American democrats backed by Washington. "In Guatemala the recent junior officer coup has given us new possibilities for working out an improved relationship with that country." The NSC document also reports approvingly that "the minicoup in Panama has brought to power a new, more dynamic and more pro-U.S. national guard commander."

The White House definition of "democratic state" has nothing in common with democracy. It is a code phrase to designate those governments that remain firmly under U.S. economic and political domination.

The NSC planners are slightly more candid when they identify the source of the rebellions engulfing Central America and the Caribbean.

Although they include the usual charges about "Cuban/Soviet influence in the region," they admit that the causes of revolution have something to do with the economic and social system that Washington is defending.

"The regional economic situation continues to deteriorate, causing social and political dislocations which impede our efforts to stabilize the situation," they complain in the document.

Their solution is to promote "reform programs to correct the severe social dislocations which foment and aid insurgency."

What the document fails to spell out is that the "dislocations" — poverty, illiteracy, high infant mortality, murderous government repression — are necessary by-products of the exploitation of the region for profit by U.S. big business. The minimal reforms NSC policy experts have in mind, like El Salvador's token

land reform program, do little more than put a band-aid on a gaping wound.

Under these circumstances the workers and peasants of Central America and the Caribbean will continue to fall under "Cuban/Soviet influence" — that is, they will continue to be inspired by the examples of successful revolutions in Cuba, Nicaragua, and the small island of Grenada.

For this reason, Nicaragua and Cuba are singled out for particularly harsh treatment by the NSC. Especially ominous in the document is the statement that Washington will continue "significant covert effort as approved in N.S.D.D. 17 and other existing authorities."

## Attacks against Nicaragua

In March 1981, Reagan authorized a \$19.5 million plan for covert military operations against Nicaragua. This plan was put into high gear by the White House in November 1981 with the National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 17, referred to above. It directed the CIA to immediately begin training an initial 500-man paramilitary force to attack Nicaragua from camps spread out along the Honduran border.

It was precisely in mid-November of that year that counterrevolutionary attacks across the Nicaraguan-Honduran border became serious.

Another objective of NSDD 17 was to support "action teams to collect intelligence and engage in paramilitary and political operations in Nicaragua and elsewhere.

"Work primarily through non-Americans" to achieve these covert objectives, but in some cases the CIA might "take unilateral paramilitary action — possibly using U.S. personnel — against special Cuban targets."

With no Cuban military installations anywhere in Central America, the clear implication of the directive was to give the CIA free rein in organizing the assassinations of Cuban doctors, teachers, construction workers, and other volunteers aiding Nicaragua and other countries in the region.

That assumption can be confirmed by the murders of a number of Cuban teachers who were helping Nicaragua carry out its mass literacy campaign.

CIA hit squads were also given contracts on Cuban leaders. Speaking at the summit meeting of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries in March 1983, Cuban President Fidel Castro said, "Through reliable sources we have learned that the new U.S. Administration has instructed the Central Intelligence Agency to resume plans to kill Cuban leaders, especially its President."

## French doctor murdered

MANAGUA — Counterrevolutionaries operating out of Honduras have time and again aired, over their clandestine radio station, hit-lists of international volunteers aiding the Sandinista revolution. These volunteers are targeted for death by the rightist forces.

On March 26 the *contras* succeeded in murdering a French doctor, Pierre Grosjean, who was, at the time, trying to find a cure for mountain leprosy.

Along with Grosjean, two Sandinista soldiers and two militia men were killed in an early morning ambush at the small town of Rancho Grande, located in the central province of Matagalpa. Seventeen civilians, among them seven children, were wounded.

The murder of Pierre Grosjean brought indignation and grief. He is the sixth international volunteer to be killed by *contras* since the 1979 revolution; the other five were Cuban teachers.

The international volunteers resident in Managua immediately went to work to get the word out abroad. They organized a militant demonstration at the U.S. embassy here March 28.

Carried by the French internationalists was a banner with a large portrait of Grosjean. It read, "Reagan, with Pierre's blood, we reaffirm our commitment to a free Nicaragua."

— Jane Harris

In addition to covert paramilitary attacks against "Cuban targets," the newly revealed NSC paper outlined a political and economic campaign against Cuba as well.

On the political front the document called for building "public pressure against Cuba by highlighting human and political rights issue. Use international Cuban community to carry the message."

Nowhere in the document is the cynicism and hypocrisy of the U. S. government more damningly revealed.

In El Salvador, a "democratic state" by Washington standards, the U.S.-backed regime murdered an estimated 30,000 civilians in the last three years. That fact gives Reagan no problem in certifying that the regime is making "human rights progress."

Meanwhile, right-wing Cuban exiles in Miami will get White House assistance in conjuring up and publicizing nonexistent human rights abuses in Cuba.

More threatening still is a proposal to escalate attacks against Cuba's economy:

"Increase economic pressure on Cuba. (Consideration to be given to quantum tightening of economic embargo by stronger restrictions on Cuban content from third countries.)"

During 1981 former Secretary of State Alexander Haig proposed an even more provocative "quantum tightening" by suggesting a U.S. naval blockade of Cuba combined with possible air strikes against Cuban and Nicaraguan targets. The White House apparently shelved Haig's plan as too risky.

However, recent revelations and statements by U.S. officials provide evidence that the administration remains committed to a pattern of escalating attacks against Cuba.

In December 1981 the White House secretly notified congressional intelligence committees that it was granting the CIA even broader authority to conduct "political and paramilitary operations against Cubans and Cuban supply lines" in the region.

Testifying before Congress April 12, 1983, a top State Department official reported that Washington had warned Cuba that "a serious situation" would develop if Cuba increased its military assistance to Nicaragua. Meanwhile, Washington continues trying to provoke a full-scale war between Nicaragua and Honduras — precisely the kind of situation that would inevitably lead to increased Cuban aid to the Sandinista government.

#### Negotiations torpedoed

Another component of Washington's Central America strategy described in the document was an attempt to defuse growing international support for negotiations in El Salvador.

White House planners also proposed doing everything possible to sow divisions within the rebel movements in the region.

Early in 1981 the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) in El Salvador had proposed unconditional negotiations aimed at ending the civil war. This call for dialogue quickly gained

worldwide support, including inside El Salvador and in the United States.

From the outset the Reagan administration hotly opposed any negotiations with the guerrillas. The White House understandably feared that negotiations would expose the weakness of the Salvadoran regime while accenting the popularity of the rebel forces.

To counter the pressure for negotiations, the NSC document proposed pushing the Salvadoran regime to hold another round of phony elections in 1983. At the same time the plan called for the administration to "step up efforts to co-opt [the] negotiations issue to avoid Congressionally mandated negotiations, which would work against our interests."

As part of the strategy the NSC suggests encouraging "friction between guerrilla groups and guerrilla supporters" and urges a "concerted effort to exacerbate factional strife in [the] extreme left."

#### Wishful thinking

The release of the top-secret NSC document is a particular embarrassment to the government in the midst of a deepening discussion in the United States over the administration's policies in Central America and the Caribbean.

There is widespread anger in the labor

movement and beyond — a feeling that Reagan is leading the nation into a new Vietnam in Central America, while unemployment, poverty, and inequality at home are mounting. Not only does the document give the lie to Reagan's pious claims to be defending freedom and democracy in the region, it provides a revealing glimpse of administration efforts to manipulate the American people.

"We continue to have serious difficulties with U.S. public and Congressional opinion," the NSC admits, "which jeopardizes our ability to stay the course."

To remedy the situation the NSC policy experts advise allocating "necessary personnel resources" to improve its "public information effort."

The most important projections the NSC planners made in 1982 turned out to be nothing but wishful thinking. The document predicted that the Salvadoran armed forces would improve, "putting the guerrillas increasingly on the defensive." In fact, the rebel forces threw the Salvadoran army into disarray during January and February.

And, contrary to the designs of the White House, the revolutionary organizations have remained unified and have strengthened ties to their supporters. □

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# U.S. bullies Mexico, Panama

*Demands support for war plans*

**By Steve Wattenmaker**

The U.S. government will take steps to "isolate" those who refuse to embrace the Reagan administration's war plans in Central America. That threat — directed at Mexico in particular — was disclosed in a highly classified National Security Council (NSC) document made public by the *New York Times* April 7.

The top-secret memorandum, prepared as a summary of an April 1982 meeting between President Reagan and his advisers, was adopted to guide Washington's intervention in Central America through 1984.

The Reagan policy makers singled out Mexico, slamming it for continuing "to work against our policies."

"Mexico continues public and covert support for the extreme left with propaganda, funds, and political support," the document complains.

Mexico and Panama, one at the northern end of Central America and the other at its southern tip, are two of the Latin American countries most dominated by U.S. imperialism. Mexico's economy is completely dependent on that of the United States. Panama remains under virtual U.S. military occupation with 10,600 U.S. troops stationed in the Canal Zone — a force equal in size to Panama's own army.

But such is the popular support for the revolutionary struggles of the workers and peasants of Central America, that the Mexican and Panamanian governments have defied the White House by backing the call of El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) for negotiations between the rebels and the Salvadoran junta. Mexico and Panama have also refused to support Washington's escalating war against Nicaragua.

## 'Accomplices in betrayal'

At the conclusion of the UN Security Council meeting called in late March in response to the U.S.-backed invasion of Nicaragua, Washington's UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick issued a thinly disguised threat to the countries who had defended Nicaragua in the debate:

"Whoever in this arena supports Nicaragua's right to commit repression at home and aggression against its neighbors . . . has become an accomplice in the betrayal of" self-determination and peace, Kirkpatrick declared. She singled out both Mexico and Panama among the list of "accomplices."

Earlier, in response to the show of independence by countries that Washington views as in its backyard, the NSC policy group decided to "adopt [a] more active diplomatic campaign to turn around Mexico" while keeping it "iso-

lated on Central American issues."

U.S. plans to "isolate" Latin American governments that do not come to heel quickly enough at their master's command go beyond diplomacy. They include financial pressures, intervention in the internal politics of these countries, and even military threats.

In August 1982 the Mexican government obtained a copy of a secret U.S. State Department document. It suggested Washington could exploit Mexico's economic crisis to pressure Mexico to be "less adventuresome in its foreign policy and less critical of ours." Mexican officials angrily charged that Washington had launched a "campaign" to inspire "critical attitudes" toward Mexico.

## Mexico gets warning

Top U.S. officials have also made it clear that in fighting the revolutionary upsurge in Central America they are prepared to ignore the existence of Mexico and Panama as sovereign states with their own independent foreign policy.

If the guerrillas in El Salvador succeed, President Reagan said in a March 11, 1983, speech, "the killing will increase, and so will the threat to Panama, the canal, and ultimately Mexico."

In essence, Reagan's argument is that he knows what is best for Mexico and Panama.

Mexico's foreign minister, Bernardo Sepúlveda, sharply criticized Reagan's speech for meddling in the affairs of his country. Reagan, he declared, was raising the specter of guerrilla war in Mexico as a "pretext" to intervene in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders testified before Congress March 1 that the revolution might spread from Nicaragua and El Salvador.

"So the struggle would go on," Enders said, "but on battlefields where the stakes would be much higher. We cannot permit that" (emphasis added).

If Washington "cannot permit" the spread of the social revolution in Central America, the implication is that it also "cannot permit" Mexico and Panama to follow policies that get in the way of the escalation of its counter-revolutionary war there. Also implicit in Enders' statement was Washington's right to intervene on any Central American "battlefield" — a warning that has not been lost on the peoples of Panama and Mexico.

## Stirring up a coup

Washington made an even more direct threat against Panama by assigning U.S. Ambassador Everett Briggs to stir up a possible coup by

junior officers in the Panamanian National Guard.

At the end of February Briggs was discovered making "courtesy calls" on local military commanders at their bases in Colon and Boquete — without the knowledge of their superior officers.

This provocation was considered serious enough for Panama's strongman, National Guard commander Brig. Gen. Rubén Darío Paredes, to warn Briggs that "in the face of another act of this nature, this command . . . will ask the Government for your withdrawal from the country."

The U.S. State Department quickly expressed "full confidence" in Briggs.

A month later the Reagan administration drove home its displeasure with Panama's independent policies by canceling a planned visit to Washington by General Paredes.

Not only is the Reagan administration irritated by Panama's support for negotiations in El Salvador, but the White House is concerned with growing opposition in Panama to an announced step-up in the training of Salvadoran government troops at the U.S. Army-run counterinsurgency school in the Canal Zone.

The school itself is supposed to close in 1984 under provisions of the Panama Canal treaty. But Washington is pressuring Panama to keep it open. Panama has repeatedly protested other violations of the Panama Canal treaty as well.

A Panamanian journalist captured the mood of growing anger in both Panama and Mexico at U.S. imperialism's efforts to bully both countries back into line. Panama, he said, "isn't Ronald Reagan's estate." □

## Revolutionary youth group formed in Switzerland

More than 200 young revolutionaries gathered in Biel, Switzerland, March 19-20 for the founding congress of the Revolutionary Socialist Youth (JSR).

The formation of the organization was the result of several years of activity by the United Circles of *La Brèche* and *La Taupe*, newspapers of the Socialist Workers Party (PSO/SAP), the Swiss section of the Fourth International.

At the congress, members discussed their political work in various struggles, including the fight of young workers against the capitalist economic crisis, the struggles against military service and for the democratic rights of soldiers, environmental campaigns, movements of housing squatters, and the struggle against women's oppression.

The conference adopted two priorities for activity for the JSR in the near future:

- Participation in an active campaign against U.S. intervention in Central America and in solidarity with the revolutionary struggles there, culminating in a national demonstration in June.

- Defending education and technical training for youth in face of the capitalists' increasing attacks in those areas.

# War comes to El Limón

## Sandinistas face escalating attacks

By Michael Baumann

EL LIMÓN — "We are in a situation of invasion. The United States is carrying out a war against Nicaragua, a war that is no less a war for not having been openly declared."

This description of what Nicaragua is facing, by Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto March 31, is no exaggeration.

The residents of this small farm town, just five miles south of the Honduran border, are among the hundreds of thousands who can testify personally.

This correspondent visited El Limón April 2, just hours after the village militia mobilized to repel a two-hour attack by a unit of 40 to 50 counterrevolutionaries who were National Guardsmen under the old Somoza dictatorship.

Bullet holes from the attack were visible in the adobe brick of El Limón's houses. Militia members who had taken part in combat were still discussing the battle.

There were no Sandinista casualties this time. In large part this was because the entire village is already on a war footing. Each house has a six-foot trench or an underground shelter in the backyard to protect the elderly and children. Most families have at least one member in either the militia or civil defense.

Somewhere in northern Nicaragua, one or more attacks like this take place every day.

There has been an intense escalation of the U.S. undeclared war against Nicaragua. In a briefing at the army command post in nearby Santa Clara, Capt. Oscar Cortés, chief of military operations for the area, gave an extensive report on the situation to journalists from more than a dozen countries.

Reviewing and amplifying, in response to reporters' questions, a major statement made several days earlier by Defense Minister Humberto Ortega, Cortés described the current fighting as "the initial phase" of the invasion.

The invasion began two months ago, he said. In early February the United States used the cover of military maneuvers with Honduras to infiltrate into Nicaragua 1,200 to 1,400 *contras* (counterrevolutionaries), organized in six separate units.

These units then carried out a series of attacks. As planned, the resulting battles were widely reported in the imperialist press as evidence of an "internal uprising" against the revolutionary government.

Washington wanted to give the impression that "the Sandinista army had lost control of the situation," Cortés said.

For example, the fight to regain an airstrip at Bocay, about half a mile south of the border, was misrepresented in some U.S. media to the point of claiming the *contras* had held the area long enough to construct an airstrip for pur-

poses of receiving further supplies.

In fact, the strip was one the Sandinistas built last year to facilitate emergency evacuations of civilian residents from the border area. It was the strip used by the helicopter that crashed last December, claiming the lives of 75 children.

Militarily the first phase is in deep trouble, Cortés said. Sandinista units made up primarily of reservists and militia members have reduced the invading forces to trying to fight their way back to Honduras.

Most of Nicaragua's regular army forces have been retained deeper inside the country, because of what the Sandinistas believe is coming next.

"The second phase," Cortés said, "will be to provoke a confrontation between our Sandinista People's Army and the Honduran army, to bring the Honduran army directly into the conflict."

Several thousand more ex-National Guardsmen are sitting on the border, waiting for the signal to attack. The unit that attacked El Limón was part of these fresh forces, Cortés pointed out.

## Salvadoran revolutionary assassinated in Nicaragua

By Jane Harris

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Salvadoran revolutionary leader Mélida Anaya Montes, better known as Commander Ana María, was assassinated here April 6. She was second in command of the People's Liberation Forces (FPL) of El Salvador.

Fifty thousand people turned out for her funeral April 9. They placed responsibility for her murder squarely on Washington.

The assassination took place as Salvadoran liberation forces are scoring new victories over the faltering U.S.-backed regime and are winning new support around the world. The attack was not only aimed at the Salvadoran revolution, but also at the Nicaraguan revolution and its refusal to retreat from uncompromising solidarity with the people of El Salvador.

Ana María was 54 at the time of her death. She became active in politics while teaching at the University of El Salvador in the 1960s. She was a founder of ANDES, the National Association of Salvadoran Educators, and helped lead ANDES in a massive strike in 1968 and another in 1971.

A target of death squads, she lived in clandestinity for years. In 1970 she became a

In recent weeks these small-scale infiltrations have been increasingly aided by cover fire and border penetrations by Honduran army units.

Use of one of these incidents to claim Nicaragua has "attacked" Honduras, and to start a formal war between the two countries, is the gravest danger Nicaragua faces at the present moment.

"That would lead to the final phase," Cortés said, "which is clearly to introduce other forces, among which cannot be ruled out U.S. forces."

"We believe the present situation is intimately linked to the situation in El Salvador," Cortés concluded.

"The United States is outraged that the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) is daily gaining strength and striking power."

For propaganda purposes, the United States is trying to link the FMLN's call for negotiations on the civil war in El Salvador with the imperialists' demand that Nicaragua "negotiate with the National Guard."

They know in advance that "we are not going to negotiate our revolutionary power with anyone," Cortés stressed. "Therefore the final phase must involve a U.S. invasion."

And because "U.S. imperialism is trying to protect its interests in the entire area, such an invasion would involve not just Nicaragua but the entire Central American region." □

founding member of the FPL, which later became one of the five revolutionary organizations that make up the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). In 1975, she helped found the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR).

After the formation of the FMLN in 1980, she became a member of the Revolutionary Unified Directorate. As a commander of the FMLN, she was put in charge of the work in mass organizations. Shortly afterwards, she led the guerrilla front in Usulután.

The facts that Nicaraguan State Security have released so far indicate that her killers entered the house where she was staying in the early morning hours, gagged Ana María with a blanket to stop her from calling out for help, and then proceeded to stab her with an ice pick 82 times.

At a press conference here April 7, Commander Tomás Borge, minister of the interior, made clear that Ana María's murder could only be seen in the context of Reagan's war against the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran people.

"The only possible assassins of Ana María are the enemies of the Nicaraguan revolution, the enemies of the revolutionary Salvadoran



process, the enemies of the people, those who use all their spying resources to assassinate revolutionary leaders, in an effort to destroy the yearnings of the people."

Borge pointed out that Ana María's presence in Nicaragua was never a secret. He said that sometimes her visits here were for several weeks at a time. She came here, he said, "as she went to other countries, tirelessly, always bringing the message of her people, the message of the Salvadoran revolutionaries."

Already, in El Salvador, the freedom fighters have stepped up their current offensive against the government, renaming it "Compañera Mélida Anaya Montes" in honor of Commander Ana María.

On April 8, thousands lined up — first at the Nicaraguan Women's Association—Luisa Amanda Espinoza (AMNLAE), at the Nicaraguan Educators Association (ANDEN), and then at the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) — to pay their respects to Ana María.

In the CST hall, speakers explained that Ana María's many capacities — from schoolteacher to professor, from strike leader to mass leader, from political leader to military strategist — made her an example of the new Latin American woman, an example for everyone to follow.

Bonfires were set that night in neighborhoods throughout the city in commemoration of her death.

Commander Ana María was buried in a large plaza here, which has been named Plaza of Revolutionary Unity — Commander Ana María.

Symbolizing the solidarity that exists between Nicaraguans and Salvadorans, Orlando Tardencillas read a statement from the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Tardencillas is the 20-year-old Nicaraguan who was tortured and dragged from a prison cell in San Salvador to the United States last year in an attempt to prove Nicaraguan subversion is behind the rev-

olution in El Salvador. Tardencillas exposed this lie before the U.S. press.

The keynote speaker at the ceremony was Salvador Cayetano Carpio, better known as Commander Marcial. He is first in command of the FPL.

He began by describing how encouraging the very existence of Nicaragua is for the freedom fighters in El Salvador.

"Imperialism accuses Nicaragua, saying that the leaders of the Salvadoran people, the leaders of the FMLN-FDR are here," he said, "as if that were shameful — the solidarity of one people with another."

Marcial said the national leaders of the FMLN would continue to work inside and outside of El Salvador, uniting the forces of solidarity wherever they existed.

## FSLN issues statement on war

### Sets up revolutionary courts

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "U.S. aggression against our country has been escalated to a new dimension," the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) alerted Nicaragua April 8.

The statement was broadcast over radio and television on the eve of assassinated Salvadoran leader Commander Ana María's funeral, and printed in all three daily newspapers the following day.

The FSLN reported that fresh units of U.S.-armed National Guards had invaded from Honduras and taken up positions near the mining region in the Atlantic Coast province of Zelaya.

Smaller-scale actions had taken place on the Pacific Coast, in the northern province of Chinandega.

At the same time, "provocations by the Honduran army have been increasing. They began with rifle fire, developed to the level of artillery fire, and have recently included incursions by Honduran army units into Nicaraguan territory."

The FSLN called on the entire population to unite in defense of the country.

"We must prepare ourselves for any eventuality," they said. "We must confront with all our forces the first stage of the U.S. aggression, the invasion by the genocidal forces. We must also prepare for a possible aggression by the Honduran army, directed by the U.S. government. And we must be prepared to defend national sovereignty, including against direct intervention by the United States."

As an initial step, in a decree issued three days later, the Government of National Reconstruction has reinstated the People's Court, organs of revolutionary justice that were used to try captured National Guardsmen after the victory of the revolution. These courts, made up of two citizens and a lawyer, will try all further captured counterrevolutionaries as war

The Reagan administration, he said, "has a global policy against the Central American people, who are irreversibly in struggle until the final victory. The struggle of the Central American people is one single struggle." He described how Farabundo Martí and Augusto César Sandino fought together in Nicaragua against the U.S. Marines in the late 1920s.

Marcial, explaining how very difficult it was for him to say goodbye to a comrade of so many years, told the crowd, "each blow hurts us more. But each blow also makes us more determined and decisive in combating all of imperialism's maneuvers."

As Ana María's body was lowered into the ground, a cry went up from 50,000 voices: "Revolution or death — El Salvador will win!" □

criminals.

Every man and woman available and every possible resource will be used to defend the country, the FSLN pledged in its statement. They warned, "This may mean greater difficulties for the development of our economic programs and more serious limitations in the availability of economic resources to be distributed in the country."

Specifically, "it is possible that in the immediate future we will have to confront limitations in fuel and transportation, limitations in basic items, and shortages of all types. To confront these inevitable difficulties, our government will take firm measures, both to regulate fair distribution at all levels and to halt hoarding and speculation."

Exacerbating these problems is clearly part of the U.S. plan.

"This is a war," the FSLN said, "that includes a search for popular discontent, through artificially increasing shortages of basic consumer items and boycotting the efforts of the revolutionary government to assure just distribution of these products."

"It is a war that includes launching insidious rumors, in an effort to sow anxiety and unease in the population."

The statement made clear that collaborators with these efforts would meet the full force of revolutionary justice, declaring: "We warn all those who become connected with counter-revolutionary activity in any of its forms that they will be considered traitors to the country and dealt with as such."

Nicaragua remains prepared to have talks with both the United States and Honduras, the statement stressed. But, it added, there is now a nonnegotiable precondition for any such talks: "the unconditional withdrawal of the genocidal forces introduced into Nicaragua by the United States and a halt to the border attacks being carried out from Honduran territory." □



COMMANDER ANA MARIA

NACLA

# Crusade against 'evil empire' falls flat

*Reagan's call to battle against USSR rejected in Europe too*

By Ernest Harsch

Over the Easter weekend, hundreds of thousands took to the streets of cities throughout Western Europe to protest Washington's plans to station new nuclear missiles in their countries.

West Germany was swept by the largest and most widespread actions. On April 2, some 75,000 people joined demonstrations blocking seven U.S. military bases and staged symbolic "die-ins," despite chilly rain. The next day, Easter Sunday, the number of protesters rose to 180,000 in various cities.

Protests also took place in Italy and the Netherlands.

In Britain, 70,000 turned out in Aldermaston on April 1. Holding hands, they formed a human chain 14 miles long stretching from the Greenham Royal Air Force Base, where some of the U.S. missiles are to be placed, to the Royal Ordnance Factory at Burghfield, where British nuclear warheads are produced. The turnout far surpassed the organizers' predictions. On April 2, some 20,000 converged on the central square in Glasgow, Scotland, and the next day demonstrators protested the stationing of Trident nuclear submarines at Faslane, west of Glasgow.

## 'Naïve and reckless'?

Responding to these antimissile actions, British Defense Secretary Michael Heseltine accused the demonstrators of following a "naïve and reckless road" that would only strengthen Moscow's military position.

But the demonstrators in Britain and the rest of Western Europe, like the great majority of humanity, are seeing more clearly than ever that it is Washington that is spearheading the drive toward war, including the danger of nuclear annihilation. And they are acting on that understanding.

The danger of war comes not from some irrational, out-of-control "arms race." Nor does it come from the Soviet Union or any other workers state, where capitalism and its drive toward war have been eliminated. Rather, the war danger comes from the coldly calculated imperialist policy of using military force to protect capitalist wealth and profits. At a time when more and more people around the globe are rising up to throw off the yoke of imperialist oppression and class exploitation, the rulers in Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, and other imperialist capitals are resorting to threats of war and war itself to safeguard their domination.

Because war is necessary for the preservation of capitalist rule, Washington and its imperialist allies have enormous stakes in the po-



Reagan during his March 23 speech. He tied U.S. nuclear buildup to Soviet 'threat' in Central America and Caribbean.

litical battle now under way. The massive opposition to Washington's nuclear arms buildup and its military interventions abroad, especially in Central America and the Caribbean, has left the U.S. ruling class politically isolated on a world scale as never before.

## Reagan's 'evil empire'

In an effort to counter these rising protests and to justify the Pentagon's massive military buildup, the White House has stepped up its anti-Soviet propaganda campaign, attempting to portray Moscow as a military threat to the United States and the rest of the world. This campaign is targeted not only at the millions of people who have demonstrated in Western Europe over the past few years, but also at the millions within the United States who oppose Reagan's massive arms spending and his rapidly escalating war in Central America.

In a March 8 speech in Florida before a convention of evangelical preachers, Reagan maintained that communism is "the focus of evil in the modern world" and called for resistance to "the aggressive impulses of an evil empire," that is, the Soviet Union.

While Reagan's anticommunist diatribes sparked enthusiastic applause from his right-wing audience, they could only arouse contempt and ridicule throughout most of the world.

To the people of Latin America fighting to throw off dictatorial regimes armed and fi-

nanced by Washington, who is the "evil empire"?

To the Arab peoples of the Middle East, above all the Palestinians who are massacred and driven from their homes by the U.S.-armed and U.S.-financed state of Israel, who is the "evil empire"?

To the Black majority of southern Africa struggling for their liberation from the U.S.-allied apartheid regime, who is the "evil empire"?

To the peoples fighting U.S.-backed dictatorships in South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Pakistan, who is the "evil empire"?

The fact is, the majority of people across the globe consider Washington to be "the focus of evil in the world."

While seeking to portray Moscow as the source of aggression, Reagan at the same time has tried to paint Washington as a peace-loving power.

In a March 31 speech to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council in Beverly Hills, Reagan maintained that "when the United States was the only country in the world possessing these awesome [nuclear] weapons, we did not blackmail others with threats to use them."

That is an outright lie. In 1946, after Washington had already dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, President Harry Truman threatened to use nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union unless Soviet troops were withdrawn from northern Iran. During the Korean War, Washington twice threatened to use nuclear weapons, as it did several times during the Vietnam War, the so-called Cuban missile crisis of 1962, and on a few other occasions.

In each of those cases, the danger of a general nuclear war arose out of Washington's involvement in specific wars due to its attempts to keep the world safe for U.S. big business. The same holds true today.

## Central American powderkeg

In his various speeches, Reagan directly linked the Pentagon's overall arms buildup, including the stationing of new nuclear missiles in Western Europe, to Washington's efforts to turn back the revolutionary struggles in Central America.

In a March 10 address to the National Association of Manufacturers, Reagan declared that if the rebel forces triumph in El Salvador, then "El Salvador will join Cuba and Nicaragua as a base for spreading fresh violence to Guatemala, Honduras, even Costa Rica. The killing will increase, and so will the threat to Panama, the canal and ultimately

Mexico. . . .

"Soviet military theorists want to destroy our capacity to resupply Western Europe in case of an emergency. They want to tie down our forces on our own southern border and so limit our capacity to act in more distant places. . . ."

The U.S. rulers know full well that the revolutionary struggles in Central America were not manufactured in Moscow and are not controlled from there. They know that the real roots of the ferment lie in the poverty, repression, and imperialist exploitation that the peoples of Central America have suffered for decades, and against which they are now rebelling.

Fidel Castro, in a March 7 address to the Nonaligned conference in New Delhi, pointed to the real target of the imperialist military buildup.

He asked, "Is it only to fight their adversaries in the Warsaw Treaty? Or is it that imperialism, perhaps aware of the economic and social realities of the underdeveloped countries, foresees a Third World convulsed by the unending poverty, crisis and exploitation that have been imposed on it? Is it preparing itself militarily to impose Yankee order and peace, by fighting underdevelopment, hunger, ignorance, squalor, the lack of basic living conditions and the consequent rebellion and disorder it produces, with the bayonets of their soldiers, the guns of their battleships, and the bombs of their planes to secure indispensable oil and raw materials?"

But Reagan and his Wall Street backers cannot publicly admit that that is precisely what they are doing. They must mask their true motives. The propaganda about Soviet involvement in Central America is designed to give some political cover to U.S. imperialism's efforts to put down those revolutions. And the nuclear threats against the Soviet Union are intended to warn Moscow not to aid the liberation forces as they come under greater U.S. attack.

#### Arms talk ploy

As part of this propaganda campaign, the U.S. rulers are also compelled to engage in negotiations on nuclear arms in order to undercut the protests against the actual imperialist arms buildup.

Reagan's initial response to the protests in Western Europe was his "zero option" proposal. Under it, Moscow would be required to dismantle all of its intermediate-range missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union. Washington and its European allies would dismantle none of their existing missiles, but would forgo deploying the 572 new Pershing 2 and cruise missiles.

Moscow rejected this obviously empty offer, and Reagan's proposal made little impact among antimissile forces in Western Europe.

Now, Reagan has put forward a new ploy. In a March 30 televised speech, he proposed an "interim agreement," under which Moscow

would dismantle some of its intermediate-range missiles, while NATO would deploy fewer of the Pershing 2 and cruise missiles than currently planned. According to Reagan, this would leave each side with the same number of nuclear warheads on such missiles. But this calculation left out the 162 British and French missiles already targeted on the Soviet Union.

Rejecting Reagan's latest gambit, Soviet leader Yuri Andropov noted the massive U.S. nuclear capacity deployed on ships and planes "literally at our threshold."

Reagan's offer was never a serious one. Its primary purpose is political. Citing unnamed administration officials, the April 4 *New York Times* reported that it "was partly intended to respond to growing pressure from Western European governments for the United States to demonstrate more flexibility in the arms-control talks.

"European leaders have come under intense political pressure from many of their citizens, especially the young members of the European movements that intensely oppose deployment of the new American nuclear weapons in Europe."

The same article reported on another new propaganda effort of the Reagan administration: a drive to counter "anti-American tendencies" among young people in Western Europe.

But Washington will have great difficulties in convincing European youth of the U.S. government's beneficence.

A survey conducted in seven European countries by U.S. pollster Louis Harris found widespread hostility toward U.S. policies. In answering the question of what was "most responsible for current international tensions," 49 percent of those polled in France between the ages of 18 and 24 cited either the "U.S. military buildup" or the "U.S. aggressive policies towards the Soviet Union." In West Germany, 64 percent of those in the same age group cited the U.S. military buildup.

Reagan faces similar problems within the United States. His series of speeches in March utterly failed to dampen antiwar sentiments. In fact, they have only served to further reinforce them.

The April 7 *Washington Post* reported, "President Reagan's efforts to rally support for his embattled defense spending buildup may have revived fears that he is a 'warmonger' and a 'cold warrior' too willing to risk confrontation with the Soviets, administration officials have discovered."

A Harris poll conducted after Reagan's March 23 speech found that 60 percent gave Reagan a negative rating for his overall handling of foreign policy, and 64 percent specifically disliked his nuclear arms negotiations proposals.

Senator John Chafee, a Republican, commented on Reagan's speech, "I don't think the blitz has blitzed. I don't think it's broken the opponent's line."

The March 23 speech was timed to coincide with Congress' Easter recess, on the theory

that it would persuade voters to urge their congressmen to approve additional military spending. According to the *Washington Post*, "Instead, a White House official acknowledged, many returning [Republican Party] members of Congress are bringing back the opposite message." □

### Belgian youth map out fight against nuclear missiles

The Young Socialist Guard (JGS), the Belgian youth organization in solidarity with the Fourth International, held its third national congress in Ghent March 12-13.

The congress noted a considerable growth of the organization over the past year, with the number of members rising by 40 percent and the number of local branches doubling.

Moreover, while a majority of members were university students at the time of the group's founding, a majority is now made up of high school and technical school students, young workers, and unemployed youth.

The central focus of the JGS's activities will be participating in the mass movement against the stationing of U.S. nuclear missiles in Belgium, culminating in a national demonstration in Brussels in October. The JGS's summer camp will be organized around the issue of the missiles.

A member of the Revolutionary Workers League (LRT/RAL), the Belgian section of the Fourth International, addressed the congress. He also emphasized the importance of the struggle against nuclear missiles and the imperialist arms buildup, which, he said, is directed primarily against the revolutions in Central America. □



# Behind OPEC's cut in oil prices

*Imperialists driving to take back lost ground*

**By David Frankel**

Oil prices have been big news over the past several months. The March 14 decision by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to cut its benchmark price by 15 percent made headlines all over the world.

Interest in this topic comes as no surprise. Millions of working people are directly affected by the price of gasoline and heating oil. Furthermore, many of us remember vividly how a few years ago the oil companies, far from their current complaint about a glut of oil, were crying that the world was running out. Superprofits for Big Oil, the argument went, would finance the hunt for disappearing petroleum resources and enable private enterprise to come up with alternatives.

## Scapegoating OPEC

One thing that has not changed, however, is the ongoing attempt by the imperialist media to blame OPEC for problems of the capitalist economic system. A recent headline in *Newsweek*, for example, talked about OPEC's "hammerlock on the world economy."

Such charges have a familiar ring. When OPEC succeeded in forcing up the price of oil at the end of 1973 and beginning of 1974, it was subjected to a hostile propaganda barrage in the mass media in the United States and Western Europe. The leap in oil prices was blamed for inflation, for the 1974-75 recession, for gasoline shortages (actually organized by U.S. oil companies), and for much else.

Articles explained that the world banking system would soon break down under the strain of trying to recycle Saudi Arabian petrodollars. Others argued that a decade of the new, higher oil prices would utterly bankrupt Japan and Western Europe. And then there was the claim that the world was rapidly running out of oil.

What was the truth?

- Oil price increases accounted for less than one-tenth of U.S. inflation during the 1970s, according to economists Barry Bosworth and Robert Lawrence of the Brookings Institution.

- Inflation, fueled by massive deficit spending for the war in Vietnam, had already taken off long before the jump in oil prices. President Nixon announced a three-month freeze on wages and — supposedly — on prices in August 1971, arguing that this would stop the upward spiral. Soaring meat prices led to a consumer boycott in the spring of 1973.

- The worldwide recession of 1974-75 would have happened even if there had been no change whatsoever in the price of oil. That economic downturn, and the two that have

taken place since then, were expressions of the same capitalist business cycle that was described by Karl Marx before the first oil well was drilled in the Middle East and before anybody had ever heard of OPEC.

- Not only did the world banking system not break down as a result of higher oil prices during the 1970s, but capitalist financial experts are now worrying about *lower oil prices* causing oil-exporting countries such as Mexico to default on their debts.

- The bosses are always crying that they are being forced into bankruptcy. The cost of oil imports, competition from steel, auto, and electronics imports, and — above everything else — workers' wages are blamed for cutting into profits.

- Finally, far from the world running out of oil, vast new discoveries in the North Sea, Mexico, and Alaska followed the rise in prices. "Every month, trade papers announce new oil finds in countries that used to be oil importers, such as India, Thailand, Brazil and China," the *Wall Street Journal* reported March 22.

## Imperialist threats

The propaganda campaign against the OPEC countries was based on a pack of lies. But there was no question about the deadly serious intentions behind it.

For decades the world oil industry had been ruled by the "seven sisters" — the five U.S. companies of Exxon, Mobil, Texaco, Standard Oil of California (Socal), and Gulf, along with Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum. These had been able to play off the producing countries against each other and to set the price of oil on the world market.

OPEC was never able to break the grip of the seven sisters, but beginning in 1973 it did loosen the hold of these imperialist giants. For the first time the OPEC countries began to get a significant part of the profits from their oil. A group of oppressed countries that had been firmly under the imperialists' thumb stood up and defied them.

Threats of military action accompanied the racist propaganda campaign against the Middle Eastern oil-producing countries. The U.S. Marines began well-publicized desert-warfare training programs. President Nixon pointedly recalled the CIA-organized coup that followed Iran's nationalization of its oil industry in the early 1950s.

Oil prices, President Ford declared in September 1974, "threaten the breakdown of world order and safety." Henry Kissinger, meanwhile, told the United Nations that "the present level of prices" was jeopardizing "in-

dustrial civilization."

But U.S. troops had just been forced out of Vietnam, and working people in the United States were not about to stand still for another military adventure thousands of miles from home. So the imperialists set out to get the results that they were yet unable to obtain through direct military means by using their domination of the world economy. Their intention was to reduce OPEC's share of the world oil market. The imperialists as a whole wanted to stem the flow of wealth to these semicolonial countries, and the seven sisters wanted the benefits of higher oil prices without having to pay such a big cut to the OPEC producers.

The success of this strategy is indicated by the fact that OPEC, which accounted for more than 60 percent of world oil exports in 1973, now supplies about 38 percent. Like other semicolonial countries, those in OPEC have taken a severe beating as a result of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis.

This is what was reflected in OPEC's price cut — from \$34 to \$29 for a 42-gallon barrel of oil.

Imperialist pressure was also the immediate cause of OPEC's March 14 price cut. On February 18, British and Norwegian oil companies tried to grab a larger share of the market by cutting their price for North Sea oil to roughly \$30 per barrel.

## Strong get stronger

Downward pressure on oil prices, in fact, began to cause worries among some imperialist financial experts and governments. "West Fears Too Much of a Good Thing" was the headline on an article on oil prices in the March 4 *New York Times*.

U.S. oil companies have been crying poverty for some time now. *Newsweek* reported February 7 that 1982 was "a disastrous year for Socal." The poor dears made only \$1.377 billion — barely enough to keep the stockholders from jumping out of windows.

Actually, although the profits of the 25 biggest U.S. oil companies declined from nearly \$30 billion in 1980 to about \$20 billion in 1982, the average rate of profit in the oil industry continues to be above the average for the U.S. economy as a whole.

As one oil analyst explained, "Clearly, there's going to be a painful fallout in the industry. But I expect the strong companies to get stronger."

That particular law of capitalist competition applies not just to corporations, but also to countries trapped within the confines of the capitalist system. The gap between the imperialist powers and the semicolonial countries

that they oppress is widening rather than narrowing. Some OPEC countries were able to temporarily reverse this state of affairs, but recent developments show how tenuous their gains are.

### Oppressed nations

Notwithstanding the assertions that OPEC has a "hammerlock on the world economy," the truth is that *the 13 members of OPEC are all oppressed nations.*

Most OPEC countries, in fact, did not obtain their independence from European colonial rule until after World War II.

Lack of economic development, the result of imperialist exploitation, has kept most OPEC countries in the position of being monocultures that rely on a single export. Just as sugar dominated the economies of Cuba and the Dominican Republic; tin, the Bolivian economy; and coffee, the Colombian economy, oil is practically the only export for most OPEC countries, and the decisive one for all of them.

Oil accounts for 100 percent of the commodity exports of Saudi Arabia and Libya; 99 percent of Iraq's; 95 percent of Venezuela's; 94 percent of Nigeria's; 93 percent of Qatar's and Iran's; and 92 percent of Algeria's. Iraq's main export after oil is dates.

No OPEC country has any industrial exports to speak of, and most have hardly any industry at all. Venezuela is by far the most economically developed country in OPEC. It also includes such poverty-stricken countries as Indonesia, Ecuador, and Nigeria.

The complete economic and military dependence of countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait is visible in the tens of thousands of U.S. and West European advisers, technicians, and other specialists that operate in the Persian Gulf region, and by the imports of these countries. As one U.S. diplomat arrogantly declared to *New York Times* reporter Thomas Friedman last November, "We have a hundred millionaires in this country. But they couldn't even make a light bulb here without us."

Because of the economic and military weakness caused by centuries of exploitation, the OPEC countries, like others in the semicolonial world, are victims of imperialist political intervention and military aggression. The Middle East, with its vast oil reserves, has a special history of such intervention, which includes the establishment and maintenance of the Israeli colonial-settler state.

Recent instances of imperialist action against the OPEC countries include U.S. military attacks on Iran and Libya, the Israeli bombing of a nuclear research facility in Iraq, and Ronald Reagan's declaration that the U.S. government "will not permit" the people of Saudi Arabia to throw off the yoke of the reactionary monarchy that rules there.

Among the oppressed peoples of the semicolonial world, there never was any doubt about the character of the OPEC countries. OPEC's success in standing up to imperialism

and obtaining a better price for its oil was widely welcomed.

As the editors of the *Washington Post* admitted January 26, OPEC has been "a rallying point for all of the Third World's hopes for global redistribution of wealth on a grand scale."

This was true despite the fact that the rise in oil prices resulted in considerable hardship for underdeveloped countries that need to import oil.

A number of OPEC countries have been able to pile up substantial cash reserves and investments as a result of oil sales over the past decade. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates — the Persian Gulf countries that most people think of first when OPEC is mentioned — have a total population of perhaps 10 million and a combined 1980 gross national product of some \$165 billion.

But the stock holdings, bonds, and other worldwide investments of the Saudis and Kuwaitis are theirs only by the sufferance of the imperialists. That was shown quite graphically when Iranian assets around the world were frozen in 1979, and billions later confiscated.

Furthermore, the same billions in the United States buy far more than they do in Saudi Arabia. The World Trade Center in New York City, for example, cost \$700 million to construct. But the same building would have cost many times that in Saudi Arabia. All of the steel, electrical wiring, and most other construction materials would have had to be imported, along with the cranes, bulldozers, trucks, and other construction equipment, and the skilled workers to operate them.

### No development without liberation

Money alone cannot overcome centuries of exploitation and economic backwardness, and it has not done so in any of the OPEC countries. As Fidel Castro explained in a speech to the Association of Third World Economists in April 1981, "Development is not only economic but also social."

"There cannot be economic and social development without the liberation of the rural masses and the liquidation of traditional relations of production in the countryside," Castro declared.

Industrialization, he noted, also requires education and democracy.

"If the decisive power of a state and a society is not in the hands of the great majority of workers, none of these prerequisites for development will materialize. The kind of socioeconomic policy we need can only be the result of a political leadership representing the most genuine interests of the working people. It is illusory to believe that the local political instruments of transnational oligarchies and feudal exploiting minorities will take those steps toward transformation. . . . Political power must go from the hands of a few to the hands of the creative majorities."

In his speech to the Sixth Congress of the Nonaligned Movement in 1979, Castro also

discussed the international issues raised by the rise in oil prices and OPEC's role in the world.

"The oil-exporting countries — all of which are in the underdeveloped world and almost all of which belong to the movement of non-aligned countries — have always been supported by the rest of our countries in their just demands for the revaluation of their product and an end to unequal terms of trade and the wasting of energy," Castro declared. "These countries now have a much greater economic potential and negotiating capacity with the developed capitalist world.

"This is not the case of the non-oil-producing underdeveloped countries. Sugar, bauxite, copper and other solid minerals, peanuts, copra, sisal, tea, cashews and agricultural products in general are terribly underpriced on the world market. . . .

"The prices of the equipment, machinery, industrial articles and semifinished products that we import are raised constantly. . . .

"Most of the surplus money from oil sales is deposited and invested in the richest, most developed capitalist countries. . . . But what recourse do the non-oil-producing underdeveloped countries have? . . .

"We should consider and discuss this matter. A solution must be found. Imperialism is already maneuvering to divide us. It is trying to isolate the oil-producing countries from the rest of the underdeveloped world, blaming them for the economic crisis — whose cause lies in the unjust order established in the world by the imperialist system."

Castro appealed to the main oil-exporting countries in the Nonaligned Movement to implement "a wise and farsighted policy of economic cooperation, supplies and investments in our underdeveloped world, because their future depends on ours. . . .

"I am inviting you to join us and close ranks with us and struggle together for a new international economic order whose benefit will extend to all."

### Road to liberation

Now that the imperialists have regained some of the ground taken by OPEC during the 1970s, they will redouble their efforts to push it back further. "The Arabs have had their decade," one imperialist official crowed to *New York Times* columnist Paul Lewis.

Although there is little likelihood that the OPEC countries will be pushed back as far as the imperialists would like, the experience of the past 10 years is convincing confirmation of the thesis defended by the Cubans in the Nonaligned Movement.

There is no road forward for the great majority of humanity except through common struggle against imperialist oppression and through cooperation in building a new social and economic system. And that road to liberation and social progress lies through the workers and farmers in each country taking political power out of the hands of the capitalists, as was done in Cuba and, most recently, in Nicaragua and Grenada. □

# Nonaligned foil U.S. disruption campaign

## Summit conference condemns imperialist policies

By Ernest Harsch

Representatives from some 100 countries gathered in New Delhi, India, March 7-12 for the Seventh Summit Conference of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries. They met to discuss the common problems they face as poor, underdeveloped nations oppressed by imperialism.

Since the last Nonaligned summit held in Havana, Cuba, in 1979, the colonial and semicolonial countries have been squeezed even further by the worsening world capitalist economic crisis. Unemployment, poverty, hunger, and human misery are all more widespread now than they were three and a half years ago.

Fearful of any effort by the oppressed to get together and organize themselves, Washington and the other imperialist powers did what they could to try to undermine the conference's effectiveness. Taking advantage of the fact that Fidel Castro's presidency of the movement had ended, they renewed their efforts to disrupt and split the movement and mute the anti-imperialist stands it took on a series of questions at the last summit conference.

But contrary to their hopes, the conference hall in New Delhi resounded with repeated and forceful denunciations of imperialist oppression, exploitation, and intervention around the globe. Washington, in particular, was the central target of these condemnations.

### Castro sets tone

Castro helped set the tone through his address on the opening day of the conference.

"The dangers of war already existing when we met in 1979," Castro said, "increased very rapidly when the new President of the United States decided to impose, as a condition for peace, the acceptance of his country's military supremacy and that of the alliance it leads."

This was reflected both in the growing imperialist arms buildup, Castro stated, and in Washington's aggressive actions in key regions of the world.

Israel's brutal invasion of Lebanon and the massacres of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila could not have taken place, Castro said, but for the "repulsive and confessed strategic alliance between Israel and the United States."

Similarly in southern Africa, the attacks of South Africa's racist white minority regime against neighboring Black-ruled states "would not be possible without the protection, aid and encouragement of the United States."

U.S. intervention in Central America has been going on for a long time, Castro pointed out, and now includes "Yankee support for genocide in El Salvador; collaboration with the

Ríos Montt sinister tyranny [in Guatemala], similar to that they always provided to the Somoza dynasty; the efforts to use Honduras as a spearhead for U.S. intervention aimed at crushing the Nicaraguan Revolution."

### An unforgettable lesson

Britain's colonial war against Argentina in the Malvinas Islands, which Washington fully supported, "has been an unforgettable lesson for all Latin Americans," Castro declared. "It evidenced, as never before, the true face of U.S. imperialism, its contempt for the interests of Latin America. . . ."

Because of Cuba's refusal to bend to U.S. pressures and blackmail, because of its support for revolutionary movements elsewhere, because of the social transformations that have taken place within Cuba, it has been the target of unremitting U.S. hostility.

Castro cited the 23-year-old economic blockade Washington has maintained against Cuba, its continued occupation of Guantánamo, and the constant violations of Cuban air space by U.S. spy planes.

"And even worse," Castro informed the conference, "through reliable sources we have learned that the new U.S. Administration has instructed the Central Intelligence Agency to resume the plans to kill Cuban leaders, especially its President. . . . However, all attempts will be useless; our Revolution does not rely on men, it relies on ideas and ideas cannot be assassinated."

### U.S. campaign

While Washington was not surprised by Castro's speech, it was taken aback by the failure of its attempts to isolate the revolutionary positions advanced by Cuba and others within the Nonaligned Movement.

Prior to the summit conference, articles in the U.S. big-business press confidently predicted a shift to the right in New Delhi. A front-page article in the February 6 *New York Times*, for example, stressed that the initial draft of the conference declarations, drawn up by Indian officials, reflected "a move from radical to more moderate leadership" within the movement.

A report in the March 6 *Washington Post* quoted a U.S. diplomat in New Delhi as saying of the main declaration, "It's a lot milder than previous declarations. We hope it will reduce the amount of controversy and build up the center view."

There were at least 10 U.S. State Department officials in New Delhi, seeking to pressure various delegations and orchestrate an anti-Cuban intervention.

Because the Nonaligned Movement is com-

posed predominantly of capitalist governments, including some that are closely allied with U.S. imperialism, Washington's campaign inevitably found an echo within the conference hall.

According to Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, "Part of [the imperialist] plan was to use their agents inside the movement to bring lies and slanders and attacks against a number of revolutionary processes around the world." The imperialists hoped, Bishop said, "that the most progressive revolutionary forces in the world would not get any solidarity" during the summit.

Representatives of a few of the more pro-imperialist regimes took the floor to attack the positions the movement had previously adopted. Singapore's S. Rajaratnam, for example, charged that Moscow was trying to "hijack" the Nonaligned Movement.

A proposal Castro put forward for the underdeveloped countries to write off their \$600 billion in foreign debts was opposed by the Saudi Arabian, Senegalese, Egyptian, and Nepalese delegations. While many others favored the proposal, it failed to win the necessary consensus for adoption.

### Discussion on Central America

Overall, however, Washington's campaign at the New Delhi summit was repulsed.

Only five of the heads of state or government who took the floor at the conference failed to speak highly of Castro's chairmanship of the movement, and some 40 sought separate discussions with him (out of the 60 heads of state or government who attended the summit).

The tone and contents of the original conference declaration were sharpened considerably. While Washington was explicitly criticized only twice in the initial draft, it was denounced more than a dozen times in the final version.

One of the major changes in the final declaration came in the section on Central America. The original draft made no mention of U.S. intervention in El Salvador. Nor did it refer to the January Nonaligned ministerial conference held in Managua, Nicaragua, which condemned U.S. imperialist aggression throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

At a news conference in Managua March 14, Nicaraguan Deputy Foreign Minister Víctor Tinoco, who had just returned from New Delhi, said that the original draft was "extremely weak." But the 17 Latin American members managed to achieve a "qualitative improvement" over the original draft.

According to Tinoco, the final declaration included the demand for an "immediate and unconditional halt" to "imperialist intervention

and repression" in El Salvador, coupled with a demand that "the government of the United States adopt a constructive position contributing to a peaceful solution to the problem."

It also denounced the "growing threats and acts of intimidation" against Nicaragua, including "the use of the territory of foreign countries, inside and outside the region, as bases for aggression and the training of counterrevolutionary forces, terrorist actions and sabotage, especially those carried out by armed groups of Somozaist ex-National Guards from across the northern border."

The declaration reaffirmed the communiqué issued out of the Managua conference, including the point that the crisis in Central America could not be reduced to an "East-West ideological conflict," but grew out of "political, social, and economic" factors "aggravated by the interference and intervention these countries have suffered since the end of the last century."

During the discussions on this point, Prime Minister Edward Seaga of Jamaica sought to advance the U.S. propaganda line on Central America, stating, "I have no doubt that the conflict in El Salvador is primarily a confrontation between East and West." But Seaga did not get very far with that.

#### From the Malvinas to Kampuchea

Other key questions that were stressed in the declaration or the discussions were:

- Recognition of Argentina's sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands. Argentine President Reynaldo Bignone explained Argentina's case in his presentation, and also praised Fidel Castro's role in the Nonaligned Movement.

- Recognition of Mauritius' sovereignty over the island of Diego Garcia, on which Washington is now building a major Indian Ocean naval base.

- Condemnation of French imperialism's continued occupation of the island of Mayotte, also in the Indian Ocean. Mayotte belongs to the independent nation of the Comoros.

- Reaffirmation of Namibia's fight for independence from South African rule, and rejection

of the Reagan administration's concept of "linkage," that is, tying the question of Namibian independence to a withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

- Condemnation of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the Israeli bombing of Iraq's nuclear research center, and of Washington's support for such Zionist aggression.

The Nonaligned conference also dealt with questions that have aroused considerable controversy within the movement.

The summit reaffirmed the position adopted at the previous conference of not seating any Kampuchean delegation, despite a continued campaign by some members of the Nonaligned Movement to have the U.S.-backed forces fighting against the Kampuchean government seated. The March 15 issue of the Vietnamese daily *Nhan Dan* termed this reaffirmation a "setback for U.S. imperialism."

#### U.S. fails on Afghanistan

The summit conference did not join Washington's propaganda campaign around the question of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, as the U.S. rulers had hoped it would. The final declaration called for an end to all foreign interference in Afghanistan, a formulation that also refers to Washington's covert aid to the rightist guerrilla forces there.

The imperialists were particularly disappointed in Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's opening address, in which the incoming head of the Nonaligned Movement called for "early normalcy" in Afghanistan, without specifically referring to the Soviet troops.

In his address, Castro reported on Cuba's efforts, as the previous chair of the movement, to try to mediate solutions to both the conflict in Afghanistan and to the Iran-Iraq War.

Because of the war between the latter two countries, the site of the Nonaligned summit had to be shifted to New Delhi from the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, where it had originally been scheduled to take place. Although the Iraqi regime has offered to host the next summit meeting, the New Delhi gathering put off a decision on designating the next site until a

foreign ministers' conference slated for Angola in 1985.

Economic questions were also given prominent attention at the conference. Since the last Nonaligned summit, the total debts of the underdeveloped countries have doubled to \$600 billion. Decreases in commodity prices on the world market have cut their total income by \$40 billion. Gandhi pointed out that raw material prices have reached their lowest levels in 50 years.

Many of these economic points were also coupled with criticisms of U.S. imperialism. Included in these were condemnations of Washington's efforts to use economic policy to put political pressures on other countries. The declaration blasted the way the U.S. government has been using the International Monetary Fund and World Bank for its political ends, and denounced the IMF's decision in late 1982 to lend nearly \$1 billion to the apartheid regime in South Africa.

#### 'A sound licking'

In the wake of the seventh Summit Conference, the Cuban, Nicaraguan, Vietnamese, and other representatives expressed satisfaction with its outcome.

Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez called it "extraordinary."

"Imperialism received a sound licking," Grenada's Maurice Bishop told a rally in his country immediately upon his return from New Delhi.

Some of the commentaries in the imperialist press sought to cover up Washington's failure. But an article in the March 14 *Wall Street Journal* acknowledged, "Before the summit, U.S. diplomats had said they hoped that India, the Nonaligned Movement's new chairman, would modify the anti-American tilt built into the declaration adopted at the last summit, held in Havana, Cuba, in 1979. But India largely failed."

The same day, U.S. State Department spokesman Alan Romberg attacked the final declaration of the Nonaligned conference as "an unbalanced and polemical document."

Washington's accusations that the declaration is "unbalanced" is itself an indication of the further shift in the world relationship of forces against imperialism.

At the founding of the Nonaligned Movement in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in 1961 — and even earlier, at the 1955 conference in Bandung, Indonesia — the U.S. imperialists attacked the participants for expressing "neutrality," that is, refusal to join in various U.S.-dominated military pacts. Now, Washington feels obliged to hypocritically claim that it favors genuine neutrality for these governments — in opposition to the sharp anti-imperialist positions that are frequently expressed today within the Nonaligned Movement.

The Cubans and other revolutionary forces have championed such positions and waged hard battles to get them adopted in the clearest and most forceful forms possible. But the basic anti-imperialist stands of the Nonaligned

### Consternation in Buenos Aires

Some of the other members of Argentina's military government were unhappy with President Reynaldo Bignone's speech at the Nonaligned summit conference in New Delhi.

Besides forcefully presenting Argentina's position on the Malvinas Islands, Bignone praised Fidel Castro, met with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yassir Arafat, agreed that social and economic injustice was the root cause of the conflicts in Central America, condemned South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia, and accepted the Nonaligned Movement's call for a "political solution" in Afghanistan, rather than condemning Soviet interven-

tion.

All this was apparently too much for Bignone's colleagues back in Buenos Aires. The Argentine military has been a major customer for Israeli arms and has recently decided to go ahead with an order for six corvettes to be built by South African contractors under Israeli supervision.

A naval captain at the Ministry of Information confirmed that he had censored television coverage of Bignone's meetings with Castro and Arafat. The daily *Convicción*, which reflects the thinking of the navy brass, ran an editorial on Bignone's trip to New Delhi under the headline, "Without Honor."

Movement predate Cuba's chairmanship. They are a reflection of what unites the countries represented in the movement: all are oppressed by imperialism, despite their different governments and social systems.

This was pointed to by Pham Van Dong, the

prime minister of Vietnam, in his address to the conference. "Naturally," he said, "due to the fact that our movement encompasses a very large number of countries differing in many aspects, there exist inevitable divergences and even disputes around a few problems within

the movement, as well as a few international issues. However, these divergences and disputes are but minor compared with the common interests of our countries in the face of the challenges that imperialism is posing to the whole movement." □

## DOCUMENTS

# 'The only solution is to struggle'

## *Speech by Fidel Castro to Nonaligned Movement*

[Cuban President Fidel Castro, the outgoing head of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, presented a major speech at the organization's seventh summit conference, held in New Delhi, India, March 7-12. Castro's speech was given on the first day of the conference. Below is a summary by *Intercontinental Press* of the first part of his speech, followed by the text of its conclusion. The translation is from the March 20 issue of Cuba's *Granma Weekly Review*.]

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Beginning with the state of the Nonaligned Movement, Castro declared, "Today, after a term of more than three years, upon handing over the Chairmanship of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to our esteemed Indira Gandhi and to India, which she so rightfully represents upon the basis of historic merit, we can state . . . that the unity of our Movement has not been weakened, that its vigor has grown, that its independence has been safeguarded against all plots intended to curtail it."

Castro pointed to three issues which "have recently threatened to weaken our unity." These were the presence of Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea, Soviet troops in Afghanistan, and the Iraq-Iran War.

During the Sixth Summit Conference, Castro stated, "The just consensus . . . that Kampuchea's seat remain vacant, was not accepted as legitimate by all member countries. Three years later, and in a less controversial atmosphere, ratification of that consensus has been necessary to fully vindicate the justness of the decision made then by Cuba as Chairman of the Political Committee.

"The positions announced by Kampuchea and Vietnam after the meeting of the three countries of former Indochina — in our view — provide the prospects for attaining a solution of the dispute that is acceptable to all."

Regarding Afghanistan, Castro noted that even before the December 1979 entry of Soviet forces "we made the necessary efforts with all parties concerned to impede a sharpening of the conflict and future complications."

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### **The unity of our Movement has not been weakened, its vigor has grown, its independence has been safeguarded . . .**

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Castro pointed out that Cuban efforts in this area had centered on relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. "During the Sixth Summit Conference in Havana we succeeded in arranging a meeting between the two illustrious statesmen of the two nations, since we felt that if an agreement was reached between them, the necessary conditions would then be created for a satisfactory return to political normality in the area. . . .

"We also made similar efforts with representatives from other countries in the area. We pursued these objectives despite Cuba's sympathy for and solidarity with the Afghan Revolution, which we have never failed to express nor have we ever concealed."

Such diplomatic initiatives continued after the arrival of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Later, Castro said, "we discontinued our efforts and supported the UN endeavors" to reach an agreement, since it appeared that these had a better chance of success.

Turning to the Iraq-Iran War, Castro noted that this was another conflict "in which we also tried to mediate from the very beginning."

Iraq's involvement in the war prevented the Seventh Summit Conference of the Nonaligned Movement from being held in Baghdad, where it had originally been scheduled. Castro praised "the constructive attitude of Iraq, and especially of its President, Saddam Hussein," in the rescheduling of the conference.

Expressing appreciation for India's role in hosting the Seventh Summit on such short notice, Castro hailed "India's great traditions, its struggle against colonialism and imperialism, for independence, devel-

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### **Never before had the Palestinian cause seemed so just than in contrast with the brutality of its adversaries . . .**

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opment and peace, [which] have earned it prestige in world politics that, at the service of our Movement, increases its strength."

Castro also expressed his confidence "that under Indira Gandhi's wise leadership the Non-Aligned Countries will continue advancing in their unrenouncable role as bulwarks of peace, national independence and development."

In light of the challenges facing the Nonaligned Movement, Castro said, unity is particularly urgent. "When we met in Havana we already noted the threats to world peace and the onslaughts against the vulnerable economies of the underdeveloped countries, but we were far from imagining that only a few months later the world situation was to become even more somber. . . .

"The dangers of war already existing when we met in 1979 increased very rapidly when the new President of the United States decided to impose, as a condition for peace, the acceptance of his country's military supremacy and that of the alliance it leads."

Calling the fight against war, against the growing arms buildup, and against the nuclear threat "the most urgent task" facing the nonaligned countries, Castro declared:

"The danger of war threatens us as citizens of the world, but it also affects us as peoples that aspire to reaffirm or conquer, whatever the case may be, our national independence and develop our battered economies."

The same policy that has inspired Reagan's quest for military supremacy, Castro said, "is the one that creates situations in the Middle East, southern Africa, and Central America, against which the Movement has had to raise its voice during the years that I am reporting on to this Summit Meeting."

In the Middle East, Castro noted, there was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the accompanying aggression against Syria, and "the cruel



slaughters in Sabra and Shatila." The Cuban president continued:

"The heroic attitude of the Palestinian fighters and of the Lebanese patriots and their unequalled courage aroused admiration throughout the world. Never before had the Palestinian cause seemed so just than in contrast with the repulsive brutality of its adversaries."

Within Israel itself, he added, "a clamor for peace and a demand for the punishment of those responsible for the killings have been raised."

The Israeli aggression "could not have been possible" were it not for the "repulsive and confessed strategic alliance between Israel and the United States."

Acting in behalf of the Nonaligned Movement, Castro appealed to world public opinion and sent Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmerca to Beirut with a message of solidarity. He said that the tragedy in Lebanon has served to confirm world support "for the Palestinian cause

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## **In condemning South Africa, we have never forgotten that its rulers are supported by the United States . . .**

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represented by the PLO, the Palestinians' right to return to their lands, their exercise of full self-determination, the establishment of an independent state, and the recognition of the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of its people."

In southern Africa also, Castro said, "it was necessary to extend permanent solidarity with the Namibian people and their representative organization, SWAPO [South West Africa People's Organisation]."

"The Government in Pretoria," Castro continued, "is competing with that of Israel to become one of the most ominous factors in world politics." In addition to its oppression and exploitation of the Black majority in South Africa itself and its continued colonial rule over Namibia, it has repeatedly attacked the neighboring countries of Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, and its forces even attempted to overthrow the government of the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. The Non-aligned Movement expressed its support and solidarity for all these victims of South African aggression.

"And," Castro added, "we are certain that the Seventh Summit Conference will also condemn the United States' attempt to link the necessary and unpostponable departure of South African troops from Namibia . . . with the presence of Cuban internationalist troops in Angola, summoned there by its legitimate Government. . . ."

"In condemning South Africa, we have never forgotten that its rulers are supported by the United States. . . . We have not forgotten either that South Africa holds a privileged position in the economic,

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## **The new U.S. Administration has instructed the CIA to resume the plans to kill Cuban leaders . . .**

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technological and military cooperation it receives, not only from the United States, but also from other Western countries."

After mentioning Washington's threats against Libya and the just struggle of the Polisario Front in Western Sahara, Castro turned to the situation in Central America.

Pursuing an "ominous and senseless policy," Washington is attempting "to make the world believe that what happened in Nicaragua and what is happening in El Salvador and Guatemala is not the result of decades of growing protest and of uninterrupted struggles . . . but that all this is rather the consequence of a grim design in which Moscow, through Cuba, would manipulate these peoples."

U.S. intervention in Central America, Castro pointed out, "began long before the 1917 Soviet Revolution," and long before the Cuban revolution. He noted that "a negotiated solution to the continuous bloodshed in El Salvador was proposed by Mexico and France," and that "peaceful negotiation of the regional problems was postulated by the Presidents of Mexico and Venezuela and reaffirmed by their foreign

Ministers and those of Panama and Colombia."

But all these proposals have been rejected by Washington. Meanwhile, "Cuba has had to strengthen its defense, train an additional half a million citizens as a supplement to the Revolutionary Armed Forces due to the continuous provocative threats launched by the President of the United States against our country. . . ."

The illegal and criminal U.S. blockade against Cuba has already lasted 23 years, Castro declared. He pointed to the U.S. occupation of the Guantánamo Bay naval base as well, and to U.S. spy flights over Cuba.

"And, even worse, through reliable sources we have learned that the new U.S. Administration has instructed the Central Intelligence Agency to resume the plans to kill Cuban leaders, especially its President. What else could be expected from such an unscrupulous government? And what is there to be surprised about in these cynical imperialist practices? Had not other presidents made similar plans in the past and tried to carry them out on several occasions, as was confirmed by the United States Senate itself? However, all attempts will be useless; our Revolution does not rely on men, it relies on ideas and ideas cannot be assassinated.

"Although we want peace in the region and we strive for peace, we will not capitulate before threats of any sort. We can assure the Seventh Summit Conference that the Salvadoran revolutionaries cannot be militarily defeated; we can express our conviction that Nicaragua will not be forced to yield; and we can categorically say that Cuba may be wiped out, but it will never be intimidated or defeated. As we said 30 years ago: 'The island will sink into the sea before we accept being anyone's slaves!'"

Castro noted also that "dozens of U.S. Congressmen have censured the policy of threats and the interventionist designs that have likewise been rejected in successive polls by the vast majority of U.S. citizens."

Regarding other countries in the region, Castro said: "Our solidarity actions should also embrace small and brave Grenada, a permanent

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## **We will not capitulate before threats of any sort . . .**

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target of imperialist activity and pressure; the new revolutionary Republic of Suriname, today a victim of mercenary threats, economic blockade, slander campaigns and maneuvers aimed at isolating it; the just demands of the Panamanian Government and people to have the agreements restoring sovereignty over the Canal territory to Panama respected; the efforts of Belize to consolidate its independence and preserve its territorial integrity; and the historic demand of Puerto Rico" and its right to self-determination and independence.

Britain's colonial war "against Argentina's right to exercise its territorial sovereignty over the Malvinas" was also taken up by Castro. That war, he said, "marked a significant moment in the development of a Latin American consciousness, in the strengthening of the unity of what Martí called Our America, as opposed to 'the other America,' which he called 'the turbulent and brutal North that despises us.'"

"The colonial war in the South Atlantic has been an unforgettable lesson for all Latin Americans. It evidenced, as never before, the true face of U.S. imperialism, its contempt for the interests of Latin America. . . ."

Castro also pointed out the growing tension and increased militarization of the Indian Ocean region, "to which U.S. strategists have attached decisive importance since they consider that its link with a major world oil-producing region makes it their own unrenounceable zone. . . ."

He noted that "the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has systematically demanded that the Indian Ocean be declared a zone of peace," with the withdrawal of all naval forces except those of the countries bordering the ocean.

For the members of the Nonaligned Movement, Castro continued, "to fight against war does not only mean opposing universal holocaust, but also defending our own immediate political interests. There is an additional reason, as important as the above, which impels us toward a concrete and immediate struggle for peace and détente. We are all convinced that without peace, development is not possible, just as peace

would not be possible without development.”

As long as \$65 billion is invested in weapons every year, Castro declared, “the international financial requirements for development cannot be met.

“Warmongering policies lead to considering our wealth as part of the strategic reserves; seeing our coasts as elements of international

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## **The colonial war in the South Atlantic has been an unforgettable lesson for all Latin Americans . . .**

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geopolitics; attempting to gain, through flattery or imposition, the acquiescence of our Governments to the policies to be adopted at international fora. The danger of war permeates and undermines everything: national independence, economic sovereignty, development prospects.

“For that reason, if the survival of mankind, now at risk, would not lead us to brandish the banner of peace as the very core of the stand of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, our pressing economic needs would also lead us to defend peace as our first and most immediate demand.”

The world economic crisis was what Castro turned to next. Along with his oral presentation to the conference, he also offered a book, prepared with the help of Cuban economists, giving “a systematic presentation of the world’s economic and social crisis and its deep effects on underdeveloped countries.”

The remainder of Castro’s speech is printed below.

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Unquestionably, the world is undergoing one of the worst economic crises in its history.

This crisis has most severely affected the underdeveloped countries and, indeed, its effects have been worse in these countries than in any other area in the world. This holds true particularly for the oil-importing underdeveloped countries whose growth rates, which had averaged 5.6 percent from 1970 to 1980, dropped to 1.4 percent in 1981 and were probably lower in 1982.

A decisive factor in that development was the drop in commodity prices since late 1980.

The prices for sugar, coffee, cocoa, tea, palm oil, coconut oil, sisal, cotton, aluminum and practically all commodities have dropped notably.

Even oil prices, which started to decline in late 1981 as a result of the crisis, have fallen faster in recent weeks, among other things due to the policies of British and Norwegian firms which have unleashed a real price war.

It has been estimated that, in comparison to 1980 values, the losses experienced by the oil-importing underdeveloped countries in two years alone — 1981 and 1982 — amount to some \$29 billion.

With the decline in commodity prices and the continuing high prices for manufactures and oil, the inevitable result is the worsening unequal exchange affecting most of the Third World.

To illustrate this phenomenon of growing and unjust unequal ex-

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## **The danger of war permeates and undermines everything: national independence, economic sovereignty, development prospects . . .**

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change between developed and underdeveloped countries, including the incidence of oil prices, here are some examples:

- In 1960, 6.3 tons of oil could be purchased with the sale of a ton of sugar. In 1982 only 0.7 tons of oil could be bought with the same amount of sugar.

- In 1960, 37.3 tons of fertilizers could be bought for a ton of coffee. In 1982 only 15.8 tons could be bought with the same amount of coffee.

- In 1959, with the income from the sale of 6 tons of jute fibre, a 7-8

ton truck could be purchased. By late 1982, 26 tons of jute fibre were needed to buy that same truck.

- In 1959, with the income from the sale of one ton of copper wire, 39 X-ray tubes for medical purposes could be purchased. By late 1982, only 3 X-ray tubes could be bought with that same ton.

These terms of trade are repeated in most of our export commodities.

This is coupled with the growing protection of Western markets against exports from the Third World. Added to the traditional tariff barriers there is now a wide range of non-tariff barriers.

It is not surprising, under these conditions, to see the extraordinary increase in the underdeveloped world’s external debt, which in 1982 surpassed the \$600 billion figure and, at the present rate, according to econometric projections, will reach the incredible figure of \$1.47 trillion by 1990.

But amortization problems have worsened also with the accelerated growth in debt servicing. The high interest rates irresponsibly and unilaterally established by the United States, out of selfish national economic objectives, directly affected the Third World, whose external debt servicing reached, by late 1982, the impressive figure of some \$131 billion.

The situation is such that underdeveloped countries are forced to incur debts with the sole purpose of meeting the obligations of the debt itself.

This huge debt, which drains the underdeveloped countries’ export earnings, without the countervailing flow of real resources for development, is in itself a denunciation and conclusive evidence of the irrationality and inequity of the present international economic order.

The underdeveloped world’s agricultural output is also facing a serious crisis today. The accelerated population growth, coupled with the

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## **This huge debt is in itself conclusive evidence of the irrationality and inequity of the present international economic order . . .**

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growing deterioration of soil fertility and losses resulting from erosion, desertification and other forms of degradation, forecast even greater difficulties by the end of the century.

If the current average of less than 0.4 hectares of agricultural land per Third World inhabitant is insufficient, by the year 2000 this ratio will be less than 0.2 hectares [1 hectare = 2.47 acres].

From 1975 to 1980, per capita world food production grew at the very low rate of 0.3 percent yearly. That of the developed capitalist countries was 8 percent in 10 years. On the other hand, over 70 underdeveloped countries have witnessed a net decline in per capita food production.

In order to maintain a minimum of food needed, underdeveloped countries have had to increase their yearly imports. In 1980 alone, import values amounted to \$52.3 billion.

Over eight years have elapsed since the World Food Conference in Rome (1974), urgently convened in view of the massive famines and alarming decrease of food reserves recorded during those years. On that occasion, the Conference solemnly declared that hunger and malnutrition should be wiped off the face of the earth in 10 years and called on all nations to cooperate in an enormous effort to guarantee world food supplies.

The total failure of these endeavors to achieve the basic and essential objective of supplying all human beings with enough food to develop their potentialities for enjoying a full life is today more evident than ever.

Industrialization is a decisive process for the Third World’s economic development. Unquestionably, it is equivalent, in strategic terms, to laying the main technological and material base for development. The classical model that postulates that agriculture and raw materials are specialized enough for the underdeveloped countries, leaving industrial production in the hands of the developed countries, does nothing but try to perpetuate a model which our countries firmly reject as irrational, unequal and unjust.

UNIDO [UN Industrial Organization] itself predicts that, if the pre-

sent trends are maintained, the underdeveloped countries — with over 80 percent of the world population — will be contributing only 13.5 percent of world industrial production in the year 2000.

The claims made as to the supposedly positive contribution transnationals may make toward the development of the Third World countries are not new.

The underdeveloped countries are offered a transnationalized de-

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## **The underdeveloped world's agricultural output is also facing a serious crisis today . . .**

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velopment model, which would turn them into "export platforms" of manufactured products for the world market.

The results of such transnational industrial development are proven in the following data:

In the 1970s, for every new dollar invested in all the underdeveloped countries, transnationals repatriated approximately \$2.20 to their home countries. In the specific case of U.S. transnationals, during 1970-79 they invested \$1.45 billion and repatriated profits amounting to \$48.7 billion, which means a \$4.25 return from the Third World for every new dollar invested in that period.

Obviously, Third World industrialization cannot be the sorry by-product left by the transnationals in exchange for the brutal exploitation of the underdeveloped countries' labor resources, the depletion of their natural resources and the pollution of their territories.

It has been rightfully said, Madame Chairlady and distinguished Heads of State or Government, that true development should be measured not by growth rates but rather by what has been termed the "quality of life." But, when we attempt to measure factors that would indicate the quality of life, the picture we observe regarding the future of the underdeveloped countries appears even more impressive.

In 1980, three out of every four inhabitants of our planet lived in the underdeveloped world. In view of its present growth trend, from 1990 onwards, there will be 95 million additional inhabitants in the underdeveloped countries every year. From now until the year 2000, in the underdeveloped world as a whole the population will grow at a rate that is three times faster than that of the developed world. That is, more than 90 percent of the total population growth in the period up to the year 2000 will occur in our countries.

Until recently, the year 2000 seemed an indicator of a distant future of unforeseeable events. But, two-thirds of the world population in the year 2000 are already living in today's world; the infant population born each day in our countries will comprise the overwhelming majority of the adults by that time; the children who in the year 2000 will be under 15 will be born just two years from now.

Whatever efforts are made today to protect them, to prevent their death and illness, to provide them with food, housing, medicine, clothing and education, will shape the basic human qualities of that decisive percentage of the future population of the planet. And yet, in view of the present trends, what sort of world will we hand over to those children? What sort of life lies ahead for those 5 billion mouths that have to be fed in the countries of our underdeveloped world, those 5 billion bodies that have to be clothed, shod and sheltered, those 5 billion minds that will strive for knowledge, those 5 billion human beings who will struggle for a decent life, worthy at least of the human condition? What will their quality of life be like?

By the year 2000, in the developed countries as a whole, the annual average per capita Gross National Product will amount to almost \$8,500, while in the underdeveloped countries it will remain under \$590. The value of per capita gross production, which in 1975 was 11 times lower for the underdeveloped world than for the developed world, will be 14 times lower by the year 2000, thereby increasing the inferiority gap. Our countries will be poorer.

At their current growth rates, the poorest countries would need 2,000 to 4,000 years to bridge the gap separating them from the present level of the most developed capitalist countries.

The food situation is another index of the quality of life with the greatest negative impact on underdeveloped countries.

According to recent FAO data, 40 million people — half of whom are children — die every year from hunger and malnutrition. If we were to decide to observe a minute of silence for every person who died in 1982 owing to hunger-related causes we would not be able to celebrate the advent of the 21st century because we would still have to remain silent.

In 1975, in 80 underdeveloped countries, over 10 percent of the population were undernourished. In 49 of them, this figure was over 15 percent. As we have said, while each year tens of millions of people literally starve to death in the poorest countries, health statistics from the developed capitalist countries reveal the continuous growth — among the highest-income population strata — in the incidence of illnesses deriving at least partially from an excessive food intake.

While future projections differ, they are all equally grim. The FAO [UN Food and Agriculture Organization], for example, estimates that 10 years from now 150 million human beings will join those who are currently suffering from hunger and malnutrition. For its part, the World Bank estimates that the number of undernourished will rise from 600 million in the mid-'70s to the impressive amount of 1.3 billion in the year 2000.

UNICEF foresees that in the year 2000 one out of every five children in the world will be malnourished.

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## **40 million people — half of whom are children — die every year from hunger and malnutrition . . .**

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While in the developed countries life expectancy at birth ranges from 72 to 74 years, in the underdeveloped world this does not surpass 55 years. In the countries in Central and Western Africa, life expectancy fluctuates from 42 to 44 years. While in the developed countries full maturity is attained at the age of 45, in other nations this is the most that it can be hoped to live.

According to World Health Organization data, infant mortality — fluctuating from 10 to 20 deaths per 1,000 live births in the developed countries as a whole in 1981 — amounted, in the group of the poorest countries, to a figure 10 times higher.

UNICEF [UN Children's Fund] has stated this reality graphically and dramatically: of the 122 million children born in 1980 — declared by the international community as International Year of the Child — 12 million (1 out of 10) died before the end of 1981, 95 percent of them in underdeveloped countries.

During their first year of life, 9 out of 10 children in the poorest countries are never given the most elementary health services, much less are they vaccinated against the most common childhood diseases.

The Executive Director of UNICEF has said that in 1981 the cost of a child's life would be less than \$100. If judiciously spent in favor of every single one of the 500 million poorest children of the world, this sum would have covered basic health assistance, elementary education, care during pregnancy and dietary improvement, and would have en-

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## **Malaria kills 1 million children a year in the African continent . . .**

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ured hygienic conditions and water supply for them. In practice, it turned out to be too high a price for the world community. That is why, in 1981, every two seconds a child paid that price with his life.

Malaria kills 1 million children a year in the African continent. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the world cost of malaria campaigns would only amount to \$2 billion per annum, that is, a sum that is equivalent to what mankind invests in military expenditures every 36 hours.

The phenomenon of unemployment and underemployment is another of the serious problems of the present social situation of the underdeveloped countries.

According to recent ILO [International Labor Organization] esti-

mates, the total number of chronically unemployed and underemployed in the Third World amount to over 500 million, a figure equivalent to 50 percent of the economically active population.

It is paradoxical that in a world where there is so much poverty and where the most basic needs of millions of human beings remain unmet, man's productive capacity cannot be fully used.

Moreover, it is in these countries pressed by poverty that 98 percent of the 51 million children under 15 who work in the world is concentrated, generally under conditions of extreme exploitation and lacking all rights.

If the children of our countries starve to death, if their health is unprotected, if they lack shelter, if they cannot work when they become adolescents, what could be the level of education for them in their precarious existence?

UNESCO [UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization] estimates that in 1980 there were 814 million illiterate adults in the world, most of them in the underdeveloped countries. In the 1960s, a period of sudden upsurge in science and knowledge, the number of people who could not read and write increased by 100 million.

According to UNESCO data, 48 percent of the adult population in the underdeveloped countries is illiterate. Ten underdeveloped countries

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## **In a world where there is so much poverty, man's productive capacities cannot be fully used . . .**

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alone account for 425 million illiterates. In 23 of the poorest countries, over 70 percent of their adult population cannot read or write.

We do not wish, Madame Chairlady and distinguished Heads of State or Government, to tire you by insisting on this drama. To summarize it, we have included a chart in our book that may give both a sinister and realistic picture of the underdeveloped world.

In the Third World there are:

Hungry	500 million
Life expectancy under 60	1,700 million
Lacking medical care	1,500 million
Living in extreme poverty	1,000 million
Unemployed and underemployed	500 million
Annual per capita income under \$150	800 million
Illiterate adults	814 million
Children lacking or unable to attend school	200 million
Lacking permanent and adequate water sources	2,000 million

How much will these figures have risen in the next 20 years?

It is up to us to find a solution to this dramatic situation. Proof that a large part of these basic public health, education and other social problems can be solved is the case of our country — if, together with deep structural changes, just economic relations are established among developed and underdeveloped countries, such as those embodying our relations with the socialist community in this sphere.

Cuba, in spite of underdevelopment, of the brutal economic blockade imposed by the United States for more than 20 years and of the relations of unequal exchange affecting part of its foreign trade combined with other problems related to that part of our economy dependent on relations with the developed capitalist world, has made remarkable progress in just a few years in the spheres of public health, education, culture and other basic aspects of our people's life.

At present our country has 17,026 doctors, a ratio of one per 576 inhabitants; 48 hospital beds per 10,000 people; it has reduced infant mortality to 17.3 per 1,000 live births, a ratio similar to that of many developed countries and better than some; and life expectancy at birth is already 73.5 years.

Vaccination programs against the main communicable diseases cover

100 percent of the child population. Diseases like poliomyelitis and malaria have been eradicated; the cases of tuberculosis, leprosy, tetanus, whooping cough, diphtheria, typhoid fever and others have been controlled and considerably reduced; and mortality due to acute diarrheal diseases has been reduced to the minimum. Hemorrhagic dengue, which was undoubtedly introduced into our country by Yankee imperialism, along with other animal and plant diseases, was equally eradicated.

Illiteracy, which stood at 30 percent of the population, was eradicated in record time. An overall minimum educational level of 6th grade has been achieved for most of the population, the average being even

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## **Why does the United States arm itself beyond all apparent logic? . . .**

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higher, and efforts are now being made to raise that minimum to 9th grade.

One hundred percent of the school-age children attend school; over 90 percent finish 9th grade; 425,000 youth have graduated from technical and professional schools; another 257,000 as teachers, and 155,000 have graduated from the universities. Our present enrollment in higher education is 200,000, in a population of less than 10 million.

Unemployment, racial discrimination, discrimination against women, mendicancy, prostitution, gambling, drugs and marginal areas have all been eradicated.

At present, over 14,000 Cuban civilians, comprising doctors, health-care personnel, teachers, engineers, economists and other technicians, and skilled workers, provide services in more than 30 Third World countries, in most cases free of charge. (APPLAUSE) More than 150,000 Cubans have done internationalist service in the past 10 years.

On the other hand, over 19,000 youths from 80 Third World countries are studying in our country, the foreign scholarship students per inhabitant ratio being higher than that of any other country in the world. This also shows what can be done in the broad and practically unexplored field of cooperation among the countries of the underdeveloped world.

When addressing the UN General Assembly in 1979, to report on the Sixth Summit Conference, I presented what could be considered a set of Third World demands in view of the already worsening situation. There, I also postulated the need for a flow of additional resources to the Third World over the next 10 years of no less than \$300 billion in 1977 real values. In the light of the present situation, all of those proposals have become insufficient.

Whenever I reflect on the very grave economic crisis affecting the Third World, on its grim outlook and I relate it to the arms race unleashed by imperialism, I often wonder: Why does the United States arm itself beyond all apparent logic?

Why does it produce not only new nuclear weapon carriers, neutron bombs, new mass extermination weapon systems, new chemical and bacteriological weapons, but also new aircraft carriers, new battleships, new destroyers, new and sophisticated conventional sea, air and land weapons? Why does it establish new rapid deployment forces? Why does it seek for and set up military bases in all continents? Why does it create arsenals in every possible place?

Why does it exert pressure on its allies in the developed capitalist countries who participate in the exploitation of the Third World for them to increase military spending and arm themselves to the teeth? Is it only to fight their adversaries in the Warsaw Treaty? Or is it that imperialism, perhaps aware of the economic and social realities of the underdeveloped countries, foresees a Third World convulsed by the unending poverty, crisis and exploitation that have been imposed on it? Is it preparing itself militarily to impose Yankee order and peace, by fighting underdevelopment, hunger, ignorance, squalor, the lack of basic living conditions and the consequent rebellion and disorder it produces, with the bayonets of their soldiers, the guns of their battleships, and the bombs of their planes to secure indispensable oil and raw materials?

Such considerable military preparations of a conventional nature are directly aimed at the Third World. If not, what would be the use of many of those war devices?

As we said at the United Nations, bombs may kill the hungry, the sick and the ignorant, but they cannot kill hunger, disease and ignorance.

As can be seen there is a dramatic link between peace and development. With just one-third of the \$650 billion used every year for military spending and of the \$15 trillion that will be spent in the coming decades, at the present growth rate of these expenditures, there would be more than enough financial resources to solve the problems of the world's economic and social underdevelopment. This would contribute, moreover, to mitigate considerably the economic problems of even the developed capitalist countries.

In the face of the nuclear tragedy threatening us, the drama of underdevelopment and exploitation that oppresses us, and the economic and social crisis that plagues us, there is no place for resignation or accommodation. The only solution in keeping with man's stature is to struggle.

And this is the message I bring upon ceasing in my capacity as Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

To struggle! (APPLAUSE)

To struggle tirelessly for peace, improved international relations, a halt to the arms race and a drastic reduction in military spending and to demand that a considerable part of those funds be dedicated to developing the Third World.

To struggle without respite for an end to the unequal exchange that reduces our real export earnings, shifts the cost of the inflation generated in the developed capitalist countries onto our economies, and ruins our peoples.

To struggle against protectionism, that multiplies the tariff and non-tariff barriers and blocks the marketing of our export commodities and manufactured goods.

To struggle for the cancellation of the external debts of the large number of countries which have no real possibilities of paying them and drastically lighten the burden of debt servicing for those that, under new conditions, may be able to fulfill their commitments.

To struggle for emergency measures to halt or compensate the drop in the underdeveloped countries' export earnings and other measures of direct assistance to bring about sound balances of payments.

To struggle to establish a new, equitable, stable and universal international financial and monetary system whose credit and voting options reflect the needs of the various groups and categories of countries rather than the economic power of some of its members; that is capable of acting in a genuinely multilateral sense rather than in response to the pressures exerted by transnational banks or a group of capitalist powers; and that, in short, can respond in the long run in keeping with the magnitude and structural character of the underdeveloped countries' balances of payments.

To struggle, with international support, to draw up plans for each country to meet as far as possible its own basic food needs; to find an

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## **There is no place for resignation or accommodation . . .**

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immediate solution for the acute deficit in foodstuffs in certain regions of the world, by means of a considerable flow from the large world surpluses transferred in the form of donations, soft credits and sales at special prices; to create an awareness of the inevitable need — if we wish to end rural underemployment, unemployment and hunger — for profound socioeconomic and structural changes, such as agrarian reform, that will make it possible to adopt higher forms of agricultural production; and also, with international cooperation, to promote programs against erosion, desertification, deforestation and other forms of soil deterioration, also protecting the main sources of water in each country.

To struggle for industrialization that responds to our interests, can be integrated with the rest of the economy and paves the way for development; and to keep the transnational corporations and foreign private investments from controlling it and from carrying out a deforming Third World industrialization process.

To struggle in each of our countries for the adoption of measures to control and limit the activities of the transnational corporations, fully exercising our right to sovereignty over our resources, including the right to nationalize them.

To struggle resolutely for a stable and definitive solution to the Third World's energy needs, keeping in mind, in addition to oil, the joint use of other renewable sources of energy and the international economic cooperation that is absolutely necessary for their development.

To struggle to ensure — along with the absolutely necessary flow of substantial resources derived from the reduction of military spending and other sources — a contribution of financial, technological and human resources that will help solve the complex problems already analyzed. Many countries (including a group of underdeveloped ones) that do not have the required financial means could participate by contributing other resources in line with their possibilities — for example, by sending doctors, engineers, planners, teachers and other technical personnel either free of charge or under favorable payment conditions.

To struggle consistently for a solid, coherent movement of cooperation among the underdeveloped countries.

To struggle to restore and apply the most positive aspects of our demands for a New International Economic Order, opposing those who at-

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## **The only solution in keeping with man's stature is to struggle . . .**

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tempt to water them down, and continue calling for a process of global negotiations that would serve as a real forum discussing and seeking out solutions to our most pressing problems.

To struggle to make all Third World states aware of the need to promote indispensable internal structural changes and measures aimed at raising the people's standard of living, which are an inseparable part of any real process of development — especially those related to income redistribution, job creation, health, housing and education.

To struggle urgently to tackle the present critical situation of health in the Third World through the massive mobilization of national and international financial and human resources.

To struggle firmly, with the required international assistance, to develop programs to combat illiteracy; to provide schooling for all children; to raise the levels of teaching; to train technicians and skilled personnel on a mass scale; to give our people access to a university education; and to develop the rich, age-old potential of our peoples' cultures, combating all forms of dependence and cultural colonialism and the deformation of our cultures.

To struggle to increase the prestige, authority and role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies; to give them our solid majority support in the struggle for peace and security for all peoples, for a just international order and for a solution to the tragic problem of underdevelopment that adversely affects the vast majority of countries. The existence of such an organization as the United Nations, with growing solidity, influence and power, is increasingly indispensable for the future of the world.

To struggle tenaciously to promote the closest possible unity within the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and among all Third World states. To not allow anybody or anything to divide us. To solve those problems which make some of our countries at times oppose one another by means of negotiations and political formulas. Let us be an indestructible battle line of peoples demanding our noble aspirations, our legitimate interests and our inalienable right to survive, both as Third World countries and as an inseparable part of mankind.

We have never been characterized by resignation, submission or defeatism in the face of difficulties. We have firmly faced complex, difficult situations in the last few years with unity and determination. We have strived together, we have struggled together and together we have scored victories. In this same spirit and with this same determination, we must be ready to wage the most colossal, just, worthy and necessary battle for our peoples' lives and future.

Thank you.  
(OVATION)

# Socialists run election campaign

## Demand halt to Labor Party's procapitalist course

By Robert Mance

During the March 5 federal elections in Australia, voters turned out the coalition government of the Liberal and National parties, headed by Malcolm Fraser, and brought the Australian Labor Party (ALP) to power. ALP leader Bob Hawke became the new prime minister.

In the weeks preceding the elections, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Australian section of the Fourth International, put forward its own candidates.

Utilizing Australia's system of ranked voting, the SWP called on working people to vote for the SWP as their first preference, and the ALP as their second. Under this system, if the first-preference candidate fails to win a sufficient number of votes, those for the second are the ones that are actually counted.

The SWP ran its most ambitious campaign ever. It fielded a total of 38 candidates, produced more than half a million national campaign leaflets, and printed 80,000 posters.

Although the final results were not yet in, an article by Larry Douglas in the March 15 issue of *Direct Action*, the weekly newspaper of the SWP, reported that the party had received a total of 41,803 votes, or 0.5 percent of the total cast nationally. However, in those electorates where it ran candidates, it received an average of 1,100 votes, or about 1.5 percent of the votes for those seats.

"In standing in such a large number of seats," Douglas said, "the SWP sought to reach the broadest numbers of working people with a clear socialist alternative to the pro-capitalist policies on which the Labor Party campaigned.

### Need for different policies

In an interview in the February 15 *Direct Action*, SWP National Secretary Jim Percy explained why the SWP candidates were calling for a vote for the Labor Party.

"The main slogan we put forward in the elections is for a Labor government with socialist policies. . . .

"A Labor government with socialist policies would, in effect, be carrying out the sort of ideas we put forward. . . .

"In reality, we think, of course, that the ALP with its present program will not bring fundamental benefits to the working class. In a period of recession and economic crisis like we have at the moment, it will in fact attack the working class. . . .

"So that's why we stress that we need a Labor government with very different policies. We seek to convince the majority of workers that it's not the case that the Labor Party is a working-class party in its program; that it

needs a different program, it needs the policies we're putting forward."

Unlike the capitalist parties, Percy went on, "The one thing that is fundamentally different about the Labor Party is that it is built by the mass organisations of the working class: The trade unions built the Labor Party and the trade unions still fundamentally control the Labor Party apparatus, though they don't have effective control over the parliamentarians. . . .

"For us it is better that the ALP comes to power. This is because workers then will understand more fully that the program of this party is incapable of satisfying our fundamental needs."

### 'What alternative does Labor offer?'

A week later, in the February 24 *Direct Action*, a major article by Douglas Lorimer discussed the issues facing working people in the elections.

Taking up the false claim by Fraser that a reelection of the Liberal-National Party coalition could bring economic improvements, Lorimer pointed to the record of those two capitalist parties while in office. During the seven years of the Fraser government, Lorimer said, living standards have fallen; taxes have risen; inflation has reached double-digit levels; there have been massive cutbacks in spending on health care, education, and social welfare; the poverty rate has doubled; and the unemployment level has doubled.

"But what alternative does the Labor Party leadership offer?" Lorimer went on.

"In their bid to present themselves as better managers of the capitalist economy, Hawke and the other Labor leaders point to their ability to get the union officialdom to 'restrain' workers' wage demands. . . .

"In its fundamentals, Labor's policy is, as the February 21 *Financial Review's* editorial explained, 'not so very different from that [which] the Government has taken since last August.'

"That the Labor leadership is seeking to foist on us only a less obvious and therefore more insidious version of Fraser's wage-cutting policy is evident from the commitment that Hawke has made to maintain the wage freeze until a national conference of governments, union bureaucrats, and the employers has worked out a better method of making us pay for the capitalist crisis."

A statement by the SWP's National Campaign Committee, quoted in the March 15 *Direct Action*, declared, "This election, even more than others in recent years, clearly posed the need and the opportunity for a class-struggle program to defend the interests of working people in the worst economic crisis for half a

century. The program on which the ALP stood in this election is a program for the defeat and demoralisation of the working class."

The same statement took up questions that were raised by the SWP's campaign in Moreton, Queensland, where it ran Helen Jones, a 20-year-old metalworker. In that electorate, former Liberal minister Jim Killen was struggling to retain his seat, against the campaign of Barbara Robson, a member of the Socialist Left faction of the ALP. A front-page article in the March 10 *Sydney Morning Herald* claimed that Killen was hoping to retain the seat with "the help of preferences from the extreme left-wing Socialist Workers Party."

The SWP's statement explained, "Of course, there is always a possibility that the campaign of the SWP or another small working-class party can divide the working-class votes; if there is a leakage of preferences this may even result in the defeat of the ALP candidate. . . .

"Voters have the right to make their own decisions, and it is inevitable that some will not be persuaded by our arguments.

"But if there is a leakage of SWP preferences to the Australian Democrats or the Liberals, the fault for this does not lie with the SWP. The fault lies with those who give the ALP a program so class-collaborationist that the program of the Democrats or the Liberals can appear superior to some workers. And it lies as well with 'socialists' who refuse to distance themselves from that program."

Following the elections, *Direct Action* quickly took the new government to task.

With Hawke's announcement of a 10 percent devaluation of the Australian dollar, "the very first action of the newly elected Hawke Labor government was a serious blow against the living standards of working people," an article in the March 15 issue commented.

A front-page editorial in the same issue stated, "Hawke's plan for solving the economic crisis, in which more than a million people have been put out of work, is based on persuading bosses and workers to put aside their 'sectional' interests and 'pull together.' . . .

"Any workers who accepted Hawke's advice would be lambs to the slaughter of the bosses' continuing attacks on wages, jobs, and working conditions."

The editorial concluded, "Working people have the power through their unions to fight the bosses' offensive and beat it. But we can't do that effectively while we're saddled with a leadership whose program is based on appeasing our class enemy. The struggle to stop the bankers and industrial magnates from forcing the burden of the crisis in their system onto our backs will therefore also involve a fight to replace the present pro-capitalist Labor leaders with a leadership that is prepared to fight, a leadership armed with a program that puts workers' needs above company profits — a program for socialism." □

# RCL-Matzpen on PNC meeting

*PLO's unity preserved by 'hidden political retreat'*

[The following assessment of the Palestine National Council meeting held in Algiers from February 14 to 22 appeared as an editorial in the March 1983 issue of *Matzpen* (Compass), the newspaper of the Israeli Revolutionary Communist League, the Israeli section of the Fourth International. The translation is taken from the March 31 issue of *International Viewpoint*, which slightly abridged the editorial.]

[For other views on the PNC meeting see "PLO deals a blow to U.S. plans," by David Frankel (*IP*, March 14, p. 133), and "Revolutionists hail PNC meeting," (*IP*, April 18, p. 209).]

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The worldwide interest in the XVI Palestine National Council meeting is, in itself, a big success for the Palestine Liberation Organization. This top-level meeting of the PLO, the liveliness of the debates, and above all the interest which it excited throughout the world, confirm once more that the PLO has not been destroyed.

In advance of the Algiers meeting, Israeli and international press put forward many analyses of what it expected to happen there. Far from being neutral and objective, they represented either wishful thinking, or barely concealed attempts to influence the decisions to be taken by the delegates of the Palestinian people.

This orgy of analysis continued during the sessions themselves, about what was, and was not, said. All those playing this game found confirmation for the conclusions that they had adopted well beforehand, in conformity with the political viewpoint they represent. Thus, once the debates were finished and the resolutions adopted, everyone could claim that the PNC had only justified their hypothesis, which was in fact only the image they had, and wanted to have, of the PLO.

Once more it was Uri Avneri who won the top prize in this festival of bad faith. "I told you so," was the substance of his editorial in *Haolam Haze*. Really? Avneri, who expected to be invited to the PNC as an observer, had predicted a split in the movement, recognition of the state of Israel, amendment of the Palestinian Charter, and that the vast majority of delegates would line up on . . . his own positions, which were in fact Washington's.

Finally, as we predicted two months ago, (see *Matzpen* 135, January 1983) there was no spectacular turn, no dramatic decision, and above all the Palestinian movement remained united. And we are pleased to see that. Any split in the present situation would only aid the

enemies of the Palestinian people.

Of course, one could discuss whether it could have been opportune to make one or another dramatic shift in the official formulations and political positions of the PLO. But in the present framework, and in view of all the pressures on the Palestine national movement from the imperialist powers, and from the Arab bourgeoisies — and with all the "advice" coming from certain false friends of the Palestinian cause in Israel itself — a spectacular turn would have led to division within the PLO, and not only that. It would also have been a green light for new compromises, which could end in dubious deals.

More than anything else, what marked the XVI PNC was a determination to preserve the unity of the PLO and to maintain the political principles that have defined the PLO for the last 15 years, that is, the program that gives it its character as a national liberation movement and which has won the support of the masses of the Palestinian Arab people.

This unity was achieved by a hard fight against centrifugal pulls, often influenced by external forces hostile to the struggle of the Palestinian people. It was also achieved at the price of resolutions that in many instances were ambiguous. Such resolutions included something for practically everybody — for the currents and tendencies inaccurately called the "Rejection Front," as well as those that have declared themselves to be in favor of a rapprochement with American imperialism.

Because of such ambiguities, a facade of unanimity appeared during the votes, which reflected nothing of the richness of the debates and the contradictory positions which were expressed during them.

However, behind this desire for ambiguity, and the dual-purpose formulas, we cannot but see certain retreats which in time could become a danger to the struggle of the Palestinian people. To be sure, the PNC did not make spectacular concessions on the program of the PLO. It reaffirmed its strategic objectives and the principle of armed struggle. But this did not prevent the PNC reaffirming its support for the decision of the Fez conference — a project which American imperialism is far from rejecting. Moreover, the PNC let it be understood that although the Reagan "Peace Plan" is unacceptable at the moment it could, if amended, serve as the basis for an initiative that the PLO would not reject.

Furthermore, Abu Amar [PLO leader Yassir Arafat] has a free hand to follow through contacts with the Jordanian regime, negotiating in the framework of the proposed Palestinian-Jordanian confederation, as amended by the Pal-

estinian delegates.

It is true that although the PLO gave a partial endorsement to some of the reactionary projects, in every case these were amended in the resolutions. Moreover, Washington was the target of the bulk of the attacks from the Palestinian delegates. Only the Brezhnev plan got the formal support of the PNC — however, it is also true that the defeat in Lebanon and the shift in the relationship of forces in favor of imperialism did not fail to have an influence on perspectives of the PLO. They tended to be deflected in a direction more compatible with the interests of Washington, Riyadh, and Aman.

These political retreats illustrate the difficult situation in which the PLO finds itself, and the weakness, indeed the betrayal, of the political forces which could counterbalance the growing weight of local and international reaction.

What the PLO needs now is more solidarity from the Arab masses and from the Arab regimes not aligned with imperialism or the Soviet Union.

Moscow can take comfort from the applause that greeted each mention of the socialist camp. It can also be gratified by the support given to the diplomatic initiative of the former general secretary of the Soviet CP, Leonid Brezhnev.

However, the new Palestinian leadership will be orienting its next initiatives towards Fez, Riyadh and these capitals are on the road to Washington, not Moscow.

To conclude then on the work of the PNC: We can say that behind the ambiguous resolutions adopted by the Palestinian delegates, it was possible to safeguard the unity of the Palestinian movement. But this was at the price of more or less hidden political retreats, which, although they are not a dramatic change in political line, will undoubtedly allow the enemies of the Palestinian people to step up their pressure on the PLO.

This is one more reason why, here in Israel, we should redouble our solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for national liberation, which was hailed many times during the National Council. It is this struggle that offers the first promise of an alternative policy to that put forward by Arab reactionary forces. That is, it involves a real fight against the occupation and national oppression, rather than at best verbal battles in corridors of Western parliaments, or palaces of reactionary Arab regimes. It involves a perspective of mobilizing all those who have nothing to gain from the continuing domination of the Arab East by Zionism and imperialism. □

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# Rightist guerrillas set back

### Washington and Peking rush to their aid

By Will Reissner

Working hand in hand, Peking and Washington have rushed to bolster rightist guerrillas operating against the government of Kampuchea along that country's border with Thailand.

The rightist forces suffered major setbacks in late March and early April when Kampuchean and Vietnamese troops captured two large base camps at Phnom Chat and O Smach. The guerrillas were driven back into Thailand.

Washington moved quickly to ship new aid to the Kampuchean rightists and the Thai military. On April 9 the first airlifts of U.S. ground-to-air missiles, howitzers, and other weapons began arriving in Thailand. The Reagan administration has asked for an additional \$25 million in military aid for the Thai regime and has promised to increase its so-called humanitarian aid to the guerrillas. Such aid provides the rightist forces with most of their food, medicine, and supplies.

The dispatch of increased U.S. aid was accompanied by claims in the imperialist media that Kampuchean and Vietnamese troops had massacred civilians in the border fighting. The guerrilla bases along the Thai border are regularly described in the U.S. media as refugee camps.

#### Peking follows U.S. lead

Taking its cue from Washington's airlift, on April 10 the Chinese government warned that Vietnam could suffer "grave consequences" along its own border with China. This was followed up by Chinese shelling of Vietnamese border regions, which began April 16.

An Asian diplomat based in the Chinese capital told the *Washington Post's* Tracy Dahlby that this "is clearly related to the situation on the Thai-Cambodian border."

In 1979, Chinese troops invaded northern Vietnam in an attempt to curry favor with the Carter administration, which was angered by the Vietnamese role in overthrowing the murderous Pol Pot regime that had ruled Kampuchea since 1975. Remnants of the Pol Pot forces still provide the bulk of the rightist guerrillas now operating against Kampuchea from Thailand.

Although the 600,000 Chinese troops who entered Vietnam in 1979 did considerable damage, they were driven back by Vietnamese forces.

The April 10 issue of the Hanoi daily *Nhan Dan* responded to the U.S. airlift to Thailand by warning that "the United States' dangerous move can only increase tension on the Thai-Kampuchean border and other parts of the region. It has not only joined the Chinese reactionaries in continuing to bleed the three In-

dochinese countries, but is also taking advantage of the current situation to prepare for the reestablishment of its military presence in Thailand."

#### Thai warplanes and troops in action

Thai troops took part in the fighting around the Phnom Chat guerrilla base, providing artillery- and air-support for the Pol Pot forces. According to some reports, Thai warplanes dropped napalm on Kampuchean and Vietnamese positions. One plane was shot down.

Although the Thai government claimed that the fighting had taken place inside Thailand, an April 9 statement by the Vietnamese foreign ministry categorically denied this charge, noting that Kampuchean and Vietnamese troops were operating under strict orders "not to violate Thai territory." It added that "if Thai soldiers have been captured or killed," it is because they crossed into Kampuchea while "backing the Khmer reactionaries."

Kampuchea's ministry of foreign affairs claimed that "Thailand has directly taken part in armed provocations against Kampuchea," having "sent jet aircraft to bombard border regions of Kampuchea and sent part of its infantry" to back up the guerrillas.

On April 13, the foreign ministers of Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea, meeting in the

Kampuchean capital Phnom Penh, proposed measures to ease tensions along the Thai-Kampuchean border. Their statement reiterated a previous proposal to establish a "security zone" along the border, with only Thai troops on one side and Kampuchean troops on the other. Under this proposal, Vietnamese troops would leave the border region if the Thais closed down the guerrilla bases along their side of the border.

#### Vietnamese announce troop pullout

The foreign ministers also called for talks between the Thai and Kampuchean Red Cross organizations regarding the repatriation of Kampuchean refugees now in Thailand.

This proposal even includes those civilians now living in the guerrilla camps in Thailand, Vietnam's ambassador to the United Nations Hoang Bich Son told *Intercontinental Press* April 15. "If they choose to return they will be welcomed by the government of Kampuchea," Son stated, "because it has a humanitarian policy even toward those now in the ranks of the reactionary forces."

The foreign ministers also announced a new withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea to take place in May. Vietnam had previously announced that annual withdrawals would take place.

The fact that this withdrawal will take place at the start of the rainy season, a time when the rightists usually try to step up their military activities, indicates the weakness of the guerrillas and the fact that the Kampuchean armed forces are now much stronger than in previous years, Ambassador Son remarked. □

## 'Yellow rain' samples exposed as fakes

Soil and leaf samples that the Reagan administration turned over to Australian and British scientists as proof that Vietnam is using biological warfare weapons in Kampuchea are fakes, according to an Australian government report.

The report was completed more than six months ago, but was kept secret until sections were leaked to the London *Observer* and published on March 6.

Following the revelations, the new Australian Labor Party government, which came to power after March 5 elections, released the entire report.

Australian scientists carried out exhaustive tests on the samples of so-called yellow rain at Defense Department laboratories in Melbourne. The Reagan administration claimed the samples had been collected in northern Thailand, near the Kampuchean border. According to Secretary of State George Shultz, the "yellow rain" had been sprayed by a "Vietnamese aircraft" in February.

Hugh Crone, an Australian scientist who studied the samples, concluded that "they seemed to have been deliberately made up

from local pollen and fungi spores." According to the March 20 *Washington Post*, Crone "speculated that someone had collected the pollen, which had somehow become contaminated with fungi and which was then applied to leaves and pebbles."

According to the now-released report, "the examples are obvious fakes."

The March 6 *Washington Post* reports that the charges by British scientists that samples have been faked have "embarrassed" the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, one of Reagan's strongest allies.

Previous studies by Canadian and British scientists of samples they themselves collected turned up no evidence of the mycotoxins that Washington claims are the lethal agent in "yellow rain."

A United Nations investigating team, set up at the urging of the Reagan administration, also found "no conclusive evidence" that the Soviet Union or Vietnam had used banned chemical or biological weapons in Afghanistan, Kampuchea, or Laos, as Washington has charged. The UN team issued its 109-page report on Nov. 26, 1982.