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Syrian Attack on PLO Weakens Arab Defense Against Imperialism



Israeli concentration camp for Palestinian prisoners at Al Ansar. Syrian regime has joined offensive against PLO.

The PLO under siege

By David Frankel

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is under siege. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the onslaught against West Beirut, the massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, the subsequent U.S. diplomatic offensive and media campaign aimed at splitting the PLO, and now the attempt by Syrian President Hafez al-Assad to gain control of the PLO are all part of the same package. These unceasing attacks over the past year amount to the biggest and most sustained offensive against the PLO since its birth.

Because of its uncompromising struggle for the national rights of the Palestinian people, the PLO represents a deadly threat to the imperialist set-up in the Middle East. The U.S. and Israeli rulers are determined to destroy the drive by the Palestinians to regain their homeland, and the Syrian regime, for its own reasons, has joined in the campaign against the PLO (see article on page 406).

Despite repeated attempts over the years, the imperialists have never been able to crush the PLO. Whatever conjunctural ups and downs it may go through, the fact is that the Palestinian national liberation struggle will remain in the center of politics in the Middle East. To eliminate that struggle would require nothing less than the destruction of the Palestinian people as a whole.

The PLO and Israel

What puts the struggle of the Palestinians — and the PLO, as the organized expression of that struggle — in such a central position in the Middle East is their challenge to the legitimacy of the Israeli state. Israel was established by a colonial movement that organized the settlement of a European population in Palestine, and which ultimately took over the country, expropriated the native Palestinian peasantry, and expelled some 700,000 Palestinians from their homeland.

The Israeli colonial settler-state is at the heart of the imperialist system in the Middle East. It is the one country in the region that is not exploited and oppressed by imperialism. It provides a counterrevolutionary army of more than 400,000 for use against the rest of the countries of the Middle East, which are super-exploited by imperialism and which periodically rebel against their oppression.

Israel's massive military power, however, has not prevented it from steadily losing ground in its political battle with the PLO. When the PLO was formed in 1964, it was under the thumb of the Egyptian government. Arab opposition to Israel was widely seen at that time — especially in the imperialist countries — as the result of anti-Jewish racism. Israeli propagandists had successfully disseminated an image of a small, peace-loving de-

mocracy surrounded by hostile and backward peoples bent on genocide.

But the Israeli attack on Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in June 1967 was a turning point in the politics of the Middle East and in how the region came to be seen by working people around the world. The expansionist character of the Israeli state was brought out more clearly by its seizure of new chunks of Arab territory. Although some 400,000 Palestinians were driven out of the areas seized by Israel, close to 1 million remained. Today, some 1.3 million Palestinians live under Israeli colonial rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The 1967 war also generated an independent mass movement among the Palestinian people. Revolutionary nationalist organizations such as Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine gained a mass base among the Palestinian refugees and in the occupied territories. These anti-imperialist guerrilla organizations took over the PLO, and they popularized their program for a democratic, secular Palestine, a country where both Arabs and Jews could live together.

The PLO's vision of a binational Palestine cut across the Israeli propaganda claim that anti-Zionism is the same as anti-Semitism. Meanwhile, the reality of the Israeli occupation regime, and of an Israeli foreign policy aligned with Washington in support of the most reactionary forces in the world, from the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua to the racist

white-minority regime in South Africa, eroded the image of a democratic and progressive Israel.

What has become clearer and clearer to working people around the world is that it is the Palestinian national liberation struggle and the PLO that stand for progress and democracy in the Middle East. That is why Israel has never been so isolated internationally. And the beginning of this same realization among a layer of Israeli Jews who understand that their government is the aggressor in Lebanon has spurred a deep polarization within Israel.

Attacks from Arab regimes

Inside the Arab countries as well, the Palestinian national liberation struggle has served as an engine of progress and a force in the broader struggle for democracy. The PLO came into conflict with Arab governments because it sought to organize and mobilize the Palestinian people throughout the Arab world in the struggle against Israel. This was an example that the Arab regimes could not tolerate, since they — like all capitalist governments — defend the interests of the wealthy few against the masses of workers and peasants, and therefore fear the independent organization and mobilization of the masses.

Furthermore, the PLO's program of uncompromising struggle for the national rights of the Palestinian people is also a threat to the Arab governments. Such a struggle precludes any fundamental compromise with imperialism. But capitalist governments in the semicolonial countries must sometimes lean on imperialism for support against their own people.

Thus, in Jordan, the growth of the mass Palestinian nationalist movement during the late 1960s led to both an increasingly sharp mili-

A case of self-defense

Israeli authorities have seized on the death of Aharon Gross as a pretext to tighten their noose around the West Bank. Gross, a colonist from the United States, was standing in the Hebron vegetable market with his Uzi machine gun July 7 when he was stabbed to death by a group of Palestinians, who reportedly got away with his Uzi.

The Israeli government clamped a curfew on Hebron; fired Mustafa Natshe, the mayor it had previously appointed; and announced that some 500 Jewish families would be settled in the heart of the Palestinian city. Meanwhile, Israeli troops stood by as ultrarightist settlers from nearby Qiryat Arba went on a rampage, setting fire to Arab market stalls, smashing windows and cars, and generally trying to terrify the Palestinian population.

"They have to be made afraid of us," one Qiryat Arba settler told *New York Times* reporter Richard Bernstein, referring to the

Palestinians. "To tell the truth," the settler added, "we want them to leave."

Miriam Levinger, another U.S.-born settler, whose husband heads the Qiryat Arba colony, told Bernstein: "I want to see a Jewish community grow up in Hebron the same way a Jewish community grew up in Haifa or Tel Aviv."

But the Palestinians in Hebron are well aware of the fact that the Jewish community in Haifa did not just "grow up." It was established through the expulsion of more than 50,000 Arab inhabitants. The Qiryat Arba settlers, and the government that supports them, want to accomplish the same thing in the West Bank. That is what is generating the conflict there, and that is why settlers such as Aharon Gross, lounging around the Hebron market with their machine guns, are not innocent bystanders, but aggressors who are stealing the land of another people.

— D.F.

tary confrontation with Israel, and at the same time the undermining of the Jordanian monarchy. This resulted in repeated military clashes between Jordanian troops and Palestinian guerrillas throughout 1969 and 1970, and culminated in the Jordanian regime unleashing an all-out war against the Palestinian guerrilla organizations in September 1970.

It was later revealed that a joint U.S.-Israeli invasion of Jordan had been planned in the event that the monarchists began to lose in the civil war unleashed by King Hussein.

A similar political process in Lebanon was one of the things that led rightist forces there to provoke the 1975-76 civil war. A victory for the Palestinian-Muslim-leftist coalition in that civil war was prevented by the intervention of Syrian troops in April 1976 — an intervention that was carried out with Washington's blessings and with Israeli acquiescence.

Since that time, the Israeli army has invaded Lebanon twice — leaving aside innumerable smaller operations — in its attempts to destroy the PLO. And now the Syrian regime has renewed its pressure on the Palestinians.

Uncompromising struggle

Through all this, the PLO has maintained its uncompromising struggle for a Palestinian homeland. It is this history of struggle that is the basis for the authority exercised by PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat, and it is this uncompromising struggle that is the real target of the current attacks on Arafat.

Like the Black population of South Africa, the Palestinians have little choice but to continue their struggle. Within the territories ruled by Israel, Palestinians find that their land is confiscated, the most basic political rights are denied them, economic pressures and outright terrorism are used to encourage emigration, and the remaining Palestinian population is more and more being turned into a superexploited proletariat.

In the West Bank, the Palestinian population is also confronted by an increasingly active fascist movement that is aided and encouraged by the government. Although Israeli troops have regularly gunned down unarmed demonstrators, and have carried out collective punishment against whole towns to retaliate for acts of resistance to the occupation, cabinet-member Yuval Neeman declared July 10:

"I think the army is going to go into perhaps stricter measures. Generally, in history, revolutions happen under soft regimes, never under strong ones, and that is true in terms of what happens in Judea and Samaria [the West Bank]."

Israel's evolution toward a South African-type apartheid is being accompanied by a parallel strengthening of militarism and an increasingly open willingness to use superior military power against the surrounding Arab nations. Neeman's advocacy of "stricter measures," after all, is applicable to relations with the Arab peoples outside of Israel as well as to

the Arabs under its rule.

It is this reality of Israeli oppression and aggression that continually generates new resistance to the Zionist state, both inside Israel and in the Arab world as a whole. No compromise

can ever solve this conflict short of the destruction of the Israeli state, the return of the Palestinian people to their homeland, and the building of a new society that is not based on national oppression. □

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CIA tries to provoke war with Honduras

Sandinistas reveal details of U.S. plot

By Michael Baumann

ACHUAPA — Towns like this one along Nicaragua's northern border have been at war with counterrevolutionary raiders based in Honduras for more than a year. Now, the attacks are also involving regular troops from the Honduran army more and more, to the point where war between Nicaragua and Honduras is drawing near.

Speaking at a news conference in Managua, 140 miles to the south, Commander Tomás Borge, Nicaragua's minister of the interior, reported on the latest ominous developments June 30.

Leaders of the Honduran army, counterrevolutionary mercenaries — supporters of the former Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua — and representatives of the CIA met recently in Honduras to discuss how to provoke a full-scale war, Borge reported. Washington has been pushing for such a war as a vehicle for the introduction of U.S. combat troops into Central America.

Unable to incite the Sandinista army into attacking Honduran territory, despite months of escalating provocations, the CIA is now discussing various ways of faking such an attack, Borge said.

Gulf of Tonkin

The latest plan is similar to the famous Gulf of Tonkin incident which Washington stage-managed in 1964 as a pretext for introducing large numbers of U.S. troops into Vietnam.

At the high-level meeting in Honduras, Borge said, "they came up with the justification of using unmarked aircraft to attack Nicaraguan population centers, followed by an immediate ground attack on a Honduran town to create the impression this was Nicaragua's answer to the bombing."

The attack on Honduras was to be carried out by Somozaist ex-National Guardsmen who, dressed up as Sandinista soldiers, would carry out a genuine massacre of civilians. This was then to be a signal for units of the Honduran army to attack Nicaragua. Ex-Sandinista Edén Pastora was to coordinate an attack from the south.

"The Honduran army and the forces of the Somozaist National Guard in the north, and the counterrevolutionaries under the command of the traitor Pastora in Costa Rica, are prepared to move rapidly and decisively," Borge said. "The aim is to take a piece of Nicaraguan territory and establish a provisional government that would then be aided by the United States."

The military base recently opened by 120 U.S. Green Berets in Puerto Castilla, Honduras, supposedly restricted to training Sal-

vadoran troops, was actually an important part of the operation, Borge said.

'Terrible days are approaching'

Because of the extensive publicity Nicaragua is giving these plans, Borge concluded, this particular operation "may not be carried out."

But, he added, "terrible days are approaching." In an interview with UPI a few days later, Borge said he saw no possibility of avoiding a wider war for "there is not a single indication, not a single possibility, that the United States wants to."

The great problem the U.S. government has in its current offensive against Nicaragua is that the forces at its disposal — some 7,000 counterrevolutionaries in the north and perhaps another 1,000 in the south — are simply no match for the highly motivated all-volunteer Sandinista People's Army, reserve battalions, and militia units.

Heavy fighting in the last few months has taken a toll on the *contra* forces, as they are called here — at least 1,000 dead according to Sandinista government estimates. Sandinista casualties have been less than one-fifth of that number, despite the fact that most of the fighting is being done by initially inexperienced reserve battalions.

Honduran forces have been playing an increasingly heavy role in the fighting.

- On June 24 the Sandinista army broke up a counterrevolutionary camp near the northern village of Ocotal. Twenty Honduran troops were caught by surprise in the camp, fought briefly, and fled across the border.

- Beginning June 25, units of the Honduran army's Special Tactical Group repeatedly entered Nicaraguan territory near the besieged village of Teotecacinte. Their mission was to disarm defensive land mines Nicaraguan forces had placed along their own side of the border in an effort to reduce the level of conflict there.

- On June 26 in Nicaragua's province of Chinandega, an invading force of 70 *contras* was stopped and driven back across the border. During the two-hour battle, the *contras* were backed by Honduran mortar fire.

- On July 2 Honduran army units opened mortar fire on the Nicaraguan border post at Teotecacinte, firing rounds for more than three hours. This was only the latest of several mortar attacks on the town, most of whose 2,000 residents have had to be evacuated.

Provocations such as these, along with the continuing U.S. military buildup in Honduras, are the background to the meeting described by Borge.

There has already been one major effort to provide Honduras with a pretext to go to war against Nicaragua and thus open the way for the introduction of U.S. combat forces. It fell apart at the end of June.

Two U.S. journalists, Dial Torgerson of the *Los Angeles Times* and Richard Cross, a photographer, were killed June 21 in Honduran territory, about two miles from the Nicaraguan border.

Honduran officials and the U.S. State Department immediately claimed that Torgerson and Cross had been killed by a rocket-propelled grenade fired by Nicaraguan troops. Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto denied the charge, pointing out that Sandinista forces had been pulled back from the border precisely to avoid such a staged provocation.

D'Escoto suggested instead that the two reporters had been set up and killed by Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries or Honduran army troops. Two Dutch journalists, Jan Thielsen and Harry Van der Aart, traveling in the same region several days earlier, confirmed that the area was full of armed, uniformed *contras*, mingling freely with Honduran troops.

They themselves were fired on by these forces and narrowly escaped with their lives. Honduran officials were "astonished" when they returned unscathed, Thielsen told a Managua news conference. "They kept checking our car looking for bullet holes."

Attacks against Nicaragua have also been continuing in the south. On June 28 some 150 followers of Edén Pastora invaded Nicaragua by boat and attempted to take the southern port city of San Juan del Norte. Although heavily armed, the invasion force was broken up by Sandinista troops.

Earlier, on June 23, Pastora had issued a much-publicized complaint that he lacked enough money and guns to fight the "Nicaraguan communists" effectively and that he was therefore suspending operations. Perhaps his bid for more CIA aid had the desired effect.

Sides being taken

Although the Costa Rican government professes neutrality in the conflict between the CIA-backed counterrevolutionaries and Nicaragua, it is hardly unaware of Pastora's activities there. As it becomes clearer that the counterrevolutionary offensive cannot stabilize, let alone overthrow, the revolutionary government in Nicaragua, the tempo of the war is speeding up. Internationally, sides are being taken more clearly.

This is not only the case in Costa Rica. Further to the south, Panamanian National Guard Commander Rubén Darío Paredes

launched a vicious attack on Cuba and Nicaragua July 1. He threatened to break diplomatic relations with both countries if they did not stop "exporting death and subversion."

Turning the real situation on its head, the Panamanian leader said: "Panama will come to the aid of Costa Rica if it is attacked. We are on the side of Costa Rica against Nicaragua."

Panama is a member of the four-government Contadora Group, which has called for peace and dialogue in Central America. But the Contadora governments are facing big pressures from Washington, and they are terrified by the impact that the Nicaraguan revolution is having on the workers and peasants in their own countries.

Another member of the group, Venezuela, was reported by ABC-TV on July 2 to be collaborating with the CIA's plots to overthrow the Sandinista government. Citing "U.S. intelligence sources," ABC reported that the Venezuelan government has for two years been providing contras with training funds.

In Nicaragua itself, as the revolution nears its fourth anniversary, July 19, the pace of events is speeding up as well. More land is being given to small farmers, more militia units and reserve battalions are being tested in battle, more control over the distribution of basic goods is being exercised by the mass organizations.

Here in Achuapa, the entire town and surrounding countryside turned out June 30 to greet returning Reserve Battalion 10-11, dedicate the first high school ever built in the region, and receive title to more than 20,000 acres of land distributed free of charge by the revolutionary government.

The 500 reservists had just returned from three months on the front lines. Dusty, tired, and proud, their faces showed how happy they were to get back to their families and their farms.

But their stay may be short. All indications are that they will soon be needed in the front lines once again. □

patched to Ndjamen.

Habré's regime has also asked for French troops. French Defense Minister Charles Hernu maintained that no French troops would be sent — for now.

However, on July 3, the U.S.-backed regime of Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaïre dispatched 250 paratroopers to Ndjamen, as well as transport aircraft and counterinsurgency planes. The troops are from an elite unit trained by French officers.

A top aide to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak flew into Ndjamen in early July to promise more Egyptian military aid to Habré's forces.

An article by *New York Times* military analyst Drew Middleton in the June 30 issue reported that top U.S. Defense Department officials were also "increasingly concerned" about Goukouni's advances, and that the Pentagon "welcomed" the French aid to Habré.

The Reagan administration has also stepped up its direct threats against Libya. In a show of force, aircraft from the U.S.S. *Eisenhower* have violated Libyan airspace, and in early July two Libyan jets were intercepted by U.S. fighters more than 100 miles from the *Eisenhower*.

This rush to back Habré is but the latest in a long series of imperialist interventions in Chad. Since the country won its independence in 1960 — after decades of brutal French colonial exploitation — French troops and jets have intervened several times to put down rebellions led by the Chad National Liberation Front (Frolinat). Goukouni is the leader of one of the largest of the Frolinat factions.

The imperialists were forced to accept the establishment of a coalition government in 1979, with Goukouni as president. But concerned by Goukouni's anti-imperialist pronouncements and his close ties with Qaddafi, they soon moved to bring his government down, backing a rebellion led by Habré. In June 1982, Habré's forces marched into Ndjamen and Goukouni had to retreat.

According to the *Newsweek* report, "Reagan administration sources confirm that the CIA helped underwrite Habré's rebellion last year. . . ."

Habré, however, failed to build up a stable regime. Goukouni initiated armed resistance, and most other political formations in Chad have now allied themselves with him.

Given the whole history of French and U.S. aggression in Chad — and against Libya — there is now a serious danger of even greater imperialist intervention in the region. □

Chad

Paris rushes arms to regime

As rebel forces push toward capital

By Ernest Harsch

With Washington's encouragement, French arms and Zaïrian troops are pouring into the West African country of Chad in a bid to rescue the shaky proimperialist regime of Hissène Habré.

Since late June, rebel forces led by former President Goukouni Oueddei have swept southward from their bases in northern Chad, taking a series of villages and towns, including such strategic ones as Faya-Largeau, Fada, Oum-Chalouba, and Kalait. Officials of the Habré regime admit that Goukouni's forces now control about one-third of the country.

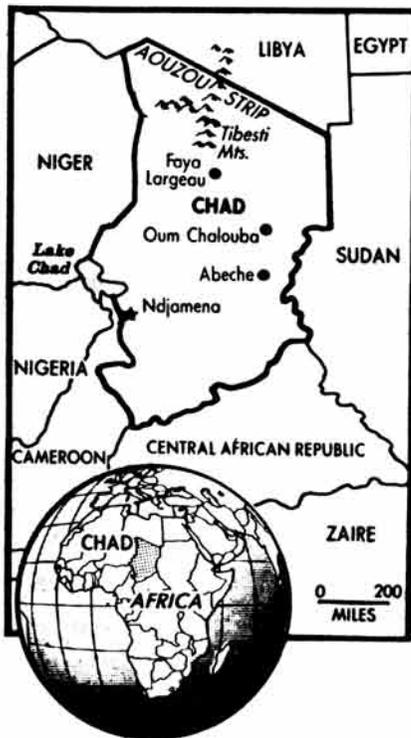
Goukouni has declared that his aim is to reach the capital, Ndjamen, and regain political power.

The imperialists, who more than a year ago helped overthrow Goukouni and install Habré in his place, are alarmed by this rebel advance. Seizing on the fact that Goukouni is closely allied with the Libyan regime of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, they have sought to portray the recent fighting as a Libyan invasion of Chad.

Both Goukouni and Qaddafi have denied that Libyan troops are involved, although they acknowledge that Goukouni's forces are receiving Libyan assistance. According to a report in the July 11 *Newsweek*, U.S. "military intelligence sources confirmed that no Libyan ground troops" were taking part in the fighting.

The accusations against Libya are designed to justify increased imperialist intervention in Chad.

The French government — Chad's former colonial master — has taken the lead in this. On June 28, President François Mitterrand declared that "France will fulfill its commitments to Chad without reservation." Some 235 tons of arms, ammunition, rockets, and other French military equipment were quickly dis-



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Syrian regime tightens squeeze on PLO

Attack on Palestinians weakens Arab defense against imperialism

By David Frankel

On July 2 the White House suddenly announced that Secretary of State George Shultz would go to the Middle East. Wasting no time, Shultz arrived in Saudi Arabia on July 4 and traveled to Lebanon and Syria the following day.

Big events in the Middle East led to the unscheduled visit by Shultz. Washington has been closely following the mutiny in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the drive by Syrian President Hafez al-Assad to win control of the PLO, and Assad's expulsion of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat from Syria.

Both the U.S. and Israeli rulers hope to profit from Assad's confrontation with the PLO, which has come about as a result of the pressures exerted by the imperialists over the past year.

Last summer the PLO survived nearly three months of brutal siege by Israeli forces ringing West Beirut. The Israeli military campaign in Lebanon was followed by a U.S. diplomatic offensive — the so-called Reagan plan — designed to further squeeze the PLO.

Imperialist pressure on Syria was also maintained. Syrian troops are facing the Israeli army in a long line extending through the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and much of Lebanon. Over the past few months the Israeli rulers have made it quite clear that if the Syrians fail to bow to their demands in Lebanon,

they are prepared to unleash another Mideast war.

Syrian military moves against the PLO come in this context. They are the latest installment in the political price that is being exacted for the military defeat inflicted on the PLO by Israel last year.

Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, unable to contain his enthusiasm, crowed during a recent television interview, "Anything that divides the Arab world is good for Israel."

Although Shultz has not been so blunt about it, he replied to questions from reporters June 29 by saying, "The greater the Syrian control the likelier that if Syria withdraws [from Lebanon] the PLO will too."

'Tight leash' for Palestinians

Approval for Assad's course also came from the editors of the *Washington Post* June 26. As the *Post* smugly put it, "there need be no excessive mourning about Syria's humiliation of Yasser Arafat."

Assad's regime, the editorial noted, "has a record of keeping 'its' Palestinians on a tight leash — preventing them from doing anything not subordinate to its interests."

The editorial continued: "In its troop-disengagement accord with Israel in 1974, Syria said: 'This agreement . . . is a step toward a just and durable peace.' President Assad faithfully put into effect all the specific obligations

he undertook in that agreement. There is no reason to conclude prematurely that he has changed his mind about the larger commitment. . . .

"It is a time to start pondering what new possibilities — peaceful ones as well as dangerous ones — may open up as President Assad tightens his grip on the fighting core of the PLO."

Shultz went to the Middle East precisely to explore these "new possibilities."

Syrians move in on PLO

Assad's move against the PLO began in May, with a mutiny by a number of leaders in Fatah, the guerrilla organization originally founded by Arafat and the largest of those in the PLO. Whatever the motives of different individuals who have taken part in the rebellion, and whatever Assad's role in getting that rebellion off the ground, there is certainly no doubt about the use the Syrian regime has made of it since then.

For the first three weeks of their rebellion, the mutineers were based at a single camp, Ait el Fukha, in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Then, on May 28, they took control of six PLO supply centers near the Syrian capital of Damascus. These PLO depots were supposed to be protected by Syrian military police.

When no further progress was made by the mutineers on their own, Assad ordered his army into action. On June 21, Syrian tanks spearheaded a rebel offensive in the Bekaa. The following day Syrian troops and tanks encircled PLO positions in eastern Lebanon, blockading them. And on June 23 an ambush on Syrian territory killed or wounded 13 Arafat supporters who were on their way to Tripoli, in northern Lebanon, where the PLO has established a base that is not under Syrian military control.

Although rebel leaders have frequently issued statements about their desire for dialogue and democratic decision-making within the PLO and Fatah, they have failed to condemn the Syrian intervention. Moreover, the June 21 attack was timed to coincide with a meeting of Fatah's Revolutionary Council that had been called to discuss the demands of the mutineers and to take up proposals that would meet objections that they had raised.

"First they said they wanted a meeting of the Fatah Central Committee, so we had that and they did not come," Arafat pointed out on June 23. "Then they said they wanted a meeting of the Revolutionary Council. We had that and they did not come. Now they say they want a meeting of the Fatah Congress."

Explaining what was at stake in the fight, Arafat declared, "The Syrians want to decide

Palestinian groups plan unity

On June 26 the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) announced the establishment of a unified political and military command as the first step toward the creation of a unified party. PFLP leader George Habash and DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh issued a statement saying that the move toward unification was not intended to "constitute a counterforce within the PLO," but was a step to "reinforce the unity of PLO and its legitimate institutions."

A senior DFLP spokesman was quoted in the July 1 issue of the Palestinian weekly *Al Fajr* as explaining: "The process [of unification] had already been started but the official announcement was advanced due to the crisis recently opened in the ranks of Fatah.

"What is happening in Fatah represents

an element of demoralisation which is being shrewdly exploited by reactionaries in a way which will transform it into a demobilisation lever, creating a widespread but false image of an alleged disintegration of the resistance movement. Our announcement is intended, on the other hand, to produce a reinforced image of the resistance. It is highly significant in this respect that one of the first messages of greeting and encouragement that we received following the announcement was sent by Yasir Arafat."

The DFLP leader also told *Al Fajr* correspondent Livia Rokach in regard to the unification process: "We all now believe that the problems which may still exist will be resolved in the best possible way, as they were solved in Cuba, in South Yemen, and as they are being solved at present in El Salvador."

for the Palestinians. That decision I will not give to anyone." Referring to the conclusion of his historic speech before the United Nations in November 1974, Arafat added, "I am still holding the olive branch in one hand and the gun in the other."

Assad responded to Arafat's refusal to bow to his dictates by abruptly booting the PLO chairman out of Syria on June 24. By deporting Arafat to Tunisia, Assad was hoping to cut him off from contact with PLO forces in Lebanon.

While rebel leaders have denied their dependence on the Syrian regime, the truth of Arafat's charges was confirmed again on June 28, when Syrian tanks once more pounded PLO positions in the Bekaa. *New York Times* reporter Thomas Friedman, describing the scene in a June 29 article, said, "gunfire could be heard all over the area as Syrian troops supporting the rebels poured out of transport trucks near the central Bekaa town [of Shtaura]."

Fifteen PLO fighters were killed and 20 wounded by the Syrian-backed forces as they took new positions. Meanwhile, outside Tripoli, the Syrians deployed 20 new tanks near the Nahr al Bared and Baddawi refugee camps, where the PLO is still able to operate freely.

Massive support for Arafat

Among the Palestinian people as a whole, all indications are that support for the PLO and its leadership remains overwhelming. "The support for Mr. Arafat on the West Bank is startling in its unanimity," Trudy Rubin reported in the July 1 *Christian Science Monitor*. "Elected mayors, student groups, professionals, and trade union leaders have all placed prominent ads in the Arabic press opposing Syrian pressure on the PLO and supporting Mr. Arafat as its leader. . . ."

"Even West Bankers sympathetic to the PLO dissidents' grievances believe they should have settled them inside the organization rather than starting a civil war on the ground. 'They opened the way for Libya and Syria to intervene and to try to control the PLO by fragmenting it,' complained a bearded Bir Zeit student leader."

Washington Post correspondent Herbert

West Bank meeting backs Arafat

More than 3,000 Palestinians met at Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque June 26 in a show of support for the PLO in its confrontation with the Syrian regime, the Palestinian weekly *Al Fajr* reported in its July 1 issue. Those in attendance, according to *Al Fajr*, issued a statement saying that the fighting initiated by elements within Fatah aims "to liquidate the Palestinian revolution and Arafat's legitimate leadership, and serve the schemes of the enemy."

Denton reported from Lebanon June 25, following Arafat's expulsion from Syria. "At the Baddawi camp, where Arafat had established part of a provisional headquarters in recent weeks, women, children and armed guerrillas paraded through narrow, dusty streets this morning waving posters of Arafat and chanting slogans condemning Assad and the PLO mutineers."

There was even a protest by Palestinians in the Syrian capital of Damascus, according to a report in the June 26 *New York Times*.

Another indication of the sentiment among the Palestinian people has been the stance of the two most important groups in the PLO after Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

While endorsing some of the specific demands raised by the rebels, the PFLP and DFLP have refused to join with the mutineers. On the contrary, they have backed Arafat's role as head of the PLO, stressed the importance of unity and independent decision-making within the PLO, and attended PLO meetings that have been boycotted by the pro-Syrian As Saiqa and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

A spokesman for the PFLP called Assad's expulsion of Arafat from Syria "an insult to the entire PLO." And a few days later, a June 28 statement by rebel leader Nimr Saleh lumped DFLP chief Nayef Hawatmeh together with Arafat. Saleh threatened to "purge the ranks and take everyone to account, no matter how senior they may be. Our people will topple the deviationist course led by Arafat, Hawatmeh and Khalil al-Wazir," the PLO's top military officer.

What Assad wants

What do the Syrian rulers hope to gain by damaging the PLO? And why have they picked this particular time to make their move?

Assad himself denies that there is any Syrian operation under way against the PLO and Arafat. But the Syrian regime, which stood aside during the siege of West Beirut and left the Palestinians to fight on their own, has been claiming ever since that Arafat is out to make a deal with Washington. It offered as proof of this charge the fact that Arafat met with Jordan's King Hussein to discuss the PLO's position on the Reagan plan.

Leaders of the mutiny in Fatah have picked up on the Syrian charges, claiming that their action was necessary because Arafat was giving up the perspective of armed struggle against the Israeli state. Yet these same rebel leaders have formed a bloc with the Assad regime, which has never allowed PLO forces to undertake military actions against Israel from Syrian territory, and which has sought to limit such PLO action within Lebanon as well.

The reason Assad opposed the PLO's talks with Hussein is not that he feared Arafat was about to make a deal with Washington. Rather, Assad opposed Arafat's attempts to maintain diplomatic relations with the various Arab re-

gimes, independent of Syrian policies. The charges against Arafat are part of a smoke screen raised by Assad as he tries to break down the PLO's independence.

The reason Assad is moving now is the same one that has always sparked the big attacks on the PLO by various Arab regimes. Assad is trying to do precisely what he charges Arafat with — he is trying to clear the way for a deal with the imperialists.

Part of the maneuvering for such a deal is the hard propaganda line Assad is taking right now on the issue of a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon. Assad would like to use his position in Lebanon to bargain for the return of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights to Syria.

Syria has a right to negotiate for the return of the Golan, which was stolen by Israel in its



June 1967 war of aggression. But Israeli aggression against Syria cannot successfully be opposed by betraying the Palestinians.

History of attacks on PLO

Because of its intransigent struggle for the rights of the Palestinian people, the PLO has always come under fire when the capitalist rulers in the Arab countries have sought to close a deal with imperialism. Collaboration with imperialism in the Middle East means above all acceptance of the Israeli colonial settler-state — something that the PLO and Arafat have never agreed to.

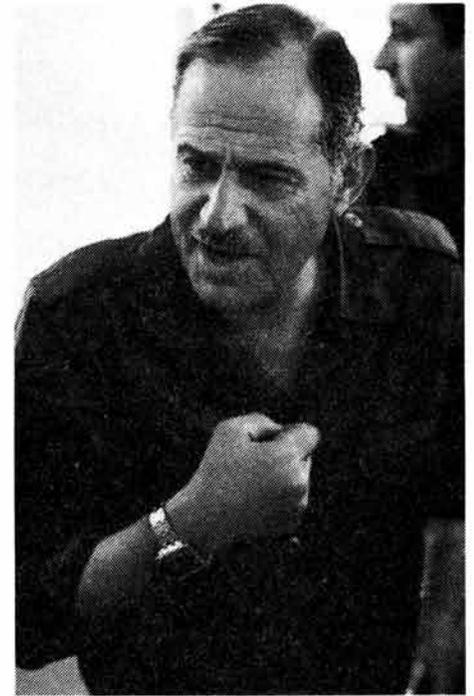
Thus, the negotiating proposals put forward by U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers in December 1969, and the attempt of the Jordanian regime to follow through on negotiations around the Rogers plan, led King Hussein to carry out his massacre of the Palestinians in September 1970. Similarly, Assad's hopes for a deal with Washington following the 1974 Syrian-Israeli troop disengagement accord mentioned by the editorial in the *Washington Post*, combined with his fear of revolution in Lebanon, led him to use thousands of troops against the PLO and leftist forces there in April 1976.

But there is another side to this history that should also be borne in mind. After Hussein smashed the PLO in Jordan, he was left in the lurch by Washington. The Israeli annexation of the West Bank is still proceeding apace. And after Assad pulled the chestnuts out of the fire for the imperialists in Lebanon, Washington went ahead and engineered the Camp David treaty between Israel and Egypt, leaving Syria out in the cold.

Assad's latest attempt to court Washington will not end any differently. Shultz will take whatever he can get, and the Israelis will refuse to budge.

As one top Israeli official put it July 7, Israel is prepared to keep its forces in Lebanon "for many years if necessary." Commenting on plans for a partial pullback of Israeli troops, the official noted, "Our lines opposite the Syrians in the Bekaa are not going to move an inch. We will stay within artillery range of Damascus."

By turning his guns against the PLO, Assad is weakening Syria's defense against Israeli aggression. And that aggression is sure to confront Syria once again in the not-so-distant future. □



MUSA

to do, although they haven't even solved their own problems.

Q. You mean Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states?

A. I mean Hussein above all. Even by itself, the matter of the negotiations over a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation is in fundamental contradiction with our concept of sovereignty. The Jordanian already has gotten such a hold over Arafat that he was willing to agree to an alliance under Hussein's leadership. Arafat returned from Amman and wanted to convince us to agree to this plan. That set the alarm bells ringing among us.

Q. Can one assume that you also reject contacts with progressive and receptive circles in Israel?

A. Those are aberrations that are incompatible with the concepts and self-understanding of the Palestinians. If I talked to them, then I could no longer condemn Egypt or those who approve of the Camp David accords. How can we criticize Gemayel for his agreement with the Israelis when Arafat himself associates with Israeli politicians?

Q. Your conflict with Arafat is not inopportune for the regime in Damascus. Aren't you afraid that you will become totally dependent on Syria if Fatah breaks apart?

A. No. As long as Syria rejects the Reagan initiative and Syrian tanks stand with us against the Israelis, as long as we have a common aim, then we will remain comrades in struggle. □

Interview with Col. Saed Musa

Leader of mutiny in PLO explains his views

[The following is an interview with Col. Saed Musa (Abu Musa), the former deputy commander of military operations of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Musa is now leading the mutiny against PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat. The interview appeared in the June 6 issue of the West German newsweekly *Der Spiegel*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. Abu Musa, why do you want to split away from Fatah?

Answer. We aren't separatists, dissidents, or rebels, whatever they may call us. We consider ourselves part of the Fatah movement, which is still the vanguard of the Palestinian liberation movement. Arguments are nothing new. We have been arguing for seven years already.

Q. Why has Yassir Arafat now expelled you and four other officers from the Central Committee?

A. One person cannot decide something like that. Only a majority of the committee can determine who fights for the holy rights of the Palestinians and who does not.

Q. What was the impetus for your conflict with Arafat?

A. We object to the sweet life of the leading

officials. They're corrupt and politically rotten.

Q. Does that hold true for the entire leadership of Fatah or only for Arafat and his loyalists?

A. It holds above all for people like Haj Ismail, who fled from the Israelis like a hare from a snake during the enemy's entry into Tyre. And now we are supposed to accept such a person as the commander-in-chief of our armed forces in the Bekaa Valley and in northern Lebanon.

Q. In the case of Haj Ismail, Arafat has suggested a compromise.

A. It's no longer just a question of personnel. It's the whole dangerous line that Arafat has been pushing since our withdrawal from Beirut.

Q. Arafat has hardly given up one of the old positions.

A. We don't want negotiations in our names over all these plans — over the Fahd plan or the so-called Reagan peace plan.

Q. You also don't want any negotiations with King Hussein or the Saudis?

A. No. We don't want to be handed over to the Arab potentates, who want to tell us what

The crisis in the PLO

Dissidents attack Arafat's leadership

By Livio Maitan

[The following article is taken from the June 27 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly magazine published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. The footnotes and sub-heads are from the original.]

* * *

Within the framework of the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization], there are a whole series of organizations that have often engaged in disputes among themselves and sometimes gone through splits.

To take just the most recent period, quite sharp disputes occurred between the summit of Arab states in Fez in September 1982 and the meeting of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers in February 1983.

As I pointed out in a previous article in *International Viewpoint* (No. 30, May 16, 1983), two pro-Syrian organizations, the Saika and the Front of People's Struggle, opposed Arafat's negotiations with King Hussein of Jordan. Moreover, five organizations that met in Tripoli in January expressed their opposition both to the Reagan plan and the resolution of the Fez summit.

Within El Fateh itself, spokespersons for the left, including Abu Saleh, severely criticized Arafat's diplomatic activities. They accused him, for example, of "going outside the Palestinian consensus."

It should be noted, in addition, that opposition to Arafat's line was expressed, including in El Fateh, during the siege of Beirut itself, and it was only after the murderous bombings in early August that the idea of a withdrawal became generally accepted.

Crisis in El Fateh

This background makes it easier to understand the crisis that erupted in May.

Since there is no way to make a firsthand check of the reports, it is obviously hard to reconstruct exactly what the chain of events was. It is still harder to make a definite assessment of the scope of the opposition to the Arafat leadership. Nonetheless, things seemed to have happened, in a general way,¹ as follows:

The conflict developed between May 9 and 12 in the Bekaa valley, near the city of Baalbek. It started when militants linked to Abu Musa, a member of the Revolutionary

Council of Fateh, occupied a base. Arafat himself explicitly referred to the crisis on May 15, in a statement made in Damascus during a tour of the PLO mess halls that began on May 10 and continued until May 22.

Moreover, also on May 15, in an interview published in the Arab daily *Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat*, which is published in London, the deputy commander of the Palestinian forces, Abu Jihad, likewise mentioned the events in the Bekaa valley. He strove to minimize them ("the affair is settled" and "the leadership has gotten the situation under control").

On May 21 the Central Committee of El Fateh took a series of disciplinary steps. Eight top officers were relieved of their posts and "put at the disposal of Yasser Arafat." Sanctions were threatened against anyone who tried to get in contact with them.

At the same time, Palestinian military forces in Lebanon and Syria were reorganized. They were put under the sole command of Ahmed Affani (Abdul Montasem), the deputy chief of the General Staff, whom the dissidents consider pro-Egyptian. In response to the demand for more democracy in the organization, Arafat also announced that there would be a special session of the Revolutionary Council of El Fateh.

The disciplinary measures did not solve the problems, and Abu Jihad's statements proved at least premature. At least five of the officers against whom sanctions were decreed refused to obey. Jihad Saleh minced no words, saying that the decisions of El Fateh's Central Committee represented "a hypocritical action by Arafat and his cohorts designed to split the movement" (*Le Monde*, May 25).

A few days later, on May 28, five officers in the El Fateh logistical services announced that they agreed with the "rebels," after occupying six military depots in Damascus. They claimed to have acted in response to the El Fateh leadership's decision to "cut off supplies" to the bases controlled by the oppositionists.

It was in these circumstances that threats of resorting to armed force began to be thrown back and forth between the two sides. A representative of the opposition, for example, told a pro-Libyan journal, *Al Kifah Al 'Arabi*, that his men "might not respond to the first or second bullet, but they certainly will start shooting back after the third" (*Le Monde*, May 31). Syria issued a formal warning that it would not tolerate armed clashes on its territory.

On June 4 armed clashes did take place in a place ten kilometers from Baalbek. Each of the two sides accused the other of starting it. There were casualties — according to some sources

four dead and seven wounded, according to others seven dead and eighteen wounded.

The armed conflict reportedly ended after a few hundred Palestinian civilians went in to separate the two sides, at the risk of their own lives.

On the same day, the PLO representative in Ryad, Rafik Al-Nacheh, announced that an agreement had been reached, following the withdrawal of the nomination of two officers who were particularly objectionable to the dissidents and whose nomination, therefore, provoked the protests that led to the challenge to the leadership. But this statement was as far as it went. As of this writing, the crisis remains open.

Who are the oppositionists?

It is clear that this conflict has developed essentially within Fateh, which is by far the most important of the organizations that make up the PLO. One of the main opposition spokespersons is Abu Saleh, who, as I noted, criticized Arafat sharply in December and subsequently in January. He was removed from his position as a member of the Central Committee of El Fateh. Up to 1976, it was Abu Saleh who commanded the Palestinian forces in Lebanon.

A still more prominent role apparently has been played by Colonel Abu Musa, who has issued several statements throughout the conflict. Another opposition leader is Lieutenant Colonel Abu Raad, who, like Abu Musa, is a member of the Revolutionary Council of El Fateh (this council is an intermediate body between the Central Committee and the congress).

Working with these two personalities have been other lieutenant colonels — Abu Majdi, Mahmud Issa, and Ziyad El Zpughayar. It was they who took the initiative of occupying a base at the start of the conflict. In all, six out of the seventy members of El Fateh's Revolutionary Council have reportedly lined up with the opposition.

The logistics officers I referred to earlier on were Commander Ali Shukri, officer in charge of supply; Captain Abu Haidar, officer in charge of resupply; Captain Abu Khaled, officer in charge of transport; Captain Abu Imad, officer in charge of fuel; and Lieutenant Abu Hassan, officer in charge of maintenance.

Among the civilians involved is Musa Awad (whose pseudonym is Abu Akrama). According to him, twenty-four leaders representing about 10,000 members of El Fateh attended an opposition meeting, which sent a memorandum to the El Fateh leadership supporting the dissidents' demands (*Libération*, June 3).

It goes without saying that such figures should be taken with a grain of salt. For his part, Abu Musa has claimed the dissidents have four battalions of 150 to 200 personnel each (see his interview in *Libération*, May 30). On the other hand, Arafat grants his adversaries no more than 100 to 150 soldiers in total (*International Herald Tribune*, June 1).

What are dissidents saying?

Taken together, the statements and inter-

1. This article is based on the daily press such as *Le Monde*, *Libération*, the *International Herald Tribune*, and *Corriere della Sera*, and on the excerpts from the Arabic press that these dailies have cited.

views by the representatives of the dissidents make it clear enough what sort of criticisms they are making of the majority of the El Fateh leadership.

First of all, they denounce Yasser Arafat for his decision to withdraw from Beirut. This involved trusting the U.S. guarantees and relying on the Arab regimes, and thus in the last analysis on the U.S., to achieve a solution to the Palestinian problem. It was this orientation that was the basis for the negotiations with King Hussein, held under Reagan's auspices, as well as for the overtures to Egypt. Both these operations are severely criticized by the oppositionists.

They also accused Arafat of underestimating the importance of the alliance with Syria and the USSR. This underestimation, they claim, weighed heavily in the decision to abandon Beirut.

In a communiqué issued at Chtaura and re-published by the international press on May

25, the oppositionists demanded the recall of all the exiled Palestinian forces "so that they can resume their place on the battle field." They demanded the drawing up of a military plan for reorganizing all these forces, beginning with the military arm of El Fateh, El As-sifa. And they also called for a committee to run the financial affairs of El Fateh, as well as the summoning of a special general congress.

For his part, Musa Awad declared in a statement on June 1 that most of the leaders of El Fateh were opposed to the withdrawal from Beirut and some of them had even threatened to open fire on the ships. The dissident leader said that the Palestinian fighters should return to southern Lebanon, "which is their departure point for the liberation of Palestine." "Let those who continue to have illusions in the American plans leave for Tunisia. They can lie on the beaches there."

In an interview in *Libération* of May 29, Abu Musa made, in general, the same criticisms. In particular, he denounced the ap-

proval of the Fez resolution and the idea of confederation with Jordan. ("We are against the plan for confederation with Jordan. We want an independent Palestinian state, not just to create a twenty-third Arab country but to be able to carry on the fight against the Zionist enemy.")

In a further statement to the Lebanese weekly *Ash-Shiraa* of June 11, Abu Musa opposed any idea of a split, calling for "a radical reform of El Fateh." He said that the oppositionists could win a majority and thus call a congress "to put on trial the American plans adopted by the El Fateh leadership."

The demand for democratizing the Palestinian movement seems to have gotten a particularly broad response, including outside El Fateh. The leader of the DFLP [Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine], Naef Hawatmeh, has said, for example, that "some bureaucratic institutions in the PLO have become an obstacle to the development of the revolution and they should be cleaned out" (*Le Monde*, May 25).

For his part, the PFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] leader, George Habash, has said that he is favorable to democratic reform in the structures and institutions of the PLO and in the ranks of the Palestinian forces" (*Libération*, June 3).

Moreover, the DFLP and the PFLP as organizations have issued a joint communiqué in Damascus calling for democratic reform "on the basis of national unity" and saying that "speeding up the process of reform in the structures, institutions, and bodies of the PLO and in the ranks of the Palestinian forces involves ending the role played by bureaucratic and bourgeoisified military, administrative, and diplomatic categories" (*Le Monde*, June 4).

In an interview published by the Arab emirates daily, *Al Khalid*, Arafat's righthand man, Abu Iyad, himself went so far as to blame Arafat for "showing negligence and not sufficiently consulting the collective leadership of the movement." But at the same time, he said that anyone else would have done the same thing, given the "complexity of the situation in the Arab World." He recognized at the same time that the oppositionists were raising legitimate demands, even if their methods were unacceptable.²

As soon as the crisis erupted, some organizations immediately took positions favorable to the oppositionists in El Fateh. I have already mentioned certain stands taken by the PFLP and the DFLP.³

2. During the session of the Palestinian Council in February, a member of El Fateh told a correspondent from *Libération*: "A parliament for life, a president for life — we are looking more and more like the Arab regimes we condemn" (*Libération*, May 30).

3. It should be noted that while Hawatmeh declared for maintaining the unity of El Fateh, he approved of some of the demands raised by the dissidents, including the removal of officers who were promoted despite actions that amounted to desertion at the start of the Lebanon war.



PLO chairman Yassir Arafat (center).

The PFLP-General Command, led by Jibril and which has linked itself in varying degrees to the Syrians and to the Libyans, has gone the furthest. It has sent 150 soldiers to the spot where the clashes have taken place.

A similar move was made by the Fateh Revolutionary Council, that is, the Abu Nidal group, which is responsible for a series of irresponsible terrorist actions, the most recent of which was the assassination of Issam Sartawi. This group has enjoyed the good will of the Iraqi regime and is suspected of being infiltrated by agents of the Israeli Mossad. According to Arafat, Abu Nidal sent 65 soldiers to aid the "rebels" (*Libération*, June 13).⁴

Regardless of whether the Abu Nidal group has actually tried to intervene, it does not seem that the dissidents themselves are favorable to any such moves. Abu Musa has explicitly condemned Abu Nidal, saying that his position toward him remains the same as that of the majority of El Fateh.

The international context

The Fateh leadership has not hesitated to accuse Libya and Syria — the first explicitly, the second indirectly — of having manipulated and backed the oppositionists. What is the basis for this accusation?

It is no secret to anyone that Qadhafi has tried several times to take advantage of the PLO's internal difficulties. In January, on the occasion of the meeting of the five organizations in Tripoli, he claimed that a "program of political and military action" had been drawn up in consultation with him.

As soon as the conflict broke out in the Bekaa valley on May 15, Qadhafi made a speech calling on the other movements in the PLO to line up behind the El Fateh dissidents to reorganize the resistance under a single command and get it "out of the impasse into which it has been led by its reactionary and defeatist leaders." Arafat responded in an abusive way, threatening to cut Qadhafi's tongue out. But besides his verbal accusations, there is no indication that Qadhafi has played any real role in the crisis in El Fateh or that those opposing Arafat are linked to him.

It has been well known that the relations between Arafat and the Syrian leaders have been decidedly bad for some time. This was confirmed by the polemics that preceded the Palestinian National Congress in Algiers.

Mohammed Heydar, a member of the National (Pan-Arab) High Command of the Baathist party, accused Arafat of being "more interested in setting up a state that he would be president of than of carrying forward the revolution."

The Syrian politician also accused Arafat of "putting all the Arab states on the same level,

making no distinction between the reactionary ones and the progressive ones" (*Le Monde*, May 5).

During the conflict, the Syrian government took steps that it claimed were designed to prevent clashes, but which the Fateh leadership claimed in fact aided the dissidents.

The dissidents, as we have seen, have made statements favorable to Syria, as well as to the USSR. This was perfectly logical on their part. In his interview in *Libération*, Abu Musa explained his attitude as follows: "Syria rejects the Reagan plan and is pointing its tanks in the direction of Israel. That's my position too." He added: "If Syria retreats, I will take the same position as I did in Sidon."⁵ He concluded by saying that it was perfectly possible for his movement to remain independent from Damascus.

As for the USSR, it can hardly be said that the Kremlin bureaucracy has encouraged the dissidents. In an all-out diplomatic counteroffensive, including trips by Arafat to Bucharest and Saudi Arabia, the PLO leadership sent Abu Jihad to Moscow. It seems to have gotten what it wanted.

In a message, Andropov has spoken of "Palestinian unity under the legitimate leadership of Chairman Arafat." Thus, in a press conference held in Moscow on June 7, Abu Jihad could say: "We are profoundly convinced that the USSR will accord us support in the political field as in the other areas in which we have appealed for such support."

Moreover, as was to be expected, Saudi Arabia has come out explicitly behind Arafat. He was greeted at Jeddah by King Fahd, who said: "We have the good fortune to have with us today Yasser Arafat, the leader of the PLO, in whom we place great hopes."⁶

Need for a democratic discussion

The dissidents are in danger of finding themselves in a very difficult situation. On the international scene, they cannot expect to find very many friends. On the other hand, they are in danger of coming under very heavy pressure, in particular from Syria, which would seriously obstruct their activity.

Moreover, there remains a strong reflex for unity in El Fateh and the PLO, which in the final analysis, works against them. This reflex reflects two realities.

One of the realities is the material strength that the PLO and its major organization, El Fateh, draw from the existing economic, polit-

5. In 1976, Abu Musa led the Palestinian forces that destroyed a Syrian column trying to repress the PLO fighters.

6. According to some reports a compromise was also reached between Arafat and Qadhafi, thanks to the mediation of North Yemen. These reports have subsequently died. Nonetheless, questions are posed by Qadhafi's trips to countries that he previously attacked in violent terms (North Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and even Syria).

ical, and military structures. If there were a break, a lot of things would be put in question, and the PLO apparatus would be profoundly shaken and weakened.

Secondly, the Palestinian activists today are a lot more critical toward their leaderships. They feel a need to think, discuss, and redefine their strategic options. But they fear that any splits would weaken them further in a situation that has become more difficult since the withdrawal from Beirut. This explains the calls for unity by the organizations that have taken positions on the May events and the statements of the dissidents themselves in support of the unity of El Fateh and the PLO. However, this concern for unity should not lead to accepting a pseudo-unity, that is no more than a diplomatic facade, the sort of unity that was proclaimed in Algiers in February and which has proven to be completely ephemeral.

The position in which the Palestinian resistance finds itself now, it should be repeated, is undoubtedly the most difficult it has experienced in a long time. The present crisis should confirm for everyone what in fact was clear enough before.

The resistance needs to make a balance sheet of its struggle, of the political orientations it has pursued, and of its organizational methods. This is a need that is undoubtedly felt by the great majority of the fighters.

Arafat himself, caught in a dilemma by the fact that his policy has produced no concrete results, has had to make more radical-sounding statements in recent months. He has said, notably, that "the best means would be for the Arab leaders to adopt a fighting course and prepare for war to change the balance of forces" (*Le Monde*, May 17).

Moreover, Arafat said that he "always called on the Arabs to launch a war against Israel because that is the only way to right the political balance in the region. The Arabs missed the chance to launch such a war during the siege of Beirut" (*Libération*, June 13).

Such statements explode the claims that Arafat himself put forward, that is, that after Beirut the PLO was politically stronger. Likewise, they unintentionally prove that the arguments that some of the oppositionists advanced during the siege of Beirut were not without foundation.

But what is more important is that occasional demagogic statements — that have no relation to real practice — are not going to overcome the crisis the resistance faces. Now is the time for critical thinking and debate, which are the prerequisites for developing a new orientation and for relaunching the struggle.

For such critical thinking and discussion, a democratic framework is necessary. Thus, it is necessary to transform the structures and the methods of functioning that have prevailed up till now. On this point, as we have seen, the dissidents' demands seem to be very widely shared. It is in the interests of the Palestinian movement as a whole that these demands be accepted. □

'The Caribbean is sitting on a volcano'

Interview with Prime Minister Maurice Bishop

[The following interview with Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, conducted during his visit to the United States, is taken from the June 28 issue of the *Village Voice*, a liberal weekly published in New York City. The bracketed insertions are from the original. The interview is reprinted with the permission of Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, who conducted it for the *Voice*.]

* * *

Question. The Reagan administration is getting more warlike in regard to Central America and the Caribbean. We have the allegation of a U.S. attempt to murder Miguel d'Escoto, foreign minister of Nicaragua. We have the build-up in Honduras. What do you think the Reagan administration's strategy is in the area?

Answer. It's going to get increasingly hard-line, and increasingly dangerous as a result. There's every prospect that this administration could move to direct intervention, protestations to the contrary. This is certainly true in El Salvador, which in many respects I think they see as the bottom line.

There are a number of things that are quite alarming. In 1983 you have an administration willing to admit publicly that it is engaged in covert activity against another government. Remembering the whole Watergate experience, the unveiling of the CIA's role, I find this alarming. Secondly, the Reagan administration is prepared to say, "If you have problems with 'covert,' we are willing to do it 'overtly,' so we will remove your difficulty for you."

Q. Make it legal.

A. Exactly. Thirdly, there is the fact that people we have seen over the years as hard-liners, have suddenly become "soft-liners." We in Latin America and the Caribbean are shocked to discover that Thomas Enders [formerly senior State Department official in charge of Central and Latin American policy, now downgraded by the White House to the U.S. embassy in Madrid] was really a soft-liner all along. We've seen this man as one of the worst hard-liners in the administration. Now he's supposed to be a soft-liner and is chopped. That tells us that if these hard-liners chose to become a little pragmatic, a little realistic because of their experience with the real world, then these too are going to be subordinated to dogmatism and chopped. It's really a frightening development, a statement of desperation.

I would imagine that at a minimum the new U.S. ambassador [at large to Central America] Richard Stone is certainly going to feel that the one thing he cannot afford to do is ever show any signs of realism, which would appear as weakness or a drift away from the hard line demanded by "Judge" [William P.] Clark [assistant to the President for national security affairs] and Jeane Kirkpatrick. That has very serious implications for the future.

Consider in the last few days this whole question of the three versus the 21 [i.e., the three U.S. diplomatic personnel expelled from Nicaragua and the 21 Nicaraguans then expelled from the U.S.]. Evidence [of the plot to murder d'Escoto] is presented by the Nicaraguans. Normally the evidence would be challenged, or refuted with other evidence as required. But here, without any basis of evaluation — I suppose they know it is true anyhow — the U.S. chopped 21 people, without even pretending that any of them has done anything wrong. This is, in my opinion, an indication of the extent to which this administration is willing to fly in the face of all international norms and legality. They act purely on the basis of expedience, laying the basis for further aggression against the countries in the region.

I would say that there is grave escalation and the possibility of direct intervention with Marines from the United States.

Q. In El Salvador?

A. Yes, and I wouldn't rule out Nicaragua, either.

Q. Do you see any escalation in regard to Cuba?

A. I think Cuba's a real problem for them, with the Bay of Pigs experience and subsequent setbacks — from the point of view of the United States. A U.S. Marine landing could never bring Cuba to its knees. It's an impossibility. Cuba really means a nuclear bomb or some such thing, and that's a problem for the Reagan administration, because of international public opinion.

Q. What about an embargo?

A. Embargoes, other forms of economic aggression, propaganda destabilization, terrorist activity, assassinations, political and diplomatic destabilization — there is a whole range, short of direct Marine intervention. Any of these are possible. I feel direct Marine intervention in Cuba is unlikely, because my view is that their assessment, in the final analysis, is that they cannot win on that basis, and you re-

ally need to drop one bomb and wipe the whole place off the map.

Q. How about Grenada?

A. Grenada, like Nicaragua, the Reagan administration will see in different terms. They will always feel that they always have the prospects of overturning our processes, given that these processes are so young. After all, in both cases we are talking about four years, a relatively short time.

In Grenada the whole population is

There's every prospect that this administration could move to direct intervention . . .

110,000. So I don't think that they will feel that a Marine invasion is something that could not succeed. However they would be wrong in that, and they would be wrong for one simple reason. It is true that they could capture the island, but they would discover that they would also have to populate the island afterwards, because our people would fight if they land in the country.

We couldn't fight them and beat them in the context of planes dropping bombs and wiping people out. But on the basis of the assumption that they would have to land at some point, they would discover that our people would fight back, and even in Grenada they will be shocked to see the cost in manpower required to try to overthrow the revolution.

Q. But in fact do you think such a Marine landing likely?

A. No. We think a Bay of Pigs option more likely, a Seychelles-type option, the use of counterrevolutionaries with logistical backing from the United States.

Q. Given the continuing world recession, falling prices for commodities and so on, what do you see on the longer-term political agenda for the Caribbean?

A. The Caribbean is sitting on a volcano. It's a very explosive situation: tremendous unemployment existing in most of the Caribbean territories, increasing repression of many individual governments in the region in response to this pressure.

Many of them have been forced into IMF prescriptions, and the IMF prescription invariably means that you tighten the squeeze even

more on your people, and therefore you can expect more industrial unrest and activity, more tension in society. The response of some of the governments has been to pass more and more repressive laws, banning the rights of workers to have unions; equally, to use the repressive arms of the state — the police, and what not — to try to crush the workers. The situation is very explosive.

Investments are down. Aid is down. Trade is down. For a country like Grenada, when you go to the IMF or the World Bank, you discover you are on a hit list and you are blocked. And even countries which are not on the hit list cannot meet the severe test of conditionality imposed by the World Bank and the IMF. The result is that more and more of us are being forced into the international capital market, and, as you know, that means the debt trap. That means your 17 per cent interest, your three- and five-year repayments. The result is that many of these countries are becoming more and more desperate.

So what is the answer, from the point of U.S. imperialism? It's an answer that some of their strategists have been pointing out: begin to develop a concept that says the U.S. has to settle for less, has to accept certain realities, including the fact that revolutions have occurred in certain countries, like Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada.

Other realities: a revolution is on the way in El Salvador — you can't get away from it and what you have to do thereafter is to try to develop normal relationships with all the countries in the region and begin to get into aid patterns that will allow a certain possibility for the people's quality of life in those countries to improve.

This is not my analysis. This is the analysis of their own strategists; the Sol Linowitz Commission is what I'm getting at — an understanding that there are socioeconomic reasons for the troubles in the region, and not subversion by any other countries.

Q. In your visit, the Grenadian revolution, and yourself, have come under some attack . . .

A. Before the revolution there was 49 per cent unemployment. Among women it was 70

No revolution has the right to call itself that if it cannot defend its people . . .

per cent. Since the revolution we have got that down to about 12 per cent. Before the revolution there was absolutely no planning. Now we have developed the beginnings of a system of planning. Before the revolution people throughout the country did not have potable water. Less than 30 per cent had pipe water in their homes. Today that proportion has been just about doubled. Now we have free health care, a free educational system. Illiteracy has

been reduced to just 2 per cent.

We have embarked on major infrastructural projects, apart from the airport. A new harbor, many new miles of main roads, feeder roads, farm roads. Farmers now can bring their produce down to the markets and ports. We are doubling telephones, electricity.

Our people feel a new sense of dignity, of pride, of patriotism, of belonging. This intangible is what many of the older folk in our country would put as the number-one achievement. Others might say the main achievement has been the construction of new, popular systems of democracy. People are now involved day-to-day in running the country, making decisions.

Q. What's specifically socialist in the content of your revolution?

A. In terms of our path of socialist orientation, there is the political essence — rule by the working people; the economic essence — development of the productive forces that would lay the basis for the building of socialism at a later stage.

We feel that in many respects Grenada is a

true experiment, in the whole theory and practice of socialism, or, in this case, of socialist orientation, in terms of our size, in terms of our population, in terms of all aspects really. If we succeed in this path — and we intend to — there are going to be a number of lessons for other small, developing island states coming after us.

Economically, we have been focusing a lot on the development of a strong, viable public sector. This is not unusual in countries of socialist orientation, but what we think is significant in our case has to do with the very small market in our country, and therefore we have to internalize, in a very deep way, the slogan: Export or Die.

One hundred and twenty acres of land in Grenada feeds the whole population — 120 acres of land cultivated, that's right. All the vegetables, I mean. So you had better export the rest. Otherwise it's going to rot in Grenada. There's a critical question, in the matter of import substitution, of breaking free of the heavy imports that you bring in. We don't even have the option of a relatively large internal market.

A second example is how we feel general

Bishop calls U.S. trip a success

For 11 days, from May 31 to June 10, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop of Grenada visited the United States.

At a June 9 news conference at the United Nations, Bishop explained that he and other Grenadian leaders came to the United States with three objectives in mind: "to deepen and further develop closer people-to-people contacts with Grenadian and Caribbean nationals living in the United States, with the Afro-American community, and with our many friends and supporters here; to speak to different strata and sectors of the American society with the hope of providing a better understanding of the Grenadian revolution"; and finally, "to initiate dialogue with officials of the U.S. administration with a view towards normalizing relations between our two governments."

"I am pleased to announce that all our objectives have been achieved," Bishop said.

Bishop's trip to the United States was in response to an invitation by TransAfrica, an Afro-American foreign affairs lobby group based in Washington, D.C., and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), a grouping of Black members of Congress. Several members of the CBC played an important role in pressuring the State Department to grant Bishop a visa.

Initially, the Reagan administration only offered a secondary official to meet with Bishop and his delegation. But after the Grenadians turned that down as inappro-

priate, the White House finally agreed to send William Clark, Reagan's National Security Council advisor; and Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam.

Bishop said the meeting "constituted a useful first step between our governments," but that the beginning of a dialogue did not mean "the threat has been entirely removed" of a CIA-coordinated invasion of Grenada.

During the visit, Bishop also spoke before 1,200 people at the TransAfrica annual dinner; to a breakfast organized by the CBC; before the Detroit City Council; to a session of the Organization of American States (OAS); and to a reception for travel agents, travel writers, and tour operators. Bishop also met with UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar and OAS Secretary General Alejandro Orfila.

A highlight of Bishop's trip was a June 5 rally at New York's Hunter College. More than 2,500 people attended the rally, and hundreds more were turned away at the door for lack of space. The predominantly Black audience responded enthusiastically to Bishop's two-hour speech, and constantly interrupted it with chants and applause.

The U.S. socialist newsweekly *Militant* is planning to publish the text of Bishop's speech at that rally in three parts in its July 15, 22, and 29 issues. Copies can be obtained by writing to the *Militant*, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

principles have to be grounded in our specific conditions. Grenada has the highest percentage of peasant proprietorship in the entire region. That has implications in all kinds of ways. If you are trying to develop the spirit of cooperativism, of cooperatives in the countryside, it means you have a further obstacle, because so many people own their own land. It means that our approach to the land question obviously has to take into account these realities, the fact that we really have very little land in Grenada — just 88,000 acres, which is a drop. On top of this, a lot of that land, being mountains and so on, is not arable. So the approach we take to this question of developing a cooperative mentality among the farmers really has a number of theoretical complications that pose a lot more problems for us than perhaps for other revolutionary countries.

We see the revolution as having three pil-

People are now involved day-to-day in running the country, making decisions . . .

lars: first, putting the people at the center, ensuring the needs of the people are always met, their views always heard, their grievances always addressed. Never tell lies to the people, never hold back the facts.

Second pillar: the national economy — agriculture, agro-industries, fisheries, and tourism. If we do not develop a vibrant economy, we will not have a surplus to use to bring benefits to our people.

Third pillar: national defense. No revolution, in our view, has the right to call itself that if it cannot defend its people. We can't afford a standing army, so what we have to rely on is a strong militia. Our people in uniform are the ordinary civilians of our country.

We have been the object of the CIA pyramid plan: at the base, propaganda destabilization; in the middle, economic destabilization; at the top, military destabilization and terrorism. We have seen all three aspects, and they continue to this day.

Q. What about the famous airstrip, and Reagan's charges that it is to receive Russian military planes?

A. Utter nonsense, and the Reagan administration knows it. The Reagan administration knows very well that the Soviet Union has no part in building this international airport; also that an international airport represents a dream of our people. It is the most important infrastructural project that we, or indeed any government in Grenada, have undertaken, since colonial days.

The Reagan administration knows that it represents the gateway to our future, that there is no way we can build tourism in our country, no way we can find markets for our agricultural products and our agro-industrial products and ship them to those markets quickly without

an international airport. They know that in the last 25 years there have been six voluminous studies on the international airport.

They know therefore that this airport is for ordinary commercial civilian economic use. The rest is just propaganda.

Q. Does the extremely hostile press Grenada has been getting in the United States and the Caribbean have any internal effect?

A. What we have been emphasizing to our people is that what we are hearing in the international and regional media is political education: an education demonstrating the twisting of facts and news into a hostile political framework, continuing the process of brainwashing that has been going on for many years.

We tried to tell the people to use their own consciousness. Also we try to explain that what sounds like 20 or 50 voices beaming into Grenada — Voice of America, Radio Antilles and so on — is really two or three voices . . . because the electronic and print media tend to be owned by the same people. The system of interlocking directorates is strongest in the media.

In the Caribbean we understand this very well. There is something called CPBA, the Caribbean Publishers and Broadcasters Association. It's a very small mafia, and we say to our people there's a small mafia that owns all the newspapers and all the radio stations and really determines what the news must be. We try to get that across, so that our people understand there is the same small minority peddling the same news. We have concrete ways we can make that point.

In Grenada, this period, we think that the best role for newspapers is to write and reflect the views of those whom they represent. So we've been trying to develop newspapers at the level of organization. The women have

their own newspaper, called *Scotilda*; the youth have *Fight*; the armed forces have *Fedon*, after a revolutionary hero, who led the first great slave insurrection, 1795-97; the media workers have *Media Worker's Voice*; the workers have *Worker's Voice* and agricultural workers have *Cutlass*; the farmers have *Fork*. When you break it down like that there

There are no less than 14 newspapers in our country, compared to 1 before the revolution . . .

are no less than 14 newspapers in our country today compared to one before the revolution.

At the same time there is a national newspaper, the *Free West Indian*. And that newspaper, by the way, allows full criticism in its columns. You look in that newspaper now and there is more criticism there of the Ministry of Health, or of the Ministry of Education or whatever than there would have been even when we had the quote-unquote independent *Torchlight*.

We think that this is the correct way for us to address the question at this time.

Q. All of a sudden, just when you were about to arrive here, there was a leak suggesting that you had something to do with Lieutenant Colonel Desi Bouterse's execution of his opponents in Suriname. How do you react to this?

A. We concluded that what we were dealing with here was an article that was planted in *Time* magazine. It came precisely one week before we were to start the visit. The charges, which are completely untrue, have been made before, in other papers in a general way, but this was the first time that I was the chief ob-



Jerry Hunnicutt/Militant

Grenadian people are prepared to defend their revolution arms in hand.

ject of the allegations.

When the Dutch papers first carried articles, they said Bishop said so-and-so and so-and-so happened, but he was really acting as intermediary for somebody else, and that somebody else has taken over. In *Time*, the item simply said Bishop is the true villain of the piece. To make the point clearer, look at this week's *Newsweek*, where Bishop drops out of the story and the traditional villain of the piece [Cuba] reappears.

Q. In light of the fact that you yourself say that internally the situation in Grenada is very stable, why have you got political prisoners? When will you have elections? What about the newspaper, The Voice, that was closed down?

A. There's never been a revolutionary situation that has proceeded without temporary dislocations. If there has been one, then it could not have been a revolution. It's impossible, because obviously a revolution does imply a break with the past, does imply a fracture, a dislocation. The question is, how temporary is

A revolution means that the class rule of the minority has to be suppressed for an interim period so that more rights will come to the majority . . .

that dislocation, what systems do you put in place in the meantime to avoid arbitrariness and to ensure fairness and a constant process of review, to ensure that the most humanitarian treatment is meted out to those who are temporarily disadvantaged?

Now a revolution means at a minimum that the class rule of the minority has to be suppressed for an interim period so that more rights will come to the majority. That's the only way. And the excesses and abuses of a minority that would like to overthrow the revolution cannot be allowed to carry on as if nothing was happening. Otherwise the majority will not be able to benefit from the fact of the revolution. In which case we don't have a revolution.

That is the reality, and that is why we have had to keep some people in detention, because the alternative was to line them up and shoot them down, which we didn't want to do and still don't want to do. That is why, too, there has been this continuous process of review over the years, so that out of the 400-plus picked up in the first few days, there are only 6 left in Richmond Hill [Prison] today, and the other 35, who are there without charge or trial at this time, are all people who were picked up because they got involved either directly in violence or in planning to overthrow the government through the use of violence. They will also be charged in due course, or released.

So far as the newspaper was concerned that was closed up precisely at the moment they also moved along the path of trying to incite a

section of the population to violence — I mean the Rastafarians. When they were indulging in destructive criticism and reproducing articles from abroad that just weren't true, we didn't close them down. We warned them, and I for one spoke on the radio and at public meetings about what they were doing. They were closed down at precisely the moment they decided to use their paper to incite others to the use of violence — something we had warned before that we would not tolerate, and still do not tolerate.

Q. What about elections?

A. Obviously, in the first four years, the concentration was in the area of easing the problems of the people, relieving the poverty, trying to improve the quality of life of the people. The first few years we therefore focused on more jobs, free health care, free education, the free milk program, the national housing-repair program that repaired the houses of the poorest workers in the country, ensuring that new roads were built, working at the international airport, the port expansion, the electricity system, the telephone system.

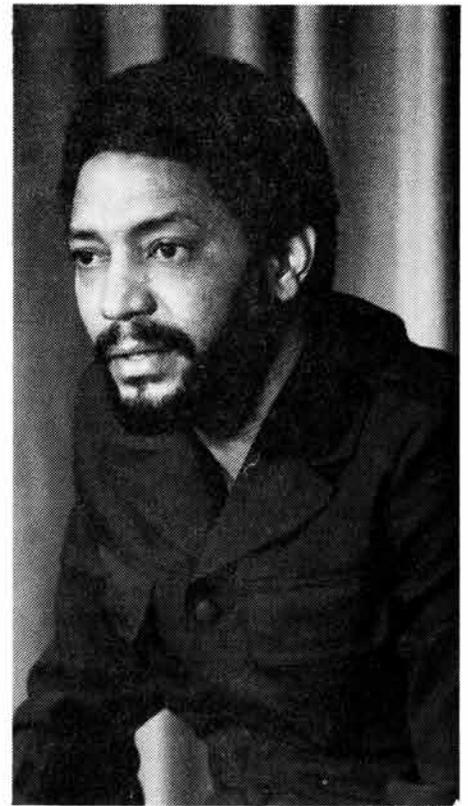
At the same time, democracy and the training for democracy are coming through the mass organizations which were freshly created. The people are able to join these organizations. Each month there are meetings, each month they are educated in one way or another through the organizations. Once every two years they elect their leadership. Same for the youth. Same for the farmers. Same for the workers.

There was this act in 1978 [under the Gairy regime] which had taken away the right to strike from 11 categories of workers. That was replaced in turn by the Trade Union Recognition Law, which gave all workers the right to form or join trade unions once 51 per cent of them wanted it. That doubled the union representation in the country, from under 40 per cent to about 80 per cent.

This was the focus of the first few years. We feel that the time has now come when we can in fact look toward institutionalizing the process and developing a constitution. That is why, just in the last week, we have appointed a constitutional commission. It has been mandated to present a constitution within two years, which we would then like to have approved by way of a referendum or plebiscite. Out of that constitution will come the next national elections. That new constitution will also have to institutionalize the different systems of popular democracy which we have built over the years.

Q. The world's getting to be a very frightening place, don't you think?

A. Absolutely frightening. It really means that revolutions are going to have to abide by the rules of the game. The rules of the game are to build your three pillars, on the one hand. That's fundamental. And then to build a fourth pillar — which is world public opinion. That's really where it's at. Our people will have to be



Ernest Harsch/IP

MAURICE BISHOP

consistently mobilized, made vigilant, prepared to withstand aggression. At the same time we are going to have to deepen that international work, to make sure that whenever they come, it's not a hundred thousand they face, but millions around the world. I really think that's where it's at.

Q. Which economists, and thinkers influenced you personally?

A. Different stages. There was a '50s period, a '60s period . . . It really has gone different ways over the years. There have been periods when I was attracted to a lot of the cultural nationalist material, frankly. Frantz Fanon, Malcolm, various people like that. That was a very strong period for me. I would say in fact that the entire leadership of the party and government came out of a black power tradition, all of us. I don't think we moved beyond that until the early '70s, when we got into other areas. Intellectually we were throwing the nets wider by then. Certainly by that time, outside of the cultural nationalist question, we were beginning to read a lot of the more classical socialist works, and beginning to move outside just the question of blackness, around to a materialist conception of the world.

Q. He's having an anniversary this year [laughter]. The cursed name has not yet passed your lips. I think it begins with M.

A. [laughing] I'm trying not to say his name. □

Reagan cozies up to Botha

Behind smoke screen of 'constructive change'

By Ernest Harsch

The Reagan administration, long an avid supporter of the racist white minority regime in Pretoria, is now trying to lay an anti-apartheid veneer over its policy toward South Africa.

In a major speech outlining the White House stance toward southern Africa — given June 23 before the National Conference of Editorial Writers in San Francisco — Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Lawrence Eagleburger repeatedly claimed that Washington favors “constructive change” in South Africa.

“We are committed to strengthening the capacity of black South Africans to participate in their country’s society as equals — economically, culturally and politically,” Eagleburger said.

In contrast to the administration’s previous reluctance to make even the mildest criticisms of the apartheid regime, Eagleburger declared, “The political system in South Africa is morally wrong. We stand against injustice, and therefore we must reject the legal and political premises and consequences of apartheid.”

Eagleburger’s speech was the most detailed exposition of the White House’s southern Africa policy since August 1981, when Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker first spelled out Reagan’s policy of “constructive engagement” with the apartheid regime.

The speech comes at a time of sharpening political conflict in South Africa, as the racist authorities seek to hold back the Black liberation struggle with the most brutal methods. Just two weeks earlier, three young Black activists were hanged in Pretoria for their participation in the armed struggle led by the African National Congress (ANC), the main liberation organization.

Despite such repression, the apartheid regime today is facing increasing mass resistance. Black workers are building strong and militant trade unions and carrying out widespread strike actions. The ANC’s activity and influence has grown considerably in recent years (see following article).

It is this struggle that worries Washington. The U.S. imperialists now have \$2.6 billion in direct investments in South Africa, and they view the apartheid regime as their strongest ally on the African continent. They do not want to see it overthrown and replaced by a government that represents the country’s Black workers and farmers.

Against a ‘revolutionary upheaval’

Eagleburger’s speech reflected this concern. He denounced “power taken by force, or a revolutionary upheaval,” and instead stressed over and over again that the only kind of

change Washington backed in South Africa was “peaceful change.” This amounted to an implicit condemnation of the ANC, which has chosen to fight back against the regime’s violent methods of rule.

Speaking in New York a day after Eagleburger’s speech, ANC representative David Ndaba explained that his organization had “held peaceful, mass demonstrations and boycotts” for five decades. “These were met with bullets,” he said, prompting the ANC’s shift toward armed struggle.

“If they [the U.S. rulers] truly wish to condemn those who use violence,” Ndaba said, “let them condemn the apartheid regime.”

Instead, Eagleburger made it clear that those the White House considers advocates of “peaceful change” include members of the South African government itself. He specifically mentioned Prime Minister Pieter Botha. He also praised South Africa’s “independent judiciary” — the same judiciary that ordered the three ANC members hanged.

Just as the Reagan administration tries to portray the U.S.-backed butchers of El Salvador as “reformers,” it is presenting the changes in the apartheid system being introduced by Botha as steps away from racist rule. But in actuality they are designed to entrench white supremacy, to make the apartheid system more responsive to changing conditions. In particular, Botha’s proposals to create separate, largely powerless “parliaments” for the Indian and Coloured sectors of the Black population are aimed at splitting those communities away from the African majority.

On the basis of this myth that the Botha regime is carrying out “peaceful change away from apartheid,” Eagleburger explicitly argued against demands for ending all U.S. support to the South African regime. He especially defended the involvement of U.S. companies in South Africa, which help prop up the apartheid system and make enormous profits from the superexploitation of Black workers. “Disinvestment by U.S. firms would undo an avenue of positive effort,” Eagleburger maintained.

Cash, computers, and electric clubs

Behind the Reagan administration’s public declarations on South Africa lies a consistent pattern of increased backing for the racist regime. Since Reagan came into office, this has included:

- Greater military ties. South African military and intelligence officials are now frequently allowed to come to the United States, and the U.S. Coast Guard has begun training South African naval officers.

- The U.S. Army Armament Research and Development Command is conducting joint re-

search with its South African counterpart on ways to increase gun barrel efficiency.

- Formal restrictions on sales of U.S. products to the South African police and military have been eased even further. This has included the sale of sophisticated computers by the Motorola Corp. to the South African police. As part of this relaxation, 2,500 electric shock batons — capable of delivering 3,500-volt jolts — were sold to South Africa in late 1982.

- In October 1982, Washington was instrumental in arranging a \$1.1 billion loan to Pretoria from the International Monetary Fund.

- It was reported in early March that the Reagan administration had blocked moves to oust South Africa from the International Atomic Energy Agency. Washington has long provided Pretoria with nuclear assistance, and is continuing to sell fuel and equipment to the South African nuclear industry.

- In the United Nations, the U.S. representative has consistently vetoed efforts to impose mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. During the massive South African invasion of Angola in August 1981, the Reagan administration blocked adoption of a UN Security Council resolution that would have condemned the attack. In April 1983 it was revealed that Washington had advance knowledge of the invasion plans.

- As a cover for Pretoria’s continued occupation of Namibia, the White House has insisted that Cuban troops must be withdrawn from Angola before Namibia can gain its independence. Eagleburger reaffirmed this demand in his speech.

Such U.S. aid to the apartheid regime has been widely condemned in the United States. There has been an increase in anti-apartheid activity on university campuses, focusing on the demand for divestment from South Africa. On April 21, more than 20 organizations, including the United Auto Workers union, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the National Bar Association, signed a statement condemning Reagan’s policy of “constructive engagement.”

Despite the repression in South Africa, many Black political figures there have also denounced Washington’s support for Pretoria.

In an interview in the Nov. 29, 1982, issue of the U.S. weekly *Africa News*, Winnie Mandela, the wife of imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela, declared, “The West and those countries that have trade links with South Africa are those who are protracting our struggle. They are prolonging our suffering. Although they know that they are doing so, they also know that we will take over this country. . . .” □

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ANC challenges apartheid regime

Takes lead of liberation struggle

By Ernest Harsch

Seven years after the apartheid regime's brutal crushing of the Black urban rebellions of 1976, the mass movement in South Africa is still very much alive.

While the current struggles do not approach the scale and intensity of the 1976 upsurge, they are nevertheless a reflection of a deep and widespread radicalization that is touching ever broader layers of the Black population.

In addition to the increasingly frequent strikes by Black workers (an average of one new strike each day), hardly a week goes by

This is the second of three articles on the freedom struggle in South Africa. The first examined the growth of the Black union movement and the third will deal with the failure of the regime's various attempts to stem the mass radicalization in the country.

without some protest demonstration, march, or rally somewhere in the country. Over the past two years these have included:

- Black student demonstrations in Kimberley, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and other cities and towns, involving high school and university students alike, as well as students from all three sectors of the Black population: African, Coloured, and Indian. Many of the protests were in reaction to arrests of student activists, in support of various community struggles, or to commemorate the anniversary of the initial June 16, 1976, student demonstration in Soweto that sparked the rebellions of that year.

- Protests against rent hikes in Tembisa, Soweto, Durban, Cape Town, Pietermaritzburg, and elsewhere. Like the student demonstrations, these have involved Africans, Coloureds, and Indians, all of whom have seen their living standards eroded by inflation and sharp increases in the cost of housing and services.

One rent boycott in early 1981 involved some 60,000 people over a period of six weeks in three Indian townships in Durban. According to a news report, Jerry Coovadia, a leader of the anti-apartheid Natal Indian Congress, "stressed that the rent struggle is an integral part of the national liberation struggle. 'The cycle of poverty and its concomitant cycle of wealth has been going on for too long.'"

Tenacious opposition to rent increases in Johannesburg's Coloured townships were successful in forcing the municipal authorities to backtrack in October 1982 and postpone the hikes.

- A series of demonstrations, rallies, marches, and public meetings throughout the country in May 1981, on the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of South Africa as a white republic (after its departure from the British Commonwealth). These actions involved a broad array of political and community organizations opposed to the apartheid system.

- Boycotts of buses to oppose fare hikes; demonstrations of squatters in Cape Town and elsewhere to fight against government moves to evict them from their homes; protests against political trials and detentions; and numerous other actions around specific issues.

Although these mass struggles reflect a generalized countrywide ferment, there has so far been little direct coordination of the various campaigns. But people are looking for political leadership. They know that their particular struggles and demands stem from South Africa's overall system of class and national oppression, and cannot be won without its abolition.

Oldest liberation movement

Increasingly, those most actively involved in the fight against white minority rule are looking toward the African National Congress (ANC) to provide that leadership.

Founded in 1912, the ANC is the oldest liberation movement on the African continent. It fought for decades against the settlers' expropriation of African lands, the denial of Black political rights, and many other features of white supremacist rule.

Confronted with the authorities' repression and refusal to grant the most basic rights, the ANC's leadership became increasingly militant and moved more and more toward the use of mass action. By the 1950s the ANC had become a truly mass-based movement. During that decade it also succeeded in building a broad alliance with several Indian, Coloured, and white organizations, known as the Congress Alliance.

The ANC's alliance in that period with liberal and radical whites — and its emphasis on nonracialism — led to a split by a current within it that favored a greater stress on African nationalism and rejected collaboration with whites. By 1959 this current emerged as the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

During a mass upsurge in 1960, the government cracked down hard on both groups. At Sharpeville, police fired into a crowd of Blacks who had turned out for a protest organized by the PAC against the pass laws. Sixty-seven were killed. The authorities then banned the ANC and PAC and jailed thousands of their leading activists. Protest

demonstrations and strikes were brutally crushed.

In response, both organizations adopted a new strategy of armed struggle. The ANC set up Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) in 1961. Umkhonto launched a series of sabotage operations, but the regime was able to contain these early actions. Nelson Mandela, the best known leader of Umkhonto and the ANC, was captured and sentenced to life in prison. The PAC's armed fighters were likewise suppressed.

For a time, the racist authorities were successful in imposing a repressive calm on the country. But by the early 1970s a new mass opposition began to emerge, reflected primarily in the 1973 Durban strike wave and widespread unrest on the segregated Black university campuses.

This led to the emergence of new organizations, including the Black People's Convention and the South African Students Organisation, which adhered to the current known as the Black Consciousness movement.

Members of the Black Consciousness movement championed unity among Africans, Coloureds, and Indians, popularizing the term *Black* to refer to all of them collectively, against the regime's efforts to sow divisions among the oppressed. They emphasized raising Black self-awareness, confidence, and pride. They likewise rejected any collaboration with the apartheid regime's divide-and-rule institutions, such as the Bantustans or the government-controlled Coloured and Indian councils.

Because of its stress on Black nationalism, the Black Consciousness movement was attacked by white liberals and supporters of the regime alike for being a "racist" current. But the nationalism of the oppressed cannot be equated with the nationalism of the oppressor, in South Africa or anywhere else. They are completely counterposed. The nationalist ideas espoused by the white ruling class are thoroughly reactionary, since they are based on maintaining the oppressive white supremacist system on the backs of the country's Black majority. Black nationalism is progressive. It expresses the aspirations of Blacks for their national emancipation, for the overthrow of the apartheid regime, which is absolutely necessary for any social progress to take place in South Africa. Black nationalism can also serve to rally and mobilize the Black population to fight for its liberation.

"Black Consciousness was not an end in itself, but a means for raising the revolutionary consciousness of the people," David Ndaba, a

supporter of the movement who later joined the ANC (and became a member of the ANC's Mission to the United Nations), said at a public meeting in New York June 24.

Although the Black Consciousness movement had an important impact, it was organizationally weak. The more than a dozen groups that adhered to it encompassed only a small segment of the Black population. Some workers and union activists were attracted to these groups, but their primary appeal was to students and township youths, as well as to a layer of young Black professionals. One reason for this organizational weakness was the movement's reluctance to develop a concrete program of struggle to take up the day-to-day grievances that afflict Blacks in South Africa.

The Black Consciousness movement's primary accomplishment was to overcome the political quiescence of the mid- and late 1960s and reawaken Black militancy and self-confidence. After a decade of political setbacks and demoralization, the militantly nationalist stance of these groups helped inspire a new generation of Black youth to stand up against the apartheid system. The rebellions of 1976, which swept more than 160 Black townships throughout the country, were a testimony to the depth of this radicalization.

The brutal suppression of the 1976-77 upsurge — which included the massacre of hundreds of youths, the banning of the main Black Consciousness organizations, and the killing of Steve Biko, the most prominent Black Consciousness leader — marked a turning point in the political thinking of thousands of young activists.

Many had, for the first time in their lives, begun to see the need for more effective organization and greater coordination in face of the apartheid regime's automatic weapons and highly organized system of rule. Some vowed that they would never again confront Pretoria's armed might empty-handed. And a great many also began to look toward the Black working class as the key social force to spearhead the liberation struggle.

Of the thousands who fled the country during and after the crushing of the 1976 rebellions, many did so with the perspective of continuing their fight against white supremacist rule. Some joined the PAC or attempted to set up new Black Consciousness organizations abroad. But the greatest number rallied to the ANC, which was better known than the PAC and had been able to overcome the setbacks of the 1960s to a much greater extent. The ANC also began to expand its recruitment within South Africa. The overwhelming majority of those who joined the ANC were Black, but some whites entered its ranks as well.

This influx of thousands of young militants revitalized the ANC and gave it a more dynamic character. Within a few years it was able to greatly step up its armed actions within the country, reestablish close ties with the urban mass movements, and win an ever more

visible following among broad sectors of the Black population.

'These boys mean business'

One of the most obvious indications of the ANC's new strength has been the sharp increase in the effectiveness and number of actions carried out by its armed fighters in Umkhonto we Sizwe. The ANC relaunched its armed struggle in October 1976, in the midst



ANC leader Oliver Tambo.

of the Soweto rebellions, but it took several more years for it to adequately train its new recruits and organize them into efficient fighting units.

By 1981, the number of reported attacks on rail lines, power stations, government offices, oil storage depots, and police and military installations had climbed to more than 50 — several times the figure for the previous year. The number of attacks reported in South Africa in 1982 was somewhat less, but that was partly a result of a new government policy of not admitting all incidents, for fear of boosting the ANC's image even further.

Some of these operations have been quite daring. In June 1980, ANC guerrillas carried out simultaneous attacks on two synthetic fuel plants and an oil refinery in Sasolburg and Secunda, causing \$7 million in damages.

In August 1981, ANC fighters fired rockets into the Voortrekkerhoogte army base near Pretoria, the first publicly acknowledged attack on a military base. In December of that year, the Wonderboom police station in the heart of Pretoria was hit — the twelfth police station attacked by ANC guerrillas since the resumption of the armed struggle in 1976.

On Dec. 19, 1982, four carefully timed explosions spaced over a period of 12 hours ripped through the nearly completed nuclear power station at Koeberg, a heavily guarded installation. The ANC claimed credit for the action, which has seriously delayed the opening of the station.

The single most spectacular action by Umkhonto we Sizwe came on May 20, 1983, when a car bomb exploded in downtown Pre-

toria, outside the building that housed the headquarters of the air force command, air force intelligence, and prisons department. The regime admitted that 19 people were killed and nearly 200 wounded, most of them air force and military personnel.

"People are jubilant," one Black told a reporter. "They long ago gave up any hope for peaceful change." Another commented, "It will make the Boers realize that these boys mean business too and have the guts to fight."

The Pretoria bombing symbolized a decision by Umkhonto to escalate the level of its armed actions to include direct attacks against South African military personnel. This decision came in the wake of the South African regime's barbaric attack on South African refugee houses in Lesotho in December 1982, in which dozens were killed.

"Never again, never again are our people going to be doing all the bleeding, never again," ANC President Oliver Tambo declared after the Pretoria bombing.

A statement issued by the ANC office in Lusaka, Zambia, explained, "The escalating armed struggle, which was imposed on us as a result of the intransigence and violence of the apartheid regime, will make itself felt among an increasing number of those who have chosen to serve in the enemy's forces of repression."

Women combatants

Although most of Umkhonto's armed operations are carried out by men, women are playing a role in the military struggle as well. On Feb. 19, 1981, the *Natal Mercury*, a white-run paper published in Durban, commented, "More and more black women are being recruited and trained to back up urban terrorists [the regime's term for freedom fighters]. They are used to ferry weapons, ammunition and propaganda material — often concealed under their dresses to give the appearance of pregnancy — across borders into South Africa. . . . Like the men, women are also trained in blowing up targets such as railway lines, police stations, post offices, power stations, bridges, etc."

While South African officials often try to dismiss the ANC as a small terrorist organization, claiming that it has no chance of mounting a credible challenge to the survival of the apartheid system, some of the more sober ruling class figures have been taking it quite seriously.

Ton Vosloo, the editor of the Afrikaans daily *Beeld*, which supports Prime Minister Pieter Botha's wing of the ruling National Party, declared in January 1981 that the ANC probably had the support of millions of Blacks. "It must be said outright: a day will come when a South African Government will sit at the negotiating table with the ANC," Vosloo wrote.

Gen. Magnus Malan, the South African defense minister and another close ally of Botha's, warned in an August 1981 speech that

the "revolutionary threat" had "now reached an extremely dangerous phase."

The apartheid regime's allies in Washington concur. A Central Intelligence Agency study on the ANC, leaked to the U.S. press in November 1982, noted the "improved efficiency and coordination" of the ANC's military operations in 1980 and 1981.

The CIA report predicted "increasing success" for the ANC in winning the leadership of the Black population inside South Africa.

'Launch mass struggles everywhere'

The expansion of the ANC's military operations has been matched by an increase in its work within the mass movements. In fact, the two aspects of its activity are inextricably linked. It was precisely in 1979-80 — when the ANC made a shift in its strategy toward greater involvement in the trade unions, community associations, and other mass organizations — that Umkhonto we Sizwe was able to step up its armed actions.

During most of the 1970s, the ANC's direct involvement in and influence over the mass movements within South Africa were limited. The focus of the ANC's activity was primarily military. And when it won new recruits out of the Black townships, it usually sent them abroad for military training, so that they could come back as guerrilla fighters.

But the 1973 labor upsurge, the 1976 rebellions, and the continued mass struggles since then led to some rethinking. It was obvious that open mass work was again possible, despite the regime's constant repression. The ANC saw an opportunity to reforge its links with the independent mass movements in the cities and countryside, and responded accordingly.

In a Jan. 8, 1979, speech on the anniversary of the ANC's founding, Oliver Tambo stressed that "the experience of our lifetime, including the experience of June 16, 1976 and after, teaches us that the issue of power and peace in our country, as elsewhere, will be resolved in our favour only by an effective combination of political and armed activity. . . ."

A year later, also in an anniversary speech, Tambo noted that militants within South Africa had been able to "regroup as open, above-ground organisations — units of the broad liberation front, defeating the attempts of the enemy to impose a deathly passivity among the oppressed people."

After reviewing the numerous conflicts between the mass movement and the apartheid regime during the previous year, Tambo declared that "we must launch mass struggles everywhere and around all the issues that both agitate us and are reflected in the Freedom Charter," the ANC's program.

Referring to the armed struggle itself, Joe Slovo, a leader of the ANC, Umkhonto, and the South African Communist Party (which works closely with the ANC), said in an interview that appeared in the April 1983 issue of



Young Soweto rebels. Thousands from 1976 upsurge have swelled ANC ranks.

the ANC's monthly *Sechaba*, "Our tasks are more and more to involve the people in actual participation and not just as sympathetic on-lookers, not just as masses who welcome what we are doing. . . ."

In the wake of the Pretoria bombing, the ANC reaffirmed its orientation toward mass mobilization. Thabo Mbeki, a member of the ANC National Executive, declared, "The only thing different about the Pretoria bomb was the number of casualties. Take people working in trade unions or students or women's groups, who have never been trained as guerrillas, but are every day talking to workers about the ANC, organizing for the ANC. This is more important than a bomb going off."

Activists in mass movements

With its shift toward mass work, the ANC is now no longer sending all of its recruits abroad for military training. Many are being assigned to work within the trade unions, women's groups, student organizations, community associations, and other bodies to help build them and strengthen the mass resistance to the apartheid regime.

One of the most important arenas of activity has been the burgeoning Black union movement.

The leadership of the ANC-allied South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) is forced to function from exile, but it also has supporters and activists within South Africa. Some belong to the new Black and nonracial trade unions.

An article in the June 1982 issue of *Workers Unity*, SACTU's monthly newspaper, explained SACTU's relationship with the other unions. "SACTU's major role is to work alongside the open trade union movement. SACTU is also able to develop contacts with those unorganized sectors of workers — for example, on the mines, farms, in the bantustans and other areas where access to workers by legally operating trade unions is usually denied."

"Underground work," it went on, "cannot easily be done through the same structures and

by the same individuals leading open trade unions. Within the context of the open trade union movement, SACTU's role is thus a supportive one."

SACTU has also pushed for unity among all the independent trade unions in South Africa, regardless of their positions on particular questions, and has stressed the close interconnection between the struggle of workers in the factories and the broader fight for national liberation.

By necessity, the ANC's activists within the mass movements cannot publicly identify themselves as members of the ANC. But sometimes they have come to public attention in the course of government trials against them.

Oscar Mpetha, the national organizer of the African Food and Canning Workers Union, one of the most militant Black unions, was arrested in August 1980 in Cape Town. Accused under the Terrorism Act on false charges along with 18 others, he has frequently been kept in solitary confinement, despite his ill health and advanced age (he is more than 70 years old). Mpetha is widely known as an ANC supporter, having been a founder of SACTU and a former president of the ANC in Cape Province.

Barbara Hogan, a white anti-apartheid activist who had helped organize consumer boycotts in support of struggles led by the African Food and Canning Workers Union and the General Workers Union, admitted in court that she was an ANC member. In October 1982 she was sentenced to 10 years in prison on charges of "high treason" for belonging to the ANC, one of the stiffest sentences yet meted out for simple membership.

Freedom Charter

With the ANC's increased emphasis on supporting mass struggles on various social, economic, and political questions, it has also been laying greater stress on the Freedom Charter, its overall program for transforming South African society. The ANC marked 1980 — the 25th anniversary of the program's adoption — as "The Year of the Charter" and went

on a major campaign to popularize it.

The Freedom Charter advances the necessity for majority rule in a nonracial society, stating that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people." It insists that "only a democratic state, based on the will of the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief."

To attain such a state, the charter says that all apartheid laws have to be scrapped, discrimination outlawed, a full franchise and equal rights accorded to everyone, and all "bodies of minority rule" replaced by "democratic organs of self-government."

Addressing itself to economic exploitation and the white expropriation of African land, the charter declares that the "mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole."

Moreover, "Restriction of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger. . . . Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land."

To advance the political rights and social position of the vast majority of the population, the charter demands, among other things, that the pass laws be abolished; all workers be allowed to form trade unions; a national minimum wage be established; men and women of all colors be guaranteed equal pay for equal work; education be made free, equal, and compulsory for everyone; and free medical care and hospitalization be provided for all.

An explanation of the Freedom Charter in the ANC's fortnightly newspaper *Mayibuye* (No. 6, 1980) pointed to the significance of its economic demands: "The consolidation of our revolutionary goal — power to the people — through the seizure of political power and the implementation of the Freedom Charter, rests ultimately on the economic clauses or pillars of our programme: 'The people shall share in the country's wealth!' and 'The land shall be shared among those who work it!' These clauses are the core of our programme, defining more than all the other clauses the substance of our vision of a liberated South Africa."

PAC in disarray

While the ANC was able to take advantage of the upsurge in South Africa to strengthen itself, its longtime rival within the liberation movement, the Pan Africanist Congress, has been considerably weakened. Riven by factionalism and virtually inactive within South Africa, the PAC has been steadily losing members and influence.

Immediately following the 1976 rebellions, the PAC also benefited from an influx of new recruits. But it was not able to consolidate them or link up with the ongoing struggles inside South Africa to any appreciable extent.

Though the PAC still talked about armed

struggle, it did virtually nothing. In February 1981, PAC Vice-chairman Vusumzi Make publicly admitted that the PAC had not carried out a single armed action between 1969 and 1978. The number since then has been negligible.

A central factor in the PAC's decline has been its political approach. The PAC favors many of the same social, economic, and political measures championed by the ANC. But it has not, in practice, sought to build struggles around them, and its propaganda is confined largely to abstract condemnations of white supremacy.

The PAC has long had close ties with Peking, and its positions on international questions often echo those made by the Chinese leadership. Denying the fact that capitalism has been abolished in the Soviet Union, the PAC considers the Soviet Union to be "social imperialist" and falsely depicts it as a threat to the people of South Africa. "Complementary to the imperialist strategy is that of social imperialism which equally seeks a sphere of influence in our country," an October 1979 plenary session of the PAC's Central Committee maintained.

Because of this stance, the PAC has remained virtually silent on the heroic role of Cuba in helping Angola to defeat the South African invasion of 1975-76 and to defend itself from continued South African attacks. This is despite the fact that the Cubans are extremely popular among Black activists within South Africa.

The PAC's diminishing size and influence have also exacerbated the factional disputes within it, leading to a series of expulsions, splits, and in some cases armed conflicts.

In June 1979, David Sibeko, the PAC's director of foreign affairs, was assassinated in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, by a group of PAC members. Four months later former PAC Chairman Potlako Leballo was expelled for "reactionary and counterrevolutionary activities."

In March 1982, Henry Isaacs resigned his positions as a member of the PAC's 15-person Central Committee, its director of foreign affairs, and its observer to the United Nations, making numerous accusations against the PAC's leadership. Isaacs, a former president of the South African Students Organisation, was the most prominent figure that the PAC had been able to recruit out of the Black Consciousness movement.

Though the PAC has been greatly weakened, it retains some support within South Africa. John Nyati Pokela, who was chosen as the new chairman following Leballo's expulsion, has been attempting to smooth over the internal factionalism and win back some of those who had left in disillusionment. These efforts, so far at least, have had little appreciable effect in strengthening the PAC's position.

Beyond Black Consciousness

While the Black Consciousness movement never sought to place itself in opposition to the

ANC (as the PAC has), it did put forward a different political approach. Many of its leaders were suspicious of the ANC because it had white members and because it criticized some of the Black Consciousness movements' positions.

In recent years, however, these frictions have largely dissipated, as most groups and individuals previously identified with the Black Consciousness movement have moved politically closer to the ANC. Some have joined the ANC directly, including Barney Pityana, who is recognized, along with Steve Biko, as one of the key founders and guiding forces of the Black Consciousness movement.

The Congress of South African Students (COSAS), a high-school student organization formed soon after the banning of the original Black Consciousness groups in October 1977, began publicly identifying with the ANC and its political positions by the end of the decade.

Then in July 1981 the Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso), a university students group, dropped most of the standard Black Consciousness terminology from its constitution. Although it maintained its character as an exclusively Black organization, it explained that it was doing so for "tactical reasons," while opening the way toward active collaboration with whites who are also opposed to the apartheid system.

Reflecting a general shift within the Black movement in South Africa, Azaso also began emphasizing that the root cause of Black oppression in South Africa is not apartheid as such, but the capitalist system on which it is based. This has led to a greater stress on the role of the trade-union movement, which Azaso recognizes as an instrument to "bring about a redistribution of power."

Joe Paahla, the president of Azaso, has pointed to the interconnection between the broader struggle for national liberation and more immediate struggles around day-to-day issues. Quoted in the Jan. 10, 1982, *Durban Sunday Tribune*, Paahla noted that workers were beginning "to realise that to improve their working conditions and their wages, they also need to change the political situation in this country."

Assessing the impact of the Black Consciousness movement, he went on, "After the bannings of 19 BC organisations in October 1977, people looked back to review what they had achieved. What they saw was that the BC organisations had achieved less mass mobilisation with their pure, ideological political stance than the Congress organisations [the ANC and its allies] had in the 1950s when they organised around more basic issues like bus fare increases, removals and the pass laws."

A similar evolution has taken place within the union movement.

Tozamide Botha, an automobile worker who headed a local Black Consciousness organization in Port Elizabeth, publicly hailed Nelson Mandela during a strike he led at the Ford

Motor Company in 1979. The following year, after he had been forced to flee into exile, he emerged as a spokesperson for SACTU.

The Black Allied Workers Union (BAWU), which was closely identified with the Black Consciousness movement, now has little real influence. Meanwhile, the nonracial South African Allied Workers Union, which originated from a split in BAWU, has grown into one of the most dynamic of the new trade unions. Its leaders follow a trade-union policy very similar to that of SACTU.

Other unions do likewise. In an interview in the August 1981 issue of the South African journal *Labour Focus*, Samson Ndou, the chairperson of the General and Allied Workers Union, commented, "The Black Consciousness people have come up with the notion of a 'class-race' struggle in terms of which blacks constitute the oppressed class and whites the oppressor class. This is not our view. Capitalists today are sophisticated: they are training black managers, many of whom have the power to dismiss workers. . . . We are fighting against a system of economic exploitation. We don't judge people on the basis of colour. If the government can organise blacks on their side, why shouldn't we have whites on ours?"

The only political group of any prominence that has continued to adhere to the traditional Black Consciousness line is the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo).

Formed around the same time as Azaso and COSAS, Azapo reports that it now has 37 branches around the country. One of its leaders, Letsatsi Mosala, is the president of the newly formed Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers Union.

Although Azapo also pays tribute to the role of the ANC from time to time, its leaders have often gotten into sharp political disputes with those who now look toward the ANC, including members of Azaso and COSAS.

The issue of whether Blacks should collaborate with anti-apartheid whites has aroused some of the sharpest differences. At Azapo's third congress in February 1983, for example, Saths Cooper, an early Black Consciousness leader who was released from imprisonment on Robben Island only two months earlier, blasted the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), a white university students group that is led by liberals and radicals, some of whom have expressed sympathy for the ANC.

ANC most popular

A survey of Blacks in Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town conducted by the Johannesburg *Star* newspaper and published in its Sept. 23, 1981, issue found that the ANC was by far the most popular organization in the country.

Asked who they would vote for if democratic elections were held, 40 percent said they would vote for the ANC, 11 percent for Azapo, and 10 percent for the PAC. (Another 21 percent indicated a preference for Inkatha,

a Zulu-based group led by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, who is viewed by the other groups as a collaborator with the apartheid regime.) The ANC came out on top among every category of Blacks interviewed: language, job, age, and region.

Imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela emerged as the most popular Black figure in the country; 76 percent of those polled said they liked him.

This mass support for the ANC has been dramatically expressed during numerous political events over the past few years.

In March 1981, hundreds of students,



Nelson Mandela, imprisoned more than 20 years.

mostly white, at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg shouted down a government minister who was addressing them. They sang the ANC anthem and chanted, "Free Mandela!"

In May 1981, during countrywide demonstrations to protest Republic Day, an official holiday, empty chairs were placed on a number of platforms to symbolize the place reserved for Nelson Mandela. At the University of the Witwatersrand, a group of Black and white students sang songs in praise of Mandela and Oliver Tambo.

According to a report in the May 29, *So-wetan*:

At the University of the Western Cape [in Cape Town] close to 1,000 students raised their fists in salute and shouted "amandla ngawethu" [power will be ours] as they watched flames leap from a burning South African flag.

As the flag disintegrated, another flag bearing the green, gold and black colours of the banned African National Congress was raised.

The flag was hoisted against a background of banners and posters displayed on the stage, spelling out the demands listed in the Freedom Charter.

ANC songs and flags have also been prominent at the funerals for a number of slain ac-

tivists, such as that of Neil Aggett. In 1980, more than 10,000 people turned out for the funeral of a slain guerrilla fighter. Up to 20,000 attended the November 1981 funeral of Griffiths Mxenge, a former Robben Island prisoner and lawyer for political prisoners, who was assassinated in the Ciskei. "It wasn't a funeral, it was like an ANC gathering," one participant told a reporter.

Numerous meetings, conferences, and rallies by various organizations have adopted the ANC's Freedom Charter as their platform of demands. In 1981, leaders of the Natal Indian Congress and other Indian organizations waged a successful boycott of elections to the government-sponsored South African Indian Council (SAIC); they conducted the boycott as an active campaign, presenting the Freedom Charter at public meetings as an alternative to the SAIC.

As a result of this upsurge among Indians, the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) was officially reconstituted on May 1, 1983. A close ally of the ANC in the 1950s, the TIC had largely ceased to function after the regime's crackdown in 1960.

In October 1981, delegates from 109 different organizations gathered in Durban for a "nonracial democrats" assembly. The groups included the Natal Indian Congress, South African Allied Workers Union, General and Allied Workers Union, the South African Council on Sport, the Durban Housing Action Committee, COSAS, Azaso, the Black Sash (a predominantly white women's group), and the Students Representative Councils of the major white English-language universities. The combined memberships of the groups was about 300,000.

The conference unanimously reaffirmed the Freedom Charter's demands. Although originally drafted in 1955, it "is a living document which is relevant today," the conference declared. "It is a universal document containing our minimum demands. It provides us with guidelines of a framework within which all struggles today are conducted."

The prestige of the ANC, and of such leaders as Nelson Mandela, has been growing not only in the Black townships, but within the prisons as well. This has been causing the regime some concern.

Mandela and three other ANC leaders — Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, and Andrew Mlangeni — were moved from Robben Island to Pollsmoor Prison just outside Cape Town in April 1982. Mandela, who had been organizing an educational program for his fellow prisoners, was moved "because the South African authorities felt he had become too dominant an influence among the 400-odd political prisoners" on the island, a London *Observer* correspondent reported.

A number of those prisoners, including leaders of the 1976 rebellions, are soon scheduled to be released. They may then be in a position to put into practice what they have learned in jail.

[Next: *Repression vs. mass radicalization.*]

For a political solution in El Salvador

FMLN-FDR proposal for a dialogue

[The following statement was issued on June 5, signed jointly by the General Command of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) of El Salvador. The subheads are from the original.]

* * *

For the past three years, our fronts have stated the need for a political solution to the Salvadoran conflict. The government of El Salvador and the Reagan administration have responded to our proposals by rejecting dialogue, as well as increasing the repression and political and military intervention against our people.

Today, given the undeniable political and military advances of the democratic and revolutionary forces of the Salvadoran people, and the increasing international pressure favoring a political solution, our enemies attempt to cover themselves with the mantle of dialogue. Nevertheless, conciliatory words cannot hide the tragic reality of a Salvadoran government whose only survival depends on a continued state terrorism and the support of the Reagan administration. This support takes the form of increased military aid and direction of the war in El Salvador and Central America.

Five points for a political solution

Given this situation, the FMLN-FDR reaffirms our willingness to continue struggling until we achieve national independence, justice, and peace for our people. At the same time, we maintain our policy of dialogue and negotiations, and propose the following points as a basis for achieving a solution to the conflict through political means:

1. The main goal is to recover national sovereignty and to achieve a just solution that enables us to overcome the current state of imposed war, guaranteeing all Salvadorans an independent, democratic, and just society, as well as peaceful coexistence among the Central American people.

2. This goal can be achieved through a direct dialogue, without preconditions among the parties to the conflict, in which all the problems our society confronts can be discussed comprehensively, and where all sectors interested in the search for peace and justice can contribute.

3. We define the parties directly involved in the conflict to be, on the one hand, the governments of El Salvador and the United States, and on the other, our fronts, the FMLN-FDR. While our conflict has its roots in the injustice and repression suffered by the people, the in-

creasingly militaristic and interventionist role of President Reagan's administration demonstrates that in El Salvador there will be no peace, no justice, and no independence as long as this policy continues.

4. To achieve a political solution, the alliance between the democratic and revolutionary forces, represented by the FMLN-FDR, is inseparable and indispensable. Attempts to solve the crisis by excluding one of our fronts are not only unworkable, but are rejected by the FMLN-FDR as divisive maneuvers.

5. We consider it necessary that third parties participate to provide their good offices and to witness the process of dialogue. Therefore, we believe it convenient that dialogue be held within the framework of a forum where the parties to the conflict can meet in an environment that ensures security and trust.

Proposal for a dialogue

Based on this position we propose to initiate a process of dialogue aimed at facilitating real negotiation between the FMLN-FDR and the governments of El Salvador and the United States.

The dialogue and negotiation process must be held within a framework that promotes trust: a forum composed of those governments that maintain an active and well-known position in favor of a political settlement to our conflict.

Given the criteria established in our proposal, we turn now to an evaluation of several initiatives that currently exist.

On President Reagan's special envoy

We consider Mr. Richard Stone, President Reagan's special envoy to Central America, a representative of one of the parties directly involved in the conflict and therefore not a mediator.

Because of its role in providing essential

economic, political, and military support to the Salvadoran regime, as well as its increasing control over the decisions of the Salvadoran government, we consider the Reagan administration as a belligerent party directly confronting the FMLN-FDR. Therefore, we have presented a letter to Mr. Stone proposing that we initiate a direct dialogue to discuss the ways to achieve a political solution, and that this dialogue be held in the United States, in the presence of witnesses from the U.S. Congress. We have also entrusted the Political-Diplomatic Commission of the FMLN-FDR with the task of pursuing this dialogue.

On the Salvadoran government's Peace Commission

We are aware that the Peace Commission appointed by President Alvaro Magaña has issued a public call to the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) for reflection and dialogue.

Taking this into consideration and reaffirming our willingness to engage in a dialogue without preconditions, we ask the government of El Salvador to define the following points:

- Who does the Peace Commission represent? We know that the Peace Commission was created through a pact between political parties, one of which, the Nationalist Republican Alliance, (ARENA), has publicly stated that a dialogue with us would be treason to the homeland. The commission's members were appointed by the president of the republic. They include a bishop, a retired diplomat, and the head of a minor political party of the governmental coalition. It is therefore appropriate to ask: Does the commission represent the political parties? All of them? The government? Who?

- What power does the Peace Commission have? Is it intended to serve an intermediary role between the government of El Salvador and ourselves, or does it have real power to discuss and reach agreements on substantive matters? The absence of real political and military forces in its composition supports the premise that it is merely an intermediary instrument.

- Does the initiative of the Peace Commission represent a change in the position the government adopted when it rejected our proposal for dialogue in October 1982?

Clarifying these questions is required in order to initiate talks on a firm and clear basis. It is also necessary to avoid the danger of malicious manipulation of the serious and urgent task of searching for peace, dialogue and negotiation.

We also categorically reject any attempt to divide our fronts. The FDR and the FMLN



constitute an alliance, and together we are ready to participate in the political solution.

Looking toward the future

The FMLN-FDR has always maintained that in order to effectively initiate and develop a dialogue, it is necessary that third parties provide their good offices and witness the process.

In the past we have accepted and encouraged initiatives from different governments

and social forces. Recently we stated that the four Latin American governments known as the Contadora Group could provide a reliable forum in which the process of dialogue and negotiations between the parties could take place.

The recent resolution of the United Nations Security Council, putting its confidence in the efforts of the Contadora Group, confirms that conviction.

Therefore, we have been interested in the

foreign ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela tackling the Salvadoran situation and developing mechanisms that would allow the parties to the conflict to engage in a constructive dialogue. We maintain — without excluding any other mediation offers that may arise — that Contadora's original proposals establish a realistic and objective basis for achieving peace in El Salvador, and they constitute an adequate forum in which to conduct a process of dialogue. □

PRT meets with Mexican president

Discuss economic and foreign policy, political rights

[The following declaration was issued in Mexico City on June 7 by the Secretariat of the Political Committee of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International. It is taken from the June 13 issue of *Bandera Socialista*, the newspaper of the PRT. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

On Monday, June 6, a delegation from the national leadership of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) had a meeting in the National Palace with President Miguel de la Madrid. The meeting, which lasted more than an hour and a half and included Secretary of the Interior Manuel Bartlett, is our party's first bilateral and special meeting with the chief of the executive branch. Therefore we feel that in the interests of complete responsibility, we should report on the subjects dealt with and the character of the meeting.

1. The meeting took place on the initiative of the president of the republic, apparently as part of a plan of meetings with some of the national political parties.

2. It was scheduled without any agenda having been set in advance. In the course of the meeting, however, the following questions were discussed:

- The government's economic policy, especially the agreements signed with the International Monetary Fund [IMF];
- Mexico's foreign policy, especially toward Central America;
- The question of civil and political liberties, which was specifically raised by the PRT.

Regarding the economic question, the president spent a large part of the time explaining and justifying his economic policy and trying to show that the agreements with the IMF did not damage national sovereignty.

On this matter it became obvious that the discussion was taking place from two different perspectives, for the defense of different class interests, however much the government might portray it as simply a question of supposed "national interest."

Regarding the Central American question,

the PRT expressed its point of view on the U.S. government's pressures for a change in orientation around the Central American policy. The president of the republic reaffirmed that in this area there will be no changes in foreign policy, and he expressed optimism about the echo that the position in favor of a nonmilitary solution is beginning to have inside the United States itself.

Finally, the PRT put forward the need for full respect for civil liberties in the country, at a time when social tensions are rising as a result of the government's economic policies.

In particular, the PRT called for respect for the strikes that various contingents of workers have launched in legitimate defense of their rights. The PRT especially opposed the expedient of claiming they do not exist.

It also stressed the urgency of resolving the case of the political "disappeared," supporting the demand that the president should meet with the National Front Against Repression (FNCR) in order to resolve this question. And finally, we demanded guarantees of the PRT's participation in the next elections, which will take place in 1985 on the local as well as federal level.

De la Madrid made specific reference to the matter of the disappeared. He maintained that, according to the Interior Ministry, the question had not been "substantiated," but that he would receive "Doña Rosario [Ibarra de Piedra] and the other people involved" if they should have something concrete to resolve.

3. The PRT delegation was made up of Ricardo Pascoe, Pedro Peñaloza, and Edgard Sánchez, all of whom are members of the Political Committee. Having received the invitation more than a week in advance, the Political Committee had decided to include Comrade Lucinda Nava, who is also a member of that body, in the delegation.

At the last minute it was decided that she would not participate because she is on the Executive Committee of the Union of Workers at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, which is now on strike, and her presence could have been misinterpreted.

In fact, although the PRT was not opposed to discussing the situation of strikes that were

taking place and clearly expressing its support for them — as it did to the president — it is not interested in changing its view that negotiations and settlements by the mass movements have to be achieved by the leading bodies of those movements and not by the party as such, even though party members might participate in the leadership of the movements.

For the same reason we declined to accept the suggestion that Compañera Rosario Ibarra — our ex-presidential candidate — should participate in this meeting to discuss the question of the disappeared, once there was a commitment by the federal government to receive the FNCR as a whole. It is to that organization (with the special participation of the National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners, Persecuted, and Disappeared) that the government must respond in its inquiry.

This attitude was, of course, discussed and agreed upon beforehand in general terms by the FNCR and by Compañera Rosario Ibarra.

4. Lastly, the PRT national leadership views this initiative by the president of the republic as part of his style and orientation of promoting diverse forms of "people's consultation forums," which, as experience has shown, have more of a propagandistic than practical aim, in that they are not really consultations with the people and do not obligate the government to do anything.

Therefore the PRT did not attend this meeting with the intention of proposing solutions or advice to the government, which, of course, would not be taken into account. Nor is it up to us, as an opposition political party, to make such proposals, since our proposals must be presented not to the executive branch but to the working people who, through their support, make it possible to change the present official orientation, a change which, moreover, will not be pushed by a PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] government.

By participating in meetings like this one, to which we have been invited by the president, our presence is a way to add support and solidarity to movements of the workers who are in struggle and to demand respect for certain democratic demands and rights. □

SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT

The following selections are devoted to Pope John Paul's trip to Poland in June.

Rouge

"Red," newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Paris.

Of the millions of Poles who turned out to hear the pope, wrote Cyril Smuga in the June 24 issue, "one thing is sure: beyond the words and the speeches, these millions of workers and citizens will retain a sense of strength and unity from the pope's passage."

Smuga added that "Solidarity had called for using this trip to assert the union's presence. And it was present, from the first day when thousands of voices shouted 'No freedom without Solidarity!'; when at the end of most of the official ceremonies thousands — and even tens of thousands — of participants left in demonstrations under the symbol of the independent union."

From the time of the pope's arrival, Smuga wrote, he "was confronted with this reality, which for months has divided the clergy in his native land. And facing the expectation of the crowds, John Paul II was brought to increasingly stress the place of Solidarity and its right to exist."

But in addition to that aspect of his sermons, Smuga continued, "even if the press hardly reported it, we should not forget that in all his speeches John Paul II spent much more time insisting on the need for 'dialogue between the regime and society,' raising all sorts of illusions about the possibilities of reforming this system."

The pope added that a more just order that respects the "fundamental rights of man" could simultaneously mark "the victory of the governed and of those who govern."

And the pope "repeated his hope of seeing the principles of August 1980 achieved through a 'social reform' that 'will be gradually put into effect.'"

Smuga wrote that the pope's tour was marked by "support for the demands of the Polish workers and an attempt to temper them and channel them to strengthen the hold of the church on the masses." As a result, "we saw an attempt to integrate the people's aspirations into the strict framework of the clergy's strategy. The crowds that mixed their cries of 'Solidarity!' and 'Long live the pope!' certainly were not conscious of this."

But in Smuga's view, the pope must operate within tight limits. Smuga feels that "whatever their ideological confusion and their political limits, the Polish workers are not a mass that is easy to maneuver, as has been seen more than once since August 1980."

While the Polish workers "are ready to see themselves in the speeches of the church when

such speeches espouse their demands, they are also quite ready to challenge them if they feel a distance is opening up between their demands and the use being made of them by the church."

In Smuga's view, the biggest development during the pope's visit was "this presence of Solidarity in the streets and gatherings. The struggle is unfolding between the union and the junta, a struggle that neither the pope nor the church can ignore if they hope to preserve and increase their following."

He concluded that the visit showed the church's willingness to play the role of an intermediary between the workers and the regime and highlighted the regime's weakness.

DIRECT ACTION

Socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia. Presents the views of the Socialist Workers Party, the Australian section of the Fourth International.

The June 21 issue devoted its editorial to an assessment of the pope's visit to Poland.

"From the very first moments of the Pope's eight-day visit to his homeland," it began, "huge crowds of Polish workers combined their welcome with declarations of their continuing support for their outlawed trade union Solidarity."

"The public display of Solidarity insignia is forbidden in Poland. But the Pope's visit provided the Polish people with the opportunity to hold what have effectively become some of the largest demonstrations in support of Solidarity since the imposition of martial law on December 13, 1981."

After describing some of these demonstrations, the editorial continued, "The Polish bureaucracy obviously hoped that the Pope's visit would help promote the facade that all is normal in Poland and generate a picture of national unity."

"All resistance to bureaucratic rule in Poland — whether through demonstrations, strikes, or illegal underground organisation — is met with repression."

"It was only natural, therefore, that Polish workers would use the Pope's visit as a way of demonstrating that their struggle is far from over."

"From the beginning, the Pope himself has used his visit to criticise strongly the rigors of martial law and the government's internment of some 4,000 political prisoners."

"This stance, of course, contrasts strongly with the Pope's recent tour of Central America. During his visit to El Salvador, the Pope launched ideological tirades against the struggle for liberation and social justice being waged by the people of that country."

"And at a mass conducted in the Nicaraguan capital, Managua, when hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguan workers chanted 'We

want peace' — referring to the US government's counter-revolutionary war against that country — the Pope accused the Sandinista government of orchestrating the chanting and of attempting to make 'political capital' from his visit. The Pope refused to denounce US imperialism's war against the workers and peasants of Central America."

"No, the Pope supports Solidarity only from a position of anticommunism."

The editorial concluded by pointing out that while many former Solidarity leaders do not consider themselves socialists, that does not mean that Solidarity's struggle is antisocialist. "What Solidarity was fighting for fundamentally was the right of working people themselves democratically to make the decisions about how the country is run."

workers world

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD UNITE

Weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the Workers World Party. Published in New York City.

The June 30 issue featured a full-page article by Sam Marcy, a central leader of the Workers World Party.

"In agreeing to the pope's visit to Poland," Marcy wrote, "Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski has opened wide the gates to imperialist intervention in papal garb. Inevitably this has stimulated another wave of counter-revolutionary activity and has raised the hopes of the world bourgeoisie for an ultimate full-scale overturn of the Polish government."

"The Polish People's Republic (PPR) has complicated and made difficult if not disarmed the entire international communist and progressive workers' movement in its task of defending the PPR against the wild anti-communist orgy unloosed by the world bourgeoisie and in particular the U.S."

"It has also humiliated the proud revolutionary traditions of Marxism and Leninism on how to conduct the struggle against bourgeois political reaction as well as clerical obscurantism while at the same time defending the democratic right of everyone to their religious beliefs."

The Polish government's political course, Marcy wrote, was linked to the economic policies it has followed since "the 1956 reactionary rebellion" that brought Wladyslaw Gomulka to power. This policy served to "orient the Polish economy toward the West" through the taking out of enormous loans from the imperialist banks. Because of this dependence on imperialist loans and trade, Marcy continued, "Poland's economic problems became compounded by the world capitalist crisis, which caused havoc to its industry."

"Why should a capitalist crisis create so many problems for a presumably socialist economy?"

"The answer is that after the 1956 rebellion, Poland abandoned the effort at collectivization of agriculture and virtually returned to a bourgeois agricultural policy. It also decentralized several industries in Poland, undermined national planning on a socialist basis, and widened the capitalist market at home."

Marcy went on, "This resulted in the growth of bourgeois political tendencies and alienated large sections of the working class, who saw excruciating contradictions in the economic policy of the leadership between its lofty promises and poor performance."

"Nor did the U.S. ever relent on political subversion. It utilized the clerical bureaucracy as a fundamental lever in its imperialist drive for an ultimate takeover."

"This made the situation ripe for blatant reactionary demagogues to assume the (mis)leadership of large sections of the working class. . . ."

"The growth of political reaction in Poland is due not to the pursuit of fundamental socialist policy, as the bourgeoisie claims, but rather to its partial abandonment and the development of bourgeois accommodation to alien class elements at home and abroad."

"The agreement to invite the pope (for such an extended time!) is a further deepening of the reactionary policies pursued by the PPR. . . ."

"The PPR leadership hoped that the pope's visit would dampen the counter-revolutionary struggle and help stifle its revival. The very opposite has occurred."

was fun

"*What Is to Be Done*," a socialist newspaper published fortnightly in Frankfurt, West Germany, by the International Marxist Group (IGM), the German section of the Fourth International.

The June 23 issue featured a full-page article by Peter Bartelheimer on the pope's visit to Poland and its relationship to the struggle by the Solidarity union movement.

Noting the continued strength of the movement against bureaucratic rule, even after the imposition of martial law in December 1981, Bartelheimer stated that this situation "is not the work of the church, but of Jaruzelski's true adversary — the independent workers movement. This movement already knew how to reorganize itself in the factories after the Solidarity union was suppressed in its old form. . . . What is more, it knew how to retake the streets before the pope brought unprecedented crowds to their feet, making an attack by the police inconceivable. It had created a situation in which it would have been more risky for Jaruzelski to bar the pope's tour than to permit him to make a return visit to his homeland for the 600th anniversary of the 'Black Madonna' of Czestochowa."

Bartelheimer then provided some background to this crisis: the activities of Solidarity's supporters in the factories, the large May



Pope in Warsaw.

Day demonstrations, and Jaruzelski's inability to win acceptance for the new government-controlled unions that are supposed to replace Solidarity.

Bartelheimer continued, "Only at first glance is the church the beneficiary of this crisis. Cardinal Glemp had much too openly agreed to a deal with Jaruzelski: approval for Jaruzelski's 'normalization' in exchange for guarantees of the church's privileges. . . . Glemp's image among union circles sank considerably. Through his visit, the pope wanted to strengthen support for the primate [Glemp]. But he only awakened the expectations of millions, expectations that the church leadership — with its own interests and its love of law and order — will be unable to fulfill. So the recent demonstration of Solidarity's existence is the only decisive fact that remains from the pope's visit."

"It is the union, not the church, that transformed the pope's appearance into a political demonstration against the regime."

Prensa obrera

"Workers Press," published weekly in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Reflects the views of the Workers Party (PO).

Under the headline "The United Front of the Uniform and the Cassock," the June 23 issue of *Prensa Obrera* described the pope's visit to Poland.

"Solidarity was preparing a gigantic general strike against the bureaucratic military and proimperialist regime of General Jaruzelski for last November 10. To defuse the danger, the dictatorship hastened to negotiate with the Polish church hierarchy," according to *Prensa Obrera*. "Shortly before the 10th, Cardinal Glemp went on a campaign against the general strike. This antiworker agreement between the

'communist' bureaucracy and the 'democratic' clergy sealed the accord, allowing the pope to visit Poland in June 1983."

The unsigned article added that "the convergence between the papacy and 'communism' did not end with that accord, although the accord symbolizes it clearly and unambiguously. For the bureaucracy of the Polish state, the clergy's concurrence is vital if it is to definitively defeat the revolutionary movement of the Polish working class." In *Prensa Obrera's* view, the Polish bureaucrats are less concerned about turning leadership of the mass movements over "to a political-clerical leadership that, as such, has as its ultimate objective the restoration of capitalism."

For the Polish bureaucrats, according to *Prensa Obrera*, "what is important is to confront the most urgent problem, that is, the danger of a political recomposition of the working class; the question of the limits of interference by the Vatican and imperialism can be the object of political negotiation on a global level between Washington and Moscow."

The Argentine weekly also maintained that the pope's visit was welcomed by the Jaruzelski regime because Jaruzelski hoped that the imperialist bankers and governments would follow in the pope's wake.

It added that "the pope's visit was strictly controlled by the army and the clergy," which *Prensa Obrera* saw as concrete evidence of "the drawing together of the state with the church."

The article stated that "toward the end of his visit the pope finally made an open defense of Solidarity's existence; during the major part of the tour he did not open his mouth on this point. But there is nothing surprising in the pope's conduct: the Vatican is engaged in something much deeper than a hurried defusing of the social revolution. It wants complete political and ideological conquest of the masses through an anticommunist and democratic demagoguery, which is facilitated by the regime's political and moral bankruptcy."

Socialist ACTION

A labor weekly supported by the Socialist League, the British section of the Fourth International. Published in London.

The June 24 issue carried a short news note on the pope's visit to Poland, entitled, "Pope pleads for peace."

"In his visit to Poland," it began, "the Pope has been urging the Polish people to have patience. His speeches have been void of any appeal for the lifting of martial law."

"In this he has followed the line of Cardinal Glemp who has attacked mass mobilisations such as those which took place around May Day this year."

"Nevertheless the occasion of the Pope's visit has been used by Polish workers to relaunch street demonstrations."

Rise of an independent peace movement

Groups demand disarmament, East and West

By Jacqueline Allio

[The following article appeared in the June 17 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Nine East Germans, who belong to the Cottbus Circle (a group attached to the Cottbus Protestant Church), were arrested for divulging information, and branded "traitors to the country." Two others were called in for questioning for "injuring the security of the state and slandering the German Democratic Republic." One of them was placed in a psychiatric hospital.

In plain language, the first group had openly proclaimed its ties with the independent peace movement "Turn the Swords into Plowshares," while the second had refused to participate in military training courses.

These repressive measures say a great deal about the big fear that the East German bureaucrats have of the growing influence of those in East Germany who struggle for peace, while asserting their willingness to organize independently and calling for measures toward immediate disarmament in the East as well as the West.

The peace movement is part of the movement of conscientious objectors that, since the 1960s and with the support of the Protestant churches, has led hundreds and then thousands of youth to refuse military service. It reached a new stage in 1981 with the launching of a petition campaign demanding the establishment of real alternative civilian service. Thousands of young people, not all of whom were committed Christians, signed the petition.

The peace movement spread in the following year, involving reservists who decided to refuse to take part in military training courses, while several hundred women wrote a letter to chief of state Erich Honecker protesting the introduction of a law making them subject to mobilization for active service from age 18 to 50.

'Berlin Appeal'

In January 1982, the Berlin Appeal was jointly launched by the Marxist Robert Havemann (who died the following year) and the Protestant minister Rainer Eppelmann. The Berlin Appeal gave a new dimension to the movement. It called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the soil of East and West Germany, as well as the removal of all nuclear weapons from West Germany and East Ger-

many, as a first step toward a nuclear-free Europe.

Later, a series of meetings of young people was organized under the auspices of churches, with several thousand participants at each of them.

The churches have played a decisive role in pushing forward the conscientious objectors movement and provide a meeting place to the youth who are radicalizing today. Nonetheless, the churches run the risk of seeing themselves rapidly bypassed by a mobilization going much farther than they wish. Before long they could find themselves in as contradictory a situation as that of the Polish church, constantly torn between its desire to remain an authorized intermediary for the regime and the need to adopt more radical positions in order not to lose all prestige in the eyes of the masses.

'For dialogue and peace'

The regime itself uses repression, albeit selectively, while also trying to co-opt the mobilization. For example, the official peace movement has taken up some slogans of the independent peace activists, twisting them in the process. "Turn the swords into plowshares" has become "Swords and plowshares." "Make peace without weapons" became "Make peace against NATO's weapons." The independent movement's explicitly anti-imperialist positions make any claim that they are CIA agents scarcely credible.

In Hungary as well, the bureaucrats have thus far not launched a direct attack on the independent peace groups. The largest of them (the Groups for Dialogue) had a contingent of 500 people last May 7 in the official peace demonstration. "All missiles out of Europe," their banners read.

Today, according to some estimates, these groups encompass about 20,000 sympathizers in numerous cities in Hungary.

The independent Hungarian groups are very hesitant about any idea of real coordination of the movement. The insistence of the Groups for Dialogue on getting recognition as a legal movement, and the distrust they have consistently shown thus far toward the political dissidents, from whom they try to differentiate themselves, reveal certain illusions — to put it mildly — about the real character of the Janos Kadar regime.

But it is highly likely that the ruling minority itself will take on the task of destroying those illusions and unleashing the antibureaucratic dynamic of the movement.

Regarding the Soviet peace activists, they

have clearly stated their agreement with the broad lines of their government's policy, and they do not even call for the "right to work for peace" in structures that are independent of the official movement. From 11 people who signed the appeal of the Group for Peace last June, they grew within four months to nearly 1,000 people who signed a petition supporting their action.

The appeal calls for dialogue among ordinary citizens, because they view negotiations that take place only at the summit level as being of rather dubious effectiveness. This group also takes up the enormity of arms spending, which could be used for social ends to satisfy the needs of the masses.

But their moderate approach did not prevent an immediate response from the bureaucracy: people were removed from their homes, placed in psychiatric hospitals, threatened with loss of their jobs, and were victims of near "accidents." Nonetheless, the independent peace activists pursued their fight. Their determination to address their own government and the public opinion of their own country, rather than foreign public opinion as the Helsinki Group did, sets up a big obstacle to a policy of direct repression by the bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy uses every occasion to divide and isolate the members of this movement. In particular, it recently offered emigration visas to some of the most public leaders in an attempt to get rid of them.

"The fate of the independent peace movement depends in large part on what our comrades in the Western peace movements will do," said Sergei Batovrine speaking for the Soviet group.

The governments of the bureaucratized workers states, and in particular the government of the USSR, must in fact take into account the independent movements in the West. Therefore the attitude that these movements take in support of the peace activists repressed in the East will have a certain weight in the very survival and struggle of the autonomous groups.

Unity in struggle of the movements in the East and West is a decisive question in the anti-war struggle on the world scale. This struggle points up the converging interests of peoples who, in the East as in the West, struggle for the right to self-determination, for the right to decide their own fate. □

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who should be reading
Intercontinental Press?**

Two interviews with Pedro Camejo

[The following two interviews were conducted with Pedro Camejo during a tour of Australia in April. The first is taken from the May 10 issue of *Direct Action*, the weekly newspaper of the Australian Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The second is from the May-

June issue of *Resistance*, the newspaper of the revolutionary socialist youth group Resistance, which is in solidarity with the Australian SWP. The headlines appeared with the original interviews, and the introduction to the first one is taken from *Direct Action*.]

Building a movement to stop U.S. intervention in Central America

Pedro Camejo is a longtime socialist activist in the United States. He was a leader of the anti-Vietnam War movement and presidential candidate for the U.S. Socialist Workers Party in 1976, when he gained 100,000 votes, the largest total for a socialist candidate in the U.S. since the 1930s.

He lived in Managua, Nicaragua, following the victorious revolution in 1979, has visited Cuba on a number of occasions, and is presently involved in attempts to form a mass opposition movement to the U.S. government's intervention in Central America.

This interview was obtained during a recent successful tour of Australia, in which Camejo spoke to several thousands at meetings in Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong, Canberra, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, and Perth.

* * *

Question. Could you tell us about the solidarity movement in the United States? How big is it? What forces are involved? How has it been built?

Answer. The solidarity movement in the United States has arisen very rapidly as the U.S. has escalated its intervention against the growing Central American revolution. It's developed much faster than the movement against the Vietnam war in its early period.

This is due to the movement against the war in Vietnam, which has left an awareness among broad layers of the American people against any further U.S. intervention and has resulted in the radicalisation of very large numbers of people on these issues.

They have formed committees all over the United States to oppose U.S. intervention. There have been demonstrations as large as 100,000 on the issue of El Salvador directly, and there are today many committees sending medical aid, providing information about El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, as well as united protest committees with relationships to the entire area.

Q. How do you think the present solidarity movement relates to the U.S. movement for a freeze on nuclear weapons?

A. The freeze movement is very large and widely supported. There was a demonstration of one million people in [New York City] last June 12. There was a decisive vote against Reagan in a referendum — the largest referendum in the history of the United States — which was held on the freeze. Reagan tried to turn this into a referendum on his war plans. He campaigned against the vote to freeze by saying it threatened United States' plans to increase its armaments and increase its interventionist role.

This referendum showed that the attitude of the American people is very hesitant towards continued armament and that they have a great deal of fear of nuclear war.

These mass demonstrations weaken the imperialists, make it harder for them to intervene. The demonstrations here in Australia, of about 150,000 I think, and the demonstrations of millions in Europe against the missiles create a general context which makes it harder for imperialism to carry out its aggressive policies.

Q. What lessons do you think the last antiwar movement in the U.S., in which you were involved, has for building today's antiwar movement?

A. Well, one of the things that was learned from the antiwar movement of the 60s and early 70s was the importance of bringing about unity on the issue of opposition to the war. In the case of Vietnam the aim was to get the U.S. troops out; in the case of Central America today it would be against intervention, against continued military aid to these dictatorships there and the sending of military supplies as well as troops.

We learned to focus on that and to make it as broad as possible, to make it multi-class.

Part of the lessons we learned from the antiwar movement is that a movement against intervention is built around a democratic demand; it's based on the respect of self-determination of Central America. Therefore it is a multi-class movement. We welcome sections of the bourgeoisie or petty-bourgeoisie that will oppose imperialism in action on this issue.

If we can get the endorsement of clubs of the bourgeois parties or get organisations of doc-

tors or anyone that's willing to participate in and join the struggle, we welcome it. Thus it's multi-class, single-issue united fronts that we are trying to build.

At the same time, there have been committees that have been built for specific tasks such as providing medical aid, or providing clothing — that is, more direct acts of solidarity. There is no contradiction between the two. There's a need for both, because one is a political movement aimed at weakening the imperialist war drive, which has to be as broad as possible, and the other is efforts by more conscious elements who provide the FSLN [Sandinista National Liberation Front] in Nicaragua and the FMLN [Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front] in El Salvador with as much concrete material aid as possible, in such a manner that it reinforces instead of comes into conflict with the political struggle.

Q. How do you think the problems of struggling for unity within the liberation forces in El Salvador relate to the problems of seeking unity within the solidarity movement?

A. I think anyone who knows anything about El Salvador would recognise that if the revolutionary forces in El Salvador do not unify, they will not be able to win. There are today five important organisations and some minor ones inside the FMLN, and even though the *bloque*, the People's Revolutionary Bloc [BPR] is the largest, without the combined effort of the February 28 People's Leagues [LP-28], United People's Action Front [FAPU], the Communist Party of El Salvador, and the Central American Revolutionary Workers' Party [PRTC] — as well as others — they would not have been able to be as effective as they've been.

This has been a very difficult process in El Salvador, as you can imagine, knowing what differences on the left can be like.

The task of the solidarity movement is to be supportive of this process, primarily by giving it support and solidarity.

It must be non-interventionist in respect of this entire movement. We shouldn't try to build a movement in support of one group or another — certainly not to try to play one group off against another — to try to build a movement based on one of the groups inside El Salvador as opposed to another. To do so is damaging to both the solidarity movement and to the actual revolutionary process.

The Cuban Communist Party and the FSLN in Nicaragua have been very supportive of the process of unification that is going on among all revolutionary currents in El Salvador. I think that the entire solidarity movement, or at least the revolutionary currents within the solidarity movement, should follow the same

course as the Cubans and the Nicaraguans.

Q. What would you see as the next step for the world solidarity movement?

A. Well, it's clear that we're at a turning point in the struggle in Central America. Reagan has not been able to break out of his political isolation and isolate the guerrilla movement and the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador and Guatemala.

However, he has been able to pour in an enormous amount of military aid, which is making it extremely difficult. So we can expect Reagan to make moves to try to break out of his international isolation. We can expect him to manoeuvre to try to isolate and if possible divide the Salvadoran revolutionary movement.

This will be his goal in the next period. While he continues to maximise the amount of military escalation he feels he can get away with before public opinion in America, it is not to be ruled out that regardless of public opinion and pressures against him, that in desperation, he may decide to introduce large numbers of American troops. That is never to be ruled out as a possibility.

It's very difficult to ever predict things exactly — and most predictions turn out to be at least in part wrong — but I would say the situation right now is one in which the solidarity movement needs to intensify the pressure to block any attempt by Reagan to isolate the revolution diplomatically, that is to continue to emphasise the fact that the revolutionaries are offering negotiations and to point out that it is the military dictators in this area that are refusing it.

It is Reagan and the military intervention from the United States that is preventing a peaceful solution, which is one in which the workers and peasants of this area would come to power as against military dictatorships. That's the only thing that would really bring any sort of lasting peace to the area.

There is a demonstration called for August 27 in Washington D.C. by Coretta King — Martin Luther King's widow — which has been endorsed by the AFL-CIO [the trade union federation]. It would be my hope that this demonstration would become not only enormous, but may be the largest ever in the history of the United States. We may be talking about millions.

It would be very good if the solidarity movement throughout the United States were to unite their efforts in creating a show of force as part of this demonstration against U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

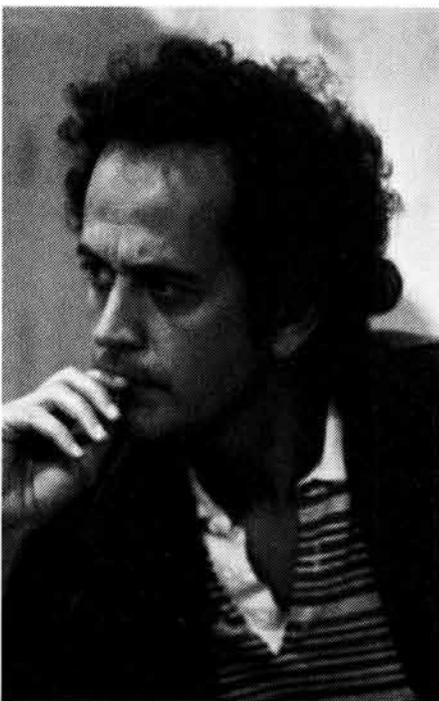
There are many, many demonstrations, tours, and efforts being made in the United States which I hope will continue. Among them is an initiative to place the question of El Salvador on the ballot so that majority opinion in the United States, which is against intervention, can be revealed to the world and to the rest of the population. It's a very good organising tool and at the moment we're working on such a referendum in San Francisco, which

I'm personally involved in.

It's a very good organising tool because you can combine referendums with mass actions and it can be used to heighten interest on the issue in the population as a whole.

Q. In the struggles in Nicaragua and El Salvador significant forces from the church have been allied to the revolutionary movement. Do you think this fact sheds new light on the role of religion in the modern world?

A. Well, I don't know if it's new. I think religions have often played the role of becoming



Della Rossa/Militant

PEDRO CAMEJO

ing an instrument for revolutionary change.

This was the case in the civil war in the United States. Religion both played the role of the ideology of the reactionary ruling class, the slavocracy which was trying to uphold slavery using the bible, and it was also used by the slaves themselves as an inspiration for their struggle.

John Brown, who was one of the early advocates of armed struggle against slavery, one who tried to put it into practice, did so out of religious beliefs.

Today in Nicaragua and El Salvador, many of the lower elements in the church feel that Christianity — if it has any meaning — should aim at helping the poor. They have recognised that those who are really helping the poor are the revolutionaries. They have joined those struggles as religious people.

This is a very positive thing. It is one which all revolutionaries welcome. There is no contradiction between a person being a Christian and participating in these mass revolutionary struggles. On the contrary, there is a phenom-

non which is spreading throughout Latin America, of wings of the Catholic Church beginning to side with the workers and peasants in class conflicts.

Q. Some people have suggested that the FDR's call for negotiations represents an unwillingness to push the struggle to the final victory — that is, that it's a sell-out. Would you like to comment on that?

A. This is completely wrong. The revolutionaries who are leading the struggle there have to decide on tactics. The question of whether you engage in armed struggle or not, when you negotiate or not, are questions that are directly a product of the relationship of forces both within the country and internationally.

In the case of Nicaragua, Somoza was profoundly isolated internationally. This facilitated the victory of the people of Nicaragua. The FSLN made enormous concessions and manoeuvres to be able to maintain that isolation of Somoza and to bring about that victory.

Many of the same people who are critical of the Salvadoran revolutionaries' offer of negotiations were critical of the FSLN establishing a government that included sectors of the bourgeoisie. They were hostile to the FSLN and criticised the FSLN for negotiating and maintaining a posture of willingness to talk to representatives of all types of governments — from Panama, from anywhere: many South American governments, even representatives from the United States.

But their effort to prevent the counterrevolution, to prevent the United States forming a united front of the national bourgeoisies of South America, some reformist elements, and imperialism against them; the continuous effort to divide the bourgeoisie, to divide the forces that were vacillating between the forces of revolution and counterrevolution — is part of the struggle of revolutionaries.

Lenin once said that if you are incapable of taking advantage of differences in the enemy camp, then you will be incapable of success, and have no right to call yourself a revolution-ary.

Today in El Salvador the revolutionaries are not in as good a position as the FSLN was in terms of international solidarity. This is due to a whole series of historical factors. Their call for negotiations is part of the effort to clarify the issues to the people of the world, to put pressure on the enemy forces, to divide from them and neutralise those elements that are not in full agreement with Reagan's war of genocide against the people.

This effort — and they will have to judge how best to do it — is helping the struggle and creating a better relationship of forces. That's my judgment and I think any objective judgment would come to that.

It's certainly the judgment of the revolutionaries there.

Any implication that because they offer to negotiate or are willing to make certain concessions, that therefore they are not truly rep-

representative or do not truly care about the interests of the workers and peasants is ultraleft nonsense — the type of ultraleft nonsense that if followed by anyone leading the masses leads to disaster.

The United States has no right to be in Central America — full-stop. The movement in the United States — to be principled — must demand that the American government totally withdraw.

But this is not in contradiction to being supportive of the diplomatic manoeuvres of the FMLN.

If the FMLN makes a call on the United States to send representatives to a meeting in Costa Rica, or makes a call on United States representatives to respect a decision made by the United Nations, or to participate in a discussion, or whatever, the solidarity movement can be supportive of such a diplomatic struggle, at the same time as maintaining a principled position that the American government has no right to be there, and has no right to negotiate anything about what happens in the future of El Salvador.

Sometimes people fall into formal logic, into formalism, in which they think that any diplomatic move that does not call for complete, total, and unconditional withdrawal, without discussions, negotiations, or anything, of the United States, is automatically a sell-out.

This is ultraleftism, completely erroneous.

An error of this kind was made during the war in Vietnam by myself and others in that we did not see that the diplomatic manoeuvres of the Vietnamese revolutionary forces need not be considered to be automatically in conflict — or necessarily in conflict — with the struggle of the movement in the United States to stand by the right of self-determination for the Vietnamese.

Q. One of the problems that the FDR/FMLN has had is that they haven't been able to win the extent of support from the local capitalists that the FSLN was able to win in Nicaragua. Could you say something about why that situation has developed, and the significance of it?

A. The important thing with the FSLN was not so much that they got capitalists to go along with them in the struggle against Somoza, though there was some value in that. The important thing is that they were able to block the bourgeoisie using its weight, its financial and media power, control of communications, of education, their influence over the middle classes, to try to turn these broader layers against the FSLN.

By dividing the bourgeoisie and neutralising them to a certain extent in the fight against Somoza, they were able more easily to win over and consolidate the population as a whole against U.S. imperialism.

In the case of El Salvador the divisions among the bourgeoisie are less, but then, because of the victory in Nicaragua the unity among the workers and peasants and the mid-

dle classes against this dictatorship is greater.

What you have is a sharper polarisation in El Salvador. History has determined this situation and it is not one which the revolutionaries have under their control. But insofar as they have included in the FDR some sectors of the bourgeoisie that are willing to carry through a decisive armed struggle led by the workers and

The largest movement in the history of humanity

Question. What made you decide to become a socialist in the first place?

Answer. Well, I became a socialist when I was 14, because I happened to come across some material, some pamphlets by Karl Marx.

The first one I ever read was *Wage Labour and Capital*. I didn't understand very much of what he wrote, except that it said something about working people produce the wealth of the world, and as they produce it, they should have a say over what happens to it. I got the feeling that what Marx was for, was a world in which everyone would be equal, and where things would be produced because people need them, not for profit. That seemed to me obvious, it seemed to me so simple.

For me deciding to be a Marxist and a socialist was a very simple decision. I was fortunate, I read this, and I said this is obviously true. Of course everybody then tried to tell me that it wasn't. But I just kept looking at that pamphlet, it kept saying working people produce wealth, they should have a say over it, we should produce for human needs. Nobody else was saying that except Marx, so I thought Marx was right and the rest were wrong.

Q. Obviously there are people all over the world who would agree with you, and who agree with what Marx was writing about over one hundred years ago. Why do you think, given that socialists today say that capitalism is a bankrupt and dying system, why has there not been a worldwide socialist revolution since Marx's day?

A. Well Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 so it's been approximately 140 years. In that 140 years you hear people saying, if Marx was right, why hasn't there been a socialist revolution. This is a very common statement, made all the time.

The obvious answer for anybody who's watched the world, let us say from outer space, would be that there has been and there is, an ongoing worldwide socialist revolution. Since Marx wrote, the socialist movement has become the largest movement in the history of the world.

There are more socialists today in the world, people who call themselves socialist, than any other movement in the history of humanity. Even larger than the followers of Jesus Christ, who became probably the next-largest movement in the history of the world. They took about 1,500 years before they got going.

peasants movement of the FMLN against the American imperialist dictatorship, this is a victory for the revolutionaries. It is a help, it is an aid, it is in no way a problem for the success of a government appearing in El Salvador after this revolution which will be truly representative of the Salvadoran people, that is of the workers and peasants. □

The Marxist movement, the socialist movement, in just 140 years has already ended capitalism in one-third of the world, are in the process of showing that they have majority support in countries like France and Spain — the very centres of the industrial world of capitalism. A majority of the people are favoring socialism in the entire semicolonial world, so that if there was a referendum today in the world, the socialists would win.

If today there was a vote: are you for socialism or capitalism? there's no question the overwhelming majority of the world today favors socialism.

So I think the question of why there hasn't been a world-wide socialist revolution reflects a very short-sighted view of the processes that are in operation. It is very hard to believe that you could end class societies, and end such a social system like capitalism in a span of time shorter than the one we have already had.

After all, at the time that Marx spoke, there was not a single country in the world that was socialist and there wouldn't be a single one until seventy years later. So all these changes that have taken place in terms of the enormous growth of the socialist movement, and the triumph of something like twenty different socialist revolutions has all taken place in less than a century.

And not a single country that has ended capitalism has ever gone back to capitalism. One would expect there would be one or two examples before the entire world is socialist, but what I would say is that if you think about what happened, if one-third of the world went socialist in the last seventy years, then you can expect in the next seventy years probably the rest of the world will go socialist.

Q. Socialist revolutions have occurred then in different countries throughout the world: the Soviet Union, Central America, Mitterrand in France was elected as a socialist. What is the difference between these countries and why is there so much divergence?

A. Well, France is capitalist, and it is individuals who own capital who run the country. There is a government that calls itself socialist, the people want socialism, but this government is made up of people who call themselves socialists that are for capitalism. That's not that confusing, when you think of the nature of the labor movement.

In the trade unions there are many unions

which represent the interests of workers, yet the bureaucrats who run the unions are more interested in protecting the capitalist system than they are in the interests of workers. This phenomena we see in many parts of the world.

When I speak of socialist revolution, I'm talking about those countries that now have planned economies, and do not produce on the basis of profit. Like many unions, once you have a union, a worker's organization, you can also have a bureaucracy, that's what we have in the Soviet Union. You have a planned economy that is in the interests of workers, but the people who run the Soviet Union reflect a privileged bureaucracy, and are not directly representing the interests of the working class.

The reason that there is a great deal of disunity is because the process of going from capitalism to socialism is a very complex one. The capitalists do not wait until all the workers are pro-socialist to begin opposing it. They begin promoting currents that call themselves socialist, but which will act to prevent the workers taking power.

Therefore, it's perfectly understandable, there is a spectrum of opinion among workers, and within the workers movement there are even differences among revolutionaries. You could have one workers organisation that is revolutionary but has one point of view; another that's got another one; another that's really not attempting to bring about socialism, but only to gain some reforms for the workers; others that are completely dishonest and simply looking out for their own privileges; these are the bureaucrats and so on, like in the French Socialist Party.

So we are fragmented because of that. But often it is possible to unite people in struggle.

People are very much united right now in Australia and in the United States to fight for an end to nuclear weapons. That type of unity

is possible around specific issues, and the role of revolutionaries is to try to work with other people, even when they don't agree with them on everything, around the issues where you can find agreement.

In this case, it is the struggle against nuclear weapons, the struggle against war, the struggle against Australian or U.S. intervention in Vietnam or Central America. It is one example where young people have been in the lead of bringing together all forces that are for progress, struggle against imperialism, or racism, or other injustices that are going on.

Q. Some people might say that socialism is really necessary in places like Cuba, Central America, and Eastern Europe — that it could, and will, only occur in places which are poverty-stricken and ruled by ruthless dictatorships. Why is a revolution necessary in places such as Australia and the United States, and how would it be made?

A. Well, we need socialism to end problems like sexism, racism, unemployment, inflation. That is, many of the problems that working people in the United States, in Western Europe, and in Australia, have even if they're not starving.

But we need socialism for another reason, which is a life or death matter. Capitalism has built into it the need to expand markets, to fight each other, and inevitably leads to war. Now with nuclear weapons, capitalism has the potential to destroy the world.

If they don't get around to destroying it with nuclear war, they are very carefully destroying it with pollution. They are destroying the ecology of the world, they are destroying the ocean, the air, they are destroying people's health with all the scientific inventions which they make for the purpose of profits, and not for the interests of people's welfare. Since they put profits above human needs, they are today poisoning us with the very food we eat.

More and more we discover that people are dying now from what capitalism does. A hundred years ago there was almost no cancer; now cancer is the first or second most frequent cause of death. Heart attacks, high blood pressure, mental illness are extremely widespread, and growing. These tensions are created by irrational society, where production is based not on people's needs, where jobs are not built around the person, but the person must be built around the job, where your education is not geared to your development, but geared to making you a piece of a machine.

With all these things happening, socialism becomes more and more a necessity for humanity and working people in the advanced industrial countries to be really human. That is to be able to live a life without tension, a life where they don't have to fear unemployment, a life where they can maintain a standard of living without having to fear that it will suddenly begin to drop because of unemployment or because of inflation. And also without having the fear that they will be involved in a war, or that the next day because they eat something

or drink water that they're going to get sick and die.

All these things come together with the fact that we have to go beyond a system where a few individuals make the decision on what will be produced and how, to one in which the people who actually *do* the work to produce have the final say over what will happen economically.

That can only be established by taking the power and control out of the hands of the few rich people who decide what happens in the economy, and putting it into an economic parliament based on the working people, democratically electing their representatives to make the economic decisions which effect their lives.

Q. A lot of people believe that socialism will mean an end to individual freedom. What do you think socialism means in relation to that?

A. Socialism means the beginning of individual freedom. You don't have much freedom when you live in a world in which you have to go begging for work, where you do not have the right to work, where you do not have an assurance that you will have an income, where you do not have the freedom to have a free education, not only through college but for the rest of your life.

In societies like Australia and the United States, we now have enough wealth to guarantee people the right to go to college their whole life. College should not just be for four years, and it should not only be for the middle class, it should be for everyone.

Socialist society would mean real development, intellectual development, for everybody to have hobbies, hobbies in the sense of a very creative and productive work in their lives. This can mean anything, it can be a hobby of a scientific enquiry, it can be a hobby in computers, you can have a hobby in sports or in music, or in arts, because every single person deserves the right to have more than to simply be a unit of production, than simply someone who goes to work in a factory eight hours a day.

A capitalist society gears your whole life around that. This society doesn't open up avenues for people's *real* development, culturally, intellectually, or physically. The whole movement for jogging, for instance, is an example of an attempt by society to break out of structures, capitalist, class-oriented structures, which do not allow even the human body to function properly.

For real individual freedom, you have to get out of a society in which you have no control over your life and your environment.

The anti-socialist propaganda tries to claim that if we are all equal materially, if we eat the same basically — that is, we don't have one person starving while another person has an enormous amount of food (and we can produce now enough food for everyone to eat) — so, that if we don't compete for who gets to eat, then somehow therefore we are all the same. That's ridiculous!

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The fact that we won't have clothes that cost \$10,000, like what the queen wears, or what Nancy Reagan wears, doesn't mean that we'll all be wearing blue. Most likely in fact, under socialism, an enormous number of people will simply make their own clothes, because it will be fun to do.

People will not have these hang-ups — be competing with each other — but people will be being more creative, people will be *more* different than ever. Today we have housing developments, where they make every home exactly the same. Under socialism, the average working person will probably want to build their own place where they live in their own way. There would be an absolute explosion of individualism and human freedom. That's our concept of socialism.

Precisely because it will increase productivity, it will make the whole society more efficient, and it will make it possible for each individual to have much greater choices of what they do with their life.

Q. The revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean have been quite violent — a lot of death and destruction. Do you think that is how a revolution would look in this country or the U.S., or how do you think it would occur?

A. In almost every country in the world now, the working people are the majority. In countries like Australia and the United States, they are the overwhelming majority. Therefore there would be no need for us, nor do we support, the use of violence. We believe that we can establish socialism completely peacefully, without any problems, without any fighting, without any violence.

There is only one minor, small, problem. That is that the capitalists don't agree with us.

They don't accept the idea that if the majority of the people, if the majority of the entire

nation, say if 80 per cent of the United States decide they would prefer socialism, or Australia decides, unfortunately the capitalists, who only number a couple of per cent, will not agree to it.

They will not promise not to be violent — they are violent every day. When there are strikes, they send the police out, and the national guard out, to break strikes.

When the people of El Salvador, and the overwhelming majority of Nicaragua wanted change, they sent armies in to kill them.

So what we have is the capitalists, a small minority, that will still not allow the majority to democratically make changes, and they are prepared to use violence.

What we socialists say is that the majority has the right to defend their decisions. We are not for violence, we do not want violence, but we simply predict that the capitalists have shown, over and over again, that they will not accept democratic change. Therefore we warn that to make social change it will be necessary to defend our decisions, decisions of the majority of working people.

That is the only way a socialist change could come in the U.S. or in Australia: when the majority definitively want it, it will be necessary to defend our decision with arms.

That's very unfortunate, but there is nothing we can do about it, it is out of our power. . . . The fact that the ruling classes, both in Australia and in the United States, do not accept majority decisions against them, like they did not in Vietnam, where they went in and napalmed and bombed. They dropped more bombs on Vietnam than during the entire Second World War, both on European and Pacific theatres, because the people of Vietnam would not go along with minority rule, would not accept that a small handful of capitalists would run Vietnam, and the U.S.

and other foreign countries would have the definitive influence.

So if they were willing to do that to Vietnam, you can imagine what they will try to do to the people of Australia or the United States, if they decide, like the people of Vietnam, to have a planned economy instead of a capitalist economy. That is why we say that revolutions are violent, lead to violent struggles, it is because the ruling class, the minority, will not accept a democratic change.

Q. If you were 14 years old again today would you choose to do the same thing — be a professional revolutionary socialist? Do young people have a role to play today in making a revolution?

A. Yes, of course. Every generation is different. The world keeps changing and the youth are always growing up in a new situation. Since the world has been moving forward, in terms of technology and knowledge, every generation tends to be smarter than the last one. Youth seems to be older when they're young than before, and it's because of this continuing change.

The worst thing that happens in our society — although it is true that through the years you learn more — is that you also lose your ability to grasp and understand, because so many things you are used to assuming and taking for granted begin to change and you tend to go wrong. As people get old they tend to go wrong and as a person you can't help getting old. Quite a few efforts have been made on that. Some day, possibly somebody may figure out a way, but at the moment there is no solution to this problem.

If I went back to being 14, I would want to be like 14-year-olds are today, because I think they are qualitatively more intelligent and more capable than we were. □

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One year of frozen wages

Federation of Labour campaigns for \$20 raise

By Eileen Morgan

[The following article appeared in the July 1 issue of the New Zealand weekly *Socialist Action*, the newspaper reflecting the views of the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The results of the wage freeze have been "extremely satisfying," Prime Minister [Robert] Muldoon announced on June 22 — the first anniversary of the freeze.

Muldoon claimed that those disadvantaged by the wage freeze were in a "limited area" only. "If there is an overall reduction in purchasing power, the amount is quite small and it is a very small price to pay for a return to stability," he said.

The effects of the wage freeze have been less "satisfying" for working people in this country, however. As Wellington trade unionist Rob Campbell explained in the June 22 *Evening Post*: "The rich get richer while the poor get poorer under this freeze."

The truth of this is clearly shown in the most recent figures on real disposable income (that is, after allowing for tax and inflation) released by the Department of Statistics.

In the year from March 1982 to March 1983, those on annual incomes below \$9,700 [US\$1 = NZ\$1.50] were 4.2 percent worse off, those between \$9,700 and \$13,200 were 3 percent worse off, and those between \$13,200 and \$16,500 slipped 2.7 percent.

By contrast, those whose annual incomes were between \$16,500 and \$21,200 were 1.4 percent better off and those earning more than \$21,200 benefited by 8.9 percent.

The first year of the wage freeze has also seen the number of people either unemployed or on special work schemes rise by over 32,000.

At the FOL [Federation of Labour] conference at the beginning of May, the delegates launched a campaign to win a \$20 a week rise for all wage earners and beneficiaries — something which would especially benefit low income earners and the unemployed. A campaign of industrial action has been launched to back up this claim.

In Auckland alone, the last two weeks of June have seen protest actions from drivers, store workers, the Paint and Varnish Workers Union, the Drug and Chemical Workers Union, the Auckland branch of the National Union of Railwaymen, and Port of Auckland clerical workers.

On June 16, waterside workers held a national 48-hour stoppage in support of the \$20 claim — the first national watersiders' stoppage since 1974.

The government and employers have been quick to denounce this campaign and claim that it is not supported by the majority of New Zealand workers.

In a speech given on June 20, Employers Federation president Garry Tait claimed that "The highest paid elitist workers are causing the most strife in the most visible areas. Many of the worthy but lower paid workers are managing pretty well in these difficult times and cause little problem."

Speaking to the Counties Association annual conference in Rotorua on June 14, Muldoon said, "It seems clear that the great bulk of moderate trade unionists accept the freeze as being in their own best interests, as it undoubtedly is, and the union leadership should accept this."

Workers in Rotorua and surrounding areas obviously did not agree. The June 23 *New Zealand Herald* reports a series of 24-hour stoppages in the region as part of the "fortnight of action" against the wage freeze called by the Bay of Plenty Trades Council.

Those participating included timber workers, members of the New Zealand Workers Union, Rotorua District Council drivers and labourers, and railway tradesmen in Rotorua, Tokoroa and Putaruru.

At the same time as they claim that the FOL campaign is receiving little support, the bosses have moved to take action against protesting

workers through the use of suspensions, lock-outs, and anti-union laws.

At a press conference called on June 27, the president of the Auckland Employers Association, Peter Johnson, described the FOL campaign as a Socialist Unity Party [SUP — the Communist Party] plot to make New Zealand a communist country.

"I suspect this campaign is being directed by [Auckland Trades Council president Bill] Andersen, who is the spokesman for the SUP," he said.

The capitalist news media has played an important role in backing up the bosses' anti-worker campaign. Reports on the Auckland protests against the freeze, for example, have ranged from describing them as "empty gestures" to denouncing the "industrial turmoil" they have caused.

In reality, it is the bosses who are responsible for the "industrial turmoil." In response to bans on deliveries of cement and sugar in Auckland, they suspended hundreds of workers and threatened to seek court injunctions.

The possibility of calling on the government to take action against striking workers through the Commerce Act or the wage freeze regulations was also raised.

As Bill Andersen told the June 24 *Auckland Star*: "The very fact employers are talking about this proves the campaign is not a fizzer."

"We've told workers that every action meets with a reaction. We expect employers to use injunctions and damages claims and things like that.

"The law provides these things for employers and hardship provision for price rises but there is no law providing for wage increases." □

U.S. ban on travel to Cuba reimposed

The U.S. Supreme Court reimposed the Reagan administration's ban on travel by U.S. citizens to Cuba July 6. The ban, which had been overturned by an appeals court on May 15, was initially imposed by the Reagan administration last year as part of its accelerating war drive in Central America and the Caribbean.

The Supreme Court justices decided to grant the Reagan administration's request for a stay of the appeals court ruling. The stay will remain in effect until they decide whether to hear the government's appeal of that ruling. Since the Supreme Court has now adjourned, this won't happen until October at the earliest, when the court's new term begins.

Lawyers challenging the travel ban expect that next fall the court will schedule the case for a full hearing and let the travel ban continue in effect until a final decision has been reached, a process that would take at least several more months.

The ban on travel to Cuba came in the midst of an anti-Cuba campaign that is escalating today. In an attempt to justify its war in El Sal-

vador and its efforts to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, the U.S. government has constantly pointed to "Cuban subversion" as the source of the revolutionary upsurge in Central America and the Caribbean.

It is the example that Cuba has set by establishing a government that puts human needs before profits that U.S. imperialism fears. The U.S. rulers do not want the American people to see the truth about the Cuban revolution with their own eyes, because that truth would be a powerful weapon in the fight against the U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean.

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