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CRIMINAL ATTACK AGAINST THE PLO



Yassir Arafat

Grenada

'Under the Boot of U.S. Imperialism'



Farrell Dobbs
1907-1983

**Farrell Dobbs
on the Birth
of the U.S.
Communist
Movement**

**Nicaraguans
Gearing Up
to Resist
U.S. Invasion**

Nicaragua, El Salvador loom as Reagan's next targets

By Steve Wattenmaker

With U.S. military occupation forces patrolling the streets of Grenada, Washington is now concentrating on preparations for new invasions in Central America.

What has blocked direct U.S. military intervention thus far is the fact that the Sandinista government in Managua has armed and mobilized its people to defend their revolution. In El Salvador the Faribundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) has overwhelming popular support among the workers and the peasants and has thousands of battle-experienced guerrilla fighters under arms.

The expectation that any war against the peoples of Central America will be long and costly has given Washington pause for consideration. It is aware that opposition to a new Vietnam War still runs deep among U.S. working people.

Despite Washington's caution, the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran masses have no illusions about what the future holds. They know an invasion is imminent. They know there are some 25,000 U.S. troops on "maneuvers" in Central America, ready to go into battle. They know that the U.S. Southern Command based in Panama is actively coordinating plans for the Guatemalan, Honduran, and Salvadoran armies to spearhead the attack.

The General Command of the FMLN issued a communiqué November 5 warning that Guatemalan and Honduran troops were already massing at five locations along El Salvador's border. (See story on page 708.) A U.S. Navy task force of nine warships has begun "exercises" off the Cuban coast.

The U.S. invasion of Grenada was itself a crucial step in imperialism's preparations for all-out war in Central America. White House efforts to portray the invasion as a humanitarian effort to "rescue" U.S. medical students and "liberate" Grenadians from a Soviet-Cuban takeover had some success in swaying public opinion. U.S. working people were barged daily with displays of captured "Cuban arms" and images of grateful medical students kissing U.S. soil.

This enabled Democratic Party liberals to jettison their initial weak protests and join in bipartisan support for the invasion.

At the same time, the relative success of the invasion has helped Washington to pick up the tempo of its preparations for a similar action against Nicaragua.

Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger said November 6 that a request from U.S. allies in Central America to launch a Grenada-style invasion of Nicaragua would pose a question "we would have to confront as it arose."

Asked the same day about a possible inva-

sion of Nicaragua, Senate Majority leader Howard Baker said, "I don't rule that out. I want our potential adversaries, those who are trying to export mischief into Central America, to no longer assume they can do so without a price."

Following Weinberger's and Baker's remarks, the administration leaked details of a secret October 23 meeting among the military chiefs of Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama. Under Pentagon sponsorship, the four regimes have recently reactivated an anti-communist military alliance originally concluded in the early 1960s — the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA).

One of the recommendations at the October 23 meeting, according to a report quoted in the November 11 *New York Times*, was to study whether "legal instruments" may "permit the security and armed forces of Panama and the other Central American countries to participate in the action for the pacification of Nicaragua."

Another recommendation coming out of the meeting called for "direct participation by the United States, with all its resources" to assist in such an invasion.

Asked about the *Times* report on November 13, Reagan's national security adviser Robert McFarlane responded:

"I think to suggest that they are plotting some kind of invasion is a little overdrawn. Their talks with each other are devoted to how

they can be supportive of one another." However, if CONDECA did launch an invasion of Nicaragua and called on the U.S. government for support, McFarlane said, "yes, we support them."

Regardless of these efforts to accustom working people to the prospect of a new Vietnam in Central America, actual U.S. military intervention will give rise to a new and powerful antiwar movement, reaching deep into the American working class. The invasion of Grenada brought thousands of people into the streets. And some 25,000 gathered in Washington, D.C., November 12 to demand "U.S. out of Central America and the Caribbean."

Moreover, the peoples of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cuba have vowed to fight off Washington's aggression however much military might it deploys in its attempt to roll back the socialist revolution in the hemisphere.

At the end of an editorial responding to Reagan's threats against Cuba, the November 3 Cuban daily *Granma* wrote:

"The Pentagon mistakenly calculated that they could wrap up their invasion of Grenada in four hours. In order to reestablish Yankee domination of Cuba four days would not be enough — nor four weeks, nor four months, nor four years, nor four centuries.

"We face the dangerous times we live in with confidence and serenity. We know the future belongs to socialism alone, and not to the decadent, irrational, and savage world dominated by Ronald Reagan, who has set himself up as world cop.

"The North American army that today is so abusive and swaggering in Grenada is the same army that dangled panic-stricken from the last helicopters fleeing Saigon as it was liberated by the Vietnamese fighters." □

U.S., Israel threaten Syria

By Fred Murphy

Having reached an impasse in its effort to consolidate a stable, proimperialist regime in Lebanon, the Reagan administration has stepped up its threats of military action against Syria. The aid Syria provides to opponents of the U.S.-backed Gemayel regime in Lebanon and the continued presence of 50,000 Syrian troops in that country are major obstacles to Washington's plans.

On November 13, U.S. National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane asserted Washington's right to send its military aircraft over Syrian positions in Lebanon with impunity. Pointedly referring to the U.S. invasion of Grenada, McFarlane warned that Washington "has made clear recently in another context — in the Caribbean — that we take very seriously threats to American lives."

When reporters asked McFarlane if this meant Washington was now "going to shoot back at the Syrians," the Reagan aide refused

to give a specific answer, referring only to "our serious commitment to Lebanon."

These new threats came as the Reagan administration was moving to strengthen its military collaboration with the Israeli government, whose forces continue to occupy large areas of southern Lebanon. Washington's move proves once again that the Israeli state remains the only reliable bastion of imperialist domination in the Middle East.

The Reagan administration had been obliged to take its distance from Israel last year in face of the worldwide revulsion provoked by the U.S.-backed invasion of Lebanon and the massacres of Palestinians that followed. The new, public rapprochement between Washington and Tel Aviv comes as the Lebanese regime, imposed at the point of Israeli bayonets, has had to make political concessions to its Syrian-backed opponents.

In the first round of Lebanese "national reconciliation" talks that ended November 4,

President Amin Gemayel agreed to set aside last May's Israeli-Lebanese accord, which legitimized Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and called for the loosening of Lebanon's ties with the rest of the Arab world. Washington and Tel Aviv had vigorously opposed any substantive changes in the May agreement.

Gemayel's concessions were followed by a flurry of reports in the U.S. news media on what the November 8 *Washington Post* termed "a major shift in the [Reagan] administration's attitude toward high-visibility strategic cooperation with Israel." The *Post* noted that this was "a marked reversal of the arms-length posture . . . since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon."

U.S. military aid to Israel is to be stepped up, and the November 1981 accord on "strategic cooperation" between the two countries is to be reinstated. (Washington suspended the pact in December 1981 to show disapproval of Israel's annexation of occupied Syrian territory on the Golan Heights.)

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir will visit Washington at the end of November, the first such trip by an Israeli ruler since the invasion of Lebanon. According to the November 14 *New York Times*, the Reagan-Shamir talks are expected to "lead to increased cooperation in a variety of fields, including concerted action in Lebanon, new intelligence-sharing agreements and American financing of Israeli technical [i.e., military] aid projects to United States allies in Central America and Africa."

The immediate target is the Syrian force in Lebanon, however. "Damascus has to be made aware again of Israeli military power," a top U.S. official was paraphrased as saying by the November 7 *New York Times*.

The Zionist rulers are ready to oblige. Israeli Foreign Ministry official David Kimche told reporters in Geneva November 5 that Israel was ready to "confront" Syria in Lebanon, and that if Damascus thought otherwise it was "misreading" the mood of the Israeli government.

"We have taken very drastic actions at times against terrorism," Kimche declared. "One example is our entry into Lebanon."

U.S.-Israeli plans for Lebanon do "not preclude either joint or separate military action against the 50,000 Syrian troops," the *New York Times* reported November 6.

On November 5, supposedly retaliating for an explosion that killed 28 Israeli troops at a military headquarters in Tyre, Lebanon, Israeli jets bombed several Lebanese villages in Syrian-controlled areas, killing some 60 persons.

Israeli forces also sealed off all bridges over the Awali River, the northern limit of Israeli-occupied Lebanon. Thousands of residents of the south were blocked from returning to their homes. "It's a de facto annexation," a Lebanese student at one of the Awali bridges told a reporter from the Paris daily *Libération*. "Our country stops at the Awali. Beyond it are the occupied territories. They have taken the

[Tyre] attack as a pretext to cut our country in two."

Resistance to the Israeli occupation is mounting in southern Lebanon. The Tyre explosion was but the most spectacular example of the armed opposition the occupiers must confront; there have been more than 70 attacks on Israeli forces in the south since early September. A general strike called for November 8 to protest the closing of the Awali bridges shut down all shops, commercial establishments, schools and public offices in southern Lebanon.

The visible hatred the Lebanese people feel

for the occupiers is evidently having an impact among the Israeli troops who must serve in the south. When Shamir visited Israeli units there November 8, one soldier told him, "I feel like an actor in a movie about the Germans in Europe during World War II or a Russian in Afghanistan." The soldier said his hope was "that more and more soldiers will refuse to serve in Lebanon and that they will put more pressure on the Government to pull out entirely."

Such sentiments will continue to be voiced both in Israel and in the United States as casualties from the joint intervention in Lebanon mount. □

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Criminal blows to the PLO

Syrian regime doing imperialism's dirty work

By Fred Murphy

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is facing the most concerted attempt in its history to splinter and destroy it as an independent, united organization fighting for the national self-determination of the Palestinian people.

The military assaults launched at the end of October against refugee camps in northern Lebanon were the latest blows in a sustained offensive against the Palestinian movement from several different quarters. This onslaught began with the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. It continued with attempts by Washington to force the PLO to capitulate politically. And it is now marked by the bourgeois Syrian regime's attempt to shatter the PLO as a cohesive force and falsely present a rump group under Syrian influence as the true representative of the Palestinian people.

By bringing massive Syrian firepower to bear on behalf of this minority of PLO renegades, President Hafez al-Assad is performing a service for U.S. imperialism and for the Israeli rulers. He is thereby weakening Syria's own ability to stand up to the growing threats of U.S. and Israeli military aggression. (See page 670.)

Centrality of the Palestinian struggle

What is behind this drive to destroy the PLO?

The Israeli settler state has been the cornerstone of imperialist domination of the entire Middle East from the moment of its establishment through war in 1948. The Palestinian people, driven out of their homeland or converted into pariahs inside the state of Israel, have been fighting ever since for their national self-determination. Their struggle represents a permanent challenge to the imperialist-imposed status quo. A central goal of Washington and Tel Aviv, therefore, has been the destruction of the PLO.

As a united, representative, and combative organization fighting for Palestinian rights, the PLO is a historic conquest of the Arab peoples as a whole and is recognized by them as such. The PLO has not only waged a military struggle against the Zionist oppressors but has also carried on a worldwide political and diplomatic effort, gaining immense prestige and the sympathy of working people, including in the United States and even among a small but growing number of Israeli Jews.

Because of its independent, revolutionary-nationalist character, the PLO has also been a thorn in the side of the Arab bourgeois re-

gimes. It has been challenged repeatedly not only by conservative and openly proimperialist rulers like Jordan's King Hussein and the Saudi royal family, but also by governments that take a nationalist stance and have come into sharp conflict with imperialism, such as those in Syria and Libya.

The Palestinian struggle against Israel continually generates popular support and militancy among the Arab masses, posing for all these regimes the threat of the revolutionary mobilization of the workers and peasants. Hence they have always tried to control, housebreak, or destroy the PLO.

The PLO and the Arab regimes

When the PLO was founded in 1964, it was wholly under the control of Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser. At the time, Nasser was widely looked to for leadership throughout the Arab world owing to his seizure of the Suez Canal and other radical measures. Nasser set up the PLO to help him use the Palestine issue as an adjunct of Egyptian foreign policy.

After the defeat of Egypt and other Arab countries in the 1967 war with Israel, the Palestinian people began to look for an alternative. Radical nationalist currents like Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) gained wide support. By 1969 these groups had wrested control of the PLO away from Nasser and converted it into an independent, fighting organization.

As a secular leadership calling for a democratic Palestine where Arabs and Jews could live together in peace, the new PLO gained the support of Palestinians of all religious faiths and exposed the falsity of Israeli charges that the Palestinian struggle was a racist, anti-Semitic cause.

The PLO's growing military confrontation with Israel made Jordan's King Hussein more and more uncomfortable; it was in Jordan that the PLO was largely based. In September 1970, Hussein launched an all-out war against the Palestinians, massacring thousands. Most of the PLO's fighters were finally forced to leave Jordan.

The PLO's main base of operations against Israel then shifted to Lebanon. In 1975-76, right-wing forces there tried to repeat King Hussein's bloody success. Allied with Muslim and leftist Lebanese forces, the PLO counterattacked. It was on the verge of victory when Syrian troops intervened at the request of the besieged proimperialist government and restored the status quo ante. Washington expressed its approval of the Syrian occupation, and Israel put up no opposition.

Despite the Syrian presence, the PLO was

still able to carry on the anti-Israeli struggle from Lebanon. In 1978 and again in 1982, the Israeli army invaded Lebanon with the aim of wiping out the PLO. Each time — and especially during last year's massive Israeli blitzkrieg — the Arab regimes, including Syria and Libya, stayed on the sidelines while the Palestinian and Lebanese people resisted the Zionist aggression despite overwhelming odds.

The PLO under siege

Ever since Israeli troops and armor smashed across the Lebanese border in June 1982, the PLO has been under siege. First it was forced to retreat from its positions in southern Lebanon. Then, after heroically withstanding the 88-day Israeli siege of West Beirut, the PLO fighters decided to withdraw from the Lebanese capital to prevent further civilian casualties in a battle they could not win.

Israel's massive military onslaught was capped with the massacre of hundreds of Palestinians and Lebanese Muslims at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in September 1982. There then followed a diplomatic and propaganda offensive by U.S. imperialism aimed at splitting the PLO or compelling its leaders to recognize Israel and abandon the struggle for an independent Palestinian state. But the PLO refused to capitulate. Its principled stand was reaffirmed at the February 1983 meeting of the Palestine National Council, the PLO's parliament-in-exile.

The imperialist news media made a series of false claims about PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat in the aftermath of the withdrawal from Beirut — that he was about to subordinate the PLO to Jordan's King Hussein, recognize Israel, and cut a deal with Washington. Such charges were also leveled by the Syrian, Libyan, and Iranian governments. Certain military commanders in Fatah, the largest grouping in the PLO, seized on these groundless claims to launch a campaign against Arafat, who had just been reaffirmed as chairman by the Palestine National Council.

In May, Fatah military units mutinied in Syrian-occupied areas of Lebanon under the leadership of Col. Saed Musa.

Syrian regime fuels mutiny

The mutiny failed to generate broader support within the PLO. At this point, however, the Syrian regime sent its troops into action on the side of the mutineers. On June 24, PLO Chairman Arafat was expelled from Syria. Despite their calls for democratic decision-making within the organization, the mutineers welcomed this interference in the PLO's internal

affairs while publicly denying Syria's involvement.

The Fatah leadership had made a series of attempts to respond positively to the rebels' professed concerns. "First they said they wanted a meeting of the Fatah Central Committee, so we had that and they did not come," Arafat said 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."

The leaders of two other key PLO components, George Habash of the PFLP and Nayef Hawatmeh of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), likewise attempted to resolve the dispute and strengthen the PLO's unity. Arafat welcomed these moves, but the rebels turned a deaf ear.

PLO leaders visited Moscow and Havana in July, seeking help in mediating the internal dispute. According to a number of reports, the Cuban leadership tried several times to arrange talks between the factions in conflict as well as between PLO Chairman Arafat and Syrian President Assad. The mutineers and Assad rebuffed the Cuban efforts.

In August, the Palestine Central Council, which is made up of representatives from all the component organizations of the PLO, met in Algiers. Attended by 79 of its 81 members, the council sought to address any legitimate concerns raised by the Fatah rebels by again condemning Reagan's so-called peace plan and by setting up committees to investigate the withdrawal from Beirut and the PLO's financial affairs. At the same time, the Central Council reaffirmed its support for Arafat and appointed committees charged with rebuilding Syrian-PLO relations and securing a cease-fire in the Bekaa Valley clashes.

Colonel Musa and the mutineers rejected all the Central Council's decisions out of hand.

Palestinian masses back Arafat

Meanwhile, the Palestinian masses were making their position on the dispute crystal clear. "The support for Mr. Arafat on the West Bank is startling in its unanimity," the *Christian Science Monitor* reported July 1. "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."

Such support remains solid. Thousands of Palestinians demonstrated November 7 at Bir Zeit University near Ramallah in the West Bank. Another such protest took place the next day in the occupied Gaza Strip. Shopkeepers in East Jerusalem and Nablus closed their doors to protest the attacks on the PLO in northern Lebanon.

A poll conducted by the East Jerusalem newspaper *Al Fajr* has found 93 percent of West Bank Arabs supporting Arafat.

The latest and most serious stage of the conflict began September 24 when PLO units loyal to Arafat were driven out of the Bekaa Valley by Syrian forces. They managed to es-

cape to the Nahr al Bared and Baddawi refugee camps on Lebanon's northern coast near Tripoli.

Beginning October 24, the camps were attacked by PLO mutineers backed up by 12,000 Syrian troops and some 350 Syrian tanks and artillery pieces. Libyan military units were also reportedly involved in the attacks.

The fighting went on for more than two weeks. The outnumbered and outgunned PLO fighters were forced to retreat from one camp but held their ground at the other in face of sustained artillery and rocket fire by the Syrians. Hundreds of unarmed Palestinian residents of the camps were killed or wounded by the indiscriminate Syrian shelling.

A shaky cease-fire went into effect on November 9 and was holding as of November 13. Assad apparently yielded to diplomatic pressure from Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf regimes that provide much financial aid to Syria. The Soviet government, which lends considerable military assistance to Syria, also expressed concern over the Tripoli fighting.

Blows open way for imperialists

Syrian president Assad's aim in the criminal attacks on the Palestinian resistance has been to cripple the PLO and transform the Palestine question into a bargaining chip to wrest concessions from U.S. imperialism and from Israel. In particular, Assad would like to regain Syrian territory on the Golan Heights occupied by Israel in 1967 and annexed by it in 1981. He would also like Washington to sanction Syrian influence in Lebanon.

Syria has every right to negotiate for the return of its stolen territory and to try to reduce the imperialist penetration of Lebanon. But by stabbing the Palestinians in the back, Assad is cutting his own throat.

Recent history proves this to the hilt: King Hussein smashed the PLO in Jordan in 1970, but this had zero effect on the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, seized from Jordan in 1967. Assad blocked a victory for Lebanese progressive and Palestinian forces in 1976, but Israel kept the Golan and negotiated a separate peace with Egypt. At present, Washington and Tel Aviv are smiling on Syria's anti-PLO drive, but rather than offering Damascus concessions they are stepping up joint military pressure to force Syria out of Lebanon altogether.

The U.S. and Israeli rulers are now hoping, moreover, that Assad's attacks on the PLO will open the way for a Camp David-style sell-out by King Hussein's regime in Jordan. The November 8 *New York Times* found it a "hopeful sign" that "Mr. Arafat's loss of power may free conservative, pro-Jordanian West Bank leaders to join hands with King Hussein and negotiate with Israel."

The imperialists hope also that confusion and demoralization sown by the blows to the PLO will affect not only the Palestinian masses but all the Arab peoples, weakening resistance to imperialist domination in Lebanon, Libya, and elsewhere, including Syria. They also seek to chip away at the high international prestige

gained by the Palestinian people and their leadership during the past decade. "The problem with Arafat," a high Israeli official told *Le Monde* November 9, "is that he had acquired international stature. His successor, whoever he is, won't be able to play the same role."

PLO weakened, but not destroyed

Big blows have already been dealt to the PLO in the period since June 1982. What was begun by the Israelis and their U.S. backers has been carried forward through the criminal complicity or acquiescence of the Arab regimes. After being driven from Jordan and Egypt in the 1970s, the PLO can no longer operate independently from Syria or Lebanon either. The aim of denying any base adjacent to Israel to the authentic representatives of the Palestinian people has largely been achieved. The fighting spirit of the masses in the occupied West Bank, Gaza Strip, and southern Lebanon is likely to suffer as a result.

While the Syrian-backed rebels clearly represent only a small minority within the PLO as a whole, the basis has nonetheless been created for the imperialists, the Zionists, and the Arab regimes to claim that no united, representative leadership of the Palestinian people exists any longer.

But the PLO has not been destroyed. Its organized leadership bodies remain intact and have repeatedly rejected the tendentious claims of the mutineers. Whatever their political or tactical differences with Arafat, the DFLP and PFLP stand firmly beside him and the majority of Fatah in defending the PLO's unity and independence of decision-making.

International solidarity with the PLO and the Palestinian struggle is extensive and deeply rooted. The Israeli state is condemned as the brutal oppressor of the Palestinians not only in the semicolonial world but increasingly among working people in the imperialist countries as well. Fresh proof of this was offered in early September at the United Nations conference on Palestine, held in Geneva. Representatives from nearly 100 countries reaffirmed the right of Palestinians to self-determination and to their "own independent state in Palestine."

The conference opened August 29 with a message from PLO Chairman Arafat in which he restated the PLO's opposition to President Reagan's "peace plan" (which the mutineers falsely accused Arafat of accepting). Reagan's plan "clearly denied the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state," Arafat said. "Is this not detrimental to the peace for which he is calling?"

Arafat also had an answer for those who are predicting the PLO's demise. "Despite the continuation of conspiracies in and outside our occupied land," he said, "events during the last decade have proved that all schemes and plots against our just cause were doomed to failure and incapable of liquidating our people's revolution and the PLO, the leader of their struggle, in the face of the will of our people and their sacrifices and resolve to continue the march until victory." □

U.S. forces impose reign of repression

Hundreds of activists thrown into detention camps

By Ernest Harsch

Grenada is today suffering under "the heavy boot of U.S. imperialism," Kendrick Radix, a close colleague of slain Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, declared in the Grenadian capital of St. George's in early November.

"The presence of foreign forces on our soil violates Grenadian sovereignty [and] international law," he said.

George Louison — who, like Radix, had been a minister in the Bishop-led government — likewise condemned the invasion, calling it "an illegal international crime."

Both revolutionary leaders have demanded the immediate withdrawal of U.S. and Caribbean troops from Grenada.

Radix, Louison, and others like them are the surviving voices of the Grenada revolution. They represent the political heritage of the workers and farmers government led by Maurice Bishop that was toppled in a coup just prior to the U.S. invasion.

Despite Washington's slaughter and the continued occupation of Grenada by thousands of U.S. troops, the voices of these Grenadian revolutionaries have not been silenced. But one way or another, Washington will try to do so.

On November 11, Radix was detained for the second time by U.S. troops and held for 20 hours. According to Capt. George Wright, a military spokesman, Radix was "an instigator in spreading bad will among the people in public places."

President Reagan and other U.S. officials talk about "restoring democracy" in Grenada and preparing for elections. But such repression is the true face of their rule. Their goal is to sweep away all vestiges of the revolution and reimpose imperialism's brutal domination over the country. That can only be achieved by installing a puppet regime, violating the Grenadian people's democratic rights, and rolling back the gains that Grenada's workers and farmers won in the four and a half years after the triumph of the revolution in March 1979.

Mass round-ups

Even before the U.S. troops had overcome the bulk of the armed resistance to the invasion, roadblocks, house-to-house searches, and mass arrests were initiated. Those subject to these round-ups include not only members of the People's Revolutionary Army and the People's Militia, but trade unionists, cadres of the New Jewel Movement (NJM), and leaders and activists in the various mass organizations.

Because of the hatred among the Grenadian people for the army officers and political figures who overthrew and murdered Bishop

and his comrades, they have been easier targets of this repression. But the crackdown has extended to supporters of Bishop as well. Radix is only the most prominent.

U.S. Army commanders admit that they have detained several hundred Grenadians, a large number for a country that has a population of only 110,000. They have been confined to a new internment camp on Point Salines. Some have been held for long hours in the hot sun. Others have been placed in small, boxlike "isolation chambers," which can only be entered by crawling through a knee-high door. After his release, Radix explained that he had been held in such a box, and was unable to keep dry in the rain.

Those released after "interrogation" are given green cards directing them to "refrain from participating in anti-Government activities." If they fail to do so, they can again be picked up.

A purge has been launched among employees in the government administration and in the island's various services.

According to an unnamed Grenadian official cited in the November 3 *Washington Post*, a list is being circulated with the names of those to be purged. "It was unclear where the list came from, the official said, but it included those who were most ardent in support of Bishop's revolution," the *Post* reported.

To intimidate the population as a whole, roadblocks have been set up at frequent intervals. All vehicles are searched and the passengers must present identification.

On November 9, Sir Paul Scoon, the British-appointed governor-general of Grenada, formalized this crackdown by announcing that all public meetings were banned, authorizing arrests without warrants, and saying he would impose press censorship.

These arrests and purges come on top of the killing and destruction of the invasion itself.

Among Washington's many lies and distortions was the initial claim that no Grenadian civilians had been killed in the invasion. Yet on its very first day, it has now been learned, a mental hospital in St. George's was bombed, and at least 18 patients were killed.

Although the official U.S. line is still that very few Grenadians died (21 according to one general), Maj. Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, a top adviser to the invasion, has been more candid. At a news briefing November 8, he blurted out that 160 Grenadians had been killed, 100 wounded, and 68 captured.

St. George's and areas to the south bear the scars of the heavy U.S. bombardment and strafing.

The size of the U.S. invasion force itself

was larger than the Pentagon initially claimed. As some of the U.S. troops were being pulled off Grenada, Maj. Gen. Jack Farris, the new U.S. commander, admitted on November 6 for the first time that a total of 8,000 U.S. troops had been involved — several thousand more than the Pentagon first acknowledged. Following the withdrawals, some 5,000 U.S. troops remain on the island, according to Farris. They are aided by 300 troops from seven Caribbean countries.

Washington digs in

While the bulk of the armed resistance to the invasion has ended, there are still occasional firefights.

About one-third of the U.S. troops remaining in Grenada have been stationed in St. George's, and the rest have been deployed to sweep the north and the central highlands, carrying out search-and-destroy raids backed up by helicopter gunships.

Using this sporadic resistance as an excuse, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger declared November 10 that the Pentagon could not give a "target date" for the withdrawal of U.S. troops. He suggested that they might remain on Grenada for an extended time.

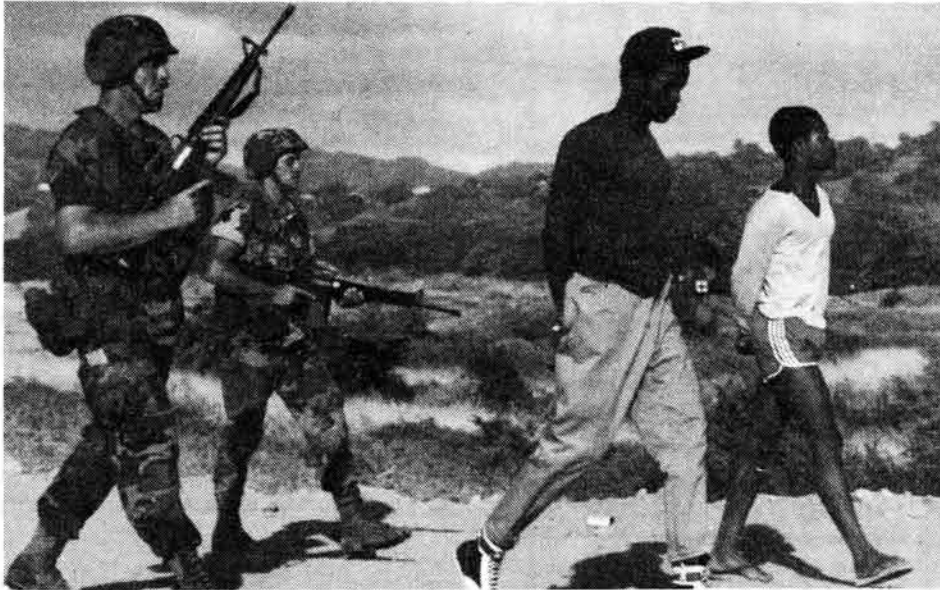
But that has been Washington's basic intention all along, regardless of whether armed opposition continues or not. It will take the imperialists some time to accomplish the political goals they have set themselves: establishing a stable regime that is subservient to Washington and chopping away at the remaining gains of the revolution.

To provide some political cover to this attack against the Grenadian workers and farmers, Washington has selected Sir Paul Scoon as its front. A Grenadian by birth, Scoon was appointed as the British queen's representative in Grenada during the dictatorship of Eric Gairy. Since Grenada remained a member of the British Commonwealth following Gairy's overthrow in 1979, Scoon stayed on as governor-general, a largely ceremonial post.

But now Scoon is being presented by the occupation forces as the only "legitimate" authority on the island.

On November 9, Scoon announced the composition of a new interim governing council. Five of the eight named to it are expatriates, and have not lived on Grenada for some time.

But the real authorities in Grenada are the imperialists themselves. In a dispatch from Grenada in the November 13 *New York Times*, correspondent David Shribman observed, "In less than two weeks, American military personnel have pervaded Grenadian society, from the hospitals to the immigration service. . . .



U.S. occupation troops round up supporters of revolution.

they are doing the things that governments ordinarily do.”

Although the British government initially took its distance from the invasion, London has now stepped in to help reestablish imperialist dominance. Anthony Rushford, a former official of the British Foreign Office who drafted Grenada's 1974 independence constitution, is now serving as Scoon's adviser on legal affairs. Maj. Robin Keeney, a British officer assigned to the Barbados army, has been posted as Scoon's top military adviser.

Attacks on Cuba

One of Scoon's first acts was to order all Cuban diplomatic personnel to immediately leave Grenada. The Cuban and Soviet embassies were surrounded by U.S. troops, and the Cuban ambassador's home was vandalized.

This was in line with Washington's campaign of threats, blackmail, and lies directed against revolutionary Cuba, including Reagan's claim that the U.S. invasion saved Grenada from becoming a "Soviet-Cuban colony."

The Cuban authorities rejected Scoon's orders, affirming that the Cuban embassy personnel in Grenada would remain until all the imprisoned Cubans — most of whom were construction workers on the site of the new international airport — were returned to Cuba.

Despite some stalling by Washington, the Cubans began to be repatriated by the first week of November. Yet the U.S. authorities continued their harassment of the Cubans up to the very last moment. As they were led to the planes, the Cubans were forced to walk through two lines of heavily armed U.S. troops and barking Alsatian dogs. They were then given body searches and had their hands tied for the flight.

Reporters who covered their arrival in Havana, where the Cubans were given a heroes' welcome, noted that they did not look

like troops, as Washington had claimed they were. "Most of the Cubans who arrived . . . looked like construction workers," reported a correspondent for the *Miami Herald*.

The departure of the Cubans from Grenada has not halted the U.S. propaganda mill, however.

Through public displays of captured Grenadian weaponry and the publication of supposed military aid agreements Grenada had concluded with Cuba, the Soviet Union, and other countries, White House propagandists have also sought to breathe new life into their charge that Grenada was being transformed into a Cuban and Soviet base for spreading "terrorism" in the region.

George Louison responded by explaining that the Bishop government had acquired these arms to help build up a 10,000-member militia to defend Grenada against an expected U.S. invasion.

Even Col. Ken Barnes, the Jamaican commander of the Caribbean troops in Grenada, did not accept Washington's story. The November 7 *New York Times* reported that "he is dubious that the former Government was planning to use the arms it was acquiring to export revolution, subvert its neighbors or train terrorists."

However skimpy its evidence, Washington keeps on churning out such accusations — which are then featured prominently in the capitalist new media — to bolster its broader anticommunist propaganda drive, both in the United States and in Grenada.

Within Grenada, in particular, the U.S. authorities are seeking to equate the brutal practices of those who overthrew the Bishop-led government with Marxism and communism. In this way, they hope to confuse Grenadian working people about the revolutionary socialist policies of the New Jewel Movement, as well as about Cuba's role.

The actions of Gen. Hudson Austin, former

Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard, and their supporters have made Washington's task easier.

According to descriptions of the conflict within the NJM leadership provided by Radix, Louison, and Lyden Ramdhanny (another surviving minister in the Bishop government), Coard led a secret factional struggle against Bishop that finally erupted openly in the government and party in recent months. All three maintained that no fundamental political differences were raised, and viewed the rift as a struggle for power on the part of Coard and a clique of his supporters in the officer corps, government apparatus, and New Jewel Movement.

The conflict first became known publicly on October 13, after Bishop had been placed under house arrest. But he and his comrades retained the support of most of the population. Demonstrations swept the island to demand his release. Radix and Louison were arrested (they eventually escaped during the chaos of the invasion).

On October 19, a mass demonstration — estimated by some participants at up to 15,000 — freed Bishop. They marched on Fort Rupert, where most of the garrison went over to the side of the demonstrators. But special army units loyal to the Coard faction arrived and fired into the crowd, killing many. According to numerous witnesses, Bishop, Unison Whiteman, and several other central NJM leaders were then summarily shot and killed.

Austin set up a Revolutionary Military Council and imposed a four-day, 24-hour curfew, with orders to shoot any violators on sight. According to Radix, Louison, and Ramdhanny, Coard was the key figure behind this new regime.

By deposing Bishop and then killing him and much of the NJM's central leadership, Grenada's new rulers had overthrown the workers and farmers government. They alienated the vast bulk of the population, and could only rule through repression. In addition to physically disarming the People's Militia and units of the army that were loyal to Bishop, they *politically* disarmed the population in face of the impending U.S. invasion.

According to Ramdhanny, "Coard took Grenada and placed it on a silver platter and said, 'Ronald Reagan, here you are.'"

Despite this devastating blow to the revolution, many Bishop supporters who could get arms nevertheless turned out to fight the invasion when it came.

Anticommunist propaganda

Now, the U.S. authorities are cynically using Austin, Coard, and their cohorts to try to politically smear the entire revolutionary process.

In violation of the Geneva Accords on the rights of prisoners of war, Austin and Coard have been paraded before television cameras stripped to the waist, blindfolded, and manacled.

A U.S. Army psychological operations unit

flown into Grenada from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, has produced posters of Austin and Coard, also showing them humiliatingly stripped to the waist, with armed U.S. troops in the background. The text proclaims: "These criminals attempted to sell Grenada out to the Communists. Now they have surrendered. The Grenadian people will never again allow such characters to assume power and cause such hardship. Support democracy in Grenada."

Those responsible for the murder of Bishop and his comrades should certainly be brought to justice. But only the working people of Grenada have the right to do that — not a puppet administration installed by the same imperialist power that tried for four and a half years to bring down the Bishop government.

The projected trials of Austin, Coard, and others have nothing to do with justice. Washington is simply using them to attack the Grenada revolution and to further undermine the political consciousness of the Grenadian masses.

But that will not be easy. Journalists have noted that Grenadians make a sharp distinction between the policies of the Bishop government, which they support, and those of the short-lived Austin regime. While welcoming the downfall of the Revolutionary Military Council, many will oppose Washington's efforts to take back what they had won under Bishop: free education and medical care, cheap housing for workers,

government job programs, land reform, women's rights, trade-union democracy, and many other advances.

A young woman who works in the government telecommunications office asked a reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor*, "Will there still be free education in schools? Will there still be aid to buy [school] uniforms and books?"

In a report in the November 6 *Sunday Sun* of Barbados, Al Gilkes, who is clearly hostile to the revolution, commented that some "far-sighted Grenadians" hope the U.S. troops will remain for some time.

The reason, Gilkes explained, "has to do with the four years of revolutionary socialist indoctrination foisted on the masses and readily accepted by a majority, mainly the under 30s, because of the popularity of Maurice Bishop himself.

"When one considers the exclamation of one woman that 'we now free again — free like when we had Brother Bishop,' one quickly realises that for many people the elation of being liberated had little to do with what went before October 19 but what came during the four days that followed."

Gilkes went on to note "the dreaded possibility that the few stragglers from the NJM leadership, who opposed the Bernard Coard faction, could easily, under a new guise, whip

up the popular support in the name of their martyred leader, Bishop, sweep aside any opposition in an election, win power legitimately and return Grenada to the pre-October 19 path of socialism, thus defeating the efforts of the United States and its Caribbean allies. . . ."

It is precisely because of this "dreaded possibility" that Washington has arrested hundreds of Grenadians, set up detention camps, and carried out a systematic violation of Grenadians' democratic rights. That is why it is preparing for a prolonged occupation. To achieve its aims it must break the will of the Grenadian workers and farmers.

Any elections held under such conditions will be far from democratic — if they are held at all. "I don't really see how we can be going to the polls in less than three years," declared Leslie Pierre, a businessman who was imprisoned under the Bishop government for his counterrevolutionary activities. "Too quick a rush to the polls is likely to bring an unsatisfactory result."

In face of such repression now being carried out under the U.S. occupation, the Grenadian people require the greatest possible international solidarity, from the workers movement in particular, to demand the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and Caribbean troops from the island. □

DOCUMENTS

The truth about Cuba's role in Grenada

How revolutionary government responded to U.S. invasion

[The following is the complete text of an October 25 statement by the government and Communist Party of Cuba, read by President Fidel Castro at a news conference for foreign journalists in Havana during the night of October 25–26. It is followed by excerpts from the journalists' subsequent questions and Castro's replies.

[This English translation has been taken from a pamphlet published in Havana, entitled, *Cuba: The Truth About the U.S. Invasion of Grenada*. We have added the subheads identifying the various documents quoted in the Cuban government and party statement.]

* * *

The painful internal developments in Grenada that brought about the death of comrade Bishop and other Grenadian leaders are well known by all the people.

In its statement of October 20,* the Cuban Government explained in detail the unfolding of events and stated our country's unequivocal and honorable position regarding these de-

velopments, while cautioning that imperialism would try to derive utmost benefit from this tragedy.

But, above all, it stressed the rigorous policy of Cuba of totally refraining from any form of intervention in the internal affairs of the Grenadian Party and people.

The merits of such a policy of principles can be noted now more than ever, since it has become evident that the Cuban personnel in Grenada had the combat capability with which they could have attempted to influence the course of internal events. The weapons in the hands of the Cuban construction personnel and cooperation workers in Grenada had been given to them by Bishop and the Grenadian Party and Government leadership so that they could defend themselves in the event of a foreign aggression against Grenada, as has unfortunately been the case. These were mainly light infantry weapons. Our own personnel kept custody over those weapons in their living quarters. They were not meant to be used in any domestic conflict and they were never, and will never be used for those ends. Neither had any type of fortification work been undertaken, since it was illogical to do so in times of

peace, at the site of a purely civilian airport. And another thing: when the invasion of Grenada took place, the weapons in Cuban hands had less than one ammunition module per rifle.

After Bishop's death and Cuba's statements, relations between our Party and the new Grenadian leadership were very cold and somewhat strained. But under no circumstances were we willing to play into the hands of imperialism, foresaking the Grenadian people by stopping our cooperation and halting the work of our construction crews, doctors, teachers, and other specialists. We did not even immediately recall our military and security advisors.

Future relations with the new leadership would be determined by its conduct, its domestic and foreign policy, and by the hope that the revolutionary process could be saved, even though this appeared to be possible only through a miracle of wisdom and serenity on the part of the Grenadians themselves and of the international progressive movement.

Relations with the new government were yet to be defined. But notwithstanding the aforementioned reasons regarding our cooperation with the people of Grenada, from the mo-

*See *Intercontinental Press*, November 7, 1983, page 634.

ment the news of a powerful U.S. naval force advancing on Grenada was made public, it became morally impossible to consider the evacuation of Cuban personnel in that country.

On the other hand, the new Grenadian leadership, faced with the imminent danger of an invasion and invoking their homeland's security, requested our cooperation, an appeal to which it was not easy to accede in view of the events that had taken place in that country.

Numerous messages regarding these matters were exchanged between Cuba and our representatives in Grenada, who conveyed the Grenadian requests.

Letter by Fidel Castro to Cuban embassy in Grenada

Due to the imminence of the aggression, during the afternoon of Saturday, October 22, comrade Fidel sent the following message to the Cuban representative in Grenada:

"I believe that organizing our personnel's immediate evacuation at a time when U.S. warships are approaching might be highly demoralizing and dishonorable for our country in the eyes of the world public opinion.

"A large-scale Yankee aggression against us can take place at any moment in Grenada against our cooperation workers; in Nicaragua against our doctors, teachers, technicians, construction workers, etc.; in Angola against our troops, civilian personnel, and others; or even in Cuba itself. We must always be ready and keep our morale high in the face of these painful possibilities.

"I understand how bitter it is for you, as well as for us here, to risk compatriots in Grenada, after the gross mistakes the Grenadian Party has made and the tragic developments to which they gave rise. But our position has been unequivocally and honorably clarified, so much so that it has been received with great respect everywhere. It is not the new Grenadian Government we must think of now, but of Cuba, its honor, its people, its fighting morale.

"I believe that in the face of this new situation, we must strengthen our defenses, keeping in mind the possibility of a surprise attack by the Yankees. The existing danger fully justifies our doing so. If the United States intervenes, we must vigorously defend ourselves as if we were in Cuba, in our camp sites, in our work places close by, but only if we are directly attacked. I repeat: only if we are directly attacked. We would thus be defending ourselves, not the Government or its deeds. If the Yankees land on the runway section near the University or on its surroundings to evacuate their citizens, fully refrain from interfering.

"Advisors from the Army and the Ministry of the Interior are to stay in their posts awaiting new orders, so as to receive information and try to exert as much positive influence as possible on the behavior of the Army and the Security forces towards the people.

"The *Viet Nam Heroico* vessel is to be kept there by all means, and efforts should be made to put children and people who are not essential to indispensable services and work there on

the first plane that lands on the island.

"Convey to [Gen. Hudson] Austin and [Col. Erwart] Layne the following oral reply to their proposals:

"That our force, essentially made up of civilian cooperation workers, is too small to be considered as a significant military factor vis à vis a large-scale U.S. invasion.

"That sending reinforcements is impossible and unthinkable.

"That the political situation created inside the country due to the people's estrangement on account of the death of Bishop and other leaders, isolation from the outside world, etc. considerably weakens the country's defense capabilities, a logical consequence derived from the serious errors made by Grenadian revolutionaries. That due to the above situation, the present military and political conditions are the worst for organizing a firm and efficient resistance against the invaders, an action which is practically impossible without the people's participation. That they have to find a way to reach a reconciliation with the people; perhaps one way would be to clarify the death of Bishop and the other leaders and seek out those responsible.

"That the Grenadian Government may try to prevent affording a pretext for intervention by publicly offering and reiterating total guarantees and facilities for the security and evacuation of U.S., English, and other nationals.

"That if, however, the invasion were to take place anyway, it is their duty to die fighting, no matter how difficult and disadvantageous the circumstances may be.

"That the Cuban personnel have been instructed to remain in their camps and to continue work on the airport. That they are to adopt defensive measures and fortify their positions as much as possible in order to be prepared in case of a surprise foreign aggression. That you are to be in constant communication with our Party's leadership, and should an imperialist attack take place, you will receive immediate instructions regarding what you should do.

"That, in these circumstances, they should keep utmost equanimity and restraint if they wish to preserve the Grenadian revolutionary process's opportunity to survive.

"That Cuba will do its best to promote, together with all progressive countries, a strong campaign to counter the U.S. threats against Grenada."

Cuban message to U.S. government

At 9:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 22, we sent the following message to the Government of the United States through its Interests Section:

"That the U.S. side is aware of the developments in Grenada; that it is also aware of our position on these developments and of our determination of not interfering in the internal affairs of that country. That we are aware of their concern about the numerous U.S. residents there. That we are also concerned about the hundreds of Cuban cooperation personnel

working there in different fields and about the news that U.S. naval forces are approaching Grenada.

"That according to the reports we have, no U.S. or foreign national, nor our personnel has had any problems. It is convenient to keep in touch on this matter, so as to contribute to solve favorably any difficulty that may arise or action that may be taken relating to the security of these individuals, without violence or intervention in the country."

Cuban response to Grenadian request for Cuban troops

Once the agreements adopted by a group of Yankee satellites in the Caribbean area to dispatch troops to Grenada became known, the new leadership in that country renewed its requests for the sending of reinforcements by Cuba. On Sunday, October 23, comrade Fidel sent the following message to the Cuban representative in Grenada:

"Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Barbados have no forces to invade Grenada. If this were to occur, it is a mere pretext by the Yankees for their immediate intervention afterwards. In this case you should strictly abide by the instructions received yesterday.

"Convey the following answer orally to the Grenadian leadership:

"That Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Barbados have no forces to invade Grenada, and in that case they could defeat them with their own forces without greater difficulties.

"That behind this intervention, were it actually to take place, there might be a pretext for the Yankees to act directly; in that case, the Grenadian revolutionaries should try to win over the people for the defense of the country, be ready to fight until the very last man and create conditions for a protracted resistance to the invasion and foreign occupation.

"That Cuba cannot send reinforcements, not only because it is materially impossible in the face of the overwhelming U.S. air and naval superiority in the area, but also because politically, if this were to be merely a struggle among Caribbeans, it should not do so in order not to justify U.S. intervention.

"That, on the other hand, the unfortunate developments in Grenada render the useless sacrifice entailed by the dispatching of such reinforcements in a struggle against the United States morally impossible before our people and the world.

"That, as a matter of our country's honor, morality, and dignity we will keep the Cuban personnel there at a time when powerful Yankee naval forces are approaching Grenada.

"That, if Grenada is invaded by the United States, the Cuban personnel will defend their positions in their camps and working areas with all their energy and courage.

"That, due to the limited number of those forces, it is impossible to assign them any other mission.

"That Grenadian revolutionaries themselves are the only ones responsible for the creation of this disadvantageous and difficult situation for

the revolutionary process politically and militarily.

"That within the difficult conditions created, the Cuban personnel in Grenada shall honorably meet the duties our revolution has assigned to them under these circumstances.

"That, as regards military advising, they will receive all possible cooperation in the face of this situation.

"That it is necessary to continue making adequate political and diplomatic efforts on their part to prevent the intervention without compromising on any principles or backing down. That, on our part, we will do our best in this connection."

Cuban message to Grenadian government

The Grenadian side continued to insist on plans that in our judgment, were, in some respects, unrealistic and politically unsound. They even hoped to sign a formal agreement on what each side should do in the military field and intended to subordinate the Cuban construction and cooperation workers to the Grenadian army. On Monday, October 24, the following principal points were conveyed to the Grenadian leadership:

"— That the Cuban personnel will defend their positions, that is, the runway up to the Hardy Bay filling and the area between Point Saline and Morne Rouge, in case of a large-scale U.S. invasion.

"— That, in the present conditions, our personnel have neither the means nor forces to undertake any other mission, nor the moral and international justification to do so in areas outside their work site.

"— It is clear to us that were it just a question of evacuating foreign personnel there would be no invasion, and presumably under those circumstances they would find a solution with the parties concerned. That, due to this, the American University and its premises should be under the custody of Grenadians if they deem it necessary and convenient. [The U.S. University is located at one end of the runway under construction by the Cubans.] Perhaps it would be better if that area were free of military personnel so that it would not be regarded as a battleground which could justify armed actions by imperialism under the pretext of evacuating its citizens.

"— That there is no need for any formal agreement between us.

"— That the instructions regarding what the Cuban personnel is to do in case of war can only be issued by the Government of Cuba."

This message, which should have been delivered at 8 o'clock in the morning, Tuesday the 25th, did not even reach the hands of its addressees. The intervention of the United States in Grenada occurred at the break of day.

The Cuban representatives and personnel strictly followed the instructions of the Party and Government of Cuba: to fight if they were attacked in their camps and work areas.

During the early hours of the day, while U.S. troops were landing with helicopters in

the University area, there was no combat at all with the Cubans, who had taken strictly defensive positions in the above-mentioned sites. Around 8:00 a.m. local time (7 a.m. Cuban time), U.S. troops advanced from different directions on the Cuban facilities, and the fighting began.

First U.S. letter to Cuba

At 8:30 (Cuban time) on the 25th — almost three days later — the Government of the United States replied with the following note to the Cuban message sent on Saturday the 22nd:

"The United States of America Interests Section of the Embassy of Switzerland presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Cuba and has the honor to inform the Ministry that the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, acting out of the grave concern of its members for the anarchy, bloodshed, and callous disregard for human life of the Island of Grenada, has asked the United States Government to facilitate armed forces of its member states in the restoration of security in Grenada. In response to the request, and taking into due account the need to safeguard the lives of several hundred United States citizens now in Grenada, the United States Government has agreed to this request.

"Consequently, armed forces from the member states of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, supported by those of the United States, Barbados, and Jamaica have entered Grenada for the purpose of restoring order and public safety.

"The United States Government is aware that military and civilian personnel of the Republic of Cuba are present in Grenada. It has taken into full account the message on this subject which was delivered on the night of October 22 from the Ministry of Foreign Relations to the Acting Chief of the United States Interests Section in Havana. It wishes to assure the Government of the Republic of Cuba that all efforts are being and will continue to be made to ensure the safety of these persons while order is being restored. These personnel will be granted safe passage from Grenada as soon as conditions permit.

"The Government of the United States agrees to the Cuban proposal of October 22 to maintain contact concerning the safety of the personnel of each side. The appropriate civilian representatives with the United States Armed Forces presently in Grenada have been instructed to be in contact with the Cuban Ambassador in Grenada to ensure that every consideration is given to the safety of Cuban personnel on the Island and to facilitate the necessary steps by Grenadian authorities for their prompt evacuation. The United States Armed Forces will be prepared to assure this evacuation at the earliest possible moment on ships of third countries. Alternatively, should there be a vessel of the Cuban merchant marine — not a warship — in Grenadian waters at present, that vessel may be authorized to conduct the

evacuation of Cuban personnel.

"In addition, any Cuban views communicated to the Department of State through the Cuban Interests Section in Washington or through the United States Interests Section in Havana will be given immediate attention.

"The Government of the United States calls upon the Government of the Republic of Cuba, in the interest of the personal safety of all concerned, to advise its citizens and forces in Grenada to remain calm and to cooperate fully with the forces of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and with those of the United States, Jamaica, and Barbados. It asks that they be instructed to avoid any steps which might exacerbate the delicate situation in Grenada. Above all, the Government of the United States cautions the Government of the Republic of Cuba to refrain from sending any new military unit or personnel to Grenada.

"The United States of America Interests Section of the Embassy of Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Cuba the assurances of its highest and most distinguished consideration."

When this note from the Government of the United States arrived, one and a half hours had elapsed since troops from that country started their attack on Cuban personnel and three hours since they had begun the landings.

Throughout the whole day today, Tuesday, the 25th, the Cuban people have been informed in as much detail as possible on the development of the fighting and the resolute and heroic resistance of Cuban construction and cooperation workers, who practically had not even had time to dig trenches or to fortify their positions in the rocky terrain, in the face of the sea, air, and ground attacks by U.S. elite troops.

The people are familiar with the contents of the message exchanged between the Commander in Chief and Colonel Tortoló, who is in command of the Cuban personnel. This chief, who had not yet been in that country for 24 hours and who was on a work visit, with his actions and words has written a chapter in our contemporary history worthy of Antonio Maceo.

Second U.S. letter to Cuba

At 5 p.m. in the evening, while intense fighting was taking place, the Government of the United States, through Mr. Ferch, head of the Interests Section, sent the following message to Cuba:

"The Cuban personnel stationed in Grenada are not a target for the actions by U.S. troops.

"The United States is ready to cooperate with Cuban authorities in the evacuation of Cuban personnel to Cuba.

"The United States is aware that armed Cuban personnel do not have either the weapons or ammunition stocks needed for protracted action, thus maintaining a belligerent position would entail a useless loss of human life.

"The United States does not wish to present

the departure of Cuban armed personnel as a surrender.

"Lastly it regrets the armed clashes between men from both countries and considers that they have occurred due to confusion and accidents brought about by our men's proximity to the area of operations of the multinational troops."

Cuban 10-point reply to U.S.

At 8:30 p.m., the following reply was handed over to Mr. Ferch to be conveyed to the Government of the United States:

"1. That we did our best to prevent the intervention, and that in our note dated Saturday we explained that, according to our reports, no U.S. or foreign citizen was in danger, while at the same time we expressed our readiness to cooperate so that the problems could be resolved without violence or intervention.

"2. That the intervention is totally unjustifiable. That we had absolutely refrained from meddling in the country's internal affairs, despite our friendship with and sympathies for Bishop.

"3. That the answer to our constructive note delivered on Saturday 22, at 9 p.m., arrived on Tuesday, the 25th, at 8:30 a.m., when our personnel and installations at the airport had been under attack by U.S. troops for one and a half hours.

"4. That we have no soldiers, but actually construction workers and civilian advisors in Grenada, with the exception of a few tens of military advisors who were working with the army and security forces before Bishop's death. Our personnel had been instructed to fight back only if attacked, and they were not the first to shoot. Furthermore, they had been given instructions not to obstruct any action for the evacuation of U.S. citizens in the area of the runway near the U.S. University. It was evident that if any attempt was made to occupy Cuban installations they would clash with them.

"5. That our personnel has suffered an indeterminate number of casualties in today's combat.

"6. That the attack by U.S. troops came as a surprise, without any previous warning.

"7. That although the Cuban personnel that are still in a position to resist stand at an absolute numerical, technical, and military disadvantage, their morale remains high, and they are firmly ready to continue defending themselves, were the attacks to continue.

"8. That if there is a real intention to forestall further bloodshed, attacks against the Cuban and Grenadian personnel who are still fighting should stop, and an honorable way should be sought to put an end to a battle that far from honors the United States; a battle against small forces that, though unable to resist the overwhelming military superiority of the U.S. forces, even when losing the battle and sacrificing themselves, could still inflict a costly moral defeat on the United States — the most powerful country in the world, engaged in a war against one of the tiniest coun-

tries on earth.

"9. That the head of the Cuban personnel in Grenada has been instructed to receive any parleyer that might approach him, listen to his views and convey them to Cuba.

"10. It cannot be ignored that some Grenadian units are also fighting, and that the treatment given to the Cubans should not differ from the one they are to receive."

During this evening the Cuban construction and cooperation personnel were still holding some of their positions in an uneven and difficult struggle but with high morale and steadfastness. Later into the night there was little news forthcoming from Grenada, and communications were becoming difficult.

The courageous and heroic Cuban construction and cooperation personnel have written an unforgettable chapter in the annals of international solidarity, but in a larger sense, in Gre-

Castro's news conference on Grenada

Journalist (The Washington Post). I would like to know if Cuban resistance would continue even if the forces in Grenada formally surrendered?

Fidel Castro. The Cuban forces will continue fighting as long as they are attacked.

Journalist (Miami News). Exactly how many Cubans are there in Grenada? How many military advisers and construction workers?

Fidel Castro. I can tell you this; there is nothing secret about it.

I am sorry I do not have the exact figures with me, but there are a little over 700 Cubans, most of whom — over 550 — are construction workers. There is also a large group of doctors, some teachers, some agricultural technicians and around 40 military advisers.

I did not include those figures here so as not to make this statement too long, but there is no secret whatsoever about this. Moreover, it is easy to prove that they are civilian workers, not military personnel. Of course, as workers, like all workers in Cuba, they have received military training. Proof of the fact that they are construction workers is the excellent airport they built in such a short time, where dozens of U.S. planes landed, even though it is not finished yet — it was scheduled to be completed by March. It is an excellent airport. I think that that is full proof of their being workers.

Moreover, members of the U.S. press can surely talk there with the prisoners or hostages who were moved up in front of the jeeps, and they will be able to verify whether they are soldiers, professionals, or construction workers, if the airport isn't proof enough.

Journalist (Miami Herald). What can you tell us regarding the present Grenadian Government. . . .

nada they have been waging a battle for the small countries of the world and for all the peoples of the Third World in the face of a brutal imperialist aggression. They have also fought for the American continent and for their own homeland as if there, in Grenada, they were in the first line of defense of the sovereignty and integrity of Cuba.

Grenada may become for Yankee imperialists in Latin America and the Caribbean what the Moncada garrison meant to the Batista tyranny in Cuba.

Eternal glory to the Cubans who have fallen and to those who have fought and are still fighting to defend their honor, their principles, their internationalist work, their homeland, and their own personal lives threatened by the unjustified, treacherous, and criminal imperialist attack.

*Patria o Muerte.
Venceremos.*

Fidel Castro. Well, our views about the Government — no, not the Government; we do not want to judge the Government, because we have no right to do so. We start from the fact that there was a split among the revolutionaries — a very painful, very disagreeable split. We foresaw that it would do a lot of harm to the country, and we even contacted the Grenadian leaders, the members of the Central Committee, and asked them to try to solve their problems peacefully, without any violence, since violence could seriously damage Grenada's image.

The people rose up in support of Bishop. Passions were inflamed, which determined Bishop's tragic death. We still do not know the details of the circumstances surrounding it, but I believe that they will come out sooner or later. We strongly opposed that split; we were aware of the damage it did and we were deeply moved by Bishop's physical elimination.

Journalist (NBC). If the Americans were not motivated in this action by concern over their citizens, what do you think was the United States' motive?

Fidel Castro. Well, it is difficult to understand, and I will tell you why. First, no U.S. citizens or nationals of any other country were in danger, because the Grenadians had taken special measures to provide them with guarantees, in the interest of forestalling pretexts for intervention. But, for example, there is a group of 500 or 600 U.S. medical students. The head of the university spoke with the Government, with the authorities, and they gave him full guarantees. The students were perfectly calm; only around 14 or 15 wanted to leave. As I understand it from news reports that have been made public, the Rector, or head of the university, was strongly opposed to and has been very critical of the intervention,

because there was no reason for it.

However, the situation of the Grenadian revolutionary process itself was very difficult; internal developments had isolated it from the outside world and resulted in serious economic difficulties. It was not easy for the new Grenadian Government to overcome this.

It was clear that the United States wanted to eliminate a process that was only just surviving — miraculously, at that — and which was facing serious problems. I think it wanted to show its muscle, to apply a philosophy of force; I think it was an opportunistic policy, taking advantage of all those difficulties in order to crush a symbol, because Grenada is a very tiny country. Under no circumstances can it be said that it was of strategic importance or posed the slightest threat to the United States. So, what reason could there be, other than a show of force?

It seems even stranger since it coincides with the recent events in Lebanon, in which more than 200 Americans were killed. What sense, what rationale, could there be in diverting forces that were on their way to Lebanon and sending them to Grenada? It seems absurd.

Really, I believe it has been an enormous political mistake that will not benefit the United States at all, because the Malvinas events — which shook all of Latin America when the United States sided with England, forgetting all about the OAS and its agreements — are still fresh. Now, however, it is invoking the agreements of a so-called group of Caribbean countries to intervene in Grenada. I think this deeply hurts the feelings of and creates a lot of restlessness in all the countries in Latin America and the world. I really do not understand it, I regard it as an enormous, unnecessary, unjustifiable mistake by the United States.

Journalist (Radio Caracol). We heard over the Voice of America today that Cuba and the Soviet Union were expecting the coup in Gre-

nada. Would you care to comment on that, Comandante?

Fidel Castro. I do not think that is even worth answering, because I believe that Cuba's position is clear, as were its relationships with Bishop. Bishop was so decent and respectful that, when he came through Cuba, he did not say anything about the problems they had there.

Later on, Cuba made its position well known through its public statements. Furthermore, that doesn't make any sense. We felt that Bishop was the right leader for the country. He had tremendous international prestige and was a very intelligent person. Moreover, he was not an extremist; he was a revolutionary who fully understood his country's situation, and we felt he was leading the country well. He was responsible for Grenada's having scored great achievements. Grenada was receiving broad international cooperation and its Gross National Product was growing. He seemed an exceptional person and the right man for the process in Grenada.

Furthermore, everything that we said in our messages has been proved — all our warnings have been borne out: the split was tragic. Therefore, it was completely illogical to think that we could be behind that absurd charge.

Journalist (BBC). Comandante, I would like to ask you to comment on the Central American crisis. For instance, if a similar invasion were to take place against Nicaragua, how far would Cuba support Nicaragua?

Fidel Castro. We would try to do everything possible for Nicaragua, but we would face the same problem as in Grenada: we lack the naval and air means to send direct assistance to Grenada. Those are the facts: we do not have any other options. However, that does not worry me, because the situation in Nicaragua is very different from the one in Grenada. Grenada has a population of 120,000; Nicara-

gua, 3.5 million. Nicaragua has considerable fighting experience. Nicaragua has tens of thousands of fighters. There, the United States would have to fight against an armed people in an unwinnable war in which not one, not ten airborne divisions would suffice. Those are the facts: neither the peoples nor Nicaragua should be underestimated. I believe it would be an incredibly serious error to attempt an invasion of Nicaragua, because the Nicaraguan people are courageous and combative. I think that all of the attacks against Nicaragua have strengthened rather than weakened the Revolution, for they have given the people experience. I believe that Nicaragua cannot be occupied or ruled by the United States and that no technology or sophisticated weapons can solve the problems entailed in a struggle against an entire nation that is armed.

Grenada's present situation is a far cry from this, since due to its internal problems, the Army collected the militia's weapons and, therefore, the people weren't armed for resistance. That is not the situation in Nicaragua. Let us hope that this terrible mistake may serve to prevent even worse mistakes from being made in Nicaragua, in the future.

Journalist (L'Humanité). Only a clarification, Comandante, of point 10 in the last message that was sent.

Fidel Castro. Which one? There were a lot of messages — to the Cubans, to the ...?

Journalist (L'Humanité). Excuse me, Comandante; the French text indicates there is a ... on your part that the same treatment should be given to the Cuban workers who are fighting and struggling there as to the Grenadians who are still fighting.

Fidel Castro. I cannot speak for the Grenadians. It is a problem they are facing; but, as a question of honor on our part, we cannot accept a solution for the Cuban personnel that does not imply a solution for the Grenadian fighters, as well. That is, we do not wish to be treated differently from the Grenadians, since, in spite of the differences we had over the events in Grenada, our present common struggle has made us brothers. Therefore, we cannot seek different solutions or different treatment. I believe that, whatever what I have called the honorable solution may be — and it would have to be discussed — the same treatment that is given to us would also have to be given to the Grenadian fighters.

We do not think we will win this battle militarily, but we are winning it morally. If the United States claims that it does not want any more senseless bloodshed, then a solution should be sought. If the United States urges the people to surrender, then there will be no more senseless bloodshed by the United States — not by those who are defending their lives and honor. □

Cuba rebuts 'terrorism' charges

[The following is the text of a statement by the Cuban government, issued on November 1, responding to U.S. charges that Cuba was planning to initiate terrorist actions against U.S. citizens in the wake of the Grenada invasion.]

* * *

1. The idea that Cuba has given instructions that terrorist actions be carried out against North American citizens abroad is the daughter of fantasy, panic the United States suffers because of its crimes, incorrect information, or another gross lie by the government of that country. The displays of solidarity that Cuba solicits are always of a political nature.

2. What may occur in other places to North American citizens has nothing to do with Cuba or with supposed instructions of Cuba, which never has nor could have given such instructions. Rather, it would be the result of the irritation felt by millions of people around the world because of the barbarous and brutal deeds committed by the government of the United States. Cuba has always opposed making innocent persons the subject of reprisals.

3. The implicit threat in the North American memorandum exceeds all bounds and does not intimidate us in the slightest. If there are aggressions by the United States against Cuba, they will receive the response they merit from our entire nation.

SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT

[The following selections deal with the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the overthrow of the Maurice Bishop-led government that preceded it.]



A fortnightly review of news and analysis published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The November 7 issue contained an October 29 statement by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Grenada.

The statement characterized the landing of U.S. marines in Grenada on October 25 as "a counterrevolutionary aggression aimed at crushing the revolution taking place in that small Caribbean island" since the overthrow of Eric Gairy in 1979.

"This invasion," the statement added, "is part of the bloody tradition of U.S. imperialism's crimes in the region, from the occupation of Cuba at the beginning of the century to the sending of 40,000 marines to Santo Domingo in April 1965, and the massive and prolonged interventions in Central America since the 1930s."

"U.S. imperialism," the statement continued, "wants to show all the peoples of the Caribbean and the Latin American continent, who are incensed by the economic crisis, poverty, and hunger, that the United States will make them pay a high price for any serious attempt at national and social emancipation."

"In four years, the revolutionary regime of the New Jewel Movement had improved the living conditions of the workers, developed health care and education, and defied imperialism's threats. In U.S. eyes, that kind of audacity, which could have become contagious in a region that the United States has defined as its own special preserve, deserved to be punished as an example."

Moreover, "the aggression of the marines is also a warning given to the revolutionaries of Central America and Cuba to show them the broad range of military measures that U.S. imperialism is ready to carry out to prevent the consolidation of new revolutionary regimes and the extension of the revolution in that region. The landing in Grenada therefore puts the Salvadoran revolution, Sandinista Nicaragua, and the Cuban workers state directly on notice."

The Bureau of the United Secretariat pointed out that the Reagan administration had targeted Grenada for a long time, but found it difficult to act because "the Grenadian revolutionary government had mass support among the population." Therefore, Washington had to bide its time and wait for an opportunity to intervene.

"The confrontations within the NJM, the overthrow and then execution of Maurice Bishop and several of his ministers by military officers on October 19, created confusion and disarray within the Grenadian masses, which was propitious for the American operation. The people's demonstrations in defense of Maurice Bishop had been suppressed, the People's Militia had been disarmed, and the masses were demobilized and paralyzed by the curfew."

The statement noted that the Cuban leadership had issued a severe condemnation of these events and quoted from the Cuban declaration of October 20.

The statement also focused attention on the "hypocrisy" of the imperialist governments allied with the United States. "The prize for disgracefulness undoubtedly goes to the Social Democratic parties, who contented themselves with discrete protests even though the NJM is a member of their so-called Socialist International."

The statement noted that among the governments of the world, "only those of Cuba and Nicaragua called for a mass mobilization in defense of Grenada, while initial responses in the streets were organized, especially in Latin America, Europe, and the United States, on the initiative of movements in solidarity with Central America and revolutionary organizations or Communist parties."

rood

"Red," Flemish-language fortnightly newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers League (RAL/LRT), Belgian section of the Fourth International. Published in Brussels.

The front page of the November 3 issue was dominated by the large headline, "Yankee, go home!", accompanied by the subheads, "No marines in Grenada! No rockets in Belgium."

The back page featured three articles: one providing some background to the Grenada revolution, another comprising extracts from a speech by Maurice Bishop, and a third on the CIA's war against Nicaragua.

A major article on page 3, by François Vercammen, explained the reasons for the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

Noting that the U.S. troops who first landed on Grenada met "unexpectedly fierce resistance by the people of Grenada," Vercammen described the strengthening of the invasion force to 6,000 troops, armed with the most modern weapons.

"Against this superior force stand 110,000 small farmers, workers, and poor people, who have at their disposal 3,000 soldiers and members of the People's Militia at the most. These 3,000 lightly armed fighters are not only de-

fending their country against foreign invaders. They are defending a socialist revolution that is under way. They are defending the new government of workers and farmers that has been in power since March 1979. They are defending the social, economic, cultural, and political gains won through their own strength, under the leadership of Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement, through a radical break with the colonial past and imperialist oppression."

After examining Washington's various phony pretexts for the invasion, Vercammen then dealt with the real reason.

Grenada, he wrote, "had begun to build socialism. Therefore, it was a contagious example to all the workers, farmers, and poor people on the other islands in the Caribbean of how to rise up out of poverty. Moreover, the political superstructure of these neocolonial islands is extremely shaky: the local bourgeoisie is very weak; the oligarchy (large landowners, etc.), openly the tool of the former colonial power, is exceptionally rich; the state apparatus is corrupt. On the other hand, a poor and very dynamic, youthful population is looking toward socialist Cuba, toward 'Sandinista' Nicaragua, and toward the heroic freedom struggle of the Salvadoran people."

"As soon as he became president, Reagan ordered invasion plans for Grenada to be drawn up. That has now come about!"

"In reality, American imperialism's plans reach further: to clean up its backyard (meaning Central America). In the first place: Nicaragua."

Socialist Action

A fortnightly newspaper published in Auckland, New Zealand. Reflects the views of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International.

"U.S. Hands Off Grenada Now!" demanded the front-page headline of the November 4 issue.

"This naked and unprovoked aggression reveals the hatred of the US ruling class for the example Grenada set in 1979, when it became the first Black country in the world to carry out a socialist revolution."

Filled from cover to cover with news and commentary on the invasion, the issue featured an eight-page supplement recounting the achievements of the workers and farmers government in Grenada. *Socialist Action* also included coverage of extensive protests throughout New Zealand. Articles detailed street demonstrations in virtually every city, as well as condemnations by figures in the Labour Party and New Zealand's indigenous Maori communities.

The issue also took the New Zealand government to task for offering Washington a

hand in Grenada.

"The United States government's invasion of Grenada had barely begun when both members of the Muldoon government and leaders of the parliamentary Labour Party were expressing their support for New Zealand military involvement in a possible 'peace-keeping force' to be sent to the Caribbean island. . . .

"By its immediate expression of support for the US invasion, the Muldoon government has already demonstrated before world public opinion that it is one of Reagan's most craven allies."

Another article, "NZ support for U.S. invasion ominous sign for South Pacific," called attention to New Zealand imperialism's own military role closer to home.

"Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs David Thompson justified New Zealand support for the invasion on the grounds that the US was simply doing in the Caribbean what New Zealand would do in the Pacific.

"Radio news reports quoted Thompson as saying that the New Zealand government would intervene, in the same manner as Reagan, to stop any similar 'Marxist takeover' in the South Pacific."

In an editorial *Socialist Action* argued that Reagan's drive toward war in Central America and the Caribbean is the key to understanding world politics today.

"Behind Washington's determination to 'crush the leftists' in Central America is a single, overriding fact: the socialist revolution is being extended in the Western Hemisphere.

"The workers and peasants took political power in the Caribbean island of Grenada in March 1979, and in Nicaragua in July 1979. In both of those countries the toilers extended their control over the economy and proceeded toward the construction of a new society.

"The social gains being made in Nicaragua and Grenada spurred the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador and inspired the workers and peasants elsewhere in the region. . . .

"The war itself, along with its implications for the class struggle in Latin America, in the United States, and throughout the world, is at the centre of world politics. No country will remain untouched by the struggle that is shaping up in Central America."

The editorial then went on to explain that the example of the Grenada revolution is indestructible:

"Today, new revolutionary Marxist leaderships are being consolidated in Cuba and Nicaragua, and these are carrying forward the process of building new societies in the struggle against imperialism. This process was tragically cut short in Grenada with the overthrow of the Peoples Revolutionary Government of Maurice Bishop and the subsequent US-led invasion.

"But no one can destroy the example Grenada provided to the Caribbean and the rest of the world during four-and-a-half years of revolution, or the contribution of Bishop and others to the development of a new international revolutionary leadership for the working class and its allies."

JUSTICE

Weekly organ of the United People's Movement (UPM) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Published in Kingstown, St. Vincent.

The United People's Movement, the most influential socialist organization in the Eastern Caribbean island nation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, responded sharply to the U.S. invasion of Grenada, which lies just south of St. Vincent. It also condemned the participation of troops from St. Vincent in the invasion.

A front-page article in the October 28 issue termed the invasion an "act of blatant aggression and international banditry."

Exposing the lie that Washington went into Grenada to rescue U.S. citizens, the article then went on, "This was no humanitarian mission but a mission to do what the US has long desired — destroy the Grenadian Revolution. . . .

"It is not too late to call for an end to the bloodbath, to condemn the new colonialism and demand a total and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces from Grenada — NOW!"

The November 4 *Justice* ran the text of a declaration by the St. Vincent Union of Teachers (in which some UPM members play a leading role) denouncing the invasion of Grenada and demanding the withdrawal of U.S. and Caribbean troops.

An editorial in the same issue dealt with the split within the leadership of Grenada's New Jewel Movement (NJM), which facilitated the invasion.

For the disastrous situation that resulted from the split, the editorial said, "responsibility rests fully at the feet of the NJM and its leadership for failing to resolve their problems peacefully. There could be, in our view, absolutely no justification for the resort to bloodshed and killing to settle what was an internal party matter." This responsibility, the editorial went on, rests with "both factions" of the NJM leadership.

"In face of constant US threats, maximum unity was necessary."

"But all is not lost," the editorial continued. "We are convinced that the Grenadian setback, no matter how grave, will only be temporary. Four years of Revolution cannot be erased overnight. Four years of People's Power cannot be forever stifled by guns and bombs."

Socialist ACTION

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

Labeling the invasion of Grenada "an act of international gangsterism," the November 4 issue explained that "the first priority is to get the US troops out, and to ensure the release of

[Hudson] Austin, Bernard Coard, and all other supporters of the NJM."

The front-page article also condemned the British government's complicity with Washington:

"Thatcher has been trying to distance the British government from the invasion, but the Tories are up to their necks in this business. They knew for months about US contingency plans. They knew several days before the invasion that it was going ahead, but they failed to tell an independent Commonwealth country of impending attack."

In an editorial, "Grenada for Grenadians," *Socialist Action* wrote:

"The whole world has now been alerted to the logic of the remilitarization drive of US imperialism — to smash the struggle of the workers and peasants of the third world to throw off the yoke of imperialism."

Calling the death of Maurice Bishop "a tragedy for the Grenadian revolution," *Socialist Action* reviewed the accomplishments of the revolutionary leader and explained its opinion of the political circumstances surrounding his execution:

"Now his tragic killing has been followed by the US invasion. But whatever the disagreements that have come out in recent weeks within the New Jewel Movement, and within the People's Revolutionary Government, there can be no excuse for the bloody consequences of the disagreements. The Cuban condemnation is absolutely correct. The lesson is that real proletarian democracy is not an optional extra for a revolution but a crucial component.

"Despite the positive gains of the revolution, there was no real democracy within the NJM and only a consultative process with the population as a whole. The NJM does not possess the structures of internal democracy by which disputes may be resolved.

"The last reported words of Maurice Bishop when a demonstration released him from house arrest were, cryptically, 'The Masses.' If the masses had been allowed a real legislative and decision making role, then the US threat of invasion, a real threat for four and a half years, might never have become actuality."

Another article on the history of the Grenada revolution argued that while Grenada's workers councils, parish councils, and other mass organizations represented the beginning of a "real democratic alternative," they "were imposed from above rather than flowing naturally out of revolutionary upheavals. They were consultative, not legislative. . . .

"The popularity of the revolution and of Maurice Bishop in particular, minimized these contradictions, but gradually popular participation fell away. Major disagreements about the future of the revolution seem not to have received a full and open discussion — as evidenced by the bloody manner in which concealed disagreements finally erupted into the killing of Bishop."

Several other articles in the issue presented opinions on the events in Grenada from other vantage points. One was devoted to excerpts

from Cuban statements commenting on the killing of Bishop and the U.S. invasion.

Socialist Action also interviewed Carol Davis, a member of the New Jewel Movement and an officer in the Ministry of Education, who left Grenada the day before Bishop was killed. In an introduction to the interview, the editors stated that they did not endorse her views, but rather were "publishing her opinion on the dispute so that our readers can learn from all sides what went on in the NJM."

Davis presented the opinion that Bishop's arrest was "a matter of principle." She denied that Finance Minister Bernard Coard was engaged in a "power struggle" or that Bishop and the central NJM leadership had been overthrown in a military coup, repeating the charge by army commander Hudson Austin that Bishop and other leaders were killed to avoid a civil war.

THE MILITANT

A revolutionary socialist newsweekly, published in New York City.

The November 4 issue featured a front-page photo of Maurice Bishop under an extra large headline, "U.S. hands off Grenada now!" A front-page editorial analyzed why Reagan fears the Grenadian revolution, while the other major article urged stepped-up participation in antiwar protests scheduled for November 12.

Inside, the paper carried the full text of the Cuban government statement of October 20 and an article by *Intercontinental Press* editor Steve Clark entitled: "Grenada: why U.S. wants to destroy its example for workers and farmers."

The *Militant* called on its readers to redouble their efforts to get out the truth about Grenada to the working people of the United States. "We urge all of our readers to join with members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance who will be organizing to distribute thousands of this issue."

Subsequent issues of the paper reported that more than 13,000 copies of the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*, were sold. It also advertised a new pamphlet, "Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Workers," which reproduced the major articles from the November 4 *Militant* along with a speech given by Bishop in New York City in June.

Rouge

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

The November 4 issue displayed a small box on the front page calling attention to two pages of coverage on the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

In an article on page 3, Christian Picquet wrote that "by attacking a small island in the

Caribbean, Washington intends to beef up its role as the cop of the 'free world.'"

He noted that "the invasion of Grenada has just recalled some elementary truths. Behind the great principles they deck themselves out in, the imperialist leaders have always had a single objective: to defend the privileges of the possessing class.

A box on the same page called for massive participation in demonstrations in France on November 19 "to stop U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean," and expressed support for a rally to be held November 21 at the Mutualité auditorium in Paris, in which the committees in solidarity with El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala will participate.

Another box reported on protests that took

place in France in the 48 hours after the invasion began.

At the October 26 demonstration in Paris, attended by some 4,000 people, the LCR passed out a leaflet arguing that Reagan's aim in invading Grenada was "to put an end to four and a half years of people's power. Until the recent death of Bishop, in fact, Grenada offered an exceptional example of people's revolution. . . . Through a system of people's assemblies, the population participated as nowhere else in the democratic life of the country."

The leaflet added that following the invasion of Grenada, "there can be no doubt: Nicaragua and Cuba are more and more directly threatened. Reagan wants to wipe out the revolution in Central America."

DOCUMENTS

In Grenada as in Beirut: U.S. go home

Declaration of Israeli LCR

[The following is an October 26 statement issued by the Political Bureau of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), section of the Fourth International in the state of Israel, which publishes the newspaper *Matzpen* (Compass). The translation, from a French version, is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The future of humanity for the decade to come is being played out on a small Caribbean island. The American invasion of Grenada aims to halt and warn the liberation movements around the world and to prove that the United States will not hesitate to use its armed forces to defend the "free world."

What is this free world of Reagan and [Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak] Shamir? The murderous dictatorship of Eric Gairy, who made Grenada into a desert island until he was overthrown by a people's uprising; the bloody Somoza regime, responsible for the massacre of tens of thousands of people; the Phalangist regime, responsible for the massacres in Sabra and Shatila.

The people have risen up against these ferocious beasts and have said ENOUGH! In Grenada and Nicaragua they began to build a new world, free from the scourges of hunger and illiteracy, where medical care is free and where an independent economy was being built. The workers and farmers governments of Nicaragua and Grenada could not but provoke the anger of Washington, which was compelled to prevent the peoples of Latin America from seeing that there is a road that makes it possible to leave behind poverty and underdevelopment.

The Israeli government was the first to salute the American aggression in Grenada. It knew all about preventive invasions against

terrorism; it understands the connection that links the aggression against Grenada and the American presence in Beirut; it is conscious that the "free world" is a single entity, from Beirut to Grenada, from El Salvador to Chad.

We know from experience the price we must pay for our participation in the free world's war against terrorism, just as our experience teaches us that neither planes nor missiles can bring to their knees a people who struggle for their freedom. This was shown by the Palestinians and the Druse in Lebanon. This is being shown right now by the people of Grenada, who are heroically confronting forces a thousand times stronger than themselves.

We must quit the "free world" camp, which threatens world peace, and we must align ourselves in the camp of those who struggle against exploitation and oppression: at the side of the people of Grenada who defend their liberty; at the side of El Salvador, which is struggling against tyranny; at the side of the peoples of Cuba and Nicaragua who are building a free society; at the side of the millions of Europeans who are fighting against Reagan's nuclear madness; at the side of the Palestinian people and the Lebanese people resisting Israeli-American aggression.

It is in our interest and in the interest of peace throughout the world to demand the withdrawal of American forces from Grenada and Lebanon.

It is in our interest and the interest of peace throughout the world to demand that Israel withdraw from Central America.

It is in our interest and the interest of peace throughout the world to demand the immediate and total withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.

For our interests and those of peace throughout the world — victory to the people of Grenada! □

Masses gear up for U.S. invasion

'We must be alert, because Grenada sets the stage'

By Jane Harris

CIUDAD SANDINO — Here in this working-class suburb, southwest of Managua, Nicaraguans are preparing for a U.S. invasion similar to the one against Grenada.

"We are trying all means to avoid a direct U.S. intervention in Nicaragua," Interior Minister Tomás Borge told a crowd of some 9,000 here October 30. "But it is possible that our efforts will not be successful and arrogance will predominate."

Yet, Borge warned Washington, the U.S. authorities had better think twice about what to expect if they do invade. If they needed their 82nd Airborne Division in Grenada, here they will need much more.

Since the invasion of Grenada, Borge and other leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) have intensified efforts to prepare the country for a shift from the current attacks by counterrevolutionary exiles to a full-scale invasion, backed by air strikes against population centers and economic targets. They point to a recent meeting of top military men from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, organized by the U.S. government, as evidence of plans for such an invasion, which could involve not only Honduran, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran troops, but U.S. soldiers as well.

"All signals, all military intelligence reports at our disposal, and the recent events [in Grenada] indicate that a large-scale intervention against Nicaragua is in preparation," said Víctor Tirado, a member of the FSLN National Directorate, October 29. He was speaking to an assembly of agroindustrial innovators, workers who have invented devices to substitute for imported materials and spare parts that are difficult to obtain.

"We must be alert, because what happened in Grenada sets the stage for a coming attack against the Sandinista revolution," Tirado warned.

Task number one in confronting this aggression, according to Sandinista Defense Minister Humberto Ortega, is to accelerate the preparations for civil defense, concretize evacuation plans, and get first-aid and fire brigades trained.

"The Yankees won't find us with our arms locked in storerooms," Ortega told a meeting of Sandinista Youth in Managua October 31. "We have already distributed weapons and millions of bullets throughout the country."

If the bullets run out, he said, Nicaraguans will fight with knives if they have to.

Ortega said Nicaragua would prefer to spare both its own people and young U.S. draftees

from such all-out warfare. Nicaragua would rather fight the "Weinbergers, Reagans, Shultzes, and Kissingers," not "young North Americans who often don't even know the name of the country where they're being sent to kill and die."

The October 29 FSLN daily *Barricada* featured a front-page interview with Commander Dora María Téllez, FSLN political secretary in Managua. She pointed to serious deficiencies in the present level of civil defense.

Téllez stressed that while formally Nicaragua is in a State of Emergency, "I would say that we're actually in a state of alert, which precedes a state of war.

"When the imperialists attack," she said, "they won't just hit economic targets, but will also try to terrorize the civilian population." So far, she added, civil defense preparations against this are "suitable for a war against an enemy like Somoza, but insufficient to withstand a full-scale U.S. invasion.

"Our people are accustomed to combat, but they think in terms of their experience in the [anti-Somoza] insurrection. We have to overcome this concept and make clear that new

methods have to be developed to confront imperialism."

Because of the shortness of time, the priority will be to prepare the defense of Managua, the country's capital and nerve center. Téllez pointed to the recent CIA-organized bombing of the country's main fuel storage depot in Corinto. "It's not difficult to imagine what would happen in Managua if the enemy attacks, even with only partial success, the refinery," she explained. The Managua refinery is the country's only fuel production facility.

Barricada also printed a two-part interview with Nguyen Vinh Bin, Vietnam's ambassador to Nicaragua. Bin explained how the patriotism and creativity of the Vietnamese masses triumphed over Washington's massive bombing of their country. Work brigades of thousands of Vietnamese mobilized to immediately rebuild bridges and other strategic targets each time they were destroyed by U.S. bombs.

Emergency aid, meanwhile, has been flown in from North Korea: 100,000 picks and shovels to begin digging bomb shelters planned for Managua and other cities. □

Antidraft march thwarted

Church hierarchy opposes defense of revolution

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA — As the threat of a direct U.S. military intervention deepens, so too does the polarization of class forces in Nicaragua.

Tens of thousands took part in a march in Masaya, 18 miles south of here, November 1 in support of Patriotic Military Service and in rejection of what march leaders called "reactionaries in clerical robes." The march, sponsored by the Nicaraguan mass organizations and made up largely of urban workers and artisans, was the culmination of several days of open confrontation over defense of the revolution. It came at the end of the first month of sign-up under the new universal military service law.

Opposition to the law — in effect, to defense of Nicaragua from imperialist invasion — is being led publicly by the Catholic Church hierarchy under the pretext of advocating "conscientious objection."

Involved behind the scenes are the right-wing political parties, wealthy businessmen, the U.S. embassy, relatives of imprisoned Somozaist National Guardsmen, and former

municipal officials of the Somoza era — all operating under the guise of "religious liberty."

These forces joined together in a supposedly religious march in one of Managua's wealthy suburbs October 9. The real aim of the action was shown by leaflets and slogans directed against signing up for military service.

Block rightist march

An effort to hold a similar but even bigger march October 30, following the main Sunday masses in a half-dozen Managua parishes headed by reactionary priests, was stopped cold by the mass organizations.

At each church, hundreds of members of the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), the Sandinista Youth, and neighborhood Christian Base Communities mobilized to block the reactionaries from taking the streets.

The sheer physical presence of these supporters of the revolution was sufficient to prevent the right-wing march from taking place.

"The people closed ranks and shut the doors to the maneuvers of those who are seeking to demobilize Nicaragua's defense," said Elías

Chávez, general secretary of the Managua CDS. "The masses took to the streets to dissuade these sectors from their antipatriotic activity and to repudiate their line of boycotting vigilance in the factories, industrial centers, and streets."

Contrary to the claims church leaders are making in the international press, the confrontation has nothing to do with "religious persecution," Chávez stressed.

In every *barrio* where mass organizations turned out Sunday, religious denominations and parishes that do not openly oppose defense preparations held services without incident.

Several of the churches that were surrounded by supporters of the revolution have been issuing anonymous leaflets urging boycott of military service, of *vigilancia* (night watch), and of efforts to save energy and increase production. They have also begun to form parish-based youth organizations to advance such counterrevolutionary political perspectives. Similar activities have been carried out in Jinotepe, Tipitapa, and Granada.

Eight members of one such organization, the Archdiocese Catholic Youth Community, were arrested and briefly detained at the end of October by state security forces. The arrests came after it was learned that they planned to occupy offices of the United Nations and the International Red Cross to publicize a call for boycotting conscription. All eight were subsequently released to the custody of their parents.

In Masaya, two foreign priests who have been among the most vocal opponents of Patriotic Military Service had their permission to reside in Nicaragua revoked October 31. The action came after they repeatedly refused to stop issuing leaflets calling for a boycott of military service.

One of the priests, a Costa Rican, was a major figure in an effort to organize a counterrevolutionary uprising in Masaya in August 1982. Support of the move by the revolutionary government to expel the robed reactionaries was a major theme of the November 1 demonstration in Masaya.

Congregations outraged

Two recent incidents, among many, show the degree to which church leaders have isolated themselves not only from the revolution but from their own parishioners.

In the southeastern Managua neighborhood of Colonia Centro América, Father Antonio Baccaro outraged much of his parish when he refused to provide a funeral mass for a Sandinista soldier slain in combat in the north. He told the soldier's family, which belongs to the parish, that he wanted nothing to do with those "communist dogs."

In the western Managua *barrio* of San Judas, the day of the planned antidraft action, CDS members and parishioners physically escorted the most reactionary parish priest out of the neighborhood and told him not to return.

A bishop who tried to enter San Judas the same day to take part in the antidraft demon-

stration was peacefully but firmly prevented from doing so. He was also informed that Archbishop Obando y Bravo, the country's highest church figure, was unwelcome in San Judas.

Feelings against the church hierarchy run particularly high in San Judas because of a lengthy battle by residents with the church over a piece of land. The land, intended for a school, was deeded to Obando y Bravo personally during the Somoza dictatorship in an arrangement to safeguard it until construction could begin. Obando y Bravo now claims to remember nothing about an agreement to return the land and says it is his personal property.

Registration moves ahead

As of November 3, full figures had not yet been published on the results of the month-long campaign to register for military service

the estimated pool of 200,000 men between the ages of 17 and 22. It has been reported that rates of nearly 100 percent registration were attained in the large working-class concentrations in the country's mines, mills, factories, and agroindustrial complexes. In Managua, the sparsely populated rural areas along the Pacific, and in the Atlantic Coast region, registration has gone slower.

The clear aim of church leaders in trying to hold an antidraft demonstration October 30, the day before the registration deadline, was to harden up those who have not yet signed up. Their inability to even step out into the streets was a blow to this effort.

Registration of women, who fought for and won the right to serve as volunteers in the military, began on November 5. This will continue to the end of the month, along with continuing registration for young men who did not sign up by the original deadline. □

Thousands march in Washington



Roberto Kopeck/Perspectiva Mundial

More than 25,000 demonstrators took to the streets of Washington, D.C., November 12 to demand an end to U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. Thousands more marched in protests on the West Coast.

Chanting "Ronald Reagan listen hard, Grenada isn't your backyard" and "USA, CIA hands off Nicaragua," demonstrators converged for a rally at the White House. Opposition to the invasion of Grenada was widespread and highly visible. Many banners and signs denounced the invasion, and it was the subject of numerous chants.

Expressions of solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution were more pronounced November 12 than at previous such demonstrations. One hand-made sign listed the vast improvements in literacy and health care in Nicaragua and underneath

asked, "What good has Reagan done?" A few trade union banners were also visible along the march route.

Among the speakers who described Washington's war plans in the region were Francisco Altschul, a representative of the Political-Diplomatic Commission of the Salvador FMLN-FDR and Lautaro Sandino, speaking for the Sandinista Youth of Nicaragua and the Unity Movement of Youth and Students of Central America (MUJECA).

Civil rights leader, and recently announced candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, Jesse Jackson was a featured speaker. Jackson charged Washington with "supporting the landed gentry" in El Salvador, and he denounced the White House for its aggression against Grenada and Nicaragua.

Farrell Dobbs: Birth of U.S. communism

Preface to Volume 2 of 'Revolutionary Continuity'

[Farrell Dobbs, national secretary of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP) for 19 years beginning in 1953, died October 31 in California, following a brief illness, at the age of 76.

[Dobbs was a leader of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes, and joined the Communist League of America, a predecessor of the SWP, that same year. He subsequently became the central Teamster organizer of the first campaign to organize inter-city truckers. He served 13 months in federal prison for his political opposition to U.S. imperialism's course in World War II. Besides his role in the SWP's central leadership team, Dobbs was the party's candidate for president in 1948, 1952, 1956, and 1960. During his 1960 presidential campaign, he visited Cuba and over the following years helped lead the process of reunification of the Fourth International around the political line of support to the Cuban revolution.

[Since his retirement as national secretary of the SWP in 1972, Dobbs wrote a four-volume series on the Teamster struggles. In 1980 the first volume of his history of the development of Marxist leadership in the United States, entitled *Revolutionary Continuity*, was published. The second volume, subtitled *Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-22*, appeared this past July. We are reprinting below the preface and dedication from that volume. They are copyright © 1983, by The Anchor Foundation and reprinted by permission of the Anchor Foundation.

[Beginning on November 20 in New York City, memorial meetings for Farrell Dobbs are being planned around the country, in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Boston, and other cities. In subsequent issues, *Intercontinental Press* will provide further materials on the life and political work of Farrell Dobbs.]

* * *

"Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922" is the second volume of the series entitled *Revolutionary Continuity*. The first volume, covering the period from 1848 through 1917, outlines the political history of the early years of struggle for a Marxist leadership of the U.S. working class. It opens with the appearance of a distinct proletarian communist current in the world labor movement, marked by the publication in 1848 of its manifesto drafted by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, today known as the *Communist Manifesto*. The volume ends with an account of the initial months following the October 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The response to that gigantic event marks the close of the early years of the struggle for revolutionary leadership of the U.S. workers and the beginning of the effort to build a communist party able to lead the toilers to power. That task remains.

In the introduction to that first book, I indicated that these volumes would trace, from the second half of the nineteenth century on, three major threads through the history of the workers' movement in the United States: "(1) the fight for the economic organization of the working class into trade unions, and for organization along industrial rather than craft lines; (2) the fight for political and social consciousness and action by the workers' movement; and (3) the fight for the independent political organization of the working class, a labor party, to advance its interests and those of its allies against the interests of the ruling capitalist minority. Tying these threads together are the efforts by the Marxist wing of the workers' movement to gather the cadres of a proletarian revolutionary party needed to lead the fight to end capitalist rule, establish a workers' and farmers' government, and open the road to a socialist order."

Readers who have not read the first volume will have no trouble in picking up this second one and following it. Those who are interested, however, may find it useful to refer back in particular to three topics dealt with in the earlier book that can serve as a jumping-off point to this one: (1) the flaws in program, strategy, and organizational concepts that

marked both the Socialist Party (SP) and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) from their origins at the turn of the century, explained in the chapters "Gains and Setbacks" and "A Disoriented Movement"; (2) the response to the outbreak of World War I and Washington's entry into it by various currents in the SP, IWW, and American Federation of Labor (AFL), as well as the disintegration of the bourgeois-led pacifist movement under the blows of the war, treated in the chapter "Supreme Test of War"; and (3) the historic watershed events in Russia in 1917, which form the topic of the last two chapters, "Bolshevik Revolution" and "First Workers' State."

The previous volume placed the evolution, debates, and development of currents in the U.S. labor movement as part of the decades-long effort by Marx and Engels to aid proletarian organizations in Europe and North America in charting a revolutionary course. This collaboration was cut in any direct form in 1895 with the death of Engels, who had outlived Marx by a dozen years. Although the thread of communist continuity was being picked up almost simultaneously in Russia by V.I. Lenin, then twenty-five years old, his writings, and the later development of the Bolshevik current, remained virtually unknown and without influence in the United States for more than two decades until after the Russian revolution.

The present volume, subtitled "Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922," opens just as the most prominent leaders in the largest parties affiliated to the old International had in their majority fallen in step with the imperialist governments of their own countries during World War I. It traces the emergence of a communist movement in the United States during its first five years, and its political interconnection with the efforts by Lenin and the Russian Communist Party to replace the now politically bankrupt Second International with a new international leadership of the working class.

In charting a course toward a new, communist International, the Russian leaders based themselves on the accumulated historical experience of the modern working class, now qualitatively enriched by the lessons from the world's first successful socialist revolution and the struggles of the initial few years of the Russian workers' state. During the years covered by this volume, the Bolsheviks explained over and over that the

Dedication to 'Revolutionary Continuity'

To the leadership of the Cuban Communist Party who, standing at the head of the Cuban workers and farmers, initiated the American socialist revolution and revived the continuity of proletarian internationalism practiced by the Bolsheviks who led the world's first workers' state.

To the men and women of the New Jewel Movement of Grenada and the Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua whose example has inspired a new generation of working people with the conviction that to defeat imperialism and begin the construction of socialism is the necessary and realizable task of our time.

To the heroic combatants of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front who are proving in the cities and in the countryside of El Salvador that even the bloodiest of tyrannies can be fought and who are destined to advance further on the road blazed by their sisters and brothers in Grenada, Nicaragua, and Cuba toward the elimination of exploitation and oppression.

Farrell Dobbs
July 4, 1983

world of revolutionary working-class politics had become a bigger and more complex place. The first global imperialist slaughter and the first concrete example of a way out of such capitalist horrors had triggered struggles by working people not only in Europe and North America, but also among the masses of the oppressed colonial and semicolonial nations. The destiny of the toilers in any one country was more than ever linked to those in all others.

The Communist International, launched in 1919 at the initiative of the Russian leadership, dedicated itself to helping working-class revolutionists around the world understand and implement a revolutionary Marxist program and strategy, including the necessary organizational principles. That step had a decisive impact on those in the United States, attracted by the example of the October revolution and its Bolshevik leadership, who were determined to construct a communist party. The discussions and decisions of the Communist International, as well as political consultation with its leaders, were a constant aid as these pioneers of communism in the United States sought to surmount all sorts of obstacles along their path. To what extent, in their initial years, these revolutionary workers succeeded or failed in learning and applying the lessons of revolutionary continuity that the Comintern leaders were trying to impart is the subject of this volume.

The developments recorded here go through the Third Congress of the Communist International in July-August 1921, and the formation the following year — after several unsuccessful attempts — of the first united Communist Party in the United States. This brought together for the first time in a single organization the big majority of U.S. supporters of the Communist International.

In addition to the three Comintern congresses in 1919–1921, other related international gatherings took place that had a deep impact on the continuity of revolutionary Marxism. These were a preliminary and a founding congress of the Red International of Labor Unions (the Profintern) in 1920 and 1921; the Congress of the Peoples of the East sponsored by the Communist International in Baku in 1920; and the founding and second congresses of the Communist Youth International in 1919 and 1921. These gatherings and their initial effect on the U.S. communist movement are covered in this volume.

Two international conferences of communist women were also held in 1920 and 1921. Along with the resolution on political work among women adopted in 1921 at the third Comintern congress, these conferences will be dealt with in the next volume. The discussions and decisions on this question had little impact on the U.S. communist movement until after the united party was formed in 1922 and the historic place of the communist fight for women's emancipation was discussed further at the fourth Comintern congress later that year.

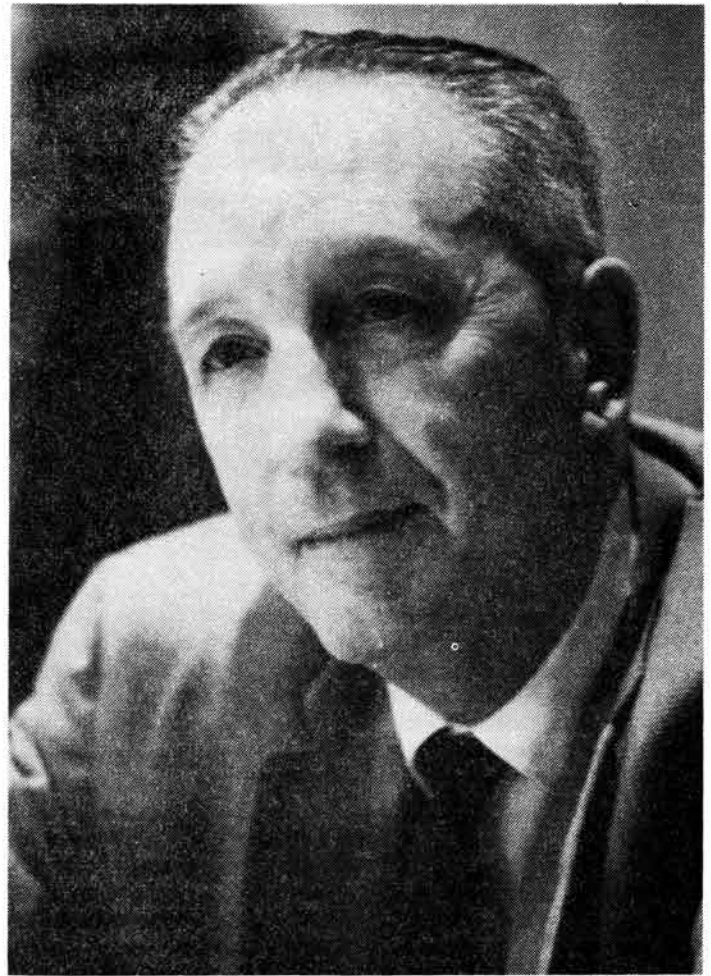
It might be useful to call to the reader's attention several points about the use of terms and abbreviations in this volume.

When Lenin returned to Russia from exile in April 1917 following the February revolution that toppled the tsar, he quickly won the majority of the Bolshevik Party leadership to the call for a government based on the soviets of workers, peasants, soldiers, and sailors — what he called a workers' and peasants' republic. "Soviet" is the Russian word for "council," but because of the pioneering role of the Russian toilers in the fight for world socialism, the term was subsequently adopted by vanguard workers and peasants in other countries to describe the broad mass organizations and delegated bodies they created in the course of their own revolutionary struggles. The word will frequently be used in this general sense in this volume.

On the day following the victorious Bolshevik-led insurrection in October 1917, the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies established a Council of People's Commissars as the new government. It was described as a Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government in the decree by the soviet congress.

The third All-Russian Congress of Soviets met in January 1918 and established a Russian Socialist Soviet Republic. It dropped the word "Provisional" before "Workers' and Peasants' Government." The new constitution adopted later that year established the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (RSFSR).

Thus, in this volume I use terms such as workers' and peasants' government or republic, Soviet government or republic, or Russian Soviet



Mohammed Oliver/Militant

FARRELL DOBBS, 1907–1983

republic, depending on the context.

During most of 1917–1921, the new government did not extend much beyond Russia proper. It did not encompass the much vaster area that had comprised the tsarist empire — stretching from the Ukraine in the west, to the Pacific Ocean on the east, and to border with China, Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey to the south.

By 1921, the Soviet republic had fought off most imperialist intervention and defeated the bulk of the counterrevolutionary forces in the civil war, and successful revolutions had taken place in Georgia and other oppressed nations that had been part of the tsarist empire. The question was posed of uniting the various soviet republics into a unified constitutional and political structure. Lenin emphasized that communists in Russia, the oppressor nation, had to approach this necessary task from the standpoint of intransigent opposition to all great-power chauvinism. Communists in the RSFSR, he stressed, must "see ourselves as equal in law with the Ukrainian SSR and others and enter with them into a new union, a new federation, 'The Union of the Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia.'"

In December 1922 the tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets met, dissolved itself into the first *All-Union* Congress of Soviets, and adopted the name Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This was formalized in a new constitution drafted in 1923 and formally adopted by the second All-Union Congress of Soviets in January 1924. This has remained the name of the state since that time, known in shorthand language as the Soviet Union or USSR for the last sixty years.

For the entire period covered in this volume, however, that was not the name of the Russian government. Thus, I have not used it in order that readers who are spurred to go back and dig out speeches and other

documents from that period will find it easier to follow the development of the Russian workers' and peasants' republic in its first years.

As explained in chapter 2, following the August 1914 collapse of the Second International, Lenin proposed for the first time changing the name of the Bolshevik Party from Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) — the official name of the Mensheviks, as well — to Communist Party. Following the February 1917 revolution, he outlined this proposal in more detail, and at the seventh party congress in March 1918, the new name Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) — the RCP(B) — was adopted.

The Bolsheviks' policy of support for the right to self-determination of the oppressed nations in the old Russian Empire had never implied the desirability of a federated structure for the revolutionary Marxist party. From his first political writings in the 1890s, Lenin had explained the necessity of a unified and centralized party with no autonomous federations. As against the claims of autonomy by the leaders of the pro-socialist Jewish Bund, for instance, Lenin insisted that the proletariat of Russia and all the oppressed nations in the empire needed a single multinational vanguard party to struggle to overturn tsarism, establish a government in the interests of the workers and peasants of all nationalities, and on that basis bring an end to national oppression.

Thus, the formation of the Soviet Union in 1922 did not involve any fundamental change in party structure. It did, however, raise the question of the party's name, which was changed from the Russian to All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) at the fourteenth party congress at the end of 1925. Since all events in this book occurred prior to that, the name Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) will be used throughout, with the abbreviations RCP(B) or just Russian CP.

One of the progressive acts of the Soviet republic was to quickly bring the Russian calendar into line with that used throughout Europe, the Western Hemisphere, and much of the rest of the world. In scrapping the old Russian calendar clung to by the tsar, however, a certain amount of confusion inevitably resulted about how to date events that took place during the 1917 revolution itself. Since the insurrection occurred on October 25 under the old calendar, for example, that historic event has become well known as the October revolution, although it is today celebrated around the world on November 7, corresponding to the modern calendar. In this book the dates from the old calendar are used for events in Russia in 1917 with the modern calendar date in parentheses the first time it appears. All dates of events in other countries or in Russia after 1917 correspond to the modern calendar.

Most Communist parties mentioned in this book will be referred to in abbreviations as, for instance, the French or Italian CP, and most Social Democratic parties as, for example, the French or Italian SP. Although this corresponds to the English translation of those names, not to the names themselves, this is by far the easiest style from the standpoint of the reader. I have made an exception in the case of the German parties, however, since the abbreviations from the German-language names are used almost universally in standard histories, in Lenin's *Collected Works*, and elsewhere. The German Communist Party, for example, will be abbreviated as the KPD from its German name, Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands. The ultraleft Communist Workers Party is the KAPD; Social Democratic Party the SPD; and the centrist Independent Social Democratic Party the USPD.

I have tried both in this volume and the previous one to avoid the adjective "American" in reference to the United States, using "U.S." instead. Although "American" is commonly used, and has been by many Marxists inside and outside the United States, I have chosen not to do so for two reasons.

First, the Americas stretch from the arctic regions of English Canada and Quebec to the southernmost part of Argentina and Chile, with two continents, the entire Caribbean basin, and an isthmus in between. Are the only things "American" those "from the Redwood forest to the New York island?" Clearly not. The working people of America hail from Toronto, Bogotá, Kansas City, Havana, Tegucigalpa, Port au Prince, and São Paulo — not just New York, Birmingham, Kansas City and Los Angeles.

Second, in the U.S. context, the term "American" has often come to connote the opposite of "foreign." In this chauvinistic usage, promoted by the bourgeoisie through schools, press, and pulpit, something is "as American as apple pie" or somebody "a red-blooded American," while something else or somebody else is not. If you speak English, were born in the United States, and, preferably, are white, then you're a "real American."

One of the central lessons from both this and the previous volume of *Revolutionary Continuity*, however, is that the working class and its allies in the United States have always been multinational and multilingual — native born and foreign born; English-speaking, non-English-speaking, and bilingual; white, Black, Latin American, and — of course — American Indian. The fight to build a communist party that can lead the U.S. working class and its allies to power has from the outset required the gathering of a proletarian cadre, of a membership and leadership, that reflects this multinational character of the toilers of the United States.

This relates to another question of terminology — one that figures prominently in Theodore Draper's 1957 history, *The Roots of American Communism*, which is still today the most widely used and only relatively thorough history of the founding years of the communist movement in the United States. Throughout that book, Draper repeatedly uses the term "foreign language federations" to refer to the organizations in both the Socialist Party and the Communist parties in the United States that grouped together many immigrant workers on the basis of their language and national origin; that published newspapers and other literature and held internal and public political events in those languages; and that elected their own leaderships. A number of things are wrong with the picture of these organizations presented by Draper.

First, the term "foreign language" federations was never that used by members of those organizations themselves; a language — including English — is only "foreign" to those who don't speak it as their first tongue, not to those who do. Generally these organizations called themselves, for example, the Russian Socialist Federation or the Russian Communist Federation, the Finnish Socialist or Communist Federation, the Jewish Socialist or Communist Federation, etc.

Second, Draper gives the incorrect impression that all or virtually all foreign-born workers in the U.S. socialist and communist movement belonged to one or another federation. The truth is that many did not, including central leaders of the SP left wing who helped form the communist movement. They held membership directly in the Socialist Party or one of the Communist parties.

Moreover, Draper's entire framework gives the impression that the mere fact of being foreign-born and non-English-speaking somehow made these militants politically sectarian toward the struggles by workers in the United States. This is not true. Immigrant and non-English-speaking workers were part of the vanguard of economic and political struggles by workers in the United States at every point in the history of the U.S. labor movement.

As I indicate, the majority of the leaders of the various communist language federations affiliated to the Communist parties were certainly ultraleft sectarians. But they had no corner on the market. Ultraleft sectarianism was a serious problem of the entire communist movement at that time, among both foreign-born and native-born leaders. The early communists were not as a whole deeply integrated into the living mass movement in the United States. Had they been, they would have been involved in struggles and labor organizations that often were heavily composed of immigrant workers; in some major industries, the majority of the workers were foreign born or Black.

The specific problem of organizational and political autonomy of various federations within the communist movement resulted from a lack of knowledge and experience among U.S. communists in constructing a centralized, Marxist workers' party, not from some peculiar innate streak of indiscipline among the foreign born; it was fundamentally the same question that Lenin had fought out in the early Russian Marxist movement.

The central conception of Draper's work is that communism was an "alien" concept in the United States, imported first by immigrant workers, and then from the Bolshevik leaders of the Russian revolution. It was never able to take root in the U.S. working-class movement, Draper claims, since it conflicted with homegrown "American" radical traditions.

This view makes "America" an exception to the laws of world history and the class struggle that hold good for other countries. It forms the link between Draper's anti-"foreign" twist and his anti-Russian and anticommunist conclusions. Scientific socialism itself, of course, was also a "foreign" import. Its attractive power to thinking workers in the United States, however, came from the road forward it showed them in the class struggle, whose effects they experienced every day, regardless of their country of origin or their bosses' nationality.

So, in this book I have used the term "language federations" when referring to these organizations, specifying the language or national grouping when a particular one is being referred to.

Finally, a note on sources. I have spared the reader the encumbrance of citations or footnotes in the text. Following the pattern of what seems to have been a useful appendix to the first volume, which included primarily letters from Engels to Marxists in the United States, I have added to the end of this volume several writings by Lenin referred to in the book. They will be cited at the appropriate point in the text.

No comprehensive collection of the reports, resolutions, and proceedings of the early congresses of the Communist International exists in English today. However, the bulk of the material from the Comintern congresses referred to in this book can be found in the following books, all of which are available from Pathfinder Press, the distributor of *Revolutionary Continuity*.

The main resolutions are available in *Theses, Resolutions and Man-*

ifestos of the First Four Congresses of the Third International and in a two-volume collection on the *Second Congress of the Communist International*, which also includes transcripts of the reports and discussion there. The book *Baku: Congress of the Peoples of the East* contains the proceedings from that gathering sponsored by the Communist International in 1920.

Lenin pulled together a team of Russian Communist Party leaders who played the central leading role in the early years of the Communist International and in its Executive Committee gatherings and related conferences. Nikolai Bukharin, Karl Radek, Leon Trotsky, and Gregory Zinoviev all drafted many resolutions and presented reports at the first four Comintern congresses. The record of the reports by Bukharin, Radek, and Zinoviev is largely unavailable in English today. Lenin's are available in his *Collected Works, Selected Works, Speeches at Congresses of the Communist International*, and other selections of his writings. The reports by Trotsky and resolutions drafted by him during those years have been published by Monad Press in the two-volume *First 5 Years of the Communist International*.

In addition, substantial quotations from the documents of the Red International of Labor Unions can be found in the introduction by Joseph Hansen to *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*.

Finally, my aim in this volume remains that indicated in the final paragraph of the introduction to the first volume: "I have had in view above all the oncoming generation of workers — Black, brown, and white, female and male — who are destined through their struggles to write the next chapters in the history of the emancipation of the toilers. Reliable knowledge of the past will help arm them to find the road to victory."

Farrell Dobbs
June 1983

Belgium

Balance sheet of general strike

LRT assesses meaning of antiausterity struggle

For nearly two weeks in mid-September, Belgium was paralyzed by a strike by 800,000 public sector workers, who walked off their jobs in response to the government's announcement of its 1984 austerity budget. It was one of the most massive workers' struggles in recent Belgian history. (For an account of the strike, see *Intercontinental Press*, October 31, p. 624.)

The October 7 issue of *La Gauche* — the French-language newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers League (LRT), the Belgian section of the Fourth International — provided the LRT's balance sheet of that strike.

In contrast to some other recent working-class struggles in Belgium, there were no great differences in the response of the French-speaking workers in Wallonia and that of the Flemish-speaking workers of Flanders.

"The breadth of the mobilization testifies to the depth of the opposition to the austerity measures envisaged by the government," *La Gauche* stated. "This opposition was expres-

sed with the same strength in Flanders, Brussels, and Wallonia."

Union tops back down

There was considerable sentiment, especially in Wallonia, to spread the strike to private industry as well. But the strike was halted by the leaders of the main trade unions just "at the moment when the workers in the public services and private sectors should have gotten the call for an all-trades general strike," according to *La Gauche*.

On September 22, two trade union organizations withdrew from the strike — the federation aligned with the rightist Liberal Party, and the Christian Confederation of Public Workers, which belongs to the Christian Trade Union Federation (CSC).

Since both of those unions were aligned with parties in the governing coalition, their leaderships were anxious to avoid action that could jeopardize the government. But many workers in the Christian unions did not return to work immediately. According to *La*

Gauche, "the CSC has probably never run into so much opposition from its ranks."

On September 23, the leadership of the Belgian General Confederation of Labor (FGTB), which is aligned with the Socialist Party, also came out for a return to work, effectively ending the national walkout.

A central target of the September strike had been the policies of the government of Prime Minister Wilfried Martens and cabinet member Jean Gol. The Martens-Gol government, as it is generally called, is highly unpopular in the workers movement because of its austerity policies.

But, according to the October 7 *La Gauche*, "the entire workers movement missed an exceptional opportunity. The leaders of the FGTB, the CSC, the Socialist Party, and the Christian Workers Movement (MOC) all attacked the policy of Martens-Gol. They all said, 'if the government doesn't change its policy, it should get out.'"

"Well, the government has not changed its policy," *La Gauche* noted, "but these leader-

ships did not dare throw it out" because "they have no alternative to the austerity policy."

The socialist alternative

The LRT and its members, however, put forward an alternative policy.

According to *La Gauche*, the main points of that alternative were:

• *Reject all sacrifices.* Moderation has not yet created a single job. Reestablish full cost-of-living increases. A 32-hour week with no cut in pay.

• *Get the money from where it is.* Abolition of banking secrecy, tax assessment of all fortunes, no amnesty for tax evaders.

"In order to get the crisis in hand, the power of the bosses has to be broken. *Nationalization of the banks and holding companies*, of the key sectors of the economy, without compensation and under workers control.

• *Martens-Gol out.* It's an illusion to think that this government is going to change its policy. It has to be thrown out.

• *Neither Martens-Gol, nor Martens-Spitaels,* but a workers government.* A coalition between the SP and the Social Christian Party will not solve anything. We need a government put in by a general strike and based on a trade-union united front. We need a government that will commit itself to meeting all the workers demands."

The question of what kind of government is needed was widely discussed during the strike.

The congress of teachers unions affiliated with the FGTB presented a plan for an alternative government based on the union movement.

That plan stated:

"We call for a government based on the mobilized workers united around a political platform, which makes the economy serve the society. . . .

"Such a government must represent all of labor and exclude all representatives of capital."

The LRT, which described this as "a valid plan," noted that such a political change "is not going to take place on its own. To forge fighting workers unity, to advance an anticapitalist program, we need to build a new workers party. We need a genuinely socialist party that will pursue the workers interests and not posts in the state apparatus."

LRT's intervention

An article by A. Tondeur in the same issue of *La Gauche* provided an overview of the LRT's intervention in the strike.

Members of the league were active throughout Belgium in the strike wave. The first to be involved were LRT railroad workers in Ghent, Antwerp, and Louvain.

*Guy Spitaels is a leading figure in the Socialist Party and the trade unions. Before the present Social Christian-Liberal coalition government, there was a Social Christian-Socialist Party coalition that began the austerity drive.

As the strike began to spread beyond the railroads, LRT members in the public service unions explained in their workplaces and unions that the railworkers' struggle against the budget was everyone's fight and should be extended into a general strike in both the private and public sectors.

LRT members argued that the strike's focus had to be broader than just the specific measures aimed against public workers in the 1984 budget, that they must fight all the measures against the working class.

The first priority, however, was to work for a national strike call for all the public services. Once this call came down, LRT union activists and all other trade-union militants threw themselves into organizing their fellow workers to actively participate in the strike.

Pickets were organized. Proposals were made for regular strike assemblies that would include all workers from the CSC and the FGTB, and in which all strikers would have the right to speak and vote.

Such assemblies functioned in many cities, such as Antwerp, Alost, Malines, Le Centre, Ath, and Louvain. In some, LRT members played a leading role.

In the private sector unions, LRT members felt that a spontaneous strike in solidarity with the public sector workers was not possible. So the main effort of the LRT union activists in the private sector was to get the unions to convene assemblies, meetings, congresses, and the like to discuss the situation and give a lead to the workers.

The LRT also intervened as a party, selling its French and Flemish newspapers and distributing leaflets.

According to Tondeur, "The real influence that the LRT activists gained in the public workers' strike can only be understood if you take into account two elements: The first is that they were present on the ground, often in the very center of the struggle. The second is that

they had a political line that corresponded to the aspirations of the masses of workers."

Tondeur noted that the LRT's political intervention was on two levels:

"1. We put forward immediate demands, such as the call for the rejection of all the government's measures and rejection of the 1984 budget as a whole. The idea that 'You have to get the money from where it is,' has spread and is being taken up now in circles much broader than our party.

"Such demands made it possible to give a concrete form to our perspective of unity in struggle of the working class, between the private and public sectors, between Flemish and Walloon, between FGTB and CSC.

"To promote unity, since the LRT has a base in both parts of the country, we were able to take concrete initiatives to establish contacts between Flemish and Walloon strikers. . . .

"2. Basing ourselves on the political consciousness of the workers, which marked this strike, we tried to orient it toward a central political objective — *the ouster of the Martens-Gol government.*"

Tondeur reported that considerable discussion of this took place in the working class. The obvious question arose: what should replace that government?

The workers were aware, Tondeur stated, that dumping Martens-Gol would not be enough, and that a return of the coalition government between the Social Christians and the Socialist Party would not solve anything.

"Calling for a *workers government* based on the trade-union common front and put in by a general strike," wrote Tondeur, "the LRT was the only party that intervened in the strike with a clear answer to the concern felt by thousands of union members" about what should replace the present government.

Tondeur noted that "we have never seen so many or such rich discussions about the alternative we offer. This will leave its mark." □

'Third World' rightists meet in Paris

An international conference of rightists from workers states and colonial and semicolonial countries took place in Paris October 20–23. Sponsored by a group called International Resistance, the conference dealt with the theme "The Third World, What Future?"

International Resistance was formed last May by Soviet exile Vladimir Bukovsky and convicted Cuban counterrevolutionary bomber Armando Valladares.

Although the conference claimed to reject the Third World "dilemma of right-wing dictatorship or Communism," the proceedings focused on how to fight what was described as "Soviet imperialism."

The gathering in the French capital brought together counterrevolutionary exiles from Cuba and Nicaragua, Soviet dissidents, Afghan resistance fighters, and opponents of the present governments of Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, and Angola.

According to the October 26 Paris daily *Le Monde*, much of the conference's time was spent attacking governments like those of Fidel Castro in Cuba and Muammar el-Qaddafi in Libya as "trojan horses of Soviet expansionism."

Le Monde noted the "imbalance in the denunciation of dictators — the most resolute adversaries of the Argentine, Chilean, or Philippine regimes were not invited." Taking a lead from the views of Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, participants justified this focus by claiming "that [dictatorships like] those of Somoza, Pinochet, Galtieri have never had the power of the one in the USSR."

The organizers of the conference hope that it will lead to the establishment of a permanent commission that will develop "a new policy for the Third World that is realistic and takes into account Soviet strategy." □

The revolution's 'great challenge'

Part II of interview with Commander Jaime Wheelock

[The following is the second of three installments of an interview with Commander Jaime Wheelock, Nicaragua's minister of agrarian reform. The interview was conducted by Marta Hamecker, an exiled Chilean journalist who today lives in Cuba.

[The first installment dealt with the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), the classes that hold political power, and the role of the bourgeoisie. The third will cover the Sandinistas' economic policies and the imperialist aggression against Nicaragua.

[The interview was published in Nicaragua in book form, as *El Gran Desafío* (The Great Challenge), published by Editorial Nueva Nicaragua, from which we have taken the complete text. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

4. The church

"On July 19, 1979, we found Monsignor Obando in Venezuela, working as a politician, not as a bishop, trying to use the influence of religion in support of a political solution."

Question. The religious phenomenon is a phenomenon extremely widespread in Nicaragua. This, in a certain way, is reflected in the government itself; two of its members are priests, which is quite exceptional. The Catholic church was an element that played a role in favor of the struggle against Somoza, but today it serves more as a brake than as an impulse for the construction of the new society. How is this to be explained? Do you think it is possible to make a strategic alliance with the Christians and, specifically, with the Catholic church, for the construction of the "new society"? Or is it the case that they represented a positive factor only in the struggle against the then-existing tyrant, and that they have now become the main bulwark of bourgeois-democratic values, becoming in effect a brake on the revolution?

Answer. It is true that there were expressions of support to the revolution and participation in it by religious sectors. But I would say, to start, that the question of religion is not quite the same as the question of participation by Nicaraguans in the Sandinista People's Revolution.

Nicaragua was divided, from the point of view of the struggle, between Somozaists and Sandinistas, between revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries. The Sandinista Front emerged as a political organization that raised economic, social, and political objectives. It emerged fundamentally as an armed revolutionary organization and, in the course of its development, grew to include, was joined by, very diverse sectors of national life: university students, high school students, women, peasants. At a certain moment, as part of the development, as part of the dynamic of the deepening of the struggle, we also saw the incorporation, in an organized way, of young people who had come together around a Christian movement that was active at a student and neighborhood level and included a few progressive priests. We understand their participation to be political, not religious, and also that the participation of the priests was of a strictly political and not religious character. We did not give either the students or the priests the task of using their religious message to gain sympathy. What we did do was to link up with them as combatants, as representatives of part of our people.

So first I would like to make clear that the reason for the participation by the Christian youth and a few priests was that we agreed on common objectives. We did not propose an alliance with the Christians. Certainly the participation of Christians was very important in strengthening the struggle. These were Christians who, from my point of view, were participating in the struggle as Nicaraguans, but with their own perspective.

They also participated because of a certain morality, an authentic Christian morality that forms part of the reexamination of what it means to be a Christian in the moment humanity is living today. There was a coincidence of views with the Christians, in that the just cause of, the demand for, national redemption raised by the FSLN was also the aspiration of a more militant and renewed Christianity. So I would separate the question of the institution from the question of the human individual.

In the framework of the currents inside the church as such, we can say that the Christian sectors, if it is possible to speak of Christian sectors, have two attitudes — some are opposed to revolution and others support it. But this attitude, at bottom, is an attitude of class. It is not a stance based on religion, but a stance based on the assessment each individual makes of his role in society. Monsignor Obando,⁹ for example, represents bourgeois ideology from his post in the church hierarchy, an ideology that supported nonrevolutionary alternatives for replacing Somoza. So one can ask, Is the Catholic church hierarchy the bearer of Christianity, is it fulfilling its pastoral mission? Or is it simply defending a given political option, an option that is the same as that of the former director of the Banco de América or of a colonel in the Somozaist National Guard.

Furthermore, there existed an entire earlier ideological current that linked the church to the state, to the regime, and to the established order. That current has been present in all the churches in Central America, in a backward, marginalized, underdeveloped, and extremely impoverished Central America. And precisely because of these conditions of injustice and oppression, after Vatican Council II Christian currents arose and flourished here that were opposed to this concept — which they called "collaborationist" — of the hierarchy's relationship to dictatorial governments. The existence of such progressive currents facilitated the incorporation of Christians in the revolution.

Q. You told me earlier that Obando was in Venezuela as one of the leaders of the FAO when the revolution triumphed. . . .

A. Yes. Obando and the church hierarchy, with rare exceptions, assumed a bourgeois position. They defended the option of Somozaism without Somoza so as to try to safeguard the existing order, an order that had served to entrench them securely.

Q. In other words, he wasn't with the revolution; he was against Somoza, which is something different. . . .

A. That's it. When Somoza was capable of preserving order, the church was with Somoza. Almost all the bishops, including Obando y Bravo, were Somozaists in their early years. But the time came when Somoza became an obstacle to preserving order. The bourgeoisie then sought another way out; they became anti-Somoza, but the aim was still to preserve bourgeois order. That's the attitude the church hierarchy was to adopt. And that's why on July 19, 1979, we found Obando in Venezuela, working toward a nonrevolutionary option. He was working as a politician, not as a bishop. Clearly, however, he was trying to use the influence of religion to gain support for a political solution of a certain sort. That is where the problems with the church-as-institution originated, that is where they developed from.

Q. The effort imperialism and the counterrevolution are making today is to try to force a confrontation between you and the Christian

9. Archbishop of Managua Miguel Obando y Bravo, an outspoken reactionary, is Nicaragua's highest Catholic church official.

population. They characterize you as atheists, as people opposed to the Christian conception of the world. How do you respond to the ideological use imperialism is making of religion?

A. I think you can take as a concrete example what I said to the peasants yesterday, in the ceremony where land titles were given to several cooperatives in Nueva Segovia. "The Somozaists say we are atheists, that we don't believe in God; they certainly don't tell you that we are the ones who are living up to the commandments, to the Bible, working toward the well-being of all. We prefer to say, let's look at deeds, not words: Blessed are the poor, the Bible says. But who are we helping? Isn't it the poor, with land, work, loans, schools, the campaign to teach reading and writing. . .? We say, yes we are living up to this teaching. Blessed be the poor, and they will be, despite Somozaism and despite the counterrevolution. Blessed be the meek, the peaceful, for they shall inherit the earth. These words must be familiar to you. Aren't they? Who spoke those words? (A peasant replied, 'He who was on high and who now is here among us.')

Yes, he who is here and has given you land.

"So who represents the sentiment of fraternity and love toward the peasants? It is Sandinism that represents genuine love here, love of the poor and the peasants that is deep and real. Shut the door to those who say that we are against the ideas of Christianity, because we are living up to these ideas. Not only do we live up to them, but we go beyond them. We do more than just live up to them because we are prepared to shed our last drop of blood for you. How many died in the war that made this triumph possible? Thousands. Why did Carlos Fonseca die? Carlos Fonseca fell and shed his blood for the Nicaraguan people. Where did he die? In the heart of the mountains, at the side of peasants. Julio Buitrago¹⁰ was a student. He wasn't fighting for himself or for his own happiness. If he had wanted to fight for his own happiness he could have remained a law student rather than dying for the people. And Edgard Lang,¹¹ who was the son of a very rich family. Why did he want to fight, since he already had everything? He fought for a higher purpose — to die and give his life for the people. That is why we are fighting. That is why we will go to the end. And that is why we are invincible."

5. Freedom of the press

"We do not limit freedom of the press; it still exists. What we limit is the ability to destabilize."

Q. Isn't it a sign of weakness of this revolution that in the midst of armed counterrevolutionary aggression, periodicals like La Prensa are still published?

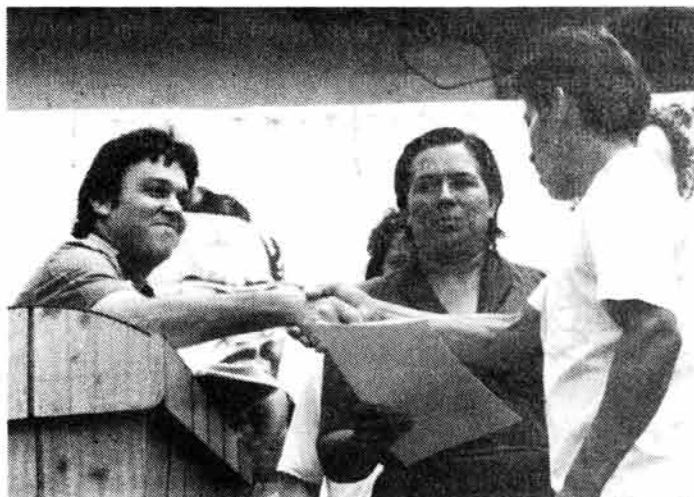
A. To take this up you have to begin with our revolution's concept of pluralism. From the outset we clearly established the rules of the game. We gave every sector the opportunity to become integrated into the revolution. Our program is a democratic-popular program. There has to be a revolutionary transformation, and above all else, national sovereignty must be defended. These are, shall we say, the basis of the new social leadership. We accept the existence of other political parties. The only thing we prohibit is the organization of supporters of Somozaism.

But what has actually happened? Under the instigation of imperialism, a series of reactionary sectors within the right wing have begun to violate the peace of our society. To what aim? To facilitate the return of North American imperialism and the enslavement of Nicaragua. They are therefore antinational sectors.

Reagan is the main enemy of Nicaragua's mixed economy. He doesn't want pluralism here, he doesn't want to see us carry out this very important program, for it is full of promise for the rest of Latin America. He doesn't want to see us succeed. So part of his general plan for destabilization here is to try to impede, attack, and destroy our program.

10. Julio Buitrago, a member of the FSLN National Directorate and a leader of the urban underground struggle, was killed in an attack by the National Guard in Managua in July 1969.

11. FSLN cadre killed in Leon by National Guard in April 1979.



Michael Baumann/IF
Wheelock (left) hands over land title to members of agricultural cooperative.

That's what lies behind the fact that the newspaper *La Prensa* at a certain point began to be converted into the general staff of reaction. It stopped being the *La Prensa* of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, or the *La Prensa* of the first few months of the revolution. It was taken over by sell-out and reactionary sectors, led by the CIA, and they began to use it as an instrument for shaping public opinion as part of their destabilization plans.

What has our response been? We have limited the right wing's use of a public means of communication for spreading their destabilizing message, something they usually try to accomplish by falsifying or distorting news. We have set certain norms.

Q. What are these norms?

A. There are two main laws. One says that economic and social data must be attested to by official bodies. The other states that news about defense of the country can only come from the Ministry of Defense. Both laws are connected with national defense. It was necessary to discipline the news a little with a sense of responsibility.

With these laws we limited not freedom of the press, which still exists, but rather the ability to destabilize.

In any country in the world, in the United States, for example — if the *New York Times* were to try to publish an article saying the Chase Manhattan Bank was on the verge of collapse, it would be stopped because that's a news item that acts against the system. Freedom of the press, as conceived by bourgeois democracy, means you can make as many criticisms as you like so long as you don't call into question the basis of the regime. When a piece of news or a periodical threatens the system, it is simply suppressed. Our freedom of the press exists within the framework of a new system in which education, participation, and the formation of opinion must have a strong national, moral, and constructive character. We permit citizen pressure of any type whatever as long as it is within the framework of the rules of the new economic, social, and political system we are seeking to build. These even include the right of the opposition parties themselves to aspire to take power.

We are at present discussing a law on political parties in the Council of State where that is made explicit. Our responsibility as a political party is to make every effort to retain power, but from the point of view of the nation we have to acknowledge that there are citizens who have a totally different point of view, and that they have the right to hold this different view. Our task is to persuade and convince them. But if they are not convinced, they have the right to fight for their ideas as long as these ideas are not contrary to the historic necessity to create a new society. They can be anti-Sandinista, they can be opposed to the Sandinista Front as a political party, they can criticize us. But they cannot attack the bases of the new society that are in the historic interests of the

people of Nicaragua, that are part of their patrimony. Such people can be nonrevolutionary, but they cannot be counterrevolutionary. Against them the revolution does not attack, it defends itself. So it is within these limits, which are quite flexible, that we are moving.

6. What imperialism fears

"Our revolution shattered a general model of imperialist power. If the United States occupies Central American territories, there will be many Sandinos in the area around Managua."

Q. I understand that you were a student in Chile during the Popular Unity government, and that you are well informed about that experience. Do you think imperialism is using the same methods here? How did it achieve its aims there, while it has not been able to do so in Nicaragua?

A. In Chile imperialism began to organize the removal of the government fundamentally by using the power of economic influence retained by the bourgeoisie and the oligarchy and at the end by using the armed forces, which had a reactionary organization and ideology.

We didn't come to power through elections, nor through the support of a fraction of the electorate, as was the case in Chile. We came to power through armed struggle; we defeated the army of the dictatorship and the Yankees. That enabled us to establish an armed, people's government, based on a very broad national consensus. That's why imperialism is using a multifaceted strategy of struggle against the Sandinista People's Revolution. Diplomatically, they are trying to isolate us. Politically, they are trying to incite to action all the domestic and international subversive forces that are disposed to question our holding power. Economically, they are trying to strike a blow at us through sabotage and efforts to discourage the private productive sector. And above all militarily, which is the spearhead of all the rest.

The strategy of imperialism is not the same one we know from the past, that is, destabilization as such, as was the case in Chile. There the aim of destabilization was to bring about the disintegration of the elements that made up the ideological, economic, and political system of the people's government. They tried to separate the people from Allende through ideological and economic, not military, tactics. The military was used for the final blow and brought about the removal of the government in a matter of four hours. Our case is different. The axis of aggression against Nicaragua is military because they are trying to overthrow

an armed people's revolutionary government. It can't be destabilized by economic or political measures alone, because we can counteract these. They have to overthrow us militarily, impede the consolidation of our process, impede the consolidation of our people's armed forces. That's why they are resorting to Somoza's army, which is what they have closest at hand for the task.

So our case is different from that of Chile, though to be sure there are some similar elements as well. The tactics imperialism applied in Chile, it has to be acknowledged, were successful. They were based on the class struggle. Imperialism clearly identified which classes were allies, which classes were in conflict, the enemies, the nature of the government, its limitations, its strengths. Imperialism used the weapon of ideology. All of this is being used against us as well.

Q. Do you think the military aspect was, in your case, present from the beginning?

A. When they saw it was going to be hard to salvage their army, the first thing they tried to do was to work out a governmental compromise with us. We'll give them the government and keep the army, they thought. These negotiations were never negotiations with Somoza, but rather with intermediaries of the United States and the United States itself, because it was the U.S. that held power here in reality. Their position was that they could remove Somoza at any time, in exchange for our agreement to discuss with the National Guard a way of integrating them into a new army. We could have accepted this, for we were working with the idea that any soldier who hadn't been involved in crimes could be integrated, in one form or another, in a new revolutionary army. However, for a series of reasons that it would take too long to discuss here, this discussion was not able to continue, and Somoza's army fell. After Somoza left and we made a very strong military push, the National Guard simply disbanded. They dumped their weapons, their uniforms, everything. . . Somoza's army was finished. All the officers fled, to embassies, in small planes, in big planes, in every direction. So a period of time passed in which the imperialists had no alternative to employ. Of course, they tried to see if they could intervene militarily against us. Somoza's army had been dismantled, not because they wanted that to happen but because of factors beyond their control. Later they began to develop an overall strategy with military aggression as its axis — as I mentioned earlier — to try to cut down our revolution.

Q. Did you understand clearly from the beginning what was going to

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happen, that you would have to devote such efforts and resources to militarily strengthening the revolution?

A. We understood that the struggle against Somoza was a struggle against imperialism; not a struggle against the United States as a country but a struggle against an imperialist concept held by the United States government, for Somoza was a creation of imperialism. They are the ones who proposed arming and training the National Guard. The National Guard was the National Guard of the United States. All its officers were trained in North American schools, with a totally imperialist ideology; they spoke English, they wrote in English.

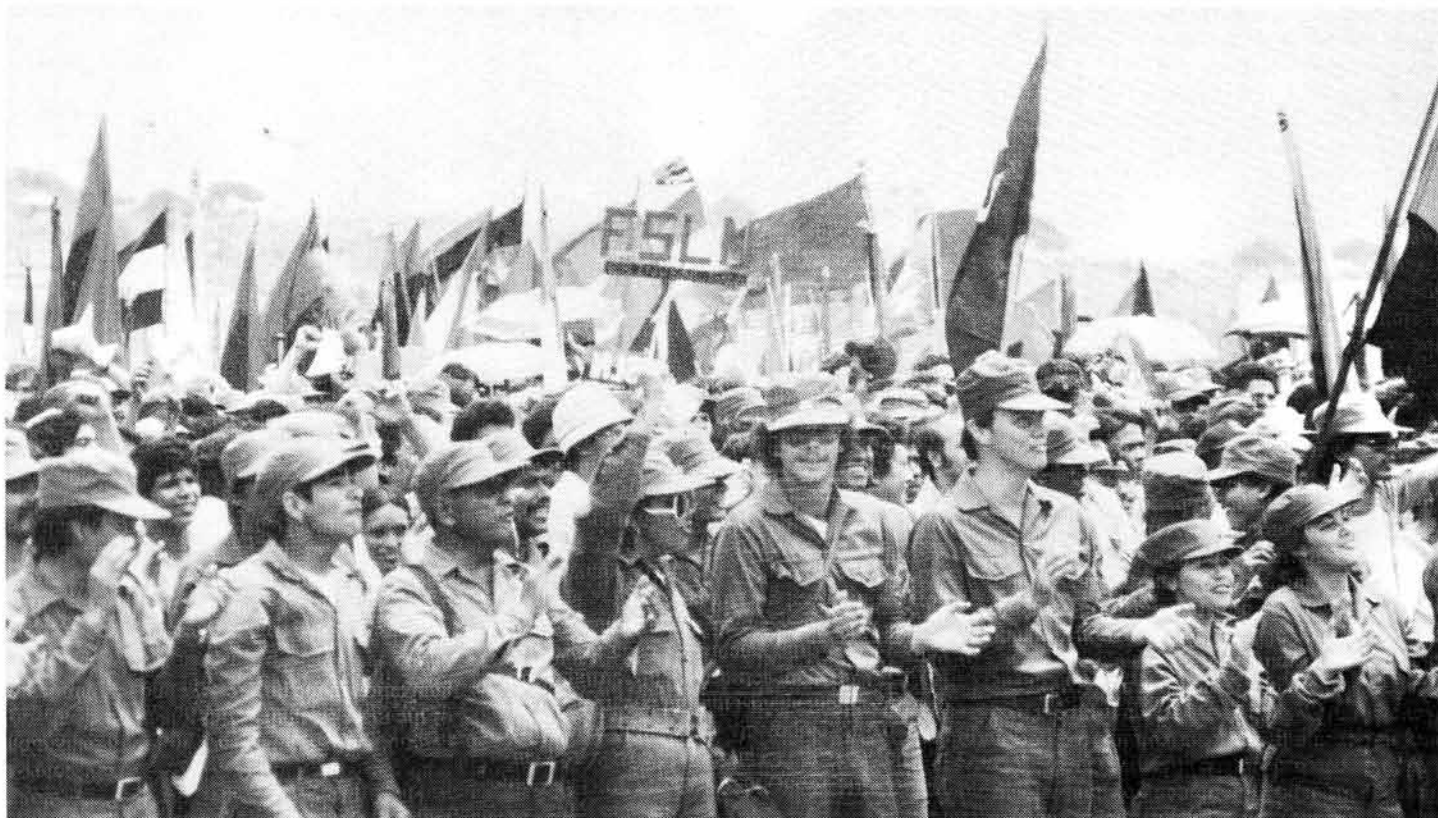
We knew that at a given moment imperialism was going to try to destroy the revolution, to regain the piece that it had lost. Nicaragua was a country that belonged to a scheme of power that had been created over a long period of time, with a lot of work and with a lot of resources, by the United States. The Central American countries are dependent countries that are located very close to the United States and above all serve it as sources of supply. The countries here have been shaped in accordance with this logic. They supply coffee, minerals, rubber, and cotton. Such countries require a large working class to pick coffee, extract rubber, mine minerals — and a small, simplified administrative structure. So what happened? There were no national classes capable of managing this type of society, because they had never been able to develop. At the same time there was great popular pressure, stemming from the struggle for economic and social demands by thousands of impoverished wage workers. That was a product of this brutal system of oppression in which the administrative layer received a share of the wealth produced.

Consequently, the United States was compelled to create strong dictatorial governments and impose them on top of these conditions of exploitation and oppression. For the local bourgeoisies could not guarantee the stability of societies that were explosive by their very nature. This is what happened in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Paraguay, Bolivia, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. All of these countries have dictatorships organized by the United States, conceived within the framework of imperialist economic relations.

The intrinsic contradiction within the North American scheme was the brutality of these dictatorships. That's why they always tried to introduce cushioning elements like elections, with the aim of providing a certain democratic varnish. And they also talked a little about progress, peace, and democracy. These were dictatorships that, paradoxically, talked about democracy. Somoza declared himself a democrat and held elections every five or six years, like Stroessner [of Paraguay].

The Somoza dictatorship was a classical, typical form, a model of imperialist domination in the situation of Latin America and especially in the Caribbean. When the Nicaraguan revolution broke such a model, something qualitative was shattered. Something of the utmost importance for the security of the reproduction of the imperialist model had been lost. This is destabilizing for imperialism's global scheme of power relations.

We are a danger for the United States; not only because we are a country with an independent foreign policy that it considers negative for its interests; not only because they see us as a "Soviet base"; but fundamentally because we represent the shattering of its classic model of domination for Latin America. And that model consists precisely in the coincidence of three systems of power: the oligarchy, the reactionary church hierarchy, and the military gorillas. All their power, draped with pseudodemocratic ideology, was cemented atop that triangle. The Sandinista revolution broke with the oligarchy, with the reactionary church hierarchy, and with the Somoza military dictatorship. It broke with the pattern that brought profound distortions to our history: poverty, brutal oppression, dependency. We are a response, a promising synthesis that is moving away from the past. In reality we are carrying out for the first time in Central America what the United States and its model always promised the people. Under revolutionary hegemony we are attaining peace, stability, progress for the people, and a more perfect democracy. I can tell you that a rupture of this classic model has global effects, for this North American model is in crisis, is being broken, and is being weakened. And we are a proof that revolutionary hegemony does not lead to all the things the United States has said. For example, to totalitarianism, to that communist society bogeyman the United States is



Arnold Weissberg/JP

Nicaraguans are prepared to defend revolution from imperialist attacks.

always trying to peddle, to persecution, to cruelty, to executions — the notions they also tried to peddle in Chile.

What has happened here? We have had, on the part of revolutionaries, on the part of a “leftist” regime, a whole series of responses that are totally contradictory to the image the United States is trying to create. And, yes, this does have subversive power. It has more subversive power than the arms we are supposedly sending to El Salvador. For it is a general message that has to do precisely with what we could call the crisis of the imperialist model and, for that very reason, the crisis of imperialism. What Reagan and his administration fear the most is that here we are developing an authentically national model — national, Latin American, and in addition a continuation of the work of Bolívar, Martí, and Sandino.

That’s also why they isolated Cuba, attacking the Cuban people who, in 1959, were the first to triumphantly break Yankee domination in America. And since then they have not ceased their entire campaign of aggression, lies, and blackmail against the Cuban revolution. That is why we feel ourselves to be brothers of the Cubans. We are sons of America, suffering together the painful birth of liberty in America.

The appeal and attractiveness of a revolution like this — humanist, generous, antidictatorial, participationist, popular, involving social transformations, with economic successes, with great support worldwide — is a defeat for imperialism much greater than the defeat we handed them in battle. It is something bigger than Nicaragua, something more important than a local revolution. This revolution shattered a general model of imperialist power, and for that reason some of the imperialists think that the end is near, that this is the beginning of the end for imperialism.

Q. How far do you think imperialism will go? Will there be direct intervention?

A. We have never discounted the possibility of direct intervention. If we go by the lessons of our own history we would have to conclude that imperialism is already putting into operation an escalation that will lead, at a given moment, to direct intervention by U.S. military forces in Nicaragua.

We have to remember that Nicaragua fought the United States at various times in the past. They sent troops here before the Bolshevik revolution, before the Cuban revolution. And we are probably going to fight the United States again. Not precisely because of the fact that we are continuing the Bolshevik revolution, that we are continuing the Cuban revolution, but because this is something that is part and parcel of the struggle for freedom and sovereignty in Latin America — you have to oppose imperialism to be free. The case of the Malvinas is an example. If we want there to exist someday a free and sovereign Latin America that follows its own path, that has the right to its own development, to its own prosperity, it will have to be accomplished by fighting North American imperialism.

The countries most subordinated to the United States were precisely the countries of Central America, because they were located along the U.S. spinal cord — the isthmus for an interoceanic canal, a factor that has been a part of our entire history. At one point there were plans to build a canal across Nicaragua, and the United States wanted to maintain this in reserve. Control over the canal means control over their naval and commercial traffic. Through the canal pass all their raw materials, all their fundamental flow of commerce. They must have thought, How are we going to instill confidence in our allies on other continents if we can’t exercise meaningful control over something so close?

In reality we are already at war against imperialism. They have organized a secret war against us, but when all is said and done it is a real war. There are Yankee marines and advisers behind this war, serving in its command posts. But the type of soldier involved is less important than the aim and objective being sought. The objective is not to prevent arms from being passed from Nicaragua to El Salvador. This is a justification Reagan is trying to sell to the North American people and Congress, to portray us as an aggressor country. The real aim is to overthrow the revolutionary government. It is to prevent a deeper fissure in its pattern of domination. They claim we are a threat to U.S. security. But this

is absolutely false. Nicaragua doesn’t represent a threat to the North American nation or people. What it does threaten is imperial will. For that reason our struggle is part of the struggle of the North American people.

An idea of what Reagan is capable of doing has been given by recent developments. We discovered here that agents of the CIA were organizing a plot to murder our foreign minister. In a step that was both prudent and responsible, we expelled only the three North American embassy employees who were most deeply implicated. In reprisal the United States expelled 30 Nicaraguan functionaries, enormously increasing the difficulty of continuing the business arrangements we have with hundreds of North American companies. It was a measure way out of proportion. It shows the intent of the Reagan administration, when it can find an iota of justification, to hit us hard. All that has kept Reagan from implementing even greater aggression against Nicaragua has been international public opinion and domestic pressure inside the United States.

Q. And the situation in Central America, what role does it play?

A. With the government of Guatemala we really haven’t had any problem. We are not in agreement with the type of regime that exists there, from a political and ideological point of view, but this has not led us to break commercial, economic and cultural relations with the Guatemalan government. With the government of Costa Rica, we have a policy of friendship and cooperation. We were beginning to have good relations with the Salvadoran junta, following the coup against the Romero regime in 1979. We even received a member of that junta here. And in regard to Honduras, we looked quite favorably on the initial neutral and prudent position of the Policarpo Paz government.

But what has happened? Aggressive U.S. policy has taken hold of Honduras, creating a situation of tension, practically a war, in Central America. Why? Because the United States is reacting violently to events that are going to change the relationship of forces and that are going to modify their model of domination in the region. To begin with they opposed the existence of a progressive government in El Salvador, conspired against it, and unleashed internal persecution against all progressive elements in the country. What have they done in Honduras? They are sustaining a military dictatorship that has now come to be a replacement for Somoza’s. They are converting Honduras into a U.S. military base and from Honduran territory are constantly provoking hostile actions against the Nicaraguan revolution. In Costa Rica they are trying to influence, pressure, and blackmail the government, to turn it against Nicaragua. They have formed “democratic ententes” with reactionary governments against Nicaragua. They would like to revive CONDECA¹² to set us fighting against each other to serve their interests. They have gone so far as to bring Israel into the picture. They have carried out several large-scale military maneuvers. They have opposed a peaceful solution in El Salvador. They are arming Somoza’s guardsmen. With the result that we, who would like to be a factor for peace and stability, are accused of preparing more than one Central American country for slaughter. We are accused of being aggressors, and we haven’t attacked anyone. We are the ones who are being attacked, as a function of imperialism’s aggressive will. All this while the Contadora group continues a discussion that is multilateral and, in a certain sense, bilateral with us.

As long as the U.S. government exercises such a decisive influence over the governments of Central America, there really can be no solution. What the Reagan administration wants is the return of right-wing and fascist military dictatorships, not only in Central America but in the whole world. It seems that these are the only governments that can maintain a stable alliance with the United States, which itself is ruled by irresponsibles and fascists. That is the problem.

We, on the other hand, despite the past, encountered a constructive interlude with Carter, for Carter understood that the United States had to make a certain shift. Reagan supposedly is seeking to protect the United States, but he is leading it to its ruin. Reagan’s war policy is not

12. Central American Defense Council, a U.S.-sponsored military pact, established in 1964.

only beyond the control of the United States but of all humanity. It means encouraging the massacres of Palestinians at the hands of the Israelis, encouraging centers of tension everywhere. They want to destroy the Nicaraguan revolution, fill the entire world with arms, stuff themselves with arms, force every country in the world to arm itself. This is going to lead all of us to death. There is another, more secure, way to protect the United States. That is through coexistence, and this was Carter's thesis. Carter said, in effect, let us acknowledge that we can no longer remain friends with the Anastasio Somozas, the Alfredo Stroessners, the Augusto Pinochets. That was more intelligent and forced us to be more prudent. It led us to make a series of commitments, including with the United States. It made us more receptive to proposals they might make. Carter sent us a few important messages at certain times, messages whose considerations we listened to and accepted.

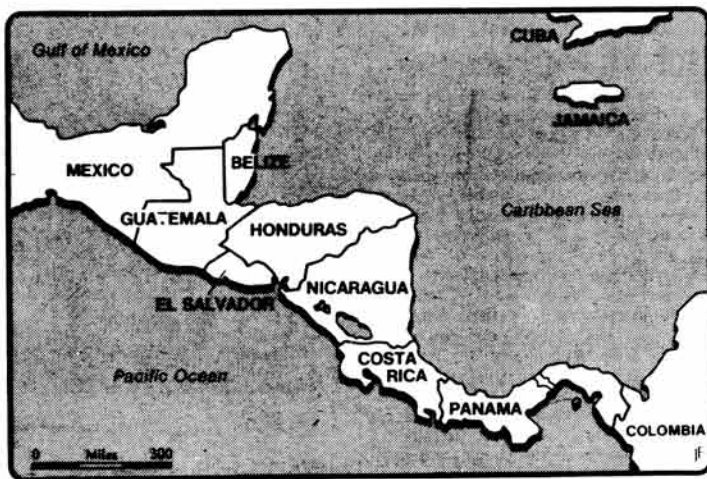
On the other hand, when the [1979] change took place in the Salvadoran government, we asked for the opinion of the revolutionaries of that country. They were enthusiastic because they saw the possibility of embarking toward the beginning of a solution to the conflict. In other words, if deep social changes were to take place in Central America, there would be no revolutionary struggles.

The great majority of the people of Central America, and this includes all layers of society, even progressive sectors of the bourgeoisie, are in favor of such changes. They are changes that are conducive to durable peace and stability.

If deep social changes were to take place, and if a possibility for participation were to open up for those who are today fighting with arms, there would be no problem. But this is not what the present government of the United States wants. It is the United States that is really fostering external and internal violence. It is the United States that is really the origin of violence. They are simply trying to deceive people when they say it has to do with the Soviet Union and the security of the United States.

Q. If the United States attacks Nicaragua, what will happen with the revolutionaries in the rest of the countries of Central America? Won't the struggle become regionalized?

A. If the United States attacks Nicaragua I see a very high cost for the Nicaraguan people, and I also see a very high cost for the North American forces that penetrate into the country. They paid a high price 50 years ago when Sandino fought them, with few weapons and from a very disadvantageous position. Today, however, the United States will not be fighting a guerrilla liberation movement but an entire country that is prepared to battle to the last man. This is another element that has slowed down imperialism. It has made them take the route of destabilization, of preparing better internal subjective conditions so as to be in a position to mount a more rapid, violent, and shattering attack. And this is where their calculations go wrong. For it is going to be very difficult



to do this in Nicaragua, where the great majority of the population are poor and humble people, people who have made gains with the revolution and who are going to defend it with determination.

If the United States intervenes militarily, they are going to compel us to make use of the relations and resources we may find in other countries. It is certain that they are going to have to intervene in other Central American countries to intervene in Nicaragua. In fact they are already building a big base in Honduras for aggression against our country. If this aggression takes place and the United States occupies Central American territories, there will be many Sandinos in the area around Nicaragua. We want to avoid this intervention to the maximum, but we will not sidestep our duty to resist it to the last drop of blood.

7. There will be elections

"Imperialism is demanding that we hold elections, because they think the revolution can be overthrown through elections. But our first task is to create an irreversible model of people's power. The forms will come later."

Q. The question of elections is one of the arguments most used by imperialism against you. If you had carried out an electoral process immediately after the triumph over Somoza, you would undoubtedly have won by a wide margin. Why didn't you do this?

A. We knew perfectly well at the time of the triumph of the revolution that if the Sandinista Front had called elections it would have won a resounding victory. However the fact that revolutionary power had emerged out of a massive armed struggle with participation, in one or another form of struggle, of the entire Nicaraguan people gave us a legitimacy of greater quality than a new civil election could have. From the juridical point of view, even bourgeois law recognizes that revolutions are a source of rights and legitimacy, for they are the work of an entire people. When the will of the people is expressed in an armed struggle against an antipopular government, the government that emerges has a historical basis that requires no other source of legitimacy.

A revolution that arises out of armed struggle, and armed struggle itself, is in a certain sense a test of opinion, for it implies a relationship of forces tremendously favorable to a cause. So we could say, therefore, that Nicaragua had "elections" in the period leading up to July 19, but in a military fashion; in contrast to the negative, false, artificial, and deceitful legitimacy Somozaism tried to cloak itself in, for Somozaism too had its elections. But those elections under Somoza did not necessarily imply a genuine test of public opinion. They were elections intended to deceive the Nicaraguan people and to cover up the dictatorial and unjust character of the Somoza regime. Somoza always won the elections, and by an overwhelming majority; that's what appeared in the vote results. You might ask, How is it possible that Somoza could win? But it is easy to answer. First, there was no system of national identity cards here, but rather a process of registration for each election. So Somoza could arrange for the vote of nonexistent citizens, including even the dead. In addition, since there was no national identification system, no identity card of any sort, one person could vote 50 or as many times as necessary under different names. Second, the boards of elections were totally controlled by the Somozaists. And the final tally was taken by an electoral tribunal that was also dominated by the Somozaists. In short, elections here had absolutely no prestige.

The Sandinista Front did not think it was necessary to hold elections because it felt, in the first place, that the revolution had been a perfect test of opinion, of much greater democratic content. And secondly, because this was not the task of the moment; the number-one task then was national reconstruction. For that reason we suggested elections for 1985.

We ourselves called for elections in our program, and we maintain this position. However, a series of situations, linked to the aggression, have made it more difficult and complex to begin to prepare for elec-



Fred Murphy/IP

Volunteer teachers in literacy campaign take oath.

tions. Not to mention a series of uncompleted technical tasks, such as a census and a national registration of the population, and this too may hold things up. We remain, however, of the opinion that it is necessary to consult our people on most decisions. And in point of fact we maintain ongoing consultation with the different social sectors, sometimes informally and at times in a formal manner. In this area we have developed, from the bottom of society on up, a set of norms and systems of participation that, taken together, are a prefiguration of a new democracy. Above and beyond the Council of State, we hold continual discussions with the people, one example of this being public meetings with the national junta in different parts of the country — in neighborhoods, in factories, in the countryside — in short, throughout the whole country. Workers participate in the management of enterprises. Local areas are governed by the ranks of the population. The people's organizations participate in the formulation of major government measures through committees for the discussion of political questions. Such committees discuss agrarian reform, industrial production, agriculture, and cattle raising and are part of practically every government body that can make important decisions.

Q. Can you explain how this actually works?

A. I'll give you an example. Our agrarian reform policy — that is, the transformation and development of agriculture and cattle raising —

is formulated in consultation with a body called the National Council on Agrarian Reform. There are also regional councils of this type. Every proposal for development is brought for discussion before this council, which includes representatives of peasant organizations, workers organizations, municipal and regional organizations, and state institutions.

That doesn't mean that we're satisfied. We are working toward the construction of a new society. This implies first of all building the central apparatus of a new state, a task that we are at present still carrying out. In a second phase we will assimilate and analyze our accumulated experience and on that basis continue working toward the institutionalization of the revolution. That will require, first of all, participation in that work by the popular organizations and all sectors of the population. In our draft plans for this, we have talked about a national constituent assembly. It is likely that an organization of this character will work for some time, perhaps for years, laying the basis for what will be a new republican institutionality of a democratic and popular character. Although elections need not necessarily be linked to such a constituent assembly and to such an institutionalization, we have thought about the possibility of linking them — that is, of using elections to initiate our institutionalization. What is likely, in the framework of all the aggressions we are suffering, is that institutionalization will proceed in an autonomous manner, and the question of elections will be dependent on a return to a minimum normality. It makes no sense for us to be trying to organize a big election campaign at a time when we are being brutally attacked.

Imperialism is demanding that we hold elections, not because they are convinced that elections are the guarantee of a government's legitimacy, but because they think the revolution can be overthrown by elections.

Now it wouldn't be of much help, and in fact would be a grave setback, if we were planning to repeat something like the worn-out electoral maneuvers of the Somozaist past. In Latin America, elections in general have been discredited; they don't correspond to the growing political maturity of our people. The ruling groups in general employ this type of elections to confuse the people with promises and manipulative campaigns, so as to perpetuate regimes that can no longer respond to the masses' needs.

Our duty as Nicaraguans and as Latin Americans is to seek to overcome historically, within the framework of democracy, the contradiction inherent in traditional elections — namely, that they are antipopular. This is the challenge. We are studying, we are examining history, we are examining the past so as to recover it, so as to become the continuators of the vanguard of republican forms of government that were once part of this continent but have since been eroded away. We want to help bring solutions.

In 1830 in Nicaragua, only those who owned property could vote. The responsibility of citizenship was measured according to your pocketbook which meant only the wealthy sectors had the right to vote. The Liberal revolution of 1893 institutionalized universal suffrage. That was a conquest, but a relative one, for Nicaragua was still a country that was illiterate in its great majority.

I think we must study universal suffrage, in the sense of assuring that citizens can effectively vote in accordance with their authentic interests. It is a question of consciousness, of political maturity, of more advanced popular and social organization. To assure that in Nicaragua the workers and peasants make use of the right to vote, we have to find new forms of participation, of state leadership. The first thing we have to do is to create an irreversible model of people's power; the forms will come later. There is nothing simple about this. It is a theoretical and historical problem that hasn't even been sorted out yet. The challenge for us is to sort it out. If we don't, what will be the use of the revolution? To return to the past?

The ridiculous thing is that others reproach us for moving slowly in carrying out the pledge to hold elections. It's ironic that in circumstances in which no one, from Plato's utopia on down, can boast of having attained democracy, we, the Sandinistas, are criticized for not having attained it in three or four years.

[To be continued.]

Debate on the Nicaraguan revolution

What is the character of the Sandinista leadership?

[The following debate on the character of the Nicaraguan revolution was printed in a joint supplement to the October 21 issue of *Rouge* and the October 22 issue of *Lutte Ouvrière*.

[*Rouge* is the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. *Lutte Ouvrière* (Workers Struggle) is the weekly

newspaper of the group of the same name, an organization that describes itself as Trotskyist. Both newspapers are published in Paris. Together they publish a joint supplement monthly. The translations are by *Intercontinental Press*.

[The first article presents the standpoint of *Lutte Ouvrière*, and the second that of the LCR.]

Sandinista leaders stood fast against imperialism. They also invoke the fact that faced with the desertion of a certain number of representatives of the bourgeoisie who went into opposition, including armed opposition, the Sandinista leaders have not been afraid to mobilize the peasants and the workers. They invoke the fact that the regime has an unquestionable popular consensus behind it.

But what does this change?

At no time do the events show us that the working class allied to the poor peasantry has intervened to take control of the direction of the country's affairs.

When the Nicaraguan leaders address the workers in the cities and countryside of their country, they tell them that they, the workers, are the ones who have power. That is true. But this is a refrain that many Stalinist, nationalist, or reformist men of state have used to tell the workers, precisely, not to oppose the regime in place.

But power is in the hands of the Sandinista leaders, who base themselves on the military apparatus they forged in the course of years of armed struggle, and which they exclusively control. They enjoy popular support, but once again, power is in their hands and not in the hands of the peasants and workers through the intermediary of bodies based on these popular classes.

The Civic Defense Committees before July 1979 were only adjuncts of the guerrilla army. The Sandinista Defense Committees that succeeded them serve as a transmission belt between the government and the population, from above to below, even if they are mass organizations. These are not organs that allow the population to decide, to exercise power. They do not even allow them to control it.

In reality, the LCR comrades' line of thinking would seem to be that it was possible under the pressure of events — in this case under the pressure of American imperialism — for the state to imperceptibly change its class character, becoming more and more working class, under the sole effect of the supposed transformations in the consciousness of the leaders.

While the LCR comrades are quick to invoke a supposed "dynamic" of the permanent revolution, which would make bourgeois nationalist revolutions grow over into proletarian revolutions, for our part we find this way of thinking quite reformist.

And this error is all the more awkward because, at the same time that the LCR comrades assert that bourgeois nationalist leaderships can in the end accomplish the tasks of proletarian leaderships, they reject even the idea of building a revolutionary workers party in that country.

FSLN: a bourgeois nationalist leadership

By Henriette Mauthey

A little more than four years ago now, in Nicaragua a people's insurrection led by the Sandinista Front overthrew the dictator Somoza regime, which was supported to the end by American imperialism.

As in Cuba 20 years earlier, as in Vietnam, as in Algeria, the new regime that was set up in July 1979 came out of a deep-going revolutionary movement, which had its roots in the exploitation and oppression imposed on the masses of the population by American imperialism and the handful of local owners.

And the victory of the Sandinistas undoubtedly represented a hope for millions of peasants and workers in Central America, Latin America, and elsewhere. It was, once again, proof that a people can succeed in doing away with a merciless dictatorship.

Faced with the *fait accompli*, American imperialism chose not to intervene directly on the military level to overthrow the Sandinista regime. But it stepped up the economic and political pressures against it.

On the military level it intervenes indirectly. Using the CIA, it arms opposition groups. It steps up military pressures through the intermediary of neighboring states. And increasingly it threatens direct intervention.

So we are, of course, in solidarity with the Nicaraguan people. And against these pressures and threats from imperialism, we are in the same camp as the leaders that the poor sectors of the population in that country have backed in their struggle.

But for us this solidarity goes hand in hand with the estimate that the Nicaraguan revolution, while certainly a people's revolution, is one that remains on the terrain of the nationalist bourgeoisie of that country, as seen through the objectives that its political leaders have fixed, and through the type of state that was set up.

This is an estimate that the LCR comrades do not agree with. In fact, although they always seem to refuse to make a very precise class characterization of the state in Nicaragua,

they see the Nicaraguan revolution as a revolution that is, if not proletarian from the very beginning, at least in the process of becoming a proletarian revolution.

The overthrow of the Somozaist dictatorship was the result of a long and arduous struggle that brought together in the anti-Somozaist camp the poor peasants, the workers and urban poor, the petty-bourgeoisie, and even, in the last two years of the dictatorship, factions of the possessing classes.

And this struggle that took place over nearly 10 years was led by nationalist leaders coming from the petty bourgeoisie. Their objective was to overthrow the dictatorship and set up a more democratic regime capable of rebuilding the economy in the national interest, that is, by standing up to American imperialism as much as possible.

The Sandinista leaders waged the political struggle and armed struggle in the name of the interests of the national bourgeoisie. They carried along the classes of common people in the cities and countryside. And they never proposed to the working class any perspective other than subordinating defense of their interests to defense of the interests of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie. They never proposed to the working class a policy corresponding to its class interests, nor one that would permit it to safeguard its independence, much less to play a leading role.

Under these circumstances — because we base our judgment on social facts and not on what the leaders might think, nor what they say they think — we do not see how the state that was set up after the fall of the dictatorship could be the expression of the political power of the working class, that is, to call things by their right name, a workers state.

The LCR comrades — if one judges from all the documents they have written on the subject — feel that, after an initial phase that they characterize in a varying and imprecise way, the proletarian character of the revolution and the state that was established finally asserted itself. For this they invoke the fact that the

It is true that in many respects the policy of the Sandinista leaders represents an improvement for the poor sectors of the population of Nicaragua. And that is why these leaders find a consensus in the common classes, including the working class.

But it is quite another thing to determine, in the battle that counts for the future of humanity, what camp the Sandinista leaders as political men will place themselves in, and what camp the Nicaraguan state as a state will place itself in. Will it be in the camp of the proletariat, which aims to overthrow the capitalist system on a world scale, or in the camp of the bourgeois nationalist movements that simply want to cut out a better place in the world for the national bourgeoisies they represent?

On this point, it is deeply significant that the

state of Nicaragua does not have a policy vis-à-vis the world proletariat. Its policy on the international level is a policy of alliance vis-à-vis other states, as carried out by all the bourgeois states.

And the fact that, pushed back and confronted by American imperialism, the leaders of Nicaragua turn toward Cuba and the USSR, and as much as possible also toward other "nonaligned" countries or toward the Socialist International, is certainly not a proletarian political criterion; nor is the fact that they aid certain guerrilla movements.

Because, finally, what policy do these leaders, whom the LCR comrades view as more and more proletarian, propose to the proletariat? What policy do they propose to the American proletariat? None. □

On the side of the Nicaraguan revolution

By Jean-Pierre Beauvais

On July 19, 1983, the Nicaraguan revolution celebrated the fourth anniversary of the fall of the dictator Somoza. At that very moment, and throughout the summer, imperialism was stepping up its support to the reactionaries throughout Central America and was moving ahead in its methodical preparations for a confrontation aimed at crushing the insurgent peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala, and at overthrowing the revolutionary government in power in Managua.

More than 6,000 U.S. soldiers are now stationed in Honduras. Their job is not limited to training Honduran soldiers to handle the most sophisticated weapons during the so-called "joint maneuvers." In reality they are one element of a powerful military deployment aimed at encircling the Nicaraguan revolution.

The number one priority of the Sandinista leaders now is defense of the revolution and its gains: "They will not cross the border! All arms to the people! One single army!" These were the main slogans for the mass assemblies organized July 19.

Of necessity, the political and military defense of a threatened revolution brings into play very broad social processes. All the efforts to extend and rationalize Nicaragua's military defense bring with them growing polarization in society. Every day, the sheer gravity of the imperialist aggression focuses a spotlight showing who defends the revolution and who is fighting it.

Increasing the revolution's military effectiveness is inseparable from deepening the revolutionary course, which in turn is a key factor in increasing the mobilization of the revolution's social base. "We must prepare to fight and to win with the entire formidable strength of the organized people. . . . All arms to the people to defend the land, to defend the gains of the revolution," Daniel Ortega stated in announcing the establishment of the new Patri-

otic Military Service, through which "students, workers, and peasants, as fundamental forces of society, will be able to defend, weapons in hand, the rights they have won against the inevitable counterattack by internal and external reactionary forces."

The Sandinista leadership's response to this new test, to this new challenge by imperialism and the bourgeoisie is unambiguous: new advances in the revolution, new advances toward the "construction of a society without exploiters or exploited" (declaration by FSLN National Directorate, April 16, 1982).

"Our working people know what direction we are going in, and that is why I ask the workers and peasants of our country, what are we going toward?" asked Tomás Borge at a May 1, 1982, mass rally. The response: "Socialism."

This concrete response in practice most convincingly illustrates that for the Sandinista leaders the struggle did not stop with the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship, that it is also a struggle for socialism. They have taken up Ernesto "Che" Guevara's formula: "Either socialist revolution or caricature of revolution."

This practical, concrete response is in keeping with the whole four years of Sandinista power. It ought to lead the Lutte Ouvrière comrades to ask themselves: is this the response of a leadership that "has set up a bourgeois state in Nicaragua that protects a system where the exploitation of the workers is still the rule, a state that defends and preserves in that country the present and especially the future interests of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie"? That is what they wrote in *Lutte de classes* (No. 104, June 1983).

This analysis by Lutte Ouvrière flows from their statement that in Nicaragua "we have not seen the working class win and exercise political power" (*ibid.*).

Historically, the industrial proletariat is cer-

tainly the motor force of the struggle for socialism. But we cannot get around the specific features of the social development of Nicaragua inherited from Somoza. The working class represented only 10 percent of the active population. And within that 10 percent, only 10 percent (i.e., 1 percent of the active population) was organized in unions.

Therefore, the initial objectives of the struggle were to gain democratic freedoms and to enact a radical agrarian reform. In this regard, the overthrow of the dictatorship was not the culmination, but rather the starting point of the social revolution. The revolution must transform itself into a socialist revolution, but it begins as an anti-imperialist democratic revolution. Trotsky never said anything different in his theory of permanent revolution.

Within this framework, the Sandinista leaders never hid the fact that they conceived of the alliance they established with the oppositional bourgeoisie on the eve of victory as *tactical* and *limited in time*.

"We simply carried out a policy making it possible for us to spread out. To achieve that we established *de facto* alliances. Our problem was to overthrow Somozism in order to take power and, from there, to make the revolution" (Humberto Ortega).

Before the fall of the tyranny there was a situation of dual power between the dictatorship and National Guard on the one side and the revolutionary movement on the other. After July 19, 1979, this dual power was transformed. It took on a more precise class aspect: between the bourgeoisie, based on private property, on the one side, and the proletarian revolution behind its Sandinista vanguard on the other.

Ever since, the Sandinista policy has always been to secure and consolidate control of political and military power and to establish alliances with the bourgeoisie on the economic level, especially through the form of maintaining the "mixed economy." But, and this is the essential thing, in each confrontation with the bourgeoisie, the FSLN has shown itself to be intransigent: from the creation of the people's militias in early 1980 to the rejection of the elections demanded by the bourgeois political figure Robelo's Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, to take those examples.

Today, it is showing this same intransigence in the face of the imperialist aggression.

Any *a priori* characterization, any sectarian approach to the Nicaraguan revolutionary process must be ruled out. It is a process that, in each of its phases, shows that there is no gap, no discontinuity between accomplishing the democratic tasks and beginning to accomplish the socialist tasks of the revolution. It is a revolutionary process whose advances are threatened more and more every day by imperialist aggression. It needs our most active, most massive, and militant solidarity. □

New rise of the revolutionary movement

Struggles in cities and countryside challenge Marcos dictatorship

By Paul Petitjean

[The following article is taken from the October 17 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly journal published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

A month after Benigno Aquino's murder, on the anniversary of President Ferdinand Marcos' proclamation of martial law on September 21, 1972, a vast crowd, estimated at half a million people, assembled in the heart of Manila in response to a call issued by the leaders of the opposition.

Following this rally, thousands of young workers, high-school and university students, and shantytown dwellers headed for the presidential palace.

The "forces of order" opened fire, and after violent clashes, eleven people were found dead and hundreds of others wounded.

In the days that preceded and followed this bloody day of struggle, the Makati business district was the scene of several antigovernment demonstrations.

The shock created in the country by Aquino's murder cannot in itself explain the extraordinary breadth of the demonstrations that followed this murder. This is not sufficient to account for the radicalism of the slogans, which demanded President Marcos' resignation, or for the variety of the political forces involved in the movement, extending from the bourgeois opposition to the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The crisis that has opened up today has revealed the profound decay of the regime and the acuteness of the social tensions in the country. It represents a decisive test for the opposition movements and holds very high stakes for the future of the revolutionary struggles. It also illustrates certain specific features of the mass struggles in the Philippines.

The specificity of the situation in this island country, by comparison with the one that prevails in the others in the region, is a result in particular of the contradictory heritage of the colonial period, the special history of the Philippine Communist movement, and the consequences of the policy the Marcos regime has been following for over a decade.

Since the Philippines became a colony of Spain in the sixteenth century and were a direct colony of the U.S. for half a century after being taken over from the Spanish empire,

they have quite a different history from the surrounding countries.¹

A contradictory heritage

From the standpoint of revolutionary struggles, the heritage of this long colonial period is contradictory.

In 1896-1898, when in Vietnam the French had not yet been able to break the resistance to their domination led by the mandarins, in the Philippines a rebellion, for all practical purposes, put an end to the 350-year-long rule of Spain.

The mass uprising was led by *ilustrados*, members of an intelligentsia trained in Spain, representatives of a bourgeoisie of mixed Philippine and Chinese blood that was made up of plantation owners, merchants, and entrepreneurs.

The armed groups of peasants and urban workers generally followed the lead of members of the petty bourgeoisie and professionals, provincial administrative personnel, and teachers.

So, the Philippines were the first country in Asia to throw off the colonial yoke, even if this was only for a very brief period, because in 1898 the Americans took over formally from Spain.

The political and social forces that led this liberation struggle already exhibited a "modern" character. They did not represent any old order but were the product of the cultural and economic shakeups created by the colonization and early integration of the country into the world market.²

This uprising against Madrid and the stubborn resistance by sections of the masses to American occupation left an invaluable revolutionary tradition. Still today, the nationalist movement can identify this "uninterrupted revolution" so as to link up the present struggle with the memory and historical experience of

1. See my preceding article (*IP*, October 31, p. 610). On the history of the Philippines, see the works of Renato Constantino, especially *The Philippines: A Past Revisited*, Quezon City, Tala Publishing Services, 1975 (also published by Monthly Review Press, New York, 1976, under the title *A History of the Philippines from Spanish Colonialism to the Second World War*); and *The Philippines, the Continuing Past*, Foundation for Nationalist Studies, Quezon City, 1978.

2. On this subject, see Jonathan Fast and Jim Richardson, *Roots of Dependency, Political and Economic Revolution in 19th Century Philippines*, Foundation for Nationalist Studies, Quezon City, 1979; and Jose Rizal, *Philippine — 1881-1896. Un aspect du nationalisme moderne*, Maspero, Paris, 1970.

the Philippine people.

However, by the very fact that this struggle developed so early, the political movements of the time left a tradition of class collaborationism and prepared the ground for neocolonialist ideology.

The Propagandist Movement, represented most prominently by Jose Rizal, reflected the anticolonialist, anticlerical, and democratic aspirations of the big Philippine planters (the sugar plantations grew rapidly in the nineteenth century on the Isla de Negros and in Luzon), the Chinese merchants, and intellectuals from well-to-do local families.

The Katipunan movement, founded by Andres Bonifacio, had deeper roots in the masses and followed a radical course. In addition, local leaders emerged who were to continue the struggle to the end, such as "Papa" Isio on Negros, who was captured in 1908 by the Americans.

But overall, the Katipunero leaders (after Bonifacio was assassinated) were to remain under the ideological influence of the *ilustrados* of the new bourgeois and plantation-owning social elite.

It was the government that came out of the 1896-1898 uprising that made an agreement with the Americans about bringing in the expeditionary forces, supposedly to hasten the defeat of the Spanish.

The theme of national unity of all classes predominated. It was so all-pervasive that the first workers organization, which was founded at the start of the century, was led by an *ilustrado*, Isabela de los Reyes, who advocated collaboration between capital and labor and a neocolonial pact with Washington.

This brings up one of the contradictory aspects of the colonial history of the Philippines. Although for a long period Madrid did nothing to develop the country, the early imposition of colonial rule favored the development in certain regions of an export economy (such as sugar production). Often in fact it was British capital that played the leading role. This gave rise to new social classes that were capable of opposing the Spanish administration and the Catholic clergy.

However, the fact that a retrograde, feudal Catholic clergy was able at an early stage to get control of the education of the masses and block the development of public education effectively cut off the population from the influence of the European socialist and workers movement and from the Asian revolutionary movements.

Moreover, many regions of the country have not been directly affected by the spread of the market economy.

The revolutionary traditions are rooted only in certain areas, in particular in the central and southern parts of the island of Luzon and the island of Negros.

At the origins of the national movement, the leadership remained in the hands of essentially bourgeois forces. And these were not victorious and self-confident forces but a leadership that negotiated capitulation to the U.S. on behalf of a movement that had triumphed over the Spanish.

In order to justify themselves, the new Philippine administrators had to present the U.S. expeditionary force as a liberating army and do everything possible to wipe out the memory of the heroic mass resistance that lasted up to 1908.

The formation of the Philippine national consciousness was thus shaped both by the revolution of 1896–1898 and by the early imposition and deep imprint of Spanish rule.

Failure and revival of communist movement

In the beginning, the union movement and the peasant movement were led by elements that were both nationalist and politically conservative.

In the mid-1920s, a bipolarization developed in the mass movement under the impact of several factors. One such factor was the indefinite postponement of the date when the country would become independent. The economic crisis that was driving down the standard of living of the masses was another. The reverberations of the Russian revolution and the founding of the Third International also had an effect.

In 1925, the Workers Party was founded. It developed in a Marxist direction. In 1927, the union movement split into conservative and radical wings. The main unions joined the Pan-Pacific Trade-Union Secretariat of the Profratern (the red trade-union International).

In 1930, the PKP (Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas, Communist Party of the Philippines) was formally constituted. It exercised a mass influence among the urban workers and the peasantry respectively through the KAP (Katipunan ng mga Anak Pawis ng Pilipinas, Workers Congress of the Philippines) and the KPMP (Katipunan Pambansa ng mga Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, National Confederation of Tenant Farmers and Agricultural Workers).³

For reasons that were largely objective, the new Communist movement took form essentially in the Manila region and certain areas on the island of Luzon. It came under repression and enjoyed only rare periods of legality.

However, more and more the line the PKP adopted under Moscow's influence kept the Communist movement from taking advantage of the real possibilities for growth that existed despite the repression.

3. On the first decades of the Philippine Communist movement, see also Norman Lorimer, "Philippine Communism, An Historical Overview," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1977.

In these early years, it advocated a very sectarian and ultraleft line (oriented toward an armed insurrection), which corresponded to the so-called Third Period line then being put forward by the Third International.

After 1933, however, and especially after 1938, in the name of the need to fight fascism, the PKP advanced a "democratic" anti-Japanese line that was once again to lower the movement's defenses against the American forces.

On the eve of the Second World War, the PKP managed to root itself in sections of the population where it had been very weak, such as the students and intellectuals. And during the Japanese occupation, it greatly extended its influence and its organization thanks to its guerrilla forces (the Huks or Hukbalahap, the People's Anti-Japanese Army), which were set up in March 1942.

The PKP's line called for putting off the social struggle against the landlords to a later period. But in reality the growth of the Huk guerrilla movement itself led to a class polarization in the areas concerned. Frightened by the mass movement, the landlords either fled or collaborated with the occupiers.

In the wake of the war, the PKP emerged stronger than ever, politically, socially, and now militarily. But, still following the line of Moscow, it greeted the American forces as a liberating rather than an occupying army. (All the PKP's propaganda had stressed the need for an alliance with the U.S. as a democratic power against Japan.)

However, the U.S. administration immediately dealt severe blows to the PKP. Then, following formal independence and the first elections in 1946 (in which six candidates of the Democratic Front led by the PKP were elected), the new president, Manuel Roxas, unleashed a witch-hunt against the Communists.

In 1947, the Huk guerrillas, who had not given up their arms, began to reorganize. In the following year, the supporters of armed resistance gained the majority in the leadership of the PKP.

Despite repeated delays, the PKP and the Huks had a number of factors in their favor. The regime was badly discredited, since the 1946 elections had been too grossly fraudulent. Social tensions were strong in a number of rural areas. The PKP and the Huks also benefited from the impact of the Chinese revolution and from the resistance aroused by the massive repression.⁴

The PKP leadership believed that it could

4. On the Huks, see (although the author seems clearly to underestimate the role of the PKP in the struggle of the Luzon rural masses) Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion, a Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines*, New Day Publishers, Quezon City, 1979. See also the memoirs of William Pomeroy, an American Communist faithful to the Moscow line who participated in the Huk guerrilla movement, *The Forest: A Personal Record of the Huk Guerrilla Struggle in the Philippines*, New York, International Publishers, 1963.

win a quick victory. It deployed its guerrilla forces as widely as possible and thus exposed itself militarily. In the cities, the pacifist education of the past period disarmed the militants. The regime got major support from the U.S. And the new president, Ramon Mag-saysay, pursued a demagogic policy that bore fruit.

In 1952, the PKP and the Huk guerrillas were smashed, to all intents and purposes. The peasant movement suffered a major setback, along with the union movement in the cities, which had reorganized after the war in the CLO (Congress of Labor Organizations).

Communist leaders gave themselves up. Some of the guerrilla units turned to banditry, for example the one led by Commander Sumulong in the province of Pampanga.

The mass movement did not regain the initiative until the end of the 1960s, and then it was essentially the students who were the moving force. The student population, which had been very elitist, had begun to change.

Reflection on the failure of the PKP, the impact of the Sino-Soviet split and the cultural revolution in China, and the revival of political struggles led to a split in the PKP.

A handful of activists, most of whom had joined the party in the early 1960s, formed a new party (or "reestablished" the old one, which was the formula they used, trying to claim the mantle of continuity). It was called the PCP (Communist Party of the Philippines, Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Thought, to give the full name). Three months later, the PCP formed the NPA (New People's Army). Symbolically it chose the anniversary of the founding of the Huks to launch the new force.⁵

The influence of the new party, which identified completely with Maoism, was mainly in the student movement, but it gained peasant and military cadres coming from the Huks, and it started to get a foothold in the trade-union movement, where the PKP remained very active.

The relationship of forces between the two parties was far from settled when President Marcos decreed martial law throughout the country on September 21, 1972. This was to be the first serious test for the young PCP, and, politically, the last one for the PKP.

At the beginning, the PCP and its armed wing, the NPA, suffered severe blows as a result of the repression and a militarist, guerrillaist orientation, which was reflected in an attempt to set up an overly ambitious guerrilla foco in the Valley of Cagayan in northeast Luzon. But it gradually recovered from these setbacks.

The PKP also had to go underground. But the leadership decided to try to make an arrangement with the Marcos regime, in which it discerned the virtues of the national

5. On the analyses and orientations of the PCP in the 1970s, see Amado Guerrero, chairman of the Central Committee, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, IAFP, Oakland, 1979. See also Jose M. Sison, *Struggle for National Democracy*, Amado V. Hernandez Memorial Foundation, Manila, 1972.

bourgeoisie. It physically liquidated a number of leaders of a faction that opposed this orientation (that is, the Marxist-Leninist Faction).

So, in October 1974, the PKP accepted a "national unity agreement" with the Marcos administration. After this, the PKP enjoyed a certain semilegality, and some of its leaders turned up in the Ministry of Labor in particular.

The PKP continued to some extent to function as an organization and maintained its allegiance to Moscow. It probably still had a significant influence in the trade-union movement and perhaps bases of support in some rural areas. But as a revolutionary force it was finished, both as a result of the physical liquidations ordered by its leadership and of its long-lasting alliance with the martial law regime.

The fact that the PKP always maintained formal criticisms of the government and the fact also that for some time it has been taking more and more distance from the regime have not by any means counterbalanced the disastrous effects of the capitulationist policy that it pursued throughout the 1970s and subsequently.

Impact of martial law period

For a whole series of reasons, the revolutionary movement and the mass movement were not able to respond effectively to the proclamation of martial law in 1972.

There was the failure, followed by the total capitulation, of the PKP. The PCP suffered from political and organizational inexperience. The effects of the political and social crisis were very uneven from region to region. The level of organization of the mass movement was inadequate. Finally, the U.S. and the World Bank pumped in substantial aid to Marcos.

Nonetheless, despite its initial successes, the government followed an orientation that recreated the conditions for a new upsurge of mass struggles in the country.

Marcos quickly adopted an aggressive policy on the southern island of Mindanao, the heart of Bangsa Moro Land, the territory claimed by the Muslim forces in the southern part of the archipelago.

A series of very important islands are in fact historically Muslim. Sultanates were established on them before the arrival of the Spanish, who, moreover, never succeeded in bringing these regions effectively under their colonial rule.

However, since the interwar period, Christian peasants from the northern island of Luzon and from the Visayas (the island group in the middle of the country) have been systematically settled on Muslim territory by the governments in Manila. As a result, there is now quite a large Christian population on Mindanao.⁶

6. On the struggle of the Moros and the MNLF, see Permanent Peoples' Tribunal Session on the Philippines, *Philippines: Repression and Resistance*, KSP Publication, London, 1980. The magazine *Southeast*

Because of its climate, the island of Mindanao is agriculturally very rich. It also offers other advantages. The Marcos regime decided to open it up for the growth of agribusiness (which is dominated by U.S. and Japanese capital), and this meant in fact pushing the Muslim and animist population back into the remote areas.

In this way, the regime provoked a long war with the forces of the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) and the Bangsa Moro Army. For a long time, two-thirds of the government's military forces were stationed in the southern part of the archipelago for use against the Muslim population. Despite attempts at mediation and short-lived accords, a state of war continues in the Bangsa Moro territory.

The militarization of the country took on a particular momentum in Mindanao, and the Christian population in turn was affected by the presence of an army engaged in a military campaign.

The Communist forces were weak on the island of Mindanao. But they have been growing substantially for some years, along with the mass movement. Mindanao has also been a favorite stomping ground for the paramilitary groups, and their exactions and massacres have created many scandals and aroused widespread resistance.

What has happened in Mindanao is also taking place in many other regions. In order to open up the country to foreign capital (generally American and Japanese but also Australian and European), the government is attacking the local populations.

To crush the resistance of the local people, the government has embarked on a policy of militarization. And, in a situation where the PCP and the NPA offer an alternative, this has led to a radicalization of activists and social strata without past revolutionary experience.

The social conditions remain quite diverse from region to region and island to island.⁷ But by creating a real army and a real national policy for the first time, by imposing the first national "development" plan, and by using the military as the principal instrument of government, the regime has created a common, clearly identifiable enemy for the masses.

Before now, the masses were dispersed and atomized, divided by geography (the sea and mountains), by language (Tagalog, the national language is spoken by only 20 percent of the population), and by history. Now their

Asia Chronicle published an interesting issue on this question (No. 82, February 1982). It has also published other important issues on the Philippines, such as its No. 62, May-June 1978.

7. On economic developments, mainly concerning agriculture, see Third World Studies Program, *Political Economy of Philippine Commodities*, TWSC (University of the Philippines), Quezon City, 1983. Lussa Research Staff, *Countryside Report*, Manila, 1982. Rene E. Ofreneo, *Capitalism in Philippine Agriculture*, Foundation for Nationalist Studies, Quezon City, 1980. See also the book published after the session of the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal, cited in footnote No. 6.

common enemy is the national state and its personification, the Marcos-Romualdes family.

Of course, the process of the spread and unification of the struggles is developing slowly. This is one of the reasons for the present caution of the opposition groups with respect to the Marcos regime.

For the first time in the history of the archipelago, a struggle for power has begun on a really national scale, and there are still a lot of obstacles to overcome. But the process got underway several years ago and then began picking up speed.

One of the first things the martial law system was supposed to accomplish was to make it possible to housebreak and atomize the mass movement and assure cheap labor for the multinationals and the capitalists close to the president.

According to the government's own figures, under martial law the standard of living of the peasant masses and of the urban and rural workers dropped by about 30 percent on the average.

In the industrial free zones, the meager trade-union rights that were formally recognized elsewhere were generally wiped out.

However, the workers movement began to raise its head again, with an important strike in the La Tondena distillery. More generally, strikes began again, with ups and downs.

In 1980, a radical trade-union current took form in what was in fact a new labor confederation, the KMU (Kilusang Mayo Uno, or May 1 Movement), which included national unions as well as locals that might also belong to other federations.

A broader alliance was formed — the PMP (United Filipino Workers), which included the KMU, the unions affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), and some industrial unions.

At its May 1 rallies in Manila, the KMU gathered from 20,000 to 40,000 workers, depending on the year.

All of this reflected a major step toward a broad, militant, class-struggle union movement. In 1982, moreover, a very important strike was waged, which briefly paralyzed the major free zone in the country, the Marivles zone across the bay from Manila.

One of the first sections of the population to mobilize after the imposition of martial law was the people of the shantytowns on the outskirts of the cities. In Greater Manila, a metropolis of about 8 million inhabitants, there are vast shantytowns. The main one, Tondo, which lies behind the port, experienced a very long and well-organized struggle.

Today, even though it has been weakened by the partial demolition of this shantytown, the ZOTO (Zone One Tondo Organization) has nonetheless played an exemplary role, which has been very important in encouraging the spread of organizations of the urban poor who live in the shantytowns and working people in the so-called "marginal" sectors or "minor trades."

As a result of the big projects undertaken to provide the infrastructure and facilities for capitalist development, people in one local area after another organized to fight.

There were the boatmen and the people of Navotas, north of Manila. In this area, the Japanese started building a modern container port that would eliminate jobs. The building of a series of hydroelectric dams on the Chico creek (a World Bank project) threatened to drive the Kalinga and Bontoc mountain tribes off their land in northern Luzon.⁸ The small fishermen on the island of Samar found their fishing grounds wrecked by the activity of the big sloops that overfished the area to meet the demands of the Japanese market.

In a more general way, the agrarian reform undertaken in the rice-growing areas soon showed its limits. Most of the peasants who "benefitted" from it had their land seized for debt before they even finished paying for it. That is, the land "distributed" by this reform had to be purchased. The objective, moreover, was to develop modern agriculture (the Green Revolution), which may be very productive but is also very costly in fertilizer, seed, pesticides, labor, and so forth.

The situation of the sugar plantation workers on Negros, already horrific, was further aggravated by intense mechanization which threatened thousands and thousands of jobs.

The coconut producers were hard hit by declining sales on the world market. And in general Philippine agriculture, largely export oriented, was rocked by the falling prices on the world market for agricultural raw materials.

To a considerable extent, all these factors — the social crisis and repression, the effects of systematic militarization of the country, the hardening of the regime as it faced growing struggles (despite the formal lifting of martial law in January 1981) — explain why the NPA guerrillas spread out to cover a wider and wider area.

At the same time, they lie behind the radicalization of growing sections of social activists in religious organizations as well as of a small but significant minority of priests and members of religious orders who have identified with the mass resistance.

The Catholic church, which remains influential in the central parts of the country, is shot through with the same contradictions as the society. This is the reason for the uneasiness expressed by the upper echelons of the hierarchy about a regime whose policy is fomenting civil war.

Evolution of the communist movement

By no means have all the democratic and social mobilizations in recent years been initiated by the PCP, the NPA, and the NDF (National

8. On the question of the highland minority groups in the Philippines and the role of their struggle in the context of the country as a whole, see Anti-Slavery Society, *The Philippines, Authoritarian Government, Multinationals, and Ancestral Lands*, London, 1983.



FERDINAND MARCOS

Democratic Front, led by the PCP). Far from it. They have in fact at times been taken by surprise by developments such as the unleashing of a movement against martial law in the cities, led by Christian activists. This struggle developed at a time when the PCP's urban networks were preoccupied with organizing support for the rural guerrillas.

However, the PCP-NPA-NDF have managed to link up with, organize, or take the leadership — either partially or entirely — of a very great number of such movements which at the start were more or less spontaneous. Today they form the backbone of the mass resistance to the regime.

In order to achieve this position, the PCP had to modify by successive adjustments its original orientation, which was close to Latin American guerrilla focoism.

Since the PCP, unlike the Thai CP, did not have the benefit of a friendly border and of substantial aid from outside, it had to build a base among the people in the rural areas where its guerrilla forces operated.

Moreover, the PCP had to give a more and more important place to work in the cities and to legal or semilegal organizational work outside the guerrilla areas proper.

In view of the evolution of the Chinese leadership, the PCP in fact took its distance from Peking and undertook an ideological reassessment.

However, as a result of its successes, as the movement's influence has been spreading rapidly to new regions and new sections of the population, the PCP-NPA-NDF have continually run up against new problems or old weaknesses that have not yet been overcome, such as the shortage of cadres.

The movement has already been confronted with problems of orientation, which are becoming more complex with the present evolution of the situation and the extension of its political activity among the masses.

What sort of alliances should it make, with what political forces and in what forms, under what conditions? A debate has started up on the lessons of the Central American revolu-

tions that bear particularly on these questions.

How should the party operate in autonomous mass organizations outside the guerrilla areas? What orientations should it propose for the unions? How can it broaden the NDP and build up a formal structure? How can it extend and consolidate international solidarity work?

There are organizational problems, problems of political orientation, and ideological questions also. The "Chinese model" has had its day. But how should the party systematically re-evaluate the ideological heritage of the movement and its analysis of the world situation?

The PCP has long remained prisoner of schemas regarding the "definition" of Philippine society (characterized as semifeudal and semicolonial). Despite the considerable growth of its mass work in the rural areas (and in the cities as well), it has suffered from an accumulated lag in this field.⁹

These problems aside, the PCP — along with the NDF and the NPA — today holds a central and essential place in the organization of the mass struggles. But it is not the only organization in the progressive and revolutionary camp.¹⁰

There are also some currents that have come out of the "Social Democratic" Front (which was led by Jesuits and not by a Socialist Party), small groups of independent Marxists, loosely organized radical Christian currents (which are coordinated to some extent by the Christians for National Liberation, who include founding members of the NDF). There are also groups active in intellectual circles and among professionals such as the KAAKBAY (Movement for the Sovereignty of the Philippines and for Democracy), which is led by the lawyer Jose Diokno.

However, the PCP, along with the NPA and the NDF, is the only movement able to coordinate struggles nationally, to combine political, social, and military struggles. It alone can offer a concrete perspective for the relatively near future and offer a viable framework for bringing together the various progressive forces. It has earned this position by the work and sacrifices of its members and leaders, many of whom have been killed or imprisoned.

A still greater responsibility now falls on the shoulders of the PCP, since Aquino's murder has opened up a political crisis that had been building up for some time.

The situation is evolving rapidly, and even if a decisive struggle for power cannot yet be undertaken on a national scale, all the political forces are going to have to adjust their orientations and tactical options to a situation in flux. □

9. To get an idea of this debate, which is running through the various currents in the Philippine left, see *Symposium, Feudalism and Capitalism in the Philippines. Trends and Implications*. Foundation for Nationalist Studies, Quezon City, 1982.

10. As regards the bourgeois opposition to the Marcos regime, see my preceding article.

Text of 'North Star Newsletter'

First issue by new U.S. political group

[The following is the complete contents of the first issue of a new U.S. publication, the *North Star Newsletter* dated October 1983. Its front cover describes it as, "an informational newsletter for members of the North Star Network."

[The North Star Network is a new political organization, which is described in the newsletter. Among its public spokespeople are Pedro Camejo, who resigned from the U.S. Socialist Workers Party in 1981 and is a fraternal member of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, and Byron Ackerman, who resigned from the SWP earlier this year.

[In the San Francisco Bay Area, the North Star Network helped initiate a broader formation called the Bay Area United Forum. Its first

Introducing the North Star Newsletter

Why the North Star Newsletter? Since the formation of the North Star Network, (originally we referred to ourselves as the Organizing Committee), in the Bay Area three months ago there has been a need to provide information to people who are supporters of the NSN but who live in other areas of the country. Recently some people have decided to begin forming groups similar to the Bay Area formation in their cities. We have also come across groups that already exist and that wish to maintain contact with us or coordinate their activity with us in other cities.

We need some regularized or at least semi-regular reports where everyone can keep informed. Our goal in starting the North Star Newsletter is quite modest. All we hope to achieve is to get out reports on activity and occasionally political developments that would otherwise not be available or would become the knowledge of only a subset of people depending on what telephone calls were made between individuals. We also hope to publish in each number a list of materials available from the North Star Network.

If you would like the people working with the NSN to find out about something you are involved on, or some political development or position you feel is important please write to us. Material which is too long to include can be listed with an address for anyone who wishes to receive it. The list we will include in each issue is arbitrary and any supporter of the NSN is free to have something included if they wish.

We have chosen the name North Star Newsletter for two reasons. We would like our names, terminology and methods to reflect our revolutionary but *anti-sectarian* politics. We want to identify ourselves with revolutionary traditions of labor, oppressed nationalities,

forum was an October 27 fundraising activity for the U.S. weekly publication, the *Guardian*. The program was entitled, "The Struggle for Unity in Central America." According to a report on the meeting in the November 9 *Guardian*, the forum "also stressed the need for unity on the U.S. left." Camejo chaired the event.

[The other organizations participating in the united forum are: the Bay Area Socialist Organizing Committee; the Bay Area *Guardian* bureau; Solidarity, an organization of former members of the New American Movement (NAM); and Workers Power. Workers Power sponsors a quarterly magazine called *Against the Current*, among whose editors are Steve Zeluck, Carl Boggs, Carl Feingold, Myra Tanner Weiss, and Milton Zaslow.]

women and other social struggles that are part of the history of the United States as well as international struggles, rather than only international traditions as the American left tends to do today.

In the United States we have had two revolutions, that of 1776 and 1861. The second was far greater in scope and in world impact. Never before or since have hundreds of thousands of Americans died fighting against oppression and tyranny. The Civil War and its aftermath was a truly great revolutionary struggle which left a long list of martyrs, most of them unknown not only to the American people but even to those considering themselves revolutionary today.

No more Vietnam wars Anti-intervention/solidarity movement

The Reagan administration is on a military offensive in Central America. The military maneuvers in Honduras, the battleships off the coast of Nicaragua are only opening scenes in their projections. The never ending guerrilla raids into Nicaragua, the recent bombings of Sandino airport, the expulsion of most Nicaraguan consuls from the United States are all aspects of this military policy against Central America.

Fred Ikle, the third ranking officer in the Pentagon explained Reagan's commitment to military intervention in these words, "We must prevent the consolidation of a Sandinista regime in Nicaragua that would become an arsenal for insurgency. If we cannot prevent that, we have to anticipate the partition of Central America. Such a development would then force us to man a new military front line of the East-West conflict, right here on our conti-

The ruling class has tried to claim most of the traditions of that struggle as their own, that is what they have not been able to bury or destroy. The flag of the revolutionary army was the flag of 1776 which is today the flag of US imperialism. But out of that gigantic struggle, at least one symbol arose which has never been associated with capitalism but only with the struggle for freedom — the north star. For if a slave could follow the north star the trail would end in freedom.

"For the old man's awaiting for to carry you to freedom follow the drinking gourd"

The drinking gourd is the little dipper of which the north star is the last star. The north star was used as a name to symbolize the struggle to end chattel slavery. Today we fight for the emancipation of wage slavery. What better name could we take for our modest contribution than North Star Newsletter?

In addition to wanting to use terms out of our own history of struggle we want to get away from all the "in" sect methods and terms. Thus in seeking our name we would like to avoid the typical lets-find-a-new-combination of the words socialist, communist, revolutionary, bolshevik, worker, labor, Marxist, Leninist, toiler, Trotskyist, league, group, party, committee etc. We should keep in mind that our view on the question of a name is one based on our present need under the present circumstances and cannot be generalized for all situations and will undoubtedly change over time.

net." (S.F. *Chronicle* Sept. 12, 1982 p. 18).

As was done in Vietnam during the sixties the Reagan administration is working full time to attempt to win the American people towards supporting the growing US aggression, by invading in stages combined with an anti-communist propaganda offensive at home. The United States government is establishing a military arsenal in Honduras in order to be in a position to escalate dramatically the attacks on the peoples of Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. Like Vietnam where huge military bases were built in places like Da Nang and thousands of troops were brought in progressively, the United States is beginning similar operations in Honduras today. Large air fields are being constructed and thousands of United States soldiers are already stationed in Honduras. While this process may temporarily be off the front pages we can expect future explo-

sive events as Reagan's aggression collides further with the growing social revolution in Central America.

What can we do?

The tasks seem enormous. The solidarity movement in the United States seems small and divided. Several large anti-intervention actions have nevertheless taken place such as the May 3, 1981 demonstration of 100,000 and the March 27, 1982 action of 50,000. Important local demonstrations and activities have also helped educate and build solidarity with the people of Central America.

Many people in the movement have tried to work out the relationship between the solidarity and non-intervention aspects of the movement. Two excellent contributions to this discussion have appeared by Robert Armstrong and Michael Ratner in recent issues of the *Guardian*. These articles have pointed to the need to continue to build a broad based non-intervention movement, something which has not yet been achieved, while also carrying out activity of a more direct solidarity nature.

The broadly endorsed November 12th demonstration in Washington, D.C. and other related fall CISPES [Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador] activities are part of this combined process. We should help build the local coalitions around November 12th, where possible, and attempt to get a large turn out to Washington, D.C. on November 12th.

In the Bay Area all the local Central American oriented groups formed a "Central American Non-Intervention Contingent" (CANIC) for the August 27th march for Jobs, Peace and Freedom in San Francisco. Thirty five groups in all were brought together resulting in the participation of a few thousand people in the contingent. The ability of differing solidarity groups to work together is an important step in the process of building a much broader movement against United States intervention. Right now these same groups are planning to build a Central American non-intervention contingent in the October 22nd demonstration against the Pershing and Cruise missiles.

One example of excellent reach out has been the work of the CISPES led San Francisco initiative.* The materials which have been massively distributed have been models of the kind of literature we need for the average American citizen. (If you need to see samples of this material for your local work let us know and we will mail it to you directly — editors). Presently the initiative is doing precinct work. Every home in San Francisco (almost) is receiving literature. This will be followed up where possible with personal visits.

An important part of non-intervention and solidarity work is being knowledgeable about

* A referendum on the November ballot calling on the U.S. government "to immediately end all military aid to the government of El Salvador and withdraw all United States military personnel from that country."—JP

North Star Newsletter

AN INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NORTH STAR NETWORK

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Central America to be able to effectively speak about it. Two books stand out for those who have not yet had a chance to read them. They are: "Triumph of the People — The Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua" by George Black and "El Salvador The Face of Revolution" by Robert Armstrong and Janet Shenk.

The labor movement

New openings are evident in the organized labor movement to gain support for the non-intervention effort. The National Labor Committee in Support of Human Rights and Democracy in El Salvador is a big step forward compared to the Vietnam war days when only a handful of union officials were willing to take on George Meany's all out support to Lyndon Baines Johnson's war policies. Now Lane Kirkland following in Meany's foot steps is

part of the Reagan/Kissinger commission on Central America. Some pressure is building up within the labor movement to change the position of the AFL-CIO and other unions. Education towards and involvement of labor unions on a local level has had an important influence. While the AFL-CIO had been supporting Reagan's authorization of funds to the government of El Salvador recently the AFL-CIO began to question El Salvador's human rights policy. The July/August issue of CISPES' paper *Alert* has a full report on the National Labor Committee in Support of Human Rights and Democracy in El Salvador's visit to El Salvador. The report of the delegation can be ordered from The National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, 15 Union Square, New York, N.Y., 10003.

United movement forum organized in Bay Area

A forum committee has begun in the Bay Area with the goal of drawing in various political currents to work together to present discussions and debates as well as educational oriented meetings on questions of interest to the workers movement and its allies. The forums will be oriented to the more politicalized milieu. The goals of the united forum are quoted below in a statement adopted by the representatives of the participating groups which have initiated the forum. These points are the following:

1. To provide a forum through which major questions confronting the broadly pro-Marxist movement can be discussed in a non-factional manner.
2. To inform the broader social movements in the Bay Area of major national and international developments in a manner which helps inspire developing struggles and increases unity in action.
3. The forum will present differences existing within our movement through panels and debates seeking to educate and clarify without undermining unity in action.
4. The forum is not to be seen as counterposed to other forums being held by the organizations participating in the Bay Area Movement Forum or with any other forums or meetings of other pro-socialist formations.
5. The Bay Area Movement Forum also seeks through the effort of working together on this project to open a dialogue between the participating groups on other possible areas of joint work and is open to the future inclusion of other formations through mutual consent of the

initiating groups.

6. All decisions regarding speakers, topics and format must be agreed to unanimously.

The first forum is scheduled to be held on October 27th featuring Robert Armstrong, author of the best known work, "El Salvador, The Face of Revolution." Armstrong will be speaking on Revolutionary Unity in El Salvador. The forum will also include as a major speaker, Liz Jacobs, the director of the San Francisco El Salvador Initiative Campaign.

Robert Armstrong has been willing to speak around the country to help the *Guardian* newspaper. The United Forum hopes to use Armstrong's appearance in the Bay Area to raise funds for the *Guardian*. Fund raising will be done primarily by mailings to *Guardian* readers.

After some lengthy discussion over what groups should or shouldn't be included in the United Forum the participants have decided to change the United Forum's organizational form. Instead of the United Forum being composed of organizations as such it will be run by a round table of individuals regardless of affiliation. It was felt this would make it easier to broaden out the forum without running into all kinds of conflicts over the relative strength of forces involved. The United Forum is considered by all its participants as an experiment which will evolve as the various political currents participating find growing possibilities for joint work or are unable to move at this time in that direction.

The North Star Network originated the

United Forum with the Bay Area Socialist Organizing Committee and the Bay Area *Guardian* Bureau. At the suggestion of BASOC, the local chapter of Workers Power and Solidarity (ex-NAM [New American Movement]) were also included. So far all those participating

Draft platform of the North Star Network

(Note this is titled a platform. It is not a program. It is a point of departure to define the North Star Network. To our knowledge there is no existing program for the United States by any group on the left. We need such a program. It will develop out of the living struggles and evolve with those struggles. This is only a platform to begin the process of defining the contribution we are trying to make to move towards an effective revolutionary movement with a program connected to the reality of the class struggle in the United States and internationally.)

1. The North Star Network exists as a forum through which activists involved in struggles fighting for the rights and interests of working people, oppressed nationalities, women and other oppressed layers, for peace, in defense of our ecology, or in other struggles for social justice, can discuss, co-ordinate and seek out united perspectives to strengthen their efforts and to help generalize and politicize the on going mass movements.

2. The North Star Network is open to all activists who recognize the need for a Third American Revolution which will place human needs before profits, establish a government genuinely by, for and of the people, that is of working people and their allies.

3. The North Star Network defends the struggles of working people for genuine workers democracy within those countries such as China and the Soviet Union that are no longer based on a profit oriented economy but where working people still face denial of basic human rights both politically and socially.

4. The North Star Network supports the struggles of all oppressed nationalities for self-determination such as the present struggle of the peoples of Central America.

5. The North Star Network opposes all manifestations of racism and sexism in our society as well as other forms of oppression such as abuses and discrimination against gays, the elderly, children and disabled peoples.

6. The North Star Network recognizes that

have been able to work out common projections without too much difficulty. Other organizations and individuals have indicated interest in becoming involved. No steps will be taken to formally broaden the United Forum until after the first forum.

the United States working people have no political party. Both the Democratic and Republican so-called parties are factions of one government party, established and run by the ruling corporate oligarchy to protect and promote their minority interests against the people of the United States and of the world and to suppress, control and manipulate all mass movements which seek to place the interests of the majority before the profits and privileges of the ruling minority.

7. The North Star Network is not a party. It does not claim to be "The Vanguard" of the Third American Revolution. The North Star Network recognizes that the development of a vanguard in the United States will be a process out of the living mass struggles.

8. The North Star Network is not a pre-party formation. It seeks to discuss with other formations, movements and individuals steps that will lead to increasing independent political action against the present ruling minority and their political representatives.

9. The North Star Network is opposed to all sectarian schemas and policies which lead to separation from living struggles. The North Star Network reserves its criticisms and polemics for fighting the ruling corporate oligarchy.

10. The North Star Network recognizes that structural and organizational norms must be fitted to the specific tasks, situation and stage of development of any movement or organization. At the present conjuncture the North Star Network will function with a clearly defined membership. Membership will be based on solely three criteria.

A. Agreement with this platform and no conflicting political or organizational loyalties.

B. Direct participation in the mass movement.

C. Contribution of time and finances to promote the activities of the North Star Network.

All decisions and leadership selection will be made by simple majority vote.

Pakistanis hold conference

At the time the North Star Network was formed in the Bay Area a group of Pakistanis called the Left Unity Forum came into contact with us. Discussions between us revealed that they had been trying to deal with many of the same kinds of problems that we have in the North American left in the Pakistani context. Many of the members of the Left Unity Forum are thoroughly acquainted with the works of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. They have especially given some attention to the lessons that can be learned from the struggle in Central

America on alliances.

For a period of time most of the left in Pakistan was heavily influenced by Maoism. Since the Chinese Communist Party took its openly pro-United States imperialist line in much of their international involvements, including their invasion of Vietnam, the influence of Maoism has sharply declined in Pakistan. In the United States we have found many people previously influenced by Maoism have been reconsidering their views on a whole spectrum of issues. We find no difficulty today working

with and learning from the *Guardian* and the Bay Area Socialist Organizing Committee. The same phenomena exist in Pakistan on a much larger scale.

The Pakistani Left Unity Forum has been able to gather together many of the Pakistani activists most interested in taking a new look at what can be done in Pakistan. Along with broader forces living in the Bay Area the Left Unity Forum put together a one day conference titled "Military Rule or Democracy?" in Pakistan. The conference was organized under an umbrella formation called the Pakistan Democratic Conference Committee.

Approximately one hundred Pakistanis came to the conference, held August 20 at the University of California at Berkeley. The turnout reflected most if not the entire spectrum on the left. Three of the five major opposition political parties in Pakistan sent the conference telegrams of support. So did Tariq Ali from England. (The North Star Network also sent a short message which is printed below.)

Also attending, although uninvited, was an official representative from the San Francisco Pakistan consulate who attempted to defend the Zia dictatorship. Apparently the impact of the conference in the Pakistani community made the official government representatives feel they should attempt to intervene.

The conference was remarkable in that short (literally less than 15 minutes each) presentations were made by various people taking up several key questions, from Pakistani history to the role of women under the present regime. Each presentation was well thought out and the conference held the interests of those attending through out its proceedings. A lively open discussion followed the presentations.

The developing crises in Pakistan was presented by Agha Saeed as a crises of institutions and classes in a talk titled "Pakistan the Crises of Democracy." We mention Agha because as a central leader in the Left Unity Forum he is active on the steering committee of the North Star Network.

After the conference a substantial number of the participants indicated interest in joining and helping the Left Unity Forum. If there is anyone you feel may want to contact the Left Unity Forum they can write to them at P.O. Box 4610, Berkeley, California 94704.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Organizing Committee salutes your efforts to promote unity in the struggle to establish democratic rights in Pakistan.

We are confident, with the help of efforts like yours, that a similar experience awaits those who uphold tyranny in Pakistan that befell Somoza in Nicaragua and the Shah of Iran.

Today El Salvador reminds us that only a united mass movement can destroy dictators and open the road towards genuine self-determination.

We wish your conference every success.

Bay Area Organizing Committee
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Berkeley, California 94709

Hard Times News

Back in 1979-80 there was one name that kept appearing on the front page of *Barricada* which was recognizable to quite a few of those today in the North Star Network. That was Gene Lantz from Dallas, Texas. The FSLN paper kept reporting about Gene because of the excellent work he had been doing in the Dallas area in support of the Nicaraguan revolution.

As some may remember Gene left the SWP [Socialist Workers Party] of which he was a member because he felt the SWP had taken increasingly sectarian positions. Like many others this did not stop Gene from continuing political work in the interest of our class.

Today Gene is a member of the UAW [United Auto Workers] and is active in helping build solidarity work in Dallas. Gene and some others have formed a group called Resistance.

One of the rather interesting activities of Resistance has been to publish *Hard Times News* an eight page tabloid oriented to unemployed workers. *Hard Times News* has articles on local as well as national and international news. Its main focus is to explain the connection between political questions such as the expenditures on the war budget and massive unemployment. It includes a local community calendar and a directory of all the agencies which the unemployed might find useful, from where to look for work, to where food and housing help might be obtained.

Those interested in receiving or seeing a copy of *Hard Times News* can write to *Hard Times News* P.O. Box 225822, Dallas, Texas 75265. Please include a donation.

October protests planned against Cruise and Pershing II

Mass mobilizations are planned in Europe during October 15-22 against the U.S. deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles. Many groups in the United States are planning to hold marches, rallies, teach-ins in October to coincide with the European protests.

The Cruise missile is a new computer-guided nuclear missile designed to avoid radar detection by flying very low. They are so small that four missiles can fit on a flat-bed truck. The Pershing II missile is extremely fast and accurate, capable of reaching Moscow from Western Europe in 6½ minutes and landing within a few feet of its target.

These October demonstrations need to be built as large as possible. The nuclear weapons that the United States plans to deploy against the Soviet Union in Europe this fall are not a separate issue from the nuclear weapons that are on warships off the coast of Nicaragua. They are part of the U.S.'s overall war plans in that they are intended to warn the Soviet Union not to aid revolutionary forces as they come under greater U.S. attack. Joining together the anti-nuclear and anti-intervention forces in a unified opposition to U.S. war moves will be an important part of the October demonstrations.

Books/pamphlets of interest

In each newsletter we would like to include a short list of books and pamphlets that members of the North Star Newsletter might find of interest. Please send your suggestions to the Newsletter.

El Salvador

El Salvador The Face of Revolution, by Robert Armstrong and Janet Shenk, South End Press, 1982 \$7.50

Voices from El Salvador by Mario Menendez Rodriguez, Solidarity Publications, 1982, \$5.50

A catalogue of materials from Solidarity Publications is available by writing to Solidarity Publications, P.O. Box 40874, San Francisco, Ca. 94140

Nicaragua

Triumph of the People, The Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua by George Black, Zed Press, 1981 \$9.95

What Difference Could a Revolution Make?, by Joseph Collins, Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1982, \$5.00

Anti-nuclear/disarmament

Beyond Survival, New Directions for the Dis-

armament Movement edited by Michael Albert and David Dellinger, South End Press, 1983, \$8.00

Materials available

The following materials are available through the North Star Network. If you would like to order something on this list please en-

The North Star 1847-1851

The original *North Star* was published by the famous abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Douglass, once a slave, became one of the central leaders of the anti-slavery movement. His paper the *North Star* not only fought for the ending of slavery but for the rights of women, native americans, working people, for all the oppressed and exploited.

The North Star ceased publication in 1851 when it merged with the *Liberty Party Paper*, the organ of an early anti-slavery political formation which favored breaking with the two parties of slavery.

Frederick Douglass made appeals for the distribution of free land to the people, challenging the government's hand outs of "millions upon millions of acres of public lands to aid soulless railroad corporations to get rich."

close a check or money order since we do not have a great deal of money to send materials out on credit.

1. "The Green Party in West Germany" articles from the *Guardian* and other publications. \$1.00
2. "Bernie Sanders, Mayor of Burlington" articles from *In These Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. \$1.00
3. "Why Socialists Should Support the Nuclear Freeze" Articles from *The Militant*, *The Guardian* and a 1982 Minority Report given to the SWP National [Committee] Plenum. \$2.00
4. "The Cuban Revolution and Its Extension" Resolution adopted by the Australian SWP [Socialist Workers Party]. \$3.00
5. "Cuba and the Central American Revolution" by Pedro Camejo, (A criticism of the IEC [International Executive Committee of the Fourth International] document on Cuba) \$1.00
6. "Revolutionary Strategy and Tactics in the Trade Unions. What was wrong with our old trade union line" Document adopted by the Australian SWP \$3.00
7. "Against Sectarianism" The evolution of the Socialist Workers Party 1978-1983 by Pedro Camejo \$3.00
8. "Confronting Reality/Learning from the History of Our Movement." Document of the Bay Area Socialist Organizing Committee (BASOC). \$3.00

I would like to order the above materials.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Please enclose \$2.00 to cover postage and handling. Thank you.

He editorialized against the growing tendencies towards monopolies, supported the peace movement of the time, urged reform in the treatment of seamen whose lot at sea was hardly better than that of slaves, and joined in efforts to abolish capital punishment in New York State.

Frederick Douglass attended the meeting in Seneca Falls, New York on July 19 & 20, 1848 which launched the movement for women's rights. Elizabeth Cady Stanton insisted that the meeting adopt the demand for the right of women to vote and hold public office. Frederick Douglass seconded her motion and gave a strong speech in her support. Elizabeth Cady Stanton in her reminiscences wrote, "All of the journals from Maine to Texas seemed to strive

with each other to see which could make our movement appear the most ridiculous. The anti-slavery papers stood by us manfully and so did Frederick Douglass, both in the conven-

tion and in his paper *The North Star*."

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"They are sure conducting themselves in an effective manner," one U.S. adviser said. "The subversives are making one hell of a challenge."

"The guerrillas have the initiative now, no one can question that," another adviser complained.

White House plans invasion

Confronted with a deteriorating military situation and an upswing in urban and rural resistance to the dictatorship, Washington is moving swiftly toward a dramatic military escalation in El Salvador.

The November 5 FMLN communiqué exposed the Reagan administration's plans to use a recently concluded military pact among the governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras as the cutting edge of U.S. imperialism's strategy in the region.

The FMLN cited "intense preparations directed by the Pentagon's Southern Command [based in Panama] to reactivate the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA) with the armies of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The preparations have been implemented with amazing speed. These steps are similar to those that preceded the U.S. invasion of Grenada."

The FMLN statement reported that 4,000 Guatemalan troops have been deployed near the Salvadoran border at Jutiapa, Valle Nuevo, San Cristobal, and Ciudad Pedro de Alvarado. Along with Honduran troops, they are preparing to come to the aid of the beleaguered Salvadoran army.

In addition, other Honduran soldiers, along with thousands of U.S. troops on "maneuvers" in Honduras, are poised to strike into Nicaragua.

"Reagan will decide the date of the aggression and whether it will be directed first against the Salvadoran people and then Nicaragua or vice versa," the FMLN said.

But ultimately "the plan is then to have [CONDECA] request U.S. military intervention to play the decisive role. The invasion by the Guatemalan and Honduran troops will be followed without any doubt by U.S. planes and soldiers."

But if Washington thinks it can simply replay the Grenada invasion scenario in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the FMLN said, it is dead wrong.

"In Grenada, imperialism took advantage of the divisions among the revolutionaries to carry out the invasion. In our homeland . . . we will never be divided. We are more united than ever. Higher levels of unity [among the different revolutionary organizations that belong to the FMLN] have resulted in clear military victories. If circumstances demand it, we shall make decisions and take all necessary steps together. We shall not fail our people.

"The peoples of Nicaragua and El Salvador will never surrender." □

El Salvador

Rebel offensive bloodies army

Washington prepares major escalation

By Steve Wattenmaker

Rebel forces in El Salvador overran army garrisons in the cities of Tejutepique and Ciudad Barrios at the end of October in an operation named "Yankees Out of Grenada and Central America." Ciudad Barrios, with a population of 20,000, is the third largest city in San Miguel province.

According to the guerrillas' Radio Venceremos, the successful attacks — only five days after U.S. Marines landed in Grenada — were "the Salvadoran people's answer to the threats of the coward Reagan and a warning of how the peoples of Central America will defeat the gringos, who will be carried out in coffins."

Since the beginning of September an unbroken string of rebel military victories has bloodied Salvadoran army units across the country. To add to the Salvadoran dictatorship's woes, the guerrilla advances have been paralleled by a strike wave among urban workers and a demonstration by 15,000 farm laborers demanding land reform.

Meanwhile, Washington is taking aggressive steps to counter the upsurge. A communiqué issued November 5 by the Faribundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) warned that the Reagan administration is preparing to send Guatemalan and Honduran troops into El Salvador and Nicaragua as the spearhead of a direct U.S. invasion. The U.S. Congress is also rushing through legislation to authorize \$64 million in military aid to El Salvador.

Rebels maul government forces

A sweeping rebel military offensive began September 3 with an attack on an army battalion headquartered in the provincial capital of San Miguel. During September and October FMLN forces mounted at least 62 major attacks on government positions in 9 of the country's 14 provinces.

Not only has the offensive battered the army, but it has brought a significant amount of new territory under FMLN control. The guerrillas now, in effect, control a wide corridor of northern El Salvador stretching from the center of the country all the way to the eastern border.

The November 4 *New York Times* put the two-month casualty toll at 800 Salvadoran soldiers killed and 400 taken prisoner. In many of

the rebel attacks, army troops have simply fled the battlefield.

On October 30 the guerrillas attacked government positions in Tejutepique, a city of 8,000 people only 37 miles from San Salvador. The city was defended by 180 soldiers, many of whom fled to a nearby town and quickly changed into civilian clothes.

The same scene was repeated the next day as the FMLN attacked the garrison in Ciudad Barrios. After a few hours of fighting, the 80 soldiers in the garrison ran away. "It doesn't look like there was much effort to keep the place," a U.S. adviser commented.

Nor has U.S. training particularly improved the Salvadoran army's combat effectiveness. Two companies sent out to reinforce Ciudad Barrios after the attack began were pinned down less than a mile from their starting point. Both companies were from a battalion that recently returned from six weeks of training at the new U.S. base in Honduras.

'Pacification' sabotaged

The rebel offensive has also thrown cold water on U.S. plans to implement a Vietnam-style pacification program in the eastern province of San Vicente. Launched with great fanfare in June, the so-called National Plan was explained as a strategy to permanently drive the guerrillas out of San Vicente and then revive the province's economy with a massive infusion of U.S. aid.

In reality the plan was aimed at terrorizing and then relocating the civilian population into virtual concentration camps, in an effort to isolate the FMLN from its base of popular support in the countryside.

U.S. and Salvadoran government claims touting the success of the strategy proved short-lived. During September and October FMLN forces carried out two major and a number of smaller attacks in San Vicente. In addition, large parts of the agricultural economy of the province remain paralyzed.

According to the *New York Times*, many of the U.S. advisers are discouraged with the Salvadoran army's ineffectiveness and low morale. At the same time the advisers admit that the rebel forces are more unified, have better intelligence, and are much more mobile than they were earlier this year, moving in daylight by trucks rather than at night on foot.