

# **INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS**

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Year-end Index  
for 1983

## Interview with New Jewel Movement leader Don Rojas **Grenada: What Went Wrong?**



Don Rojas (right), a key aide to slain Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, with Bishop in 1982.

**Latin American  
Dictatorships  
on the Defensive**

**Yassir Arafat Speaks  
on the Palestinian  
Liberation Struggle**

# U.S., Israeli rulers plunge toward new Middle East war

By Fred Murphy

Acting in close collaboration with its Israeli allies, the Reagan administration has launched a new and dangerous escalation of U.S. military intervention in Lebanon.

In the first U.S. air strike ever against an Arab country, 28 bombers launched from two aircraft carriers off the Lebanese coast dropped some 150 bombs on Syrian, Palestinian, and Lebanese opposition militia positions in east-central Lebanon on December 4. Syrian defenders shot down two of the U.S. jets; one pilot was captured and is being held in Syria as a prisoner of war.

Washington sought to justify the air strike by saying it had warned Syria not to fire on what it insisted were "routine reconnaissance flights" over Lebanon by F-14 fighter aircraft from the U.S. carriers. Two of these jets — which in fact are fully equipped combat planes — had come under attack when they flew provocatively over Syrian positions just 90 minutes after an Israeli air strike in the same vicinity.

Hours after the U.S. air raid, eight more marines were killed when they fought on the side of the Lebanese army in a clash with opposition militias near the Beirut airport. U.S. warships then opened fire on Lebanese villages in the hills southeast of the capital.

## 'Strategic cooperation'

The U.S. war moves in Lebanon came less than a week after talks in Washington between President Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. A series of far-reaching agreements were made concerning what officials from both countries have labeled "strategic cooperation" between Washington and Tel Aviv in the Middle East.

Describing the back-to-back air raids by Israeli and U.S. planes December 3-4, a commentator on Israeli Defense Forces radio termed them "the first expression of the spirit of understanding concluded last week."

The Zionist rulers reaped a rich harvest from the Reagan-Shamir talks. Among the agreements reached were the following:

- The amount of U.S. military aid provided to Israel free of charge is to be boosted from its current level of \$850 million a year to \$1.275 billion.
- Shipments of cluster bombs, a deadly

antipersonnel weapon, are to be resumed, and Israel is to be provided with the technology to manufacture its own. Washington had suspended shipments in July 1982 when it became known that Israel was using cluster bombs to terrorize civilians in its invasion of Lebanon.

- U.S. and Israeli forces are to conduct joint military exercises in the Middle East.

- Israeli officers are to be given increased access to secret U.S. military technology and to restricted installations in the United States previously open only to British and Canadian personnel.

- Military and medical supplies for the Pentagon's Rapid Deployment Force are to be stockpiled in Israel.

- Israel may now bypass the Pentagon and deal directly with private U.S. arms merchants. Also, the Pentagon will begin buying certain weapons from Israeli manufacturers, and Tel Aviv will be allowed to spend U.S. military aid dollars for the development of its advanced Lavi fighter jet, which will eventually compete with aircraft sold by U.S. companies on the world market.

- A further spur to the crisis-ridden Israeli economy is a new trade agreement to boost Israeli exports to the United States.

- Finally, a Joint Political-Military Group has been set up by the two governments. Its purpose, Reagan stated, is to "give priority attention to the threat to our mutual interest posed by increased Soviet involvement in the Middle East." The December 12 *Time* magazine reported that U.S. officials also "hinted . . . that U.S.-Israeli cooperation could extend to contingency planning for a joint defense of the Persian Gulf."

Shamir declared upon returning to Israel, "We did not pay for whatever we got from the Americans." In fact, he reiterated Israel's refusal to suspend Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank and its opposition to U.S. sales of advanced military equipment to the proimperialist regimes in Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

Tactical differences notwithstanding, Reagan and Shamir are now fully in agreement on the need to step up military and diplomatic pressure on Syria to withdraw its 50,000 troops from Lebanon. They also agreed to make no concession to Lebanese opposition forces regarding last May's accord between Beirut and Tel Aviv that legitimized continued Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon so long as there is no Syrian withdrawal.

President Amin Gemayel of Lebanon arrived in Washington as Shamir was leaving. He received a pep talk and instructions from Reagan to step up collaboration with the Israeli occupation forces, extend Lebanese army con-

rol to areas beyond the capital now dominated by opposition militias, and offer further political concessions to leaders of the oppressed Muslim and Druse communities.

## Recipe for a new war

By calling on Gemayel to broaden the base of his government, now dominated by the extreme-rightist Christian Phalange, Washington would like to isolate Syria from its allies among the Lebanese opposition. Gemayel tried to oblige in October by agreeing to his opponents' calls for changes in the accord on Israel's role in the occupied south. But Washington and Tel Aviv promptly cut the ground out from under him on that score.

The chances of any internal settlement in Lebanon are reduced further each time there is a U.S. or Israeli attack on the Syrian-backed opposition militias. And by calling for the Lebanese army to extend its operations, Washington is virtually insuring a new round of fighting in the country's civil war.

Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens has even proposed publicly that the Lebanese army launch guerrilla warfare against the Syrian forces. According to the November 30 *New York Times*, "hard-line Lebanese Christian strategists" have likewise suggested that "the Lebanese Army should start a war with the Syrians on the assumption that the Americans and Israelis will eventually be dragged in."

The Lebanese government and army are the "weakest link" in Reagan's policy, *New York Times* correspondent Bernard Gwertzman noted December 5. "Questions remain," he said, as to whether the Lebanese army "can resist new fighting without a major increase in the size of the American military force or a dramatic rise in Israeli military actions against the Syrians."

The threat of U.S. involvement in a major new Middle East war against Syria carries with it the danger of an armed confrontation with the Soviet Union. The Soviet government provides considerable military aid to Syria and has some 7,000 advisers stationed in that country. In the event of a major attack on Syria, the lives of these personnel would be at risk. There is also a mutual defense treaty between the Syrian and Soviet governments. A dispatch by the official Soviet news agency Tass warned December 5 that U.S. military action against Syria would constitute "a serious threat to peace in the Middle East and not only in that region."

Reagan's drive toward war in Lebanon has stirred opposition and concern across a wide front.

After the U.S. air raid, the Italian and British governments faced sharp criticism in parliamentary debates and demands for withdrawal from the multinational "peacekeeping" force in Lebanon. Proimperialist Arab rulers such as King Hussein of Jordan, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, King Hassan of Morocco, and Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia have voiced protests against the U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation accord.

## Our year-end schedule

This is the last issue of *Intercontinental Press* that will appear in 1983. Our next issue will be dated January 23, 1984.

In the United States, members of Congress have felt the pressure of widespread public discontent over Washington's intervention in Lebanon. "Opposition . . . is increasing on a daily basis," Congressman William Alexander, Jr., of Arkansas said December 9. "Every time they send a Marine back home in a plastic bag it increases the opposition."

Congressman Byron Dorgan of North Dakota noted the same day, "You don't find great support in North Dakota or across the country for Lebanon like you did for Grenada."

### 'Get the hell out'

In Beirut, a *Washington Post* reporter found that "frustration . . . pervades the U.S. [Marine] replacement contingent only a month after it arrived." The reporter asked one marine where he thought he might be safe and received the reply, "Ohio."

Another marine who had returned for a second tour of duty said, "The first time I thought I was really doing something good. Now, we're just holed up to be shot at. I think we ought to get the hell out of Lebanon. . . ."

The prospect of large-scale war has also given rise to hesitation on the part of some representatives of U.S. ruling-class opinion. Driving the Syrian forces out of Lebanon will not be easy, a *New York Daily News* editorial warned December 6. "Bombing doesn't work. We tried it in Vietnam. We need a few hundred thousand troops on the ground, and that is the road Reagan has set his feet on." The editors called for a different course: "We have to get out of Lebanon, now."

In a December 7 editorial entitled "Out by New Year's," the *New York Times* said, "It's time to pull [the marines] out while their losses can still be reckoned in hundreds."

One of Reagan's own political advisers admitted to the *Washington Post* that the intervention in Lebanon is "the single most negative issue we face" going in to the 1984 elections. The Middle East has "Vietnam possibilities in political terms," he said.

But there is no sign Reagan is backing off. In fact, the December 6 *New York Times* re-

## Ziad not freed

*Intercontinental Press* reported in our issue dated December 12 that Ziad Abu Eain had been released from an Israeli jail at the end of November. This information was incorrect. Ziad, a young Palestinian framed up on a bombing charge and extradited from the United States in 1981, is still being held.

According to the December 3 *New York Times*, early reports of Ziad's release "came from relatives who said they had been told by the International Committee of the Red Cross that he had been freed and flown to Algeria.

"But his brother, Mahmoud, said . . . that he had been returned to prison after having been taken to Ben Gurion International Airport with others being released."

ported "a nearly unanimous feeling" among White House aides "that increased force in the Middle East had become necessary." Moreover, the *Times* said, National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane "wanted it known that Mr. Reagan would not respond" to political pressure for a marine withdrawal "even if it existed."

### Arafat defends Syria

The threat of a major war is further heightened by the political isolation of the Syrian regime internationally, owing to its criminal onslaught against the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its chairman, Yassir Arafat. As of December 12, Arafat and some 4,000 PLO fighters loyal to the organization remained besieged at Tripoli on Lebanon's

northern coast. They were surrounded by Syrian and PLO renegade troops on land and by Israeli gunboats at sea.

News reports from Tripoli December 3 said Arafat had expressed satisfaction that the resistance the loyalist PLO fighters had put up to the Syrian-backed attacks had helped to expose the scant support the renegades have among the Palestinian masses. "The battle has produced its intended results," Arafat said. "Our people have given their judgment. Who is isolated now? Me or the Syrians?"

At the same time, the PLO chairman denounced the new threats against Syria by U.S. imperialism and Israel. After the U.S. air raid December 4, Arafat declared his support for "the Arabic Syrian Army in the face of American-Israeli barbaric aggression." □

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# Amnesty for exiles who return

*Sandinistas remove pretexts for U.S. invasion*

By Michael Baumann  
and Jane Harris

MANAGUA — In a bold move demonstrating its confidence in the strength of the revolutionary process, the Nicaraguan government is allowing virtually all counterrevolutionaries to return to the country and take part in the elections scheduled for 1985.

Exceptions to the decree, issued December 4, include top leaders of the counterrevolutionary bands and officers of the former Somoza regime's National Guard. Nearly all others can return without fear of prosecution as soon as they put down their weapons.

The decree removes one of the major possible pretexts for a U.S. invasion — the claim that Washington is defending "freedom fighters" allegedly repressed by the revolutionary government.

Today these opponents of the revolution are free to return to demonstrate in practice, in the framework of elections, exactly how much support they have or don't have.

## 'We are stronger than ever'

This is a move from strength, not from weakness, government coordinator Daniel Ortega stressed. "Never in our history have we had a government that was more solid or more popular."

We have forged an "indestructible unity" through daily work, the militias, nightwatch, and through production and combat. "Today we are stronger than ever," Ortega told the Council of State December 4, at the closing of the parliament's regular session. The council will continue to meet in special session to draft electoral procedures.

"This strength of the revolution allows us to give an opportunity to those who wish to reincorporate themselves into the new life the revolution has created," Ortega explained.

Specifically, the new decree covers nearly all Nicaraguan nationals who fled following the revolutionary triumph. Excluded besides the ex-Guard officers and counterrevolutionary leaders are those condemned by courts (i.e. associates of Somoza) or currently serving prison terms and members of Somoza's security agencies who were involved in repressive acts.

"In this manner we are giving an alternative to those who — by means of terror, repression, and deceit — have been victims of the aggressive policy of the United States, becoming unconscious instruments of that foreign power, of the traitors and sell-outs," Ortega continued.

"Today they have the possibility to repent before the people, to turn over their arms and

rejoin the new Nicaragua."

Those who decide to return are to be granted safe-conduct by Nicaraguan consulates abroad. Or, if they are currently fighting or hiding inside the country, through regional offices of the Ministry of the Interior. They are guaranteed full participation in the 1985 elections, either as candidates or as voters. But they must return by February 21, the day election procedures are to be announced.

## Eligible for free land

Furthermore, returnees will all be eligible to benefit from free land through Nicaragua's extensive agrarian reform. Former landowners will have their lands returned or, if these properties have been turned over to peasant cooperatives, be financially compensated.

This new decree comes on the heels of other important and related steps taken by the revolutionary government in recent weeks:

- Amnesty for all Miskito Indians in exile in Honduras or in prison in Nicaragua. (Here again, only top counterrevolutionary leaders are excluded.)

- Major loosening of censorship.
- New incentive packages for big coffee and cotton producers.

- Guarantees to big growers and rich peasants that their land will not be confiscated so long as they continue to produce.

- Initial discussions to reduce tensions with the internal opposition: the Catholic Church hierarchy, the right-wing political parties, and the reactionary daily *La Prensa*.

## Strengthen class alliances

Each of these measures is intended to strengthen the alliance of Nicaragua's tiny working class with the majority sectors of society — the peasantry and the urban middle class (largely made up of vendors, traders, and people running small businesses). Only such an alliance can ensure the unity of the country in face of threatened imperialist invasion.

They are also intended to remove pretexts for such an invasion. In effect, the moves buy time for further strengthening of the revolution, or at least increase enormously the political price the U.S. government will have to pay for direct military intervention.

Ortega explained that while all these measures thoroughly fit in with the new Nicaragua being built, they are only one aspect of democracy.

"Democracy doesn't begin and end with elections," Ortega pointed out. He explained that it begins with mass participation in decision-making and with the reordering of the economy. It includes agrarian reform, educa-

tion, and health care.

## 'All arms to the people'

The best possible proof of Nicaraguan democracy, Ortega said, is that the revolution has carried through on its promise to turn over "all arms to the people." This shows that the government is not separated from the masses but rather is 100 percent confident that the arms will be used to defend the revolution, not overturn it.

Of Nicaragua's 3.5 million people — half of whom are children — Ortega reported "there are 1,603,293 Nicaraguans older than 14 who are ready to fight against the invaders, but some lack rifles."

Those without arms, Ortega said, would have to rely on homemade bombs, arrows, and even rocks to defeat the invaders.

Regarding the current negotiations by the Contadora group — Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela — Ortega reported that Nicaragua was so far the only country to develop peace proposals addressing all 21 points of mutual concern to Central American countries.

Ortega made clear that Nicaragua was not seeking a separate arrangement with the United States. He stressed that there was no possibility for peace in Central America until U.S. intervention in El Salvador stopped.

## Proposals for peace

As the basis for peace, Nicaragua has proposed to the Central American countries in conflict:

- Immediate removal of foreign military bases, schools, and of any other form of foreign military presence, including maneuvers.

- Immediate end to any type of arms build-up.

- Immediate withdrawal of all foreign military advisers.

- Limitations on the size of the regular standing armies of the Central American countries.

"None of these steps can be taken unilaterally by Nicaragua," Ortega said. "They must be met by measures implemented simultaneously by all the Central American governments."

After reviewing the sum total of the steps Nicaragua has taken, Ortega said, "In this way Nicaragua is making a new effort that will test the United States' desire for peace."

As has been reported in the local press here, Nicaragua's recent proposals for peace have so



far been met by:

- Reagan's veto of certification of human rights "progress" prior to funding for the Salvadoran regime.
- Roving U.S. Ambassador Richard Stone's meeting in Panama with most major Nicaraguan counterrevolutionary leaders.
- Denial for a third time of a visa for Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomás Borge to address the U.S. people and governmental representatives. This despite Nicaragua's open-door, no-visa-necessary policy for any U.S. citizen who wishes to visit here.
- Funded by Washington, counter-

## 'We will not be another Grenada'

### Nicaraguans prepare to meet imperialist aggression

By Cindy Jaquith

[From November 20 through December 4, two dozen U.S. trade unionists and solidarity activists visited Nicaragua on a tour organized by the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, two U.S. revolutionary socialist publications. The following are excerpts from an article on the tour that is scheduled to appear in the December 23 *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

MANAGUA — "Every factory is an invincible trench in defense of the revolution."

This slogan and hundreds similar to it cover billboards, fences, factories, and houses throughout Managua, the capital of Nicaragua. Professionally lettered, or simply spray-painted, they are a graphic statement of the high level of preparation of the Nicaraguan people for the U.S. invasion they expect at any time.

In two weeks of meetings with representatives of the Nicaraguan labor, women's, and youth movements, as well as with neighborhood defense committees and many individual Nicaraguans who stopped to talk with us, we heard the same message repeated: "Nicaragua wants peace, but we will fight to the end to defend our revolution."

Stressing that they consider the North American people — particularly workers, Blacks, Latinos, and Indians — to be their allies, Nicaraguans urged us to bring this message back to our unions and communities to help mobilize opposition to the U.S. war against their country.

This war is already in full swing, with daily attacks by CIA-organized exiles in several parts of the country. But these rightist forces have been unable to win domestic support for their attempt to topple the popular Sandinista government. Thus the Nicaraguan people expect the next stage in the war to be an invasion by Honduran and/or Guatemalan troops, combined with U.S. combat troops, 6,000 of which are currently across the border in Honduras.

revolutionaries killed 29 Sandinista soldiers between November 24 and December 3 in various fighting around the country.

There is no illusion here among government leaders that any step taken by Nicaragua — short of a return to Somozaism — can stop direct U.S. intervention. But there is growing confidence that the invaders will pay an enormous price, and that eventually they will be driven out.

As Daniel Ortega told the Council of State, and television and radio listeners around the country, "The armed people will not be defeated by either bullets or ballots." □

As a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) explained to us, Nicaragua intends to rely on its own army and militia — as well as the population as a whole — to beat back the invaders. They expect that imperialist troops could seize whole cities in their country. The war will last years, as the Vietnam War did.

But they are also convinced that the Nicaraguan people will eventually win the war, whatever the cost in human life and destruction.

"The Nicaraguan people, our government, and our vanguard, the FSLN, have never given in," said Cristóbal Espinoza, a leader of the union at the Fanatex textile plant in Managua. "We will not be another Chile or Grenada."

Despite the seriousness of the military situation, the mood we found was not one of panic, fear, or demoralization. "It would be hard for us to feel tragic or sad about the coming war," said a leader of the Sandinista Youth—July 19 (JS-19), in Matagalpa. He expressed the confidence we observed elsewhere that the revolution has prepared and organized the masses to meet the invasion in the strongest way possible.

At the heart of this preparation is the mobilization of the population through the mass organizations and unions in Nicaragua, such as the Sandinista Workers Federation; the Nicaraguan Women's Association (AMNLAE); the JS-19; and the Sandinista Defense Committees, the neighborhood block associations. This is coupled with a campaign of popular support for Patriotic Military Service, Nicaragua's newly established military draft, and recruitment to the Territorial Militias.

The great majority of people we met were members of the militia. They drill on their day off or at night after work. Many proudly wear their uniforms even while not on duty. A large number are women.

In the factories, workers serve militia duty defending the plant for four hours either before or after their shift. Each factory also has a good number of their workers mobilized in militia units at the front. At the Fanatex plant, of 1,100 employees, 90 workers were on leave to

fight. Three hundred others were active in the militia.

The Texnica textile plant, also in Managua, has 1,200 employees, 400 of them women. Of these women, 186 are in the militia. Eighteen women are in the reserves, and 198 are in health brigades, which are preparing for the emergency medical needs of war.

Workers are also striving to increase production and combat sabotage by counterrevolutionary elements within the country.

A major role in defense mobilization is being played by AMNLAE. It is active among housewives, peasant women, workers, merchants, and professionals, recruiting them to AMNLAE and organizing them in the defense effort.

Karla Rodríguez, an AMNLAE leader in Matagalpa, explained that her group helps organize women on cooperative farms to keep production going when the men have to be mobilized for combat. AMNLAE is also organizing women in the Matagalpa neighborhoods, called *barrios*. The goal is to maximize women's participation in the militia, civil defense brigades, food distribution, and night watch.

AMNLAE was also organized in all the factories we visited, focusing on the particular problems of women workers and deepening their involvement in the union, defense work, and neighborhood civil defense for when the invasion comes.

The barrios themselves are organized by the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS). We talked with CDS leaders at the sprawling *Mercado Oriental*, or Eastern Market. Olga Rosco, head of the 42 CDS units in the market, welcomed us, saying, "This visit of yours is very important to us, with the U.S. invasion right on our doorstep."

Rosco and other CDS leaders, all of them women, described some of the special measures they are carrying out through the CDS in the market. One hundred fifty men and women — mostly vendors and artisans — have been trained in first aid. There are also fire brigades and brigades trained to evacuate children, pregnant women, and the elderly from the market in the event of an attack.

Separate squads have been designated to prevent looting when the invasion comes. And bomb shelters are being built.

We were also invited to talk with Catholic supporters of the revolution who belong to the Christian Base Communities. They wanted us to know that they, too, were prepared to take up arms to defend the revolution. Isidro, a union leader and member of the group, said his three children have all registered for the draft. "The revolution represents for us the transformation of those who didn't know anything, particularly the workers and peasants. We'll fight all together to defend the revolution to the last consequences because that's what Christ wants. This is a true revolution of the poor." □

# New NATO missiles deployed

*Warning to liberation struggles, Soviet Union*

By Margaret Jayko

[The following article is taken from the December 16 issue of the U.S. socialist news-weekly *Militant*.]

\* \* \*

"Today Grenada, tomorrow Woensdrecht!" proclaimed a banner at a huge peace demonstration in the Netherlands. Woensdrecht is the site of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air base where cruise nuclear missiles are scheduled to be installed.

The first missiles have already been delivered to Britain, Italy, and West Germany. In response, the Soviet Union decided to discontinue its participation in the Geneva arms negotiations.

What is the link between the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the deployment of 108 Pershing 2 and 464 cruise nuclear missiles in Western Europe?

Both are aimed at intimidating the workers and peasants of Nicaragua, Lebanon, El Salvador, and Cuba and anyone else that dares to challenge U.S. imperialist domination — including European workers. The missiles are a nuclear shield behind which Washington hopes to carry out murderous bombing raids against Syria and rightist terror in El Salvador with impunity. These missiles also carry a clear message to the Soviet Union: do not provide aid to peoples struggling for national liberation.

The deployment of these mass-murder weapons, far from being the crazed actions of some madman in the White House, is a cold-blooded statement by Washington and its European imperialist allies of how far they are willing to go to quell the revolutionary struggles that are the inevitable result of the worldwide crisis of the capitalist system.

The massive military buildup — including both nuclear and conventional weaponry — is *necessary* to wage counterrevolutionary wars — as was done in Vietnam and as is being done today from Central America to Lebanon. These wars are all carried out under the protection of U.S. nuclear weapons.

That is why imperialism has fought so hard to deploy these missiles in Western Europe.

## First missile deliveries

The 15 NATO members are the United States, Canada, Iceland, Portugal, France, Britain, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Italy, West Germany, Greece, and Turkey. Of these, France and Greece are not part of NATO's military structure.

NATO has slated 204 missiles for West Germany. Of these, 108 are Pershing 2 missiles,

which are capable of delivering nuclear warheads deep inside the Soviet Union in no more than six minutes. The cruise missiles, which NATO is deploying in Belgium, Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, and West Germany, are slower and are designed to avoid detection by skimming the ground at a height of 50 to 200 feet.

The first missiles delivered went to Britain on November 14. Each warhead of these Tomahawk cruise missiles is *16 times* more powerful than the bomb Washington dropped on Hiroshima.

The police arrested hundreds of people who protested the arrival of the missiles.

Nine days later, the first Pershing 2s were delivered to West Germany. Nine journalists were detained for filming and taking pictures in the security zone around the Ramstein air base that the missiles were flown into. Two of the reporters were from the East German press agency, and cops said they intended to charge them with espionage.

The Italian Defense Ministry announced on November 27 that the first component of what will be 112 cruise missiles had arrived in Sicily. On December 4, antimissile demonstrators formed a six-mile human chain from the U.S. naval base where the NATO missiles are stored toward Catania, Sicily. Several busloads of protesters blocked the entrance of the base. Thousands gathered in a cold rain in downtown Catania to protest.

Two Italian crewmen from CBS news were arrested while filming the entrance to a NATO base that will house the missiles. They are being held on charges of procuring information regarding state security. The crackdown on democratic rights that is accompanying the missiles is due to the fact that the Western European governments are faced with massive opposition to the missiles.

Ever since the Dec. 12, 1979, decision by NATO to develop and deploy these weapons, a huge political battle has unfolded in Western Europe over them. This has been a central political issue, with massive protests in the last couple of years against the missiles.

The Social Democratic Party of Germany, which backed missile deployment when it was in office, has come out against it now that it is in opposition.

The British Labour Party and labor federation also oppose the missiles.

In the most recent round of protests, on October 22, more than a million West Germans took to the streets, making it that country's largest political demonstration since World War II. The largest antinuclear protest in British history took place as a quarter of a mil-

lion turned out in London.

Resistance to the missiles, as well as opposition to imperialist military interventions from Central America to Lebanon, has been heightened by the worldwide economic crisis. Working people in the imperialist countries are facing concerted austerity drives by the employers and governments, while the peoples of the semicolonial world are being driven even further into poverty.

## Bipartisan policy

The initial deployment of the missiles represents a victory for Washington in its campaign to force its imperialist allies to shoulder more of the political and military burden for policing the world.

This is a bipartisan policy of U.S. imperialism. It was under the administration of Democrat James Carter that agreement was reached to install these missiles. They are being added to thousands of NATO nuclear weapons already in place in Western Europe.

The majority sentiment against these missiles has not been translated into action by the governments in Western Europe. It is not just the governments led by capitalist parties, as in Britain and West Germany, that have welcomed the missiles. It is also capitalist governments led by social-democratic parties, as in Italy and France.

Leading the charge, in fact, has been French President François Mitterrand. No missiles will be placed in France, which has its own nuclear weapons. But Mitterrand has repeatedly urged deployment and condemned all those who oppose it. Meanwhile, Mitterrand is building up a French Rapid Action Force in order to better carry out military interventions in countries like Chad, Lebanon, and the French colonies in the Caribbean.

The antimissiles movement was not able to stop the initial deployment. However, it has involved millions of Western European workers and farmers in political action and discussions on war, how to stop it, and its relationship to the attacks on their rights and living standards.

This deepening politicalization among working people, in fact, is creating a big problem for the ruling classes in Western Europe, a problem which deploying the missiles will not solve.

## Is Soviet Union a threat?

The primary argument in favor of the missiles is the need to defend Western Europe from a supposed Soviet military threat. This lie is told because it is politically impossible for the U.S. ruling class to state its real reasons for



fighting wars such as in Vietnam, Lebanon, or Central America. Working people are not willing to lay down their lives for the profits of the big banks and corporations.

So instead we are told we must fight "Soviet expansionism."

Moscow's decision to withdraw from the Geneva arms negotiations once the deployment began is being used to bolster this argument about a warlike Soviet Union.

But it was Washington that dropped the first and only atomic bombs ever used.

It was Washington that threatened to do so again in Korea, the Middle East, and Vietnam.

It is Washington that has initiated every increase in the deadlines and numbers of nuclear weapons.

And it is only Washington that boasts it will use them if necessary.

The Geneva talks originated at the insistence of the European NATO powers. In order to win acceptance for deployment, NATO needed the window-dressing of some kind of arms talks. This was after NATO rejected Moscow's offer to decrease its missile force aimed at Europe in exchange for a NATO agreement to simply not deploy new missiles.

The Soviet Union has itself been the victim of two imperialist invasions and is encircled by imperialist military bases. This continues to impose a very heavy burden on the Soviet workers state. And it is working people — in the imperialist countries, the semicolonial world, and the workers states — who are forced to foot the bill for these weapons.

The imperialists hope that their threat to wage nuclear war will strike fear in the hearts of all those who stand up to Washington and Wall Street — from the Nicaraguans to the Greyhound bus line strikers in the United States.

But the U.S. ruling class is moving from a position of weakness, not strength. Their system is in crisis all over the world. It is not fear of nuclear war that should be our reaction to this latest escalation, but anger and determination to continue fighting against imperialist intervention in Central America and Lebanon, against further deployment of NATO missiles, and against the ruling class's austerity drive. □

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## Antilles

# Protests hit Grenada invasion

## Interview with members of GRS

[The following interview with members of the Socialist Revolution Group (GRS), Antilles section of the Fourth International, appeared in the Dec. 2, 1983, issue of *La Gauche*, biweekly French-language newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers League (LRT) of Belgium. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.

[The GRS has members on the islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the Caribbean and in France. Martinique and Guadeloupe are officially "French overseas departments," but in fact are French colonies.]

\* \* \*

*Question.* Following the 1979 revolution on the island of Grenada, did you have contact with the revolutionaries in power (the New Jewel Movement)?

*Answer.* We have known Maurice Bishop and his movement since 1976, when there was a common campaign to free Desmond Trotter, a young man sentenced to death in Dominica.

After the 1979 revolution, the GRS was the first organization invited to Grenada. We went there numerous times. When Alain Krivine [a leader of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) of France] came to the Antilles for the Fifth Congress of the GRS in March 1982, he accompanied us to Grenada and met members of the People's Revolutionary Government.

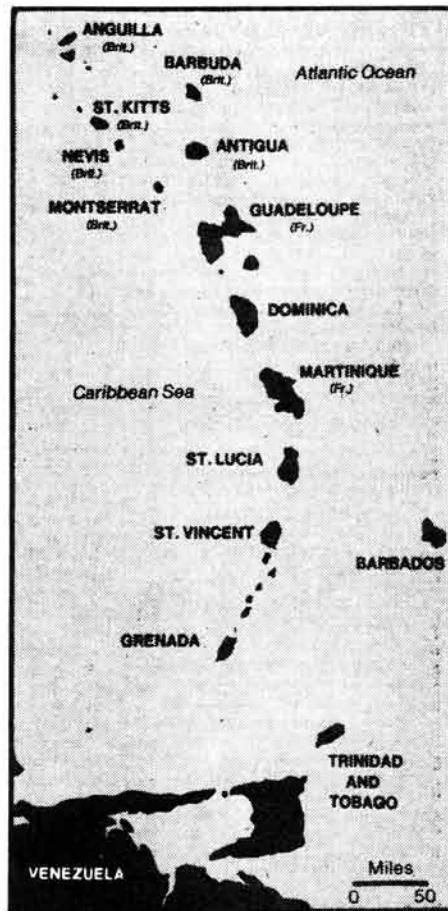
Last summer, our youth organization, the Vanguard Youth (JAG), organized an official trip to Grenada.

As soon as we heard of the arrest of Maurice Bishop and key government ministers by the majority of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement, we immediately condemned such methods of solving political disagreements within a revolutionary leadership through use of arms and leaving the masses in ignorance of the contested questions.

The tragic events that followed showed that such methods lead to the demoralization and demobilization of the masses. In the period between the arrest of Bishop and the U.S. military landing, we were able to have telephone contact with some Grenadian leaders under house arrest.

*Q.* What were the reactions in Guadeloupe and Martinique after the U.S. military invasion of Grenada?

*A.* There was a strong emotional reaction among the population. This proves that the idea of the solidarity of oppressed peoples in the Caribbean is gaining. We have put forward this idea since the founding of the GRS ten



years ago, but at that time it was in a tiny minority.

The colonialist right wing uses the U.S. intervention to bolster its opposition to the independence of the French Antilles.

The Martiniquan Communist Party (PCM) waited until the U.S. military invasion before demonstrating. That is, during the days preceding the invasion, the PCM had no reaction to the arrest or the murder of Bishop.

In Martinique and in Guadeloupe the GRS organized a meeting. In Martinique the GRS and the PCM organized two separate demonstrations because the PCM refused to condemn the murder of Bishop. Later on, a united demonstration (GRS, PCM, and trade unions) finally took place, with an explicit condemnation of the murder of Bishop in its platform. The PCM thus had reversed itself on this point.

*Q.* Has the revolutionary upsurge we have seen for some years in Central America and Grenada had repercussions on the Caribbean as a whole? What role does the GRS expect to



play on the Caribbean level?

A. In terms of interest, there is a great deal of difference from one Caribbean island to the next due to the linguistic divisions. For example, the Central American revolution has a big impact in Spanish-speaking Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, and the events in Grenada spark more interest in the English-speaking islands. On the Caribbean level, the GRS aims in particular to carry out:

- the establishment of a solidarity movement with Nicaragua and Grenada;
- support for the coming Haitian revolution;

- development of an axis of political and trade-union movements that put forward a clear orientation of class independence;

- development of organizations linked to the Fourth International.

In Martinique, for example, partially as a result of our efforts, a Committee in Solidarity with the Peoples of the Caribbean and Central America has been set up. This year this group has organized:

- a three-hour program of solidarity with Haiti, in which a leader of the Haitian Communist Party took part (800 people attended).
- On April 26 (the anniversary of the U.S.-

sponsored landing at the Bay of Pigs in Cuba), it held a day of solidarity with the Cuban revolution, and showed a film on El Salvador.

- July 19 (the anniversary of the fall of Somoza), there was a demonstration of support for the Sandinista revolution.

*Q. How strong is the GRS?*

A. Our forces are still modest, but far from negligible. We have several people elected to municipal councils. Our weekly newspaper (*Révolution Socialiste*) sells nearly 1,000 copies per issue in a population of 650,000 inhabitants. □

## DOCUMENTS

# Arafat: 'They are trying to kill the dream'

## Two interviews with chairman of Palestine Liberation Organization

[The following are excerpts from two recent interviews with Yassir Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).]

[The first is taken from the October 28 English-language edition of *Al Fajr*, a Palestinian weekly published in Jerusalem. It was obtained by an *Al Fajr* correspondent, Ghassan Bishara.

[The second interview was held in Tripoli, Lebanon, on November 12 by a group of French journalists. The interview, conducted almost entirely in English, was broadcast over Radio France Internationale two days later. Our excerpts are taken from a transcript of that broadcast.]

\* \* \*

*Question. A year has passed since the end of the last Israeli-Palestinian war. What has happened during this past year? How is the Palestinian revolution faring?*

*Answer.* I would like to remember now the Israeli-American decision taken at the start of the invasion, on June 4, 1982, which aimed at liquidating the PLO, its political existence and military forces and destroying its infrastructure. What has happened since? The Palestinian-Lebanese unified forces fought together against the Israeli invading army — the greatest and proudest Arab battle in contemporary Arab history, despite the great gaps both in weaponry and numbers between the two fighting forces.

Nonetheless in accordance with resolutions of the PLO military council and the Palestine National Council (PNC), we not only succeeded in escalating our military attacks on Israeli forces in Lebanon, but in coordination with the Lebanese resistance, we turned these attacks into a war of attrition against the Israeli presence in Lebanon.

This was confirmed by Israeli military sources and is considered one of the reasons the Israeli government redeployed its forces to



Palestinians at Nahr al Bared refugee camp outside Tripoli, Lebanon, demonstrate in support of Arafat, shortly before camp was taken by Syrian-backed rebels.

the Awali River in order to minimize their casualties. Thus, what they thought was going to be a three-to-five day journey into Lebanon against our forces has become a trap for their continued presence in Lebanon.

Of course in the face of this reality and the success of our forces, the conspiracies against us multiplied. Events in the Beqa'a [valley], resulting from Arab interference, are mere attempts by these Arab regimes, masked behind Palestinian names and symbols, at achieving what Israel failed to achieve last year in Beirut.

*Q. What avenues for a solution to the Palestinian problem are there to pursue considering that the PLO has lost the military option*

*with its departure from South Lebanon?*

A. We had not used Lebanese territory for attacks against Israel since I agreed at the Tunis [Arab League] Summit in 1979 not to do so. This was in response to a request by the Lebanese government. [The Israeli reaction was that] they launched two wars against us, one in the summer of 1981 and the invasion of last year, during which Lebanon and Palestine lost 72,000 killed and wounded. The majority of those were women and children.

Now, since we agreed to leave South Lebanon, in the past three months, with Israeli confirmation, we have initiated 355 operations against Israeli forces.

Our revolution is not only with the gun, for

if it were we would be thieves and robbers — our revolution is with a surgeon's scissors, a farmer's hoe, a worker's hammer, a Palestinian woman sewing for her children late at night and a newborn Palestinian child on Palestinian soil. Our people in the occupied territories came out to defend our achievements in a tide-like movement when the news of the Beqa'a events became known.

*Q. It appears that a stalemate has developed on the political level since the negotiations with Jordan stopped. Do you agree?*

A. The dialogue with the Jordanian government didn't end. Even now I say the door remains open for a continued dialogue with Jordan. I shut neither a door, nor a window, nor any small opening on further dialogue with Jordan. We may have disagreed on some aspects, but we remain ready and willing to continue the dialogue with Jordan, depending mainly on the Jordanian party. In this regard we are obliged to execute the resolutions of the PNC, and we will.

*Q. Why did the Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue stop? Did the Jordanians aim to receive a mandate from the PLO to represent the Palestinian people in any future negotiations?*

A. No. The truth is that the Jordanian government didn't demand the mandate you are talking about. The disagreement with Jordan was about the bilateral communique regarding the Reagan Plan [of Sept. 1, 1982].

About the Reagan Plan, I have to say that while it denies our right to self-determination, granting that very same right to 1,800 Falkland Islanders, it denies us a very basic right which is recognised by the United Nations and basic to the American political system and the American people.

I am aware that the American people do sympathise with our plight, contrary to their government, but it should be made clear that US interests can't be forever protected in the Middle East while the American government is bypassing our basic right of self-determination.

*Q. What is the reason for the Beqa'a mutiny?*

A. Arab intervention and conspiracy, basically Syrian and Libyan. The Palestinians involved are simply puppets . . . but as was decided at the central council, we remain open-minded and willing to solve this problem with our brothers in Syria.

*Q. Palestinians both in the '48 territory and the '67 territories expressed their utmost support of you and of the PLO immediately after news of the Beqa'a mutiny became known. How important to you is their support and what would you say to them?*

A. I call this the tide which came once the conspiracy against us became known. To every child, to every man and woman, young

and old, to every youth and all Palestinians in our land, I say thank you. I also say to them our pledge remains and so does our oath, that we will meet in Jerusalem.

Our people are a giving people, and a people of sacrifice. That is why they are great, even in tribulation.

\* \* \*

*Question. Mr. President, in 1974 you were received in triumph, I remember well, at the United Nations. And today you are in a school, as you say, in a little school of Tripoli, and one has the impression that you've lost a large part of your power. What do you feel about that this evening?*

*Answer.* You have to remember that when I went to the UN, I lived at that time in a cave in south Lebanon. It does not matter from where you start. The objective is not this school. It isn't Beirut. It isn't Tripoli. My objective is Jerusalem.

*Q. When do you think you will go there?*

A. I am a man of history. Sooner or later we will attain our objective.

But we know that we confront a very difficult situation. There are the Camp David accords with Egypt, which make it such that Egypt, with all its weight, is on the sidelines. We are trying to say to our brothers, the Egyptians, to return back to their own ways.

We have some problems with the Syrians. Now I am under siege — the attack of the Syrians and Libyans. And at the same time, I am facing another siege by the Israeli navy.

But it is very important to understand why they are all around me: because there is a Syrian-American agreement. Last year there was an American-Israeli agreement to liquidate the PLO in two, or three, or five days! But where is Haig? The Haig who organized all this aggression. Sharon? Where is Sharon? Where is Begin?

When I left Beirut, I mentioned something very important: the volcano, the volcano which has already started in Beirut. It will act, everywhere.

Look, even in Israel it has started. There is an economic disaster. Begin was obliged to step down. There is a war of attrition being waged by the joint Palestinian-Lebanese forces against the Israeli Defense Forces.

The Americans are obliged, too. While Mr. Reagan imagined he was on a picnic, he was obliged to bring out his whole navy from New Jersey, or wherever, and bring out very important units of the marines to the east of the Mediterranean Sea.

And this volcano, it is erupting in Beirut, in the mountains, and in Tripoli. What will happen after? No one knows. But remember this volcano! It won't go out. This volcano will destroy the American interests which are planning, organizing this conspiracy against the Palestinians, against the Arabs.

Maybe from time to time the U.S. will succeed in making accords with the Syrians, or an arrangement with Sharon or Begin. But those

accords will never last long. One can control by power only for a short period. Force doesn't control in the long run. Hitler invaded France, but where is he now?

*Q. We would like to ask you, Mr. President, about what journalists call, perhaps wrongly, the PLO dissidents.*

A. They have been used by the Syrians, by the Libyans, too — in their opinion — to control the PLO, or if not, to damage the PLO, damage the image that glorifies our heroes in Beirut and this miracle of 88 days of resistance, the longest Arab-Israeli war. This is a big conspiracy from the Syrians, the Libyans, because they want to use the Palestinian card as one of their cards in the Lebanese question.

That is why we will fight to defend our political independence, our independence of political decision.

You can see this is very simple and clear. It may be that they are trying to put such and such reason to gloss over things, but you cannot kill the dream. That is what they are trying to do. They are trying to kill the dream in the eyes of our children.

But I'm sure they won't succeed. You know why? Because there are men who have decided to die to defend their people, their political program, and their freedom of decision. Look at the masses inside our country and outside: they are strongly supporting the PLO.

*Q. Don't you nonetheless find it strange that within a revolutionary movement there is talk of loyalists and dissidents?*

A. No, it is not a matter of loyalists and dissidents. There were many problems in Europe during the Nazi occupation, remember. It wasn't a matter of loyalists and dissidents. No. It is simply surrogates, puppets, used by the invader.

But they can't stop the course of history. They are trying to stop the course of history, but they can't. Because our revolution is with the strong will of the people.

I hope you will go into the occupied territories and you will see how the masses are supporting the PLO. Outside the occupied territories also. Yesterday I received a very important telegram from the AAUG in the United States, the Arab American University Graduates, who support completely the PLO in the United States. I receive between 150 and 200 telegrams every day which support the PLO.

No stability, no peace, no settlement in this area by overjumping the PLO, which represents the Palestinian people, the 5 million Palestinian people and their leadership.

I am not in my place through a military coup. I am here through this Palestinian democracy, and we are very proud of it. Some Arab regimes who are against our democracy are trying to put some troubles in front of our democracy. But to be sure, we will continue our democracy in spite of all the obstacles which are put before us. □



# The fruits of divide and rule

## *Imperialism fosters conflict between Greek and Turkish communities*

**By Will Reissner**

On November 15, only hours after President Reagan signed a nearly \$1 billion aid package for Turkey, representatives of the Turkish ethnic minority on the strategic Mediterranean island of Cyprus announced the establishment of an independent state on the portion of the island they control.

The self-proclaimed "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" encompasses the northern third of the island. Since 1974 it has been occupied by the Turkish army, and about 25,000 Turkish troops remain on Cyprus to this day.

Turkish Cypriots comprise about 18 percent of the island's 650,000 inhabitants, while 77 percent are ethnic Greeks.

### **Imperialist bases**

The November 15 declaration of independence is the latest reflection of a three-decade-long policy of "divide and rule" fostered by London and Washington in hopes of turning Cyprus into a NATO bastion only 60 miles from the coast of Syria.

A high Greek official told *Le Monde's* correspondent Eric Rouleau that "the Turks would have never dared to recognize the independent pseudo-state on Cyprus if they had not first gotten the agreement of the Reagan administration. America, we know, has never been favorable to the reestablishment of the unity and independence of Cyprus, because Cyprus is resolved to remain in the camp of the nonaligned countries" (November 17).

Cyprus' strategic role in the eastern Mediterranean has been highlighted by the events in Lebanon since the June 1982 Israeli invasion.

British, French, and Italian troops in Lebanon are being supplied by way of two giant British military bases on Cyprus. The British have also allowed Italian fighter planes to use the Cyprus bases to provide air support for Italian troops in Lebanon.

In addition, since August 1982, the Pentagon has been using the civilian airport at Larnaca to supply U.S. Marines in Lebanon, despite the strong opposition of the Cypriot population. As many as seven to eight U.S. planes per day have been landing in Cyprus on their way to Beirut. Casualties from the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut were also evacuated to Cyprus.

About 10,000 British troops and dependents are permanently stationed at the two Cyprus bases to defend British imperialist interests in the Middle East.

In 1956, for example, the British and French invasion of Egypt, mounted to retake the Suez Canal after its nationalization by President

Gamal Abdul Nasser, was launched from the British bases in Cyprus.

British troops based on Cyprus were also dispatched to Jordan in 1958 and to Kuwait in 1961 to prop up the pro-British monarchies there.

### **Divide and rule**

Since the days of British colonial rule over Cyprus, London has pitted the island's Turkish minority against the Greek majority. London's aim was to thwart the independence struggle, which was largely based in the Greek community. When that became impossible, it used communal frictions to prevent the development of a strong Cypriot state reflecting the anticolonial sentiments of the island's majority.

Turks have lived on Cyprus since the Turkish Ottoman Empire conquered the island in 1571. During the three centuries of Turkish rule, Turkish and Greek Cypriots joined together on several occasions in revolts against the policies of the Turkish sultans.

Turkish rule ended in 1878, when the decaying Ottoman Empire handed the island over to the British, who wanted Cyprus as a base from which to protect British imperial interests in the Middle East and British control over the Suez Canal and the shipping routes to their empire in India.

In 1955, guerrillas of the National Organization of Cypriot Struggle (EOKA), based in the Greek community, began an armed struggle against British rule. The British in turn played their Turkish card, hoping that by pitting Turkish Cypriots against Greek Cypriots they could maintain colonial rule.

When the struggle against British rule in Cyprus began to get backing from Greece in international forums, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden invited the Turkish government to become involved in Cypriot affairs as a counterbalance.

With the encouragement of the British and Turkish governments, leaders of the Turkish ethnic community on Cyprus began calling for the island's partition in the event British rule ended.

### **Massive population transfers**

The British were forced to grant Cyprus its independence in 1960. Partition, however, was not a viable alternative at that time, because the small Turkish minority was widely scattered throughout the island.

Only in the wake of the 1974 Turkish invasion did partition become a real possibility. When Turkish troops occupied more than one-third of Cyprus, a massive population transfer

took place. Some 200,000 Greek Cypriots fled or were driven from their homes in the area seized by the Turkish army and 65,000 Turkish Cypriots left the predominantly Greek areas.

Before the British yielded control of Cyprus in 1960, they forced the new republic to give Britain absolute sovereignty over two military bases covering an area of 99 square miles.

Under the treaty of independence, Britain, Greece, and Turkey were all given rights to intervene on the island as guarantors of that treaty. In addition to the British forces, 950 Greek and 650 Turkish troops were to be permanently stationed on Cyprus.

The treaty of independence also gave the Turkish Cypriot community privileges and benefits it had never had in the past, even during the centuries of Turkish rule. The effect of these privileges was to poison relations between the two communities on the island, thereby giving the three outside powers ready excuses to continually intervene.

The British also foisted a constitution on Cyprus that made the island virtually ungovernable. Containing 199 articles and hundreds of paragraphs, the constitution regulated life down to the smallest details and cut across the right of the majority of Cypriots to manage their affairs as they chose.

### **Turkish veto**

Under the British-imposed constitution, all government posts were divided along ethnic lines, and the Turkish Cypriot community was given an absolute veto over all measures related to defense, internal security, and foreign affairs.

The post of president was reserved for a Greek Cypriot, while the vice president had to be a Turk. The council of ministers had to be composed of seven Greeks and three Turks, and the legislature was fixed at 35 Greeks and 15 Turks.

Municipalities had to maintain parallel Greek and Turkish structures to provide water, power, and health services to the same area.

The army had to be composed of 60 percent Greek and 40 percent Turkish personnel, while the police were constitutionally divided on a 70 percent to 30 percent ratio.

The British insistence that the Turkish minority of 18 percent have veto power over all foreign policy, defense, and internal security decisions, as well as disproportionate representation on all levels of government, was aimed at preventing the newly independent Cyprus from carrying out the foreign policy it favored, which included the elimination of British military bases.



The continued existence of those bases more than two decades later and the November 15 Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence both highlight how successfully the British-imposed constitution served its purpose, making it impossible for the majority to govern as it chose and exacerbating frictions between the Greek and Turkish communities.

Shortly after independence, Cypriot leaders began trying to remedy the situation. In November 1963, Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios, who had been the central leader of the struggle against British colonialism, proposed to the Turkish community a 13-point plan to "democratize" the constitution so that the majority could carry out the normal prerogatives of government while still providing guarantees for the Turkish minority.

The Cypriot vice president, Dr. Fazil Kutchuk, did not even reply to the memorandum, while the Turkish government in Ankara, in its capacity as a "guarantor" of the treaty of independence, vetoed the plan.

#### 'Tripartite colonialism'

Makarios pointed out that a state could hardly be considered independent if it could

Turkish state in northern Cyprus. In addition to being the most fertile part of the island and the richest in mineral resources, it is only 40 miles from the coast of Turkey. The fact that northern Cyprus was then overwhelmingly Greek and the Turkish population was concentrated in the south made little difference to the pro-Ankara forces.

As a result of the 1963 communal friction and the subsequent regrouping of much of the Turkish population into enclaves that were closed to Greek Cypriot authorities, the elaborate constitutional provisions for joint Greek-Turkish control broke down, and each community handled its own affairs.

The fighting, however, led to the introduction of yet another outside force. A United Nations force has been on Cyprus ever since March 1964.

In addition, thousands of regular Greek and Turkish troops were smuggled onto the island. By 1967 it was estimated that in addition to the 950 Greek and 650 Turkish troops in Cyprus under the terms of the treaty of independence, nearly 10,000 more were there as "illegals."

Another outbreak of intercommunal violence, in which two dozen people lost their

but to the U.S. administration, and to the Turkish government as well. All three accused Makarios of being soft on Communism and feared the possibility of "another Cuba" in the Mediterranean.

In 1970, with the blessings of the Athens military government, right-wing Cypriots began a campaign to oust Makarios and establish unity with Greece. In August 1971, Gen. George Grivas, a Cyprus-born officer in the Greek army, returned to Cyprus clandestinely to lead a guerrilla struggle against Makarios. Grivas had been the military commander of the 1955-59 campaign against British rule.

When Grivas died of a heart attack in 1974, the Greek military regime decided to take direct control of the guerrilla movement and shift its focus. The *New York Times* reported on March 3, 1974, that the junta's "object was to use [the guerrillas] more effectively against the island's militant leftists and Communists for the time being, rather than to back up the demand for union with Greece."

In July 1974 the Greek military regime, under severe pressure at home, tried to divert attention from its unpopular policies by sponsoring a coup to overthrow Makarios and absorb Cyprus into Greece.

#### Turkish invasion

The coup succeeded in its first goal — Makarios was ousted. But this led to the Turkish military invasion of Cyprus a week later and to the ongoing partition of the island. As a result of this fiasco, the military junta in Athens collapsed just eight days after giving the go-ahead for the Cyprus coup.

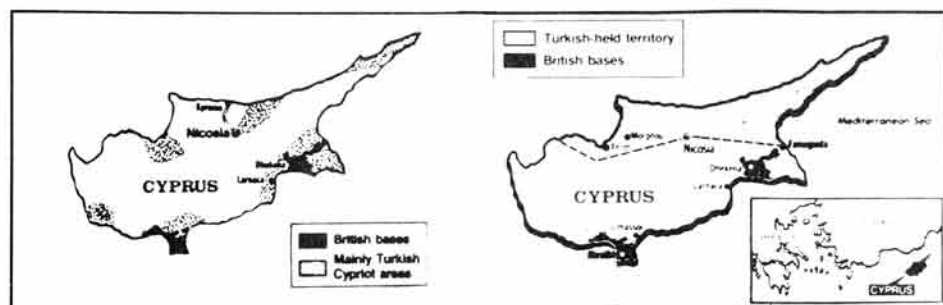
Washington looked with favor upon both the coup against Makarios and the Turkish invasion. An editorial in the July 22, 1974, *Christian Science Monitor* noted that "there has been no love for Archbishop Makarios in Washington; and the U.S., wanting above all to maintain peace and stability in the region, displayed no forceful concern about his removal."

*New York Times* columnist James Reston wrote on July 17, 1974: "No doubt the planners at the Pentagon would like to see Greece and Turkey control the island, settle their intercommunal differences on Cyprus and permit it to be used as a NATO base. . . ."

Turkish control over northern Cyprus was, in fact, consolidated. But the goal of eliminating Makarios and integrating southern Cyprus into Greece was not achieved. In the wake of the Turkish invasion and the collapse of the Greek military regime, Makarios was able to return to power in December 1974 and served as president until his death in 1977.

Ever since the 1974 invasion, Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denkash has worked ceaselessly to lay the groundwork for last month's declaration of independence. That proclamation is simply a cover for the actual integration of northern Cyprus into Turkey.

Last year Ankara subsidized half the Turkish enclave's \$120 million budget and provided millions more in development aid. Turk-



Map on left shows distribution of Turkish Cypriot population prior to invasion by Turkish army in 1974. Present division of island is shown on right.

not even amend its own constitution without outside interference. He blasted what he described as the "tripartite colonialism" that was fostering a partition of the country.

British and U.S. diplomats warned Makarios that unless he backed down from his plan to amend the constitution and showed signs of political "realism," a Turkish invasion would be likely.

In this tense context, intercommunal violence broke out in December 1963. Using these clashes as a pretext, Ankara-backed figures in the Turkish community began pushing for a partition of the island and a physical separation of the two populations. Turks were urged to leave predominately Greek areas, and those who would not were branded traitors. Several Turkish members of the Communist Party and left-wing unions were murdered for voicing opposition to partition.

The campaign had its effect. More than 20,000 Turks moved out of mixed Greek-Turkish areas and into scattered Turkish enclaves.

In the wake of the December 1963 fighting, leaders of the Turkish community began openly talking about creating an autonomous

lives, took place in November 1967. At the height of the tensions, Turkey and Greece placed their armed forces on a war footing, and a Turkish invasion fleet was readied as the Ankara government threatened to end the Cyprus problem once and for all.

#### Greek-sponsored coup

While the Turkish government was threatening invasion, the Greek military regime that had seized power in Athens in April 1967 began its own campaign to get rid of President Makarios. The Greek junta wanted to oust Makarios because of his opposition to the military regime in Athens and his alliance with the powerful Cyprus Communist Party (AKEL — Reconstruction Party of the Working People of Cyprus).

AKEL was, and remains, by far the strongest party in Cyprus. In the 1968 elections it polled 40 percent of the vote, and in 1970 it won all nine parliamentary seats it contested. AKEL deliberately declined to run for more seats in order to avoid winning a majority, which it could have done.

The Makarios coalition government was anathema not only to the Greek military junta,

ish currency has been the currency of the enclave since the 1974 invasion, and the land grab and expulsion of Greek Cypriots has been guaranteed by the continued presence of 25,000 Turkish troops.

In announcing the declaration of independence, Denktash cynically claimed that the move "will not hinder, but facilitate the establishment of a genuine federation" between the two communities on Cyprus.

But back in February Cypriot President Spyros Kyprianou had proposed new talks between the two communities. At that time Kyprianou stated that the Greek Cypriots were willing to make big concessions to their Turk-

ish counterparts by accepting the principle of a "bi-regional federation," which he added would have been "unthinkable in the past."

But the Cypriot leader, who heads a coalition that includes AKEL, also warned that "any kind of partition for Cyprus will mean catastrophe. Cyprus would not survive."

Greek Cypriots reacted angrily to the Turkish declaration of independence. On November 17, public services and trade in the Greek Cypriot areas were paralyzed as unions, shopkeepers, and civil servants protested the Turkish declaration of independence.

Three days later, more than 100,000 people

— one-fifth of the total Greek Cypriot population — gathered in the main square of Nicosia, the capital, to condemn the Turkish move.

The United Nations Security Council voted November 18 by a margin of 13 to 1 to brand the declaration of independence "legally invalid." That phrase had been added to a weak British draft resolution after many hours of bargaining. The British delegation refused, however, to include any reference to the Turkish occupation troops on Cyprus.

By contrast, the Nonaligned Movement has regularly called for a complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Cyprus and an end to all forms of interference in its internal affairs. □

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## Angola

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# South Africa's devastating war

*Stepped-up attacks mark 'new and dangerous situation'*

**By Ernest Harsch**

Since mid-1983, the white-minority regime of South Africa has escalated its military attacks against Angola, striking deep into the heart of the country. It has done so with the full blessing of the Reagan administration in Washington.

Angola now faces "a new and dangerous situation," Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos acknowledged in an interview in August. "South Africa's objective is to overthrow the legitimate government of Angola," he said.

Using its own troops and puppet forces of the so-called National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the apartheid regime in Pretoria has succeeded in spreading terror and destruction throughout much of southern Angola and even into parts of the central highlands.

Roads, factories, and bridges have been bombed. Food has been stolen or destroyed. Schools and peasants' huts have been burned to the ground. Villagers have been massacred. In August, the entire town of Cangamba was bombed into rubble by South African jets.

### Occupation and devastation

Since Angola won its independence from Portugal in 1975, it has been the victim of an unremitting series of invasions and attacks conducted by South African troops operating out of bases in South African-occupied Namibia.

Those attacks tapered off for a while following the defeat of Pretoria's massive 1975-76 invasion, in which Cuban troops came to the assistance of Angola's ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) to drive out the invaders. But the remnants of UNITA, which had opposed the MPLA, were reorganized under direct South African tutelage, and the attacks soon resumed.

In 1981, confronted with the failure of UNITA to make any significant headway in its war against the Angolan government, South African troops again invaded on a massive scale. Through air, artillery, and ground attacks, they devastated wide areas of southern Angola, especially in those regions closest to the Namibian border. Thousands of Angolans were killed.

Pretoria's aim was two-fold: to weaken and eventually bring down the Angolan government, which has given assistance to Namibian and South African freedom fighters; and to strike a blow directly at the Namibian independence struggle (many Namibian refugees were housed in camps in southern Angola at the time).

The Angolan troops were able to keep the South Africans from driving further north, but they could not push them out of the country entirely. Much of southern Angola is sparsely populated and difficult to defend. As a result, at least eight battalions of South African troops — about 5,000 men — continue to occupy parts of Cunene Province, including the towns of Ngiva and Xangongo.

This prolonged South African occupation has enabled Pretoria to step up the organization and infiltration of UNITA bands into other parts of the country. UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi openly admits that his forces are supplied from bases in Namibia and that UNITA and Pretoria maintain relations of "mutual respect."

According to a report in the July 30 London *Economist*, some UNITA units now have Portuguese commanders as well.

During the 1975-76 civil war, UNITA had a base of support among the Ovimbundu people of Angola's central highlands. But because of its open alliance with the South African racists, it has since lost much of that sup-

port, and the Angolan government has made gains in extending its authority to areas formerly dominated by UNITA. As a result, Savimbi's troops have turned increasingly toward direct terror against Angolan civilians, including Ovimbundus.

The economic and human toll of this combined South African-UNITA onslaught has been enormous.

According to a May 1983 United Nations report, South African aggression had taken 10,000 lives up to 1982. Economic damage to Angola — the destruction of roads, railways, bridges, factories, and refineries — has been estimated at \$10 billion since Angola won its independence (the equivalent of three years of Angola's gross national product).

Recently, UNITA attacks against roads, transport, and agricultural communes in the central highlands, where much of Angola's food is grown, have disrupted food supplies and led to shortages of some basic items in the urban centers.

According to the Angolan authorities, some 160,000 Angolans have been driven from their homes by the fighting.

### Reagan gives go-ahead

These stepped-up South African attacks come at a time when Washington has been forging closer ties with the apartheid regime, under the guise of Reagan's policy of "constructive engagement."

This has encouraged the racists in Pretoria to strike out at neighboring Black-ruled states that have given sanctuary to South African and Namibian refugees or freedom fighters. Angola has not been alone. Mozambique, Lesotho, and other countries have been the targets of South African aggression as well (with Mozambique, after Angola, suffering the most sustained attacks).



Whenever resolutions have come before the UN Security Council to impose sanctions against South Africa for such aggression, Washington has vetoed them.

At the same time, the Reagan administration has sought to provide some political cover for the South African attacks against Angola and Pretoria's continued illegal occupation of Namibia. It has done so through its "linkage" proposal, that is, tying the call for a withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola to new negotiations over independence for Namibia. Through this cynical ploy, Washington hopes to shift the blame for the conflict in the region to the Angolans and Cubans themselves.

The U.S. imperialists' intervention against Angola is also more direct. According to a report in the October 10 *Newsweek*, the CIA is now providing "training, arms and financial assistance" to unnamed military forces in Angola (presumably UNITA, which received such CIA backing during the 1975-76 war). This is despite a U.S. law prohibiting such assistance. The CIA, of course, denied the report.

The Zionist regime of Israel may also be getting into the act. Some 60 tons of Israeli arms were delivered to Zaïre in May. The U.S.-backed dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko has been a key supporter of the antigovernment forces in Angola for years, and it is known that the Israeli arms were not destined for the Zaïrian army.

#### Massacres, bombings, kidnappings

Buoyed by such increased imperialist backing, Savimbi's UNITA bands shifted their military operations to a higher gear. Sometimes they attacked on their own (though with South African logistical and reconnaissance support), but often they fought in direct collaboration with South African troops.

Among numerous attacks over the past 10 months, these terrorist actions have included:

- A March assault on a hydroelectric and paper mill complex in central Angola. Dozens of Angolan militia members were killed, and the paper mill, the largest in southern Africa, was destroyed. Sixty-six Czechoslovak technicians and their relatives were kidnapped and forced to march 620 miles to a UNITA base camp.
- A June raid on the M'Have agricultural commune, northeast of Huambo, in which several villagers were killed and others kidnapped. The UNITA terrorists looted and burned houses, and set fire to a large quantity of corn.
- A series of attacks against the town of Hungo in June, in which a number of residents were killed, a large amount of property was stolen, and some 4,000 houses were burned down.
- The periodic mining of the strategic Benguela railway, which runs through the heart of the country. In late July, a train hit a mine in Moxico Province, killing 50 persons and injuring 210.
- A massive frontal assault on Cangamba, a



Members of People's Defense Organization (ODP), which has played a key role in combatting South African-backed terrorists.

key crossroads town in Moxico Province, nearly 300 miles from the Namibia border. After Angolan troops beat off an attack by UNITA forces in early August, killing hundreds of the attackers, South African warplanes moved in to bomb the town with napalm and phosphorous bombs. Overwhelmed by superior firepower, the Angolan troops withdrew and evacuated Cangamba's residents. South African paratroopers were then parachuted in to help UNITA occupy what was left of the town.

UNITA claimed the battle as a big "victory," though it had lost many troops and had been unable to take the town on its own.

- A raid by 800 UNITA troops against Bocoio, in Benguela Province, in early September, in which villagers were killed and food supplies burned. According to the official Angolan news agency, the UNITA forces were supported by 30 white mercenaries, who spoke Portuguese, French, and English.

#### Angolans, Cubans stand firm

The thousands of Cuban troops who came to Angola in 1975 to help repulse the South African invasion remain there today, at the request of the Angolan government.

They help train and advise the Angolan army, and operate some of the equipment for which there are not yet enough trained Angolans. These military personnel are in addition to several thousand Cuban doctors, teachers, and economic advisers.

In general, the Angolan troops and militia members have borne the brunt of the actual fighting against the South Africans and the UNITA bands. But the continued presence of Cuban troops in such towns as Luena and Menongue serves as a deterrent to Pretoria: the

apartheid authorities know that if they strike too far north, the Cubans are prepared to fight them directly, as they did in 1975-76.

According to an unnamed U.S. State Department official cited in the October 7 *New York Times*, the number of Cuban troops in Angola has increased by several thousand in recent months in response to the stepped-up attacks.

The Angolan government and MPLA leadership have for several years been taking steps to organize and mobilize the armed forces — and the population as a whole — to confront the threat from South Africa.

This has included a strengthening of the local militia, known as the People's Defense Organization (ODP), which now has 1 million members. The ODP is composed overwhelmingly of workers and peasants who fulfill part-time military duties and help guard factories and farms.

Because the regular army (which numbers 35,000 troops) cannot be present in every village, town, and rural community, the ODP plays a crucial role in confronting the UNITA bands. It also participates in joint actions with the army, conducting coordinated sweeps of areas where UNITA has been active and putting up resistance to the frequent South African attacks.

The popular sentiment against imperialist aggression has also been expressed in numerous and large demonstrations in Luanda and other cities. One of the most recent took place on October 1 in Luanda, where tens of thousands condemned the "criminal actions" of UNITA and South African troops.

On July 30, a new law was adopted establishing regional military councils that have wide powers to organize economic life and mobilize economic and military resources in areas most affected by the war. The councils also have jurisdiction to try people accused of "economic sabotage" and "speculation." This is part of a broader effort by the government to combat the corruption and profiteering that has been aggravated by the war situation and the impact on Angola of the world capitalist economic recession.

The text of the law stressed that "imperialism does not want to recognize that it has been defeated in Angola. Daily, it is mounting acts of aggression, vandalism, and banditry against our nation and our defenseless people, sowing death, destruction, and grief by shamelessly using South African troops, mercenaries and other bands of murderers and puppets."

Referring to the social and political gains that have been made since independence in 1975, the law went on, "The revolution must be defended, and our people, today as yesterday, must show they are worthy inheritors and perpetuators of the traditions of struggle which made the achievement of national independence possible." □



# Terror in the Bantustans

## *Black quislings carry out Pretoria's dirty work*

By Ernest Harsch

Scores of protesting workers and students have been murdered by police and hired thugs in various parts of South Africa in recent months, marking one of the most sustained and brutal crackdowns on popular unrest since the crushing of the 1976 youth rebellions.

This new wave of repression comes at a time of growing militancy among the oppressed Black majority, including frequent labor strikes, community mobilizations against the rising cost of living, and organized protests against the regime's racist apartheid policies.

Most of the killings have taken place in the Bantustans (see box) and have been carried out by Black policemen under the direction of Black Bantustan officials. But the reign of terror in the Bantustans has been initiated with the approval — and encouragement — of the white minority regime in Pretoria, to which the Bantustan administrations are subservient.

### **Workers' defiance in Mdantsane**

The most blood has been spilled in the Ciskei, one of two Bantustans designated for Xhosa-speaking Africans. Since the beginning of a bus boycott in the township of Mdantsane in July, up to 90 people have been killed by police and progovernment vigilantes, according to estimates by Mdantsane residents.

The Ciskei was declared "independent" in 1981, although surveys found that an overwhelming majority of those assigned to the Ciskei opposed such a move. Unemployment in the Ciskei is 40 percent, and during the first year of "independence," 70 percent of its budget was provided directly by Pretoria.

The Ciskei has been saddled with an especially corrupt and repressive administration. Lennox Sebe, who was appointed a chief by the apartheid authorities and who then proclaimed himself "president-for-life" of the Ciskei, has utilized his position to amass a modest fortune.

Sebe has also faithfully implemented Pretoria's antilabor policies, directing much of his fire at the large Black work force that lives in the townships of Mdantsane and Zwelitsha, on the outskirts of East London, one of South Africa's key industrial cities. Hundreds of trade unionists have been detained in recent years, particularly members of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU), the most militant and influential independent Black union in the area.

When the Ciskei Transport Corporation announced an increase in bus fares in July, the people of Mdantsane fought back. A mass bus boycott was called on July 18 to force the fares back down, and a Committee of Ten was

elected to coordinate it. The SAAWU, which has a strong base among the Mdantsane workers, supported the boycott call.

### **Torture and death**

The Sebe administration had already been thrown off balance a few weeks earlier by internal divisions (Charles Sebe, the president's brother and the head of the Ciskei Intelligence Service, was arrested amid rumors that he had been plotting a coup). In response to the popular challenge posed by the bus boycott, the authorities launched a vicious — and desperate — crackdown.

Police set up roadblocks and arrested or beat up drivers who gave bus boycotters lifts in their cars. Eight of the 10 members of the coordinating committee were detained, as were the entire local leadership of SAAWU, members of the Transport and Allied Workers Union who were attempting to organize the bus drivers, and members of the militant Congress of South African Students.

On August 3, Sebe declared a state of emergency. The next day, police opened fire on commuters to prevent them from boarding trains. At least five people were killed in that incident alone. Others were shot or beaten to death in subsequent days and weeks.

A curfew was imposed, timed to catch boycotters on their way to and from work. Hundreds were arrested for breaking the curfew, and mass trials were held, although most were acquitted because of flimsy evidence.

The police themselves were unable to contain the unrest, so Sebe's Ciskei National Independence Party organized squads of thugs to attack boycotting workers.

Many of those who were picked up by the police and vigilantes were taken to the Sisa Dukashe sports stadium in Mdantsane. In the changing rooms, which the prisoners dubbed the "gas chambers," the police carried out their beatings and torture.

A report released in October by Nichols Haysom, a lawyer at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, provided testimony from some of those who were taken to the stadium.

One young woman said she and her brother were detained after police could not find her sister, who was accused of being a "spy" for the SAAWU. Her brother was whipped with sjamboks, short, ox-hide whips.

Another person testified, "Vigilantes took me to the stadium, where I was assaulted. I was suspended while handcuffed, and whipped on my body and feet with sjamboks and sticks for several hours. . . . During my time there,

other persons were assaulted by the vigilantes. . . . At one stage two vigilantes came into the room and took out a young woman. They raped her in the adjoining changeroom."

According to Haysom, yet another former prisoner explained that he had been "taken to the stadium, handcuffed hands-to-his-feet, and made to swing for two hours from a rod suspended between two tables. This is commonly referred to by Ciskei security police as the 'boeing' or 'helicopter.'"

### **Protest widens**

Despite the repression, the boycotters stood firm — and won even greater support and solidarity.

High school students walked out of their classes in support of the bus boycotters, and by the end of August the student protests had spread to 10 schools in Mdantsane and to nearby Duncan Village. A thousand Mdantsane residents turned out for a Women's Day rally on August 9 and pledged to continue the boycott.

In face of this determination, the transport company announced a reduction of the fare increase by one-half. But the boycott continued in protest against the continuing police and vigilante terror.

Because of the revelations of the Haysom report, the Ciskeian authorities were forced to close down the Dukashe stadium. But they continued picking up protesters, and took them instead to an old school for beatings and torture.

According to an October 6 statement by the Detainees' Parents Support Committee, "we have received new information that conditions in the Ciskei are worsening and the vigilantes are now turning their violent attention to schoolchildren boycotting classes in support of their parents. Last weekend, supporters of the ruling Ciskei National Independent Party gave parents an ultimatum to send their children back to school from Monday. The boycott continued. Vigilantes rounded up children — many in their early teens — and severely assaulted them."

The Sebe administration further escalated the stakes in the confrontation by banning the South African Allied Workers Union in the Ciskei. Following the announcement of the ban in early September, 11 predominantly Black trade unions and union federations throughout South Africa — representing 250,000 workers — pledged their support for the SAAWU and the bus boycotters.

A statement issued by the Council of Unions of South Africa, one of the main Black union federations, declared, "An attack of this nature constitutes an attack on the trade union movement as a whole. The Ciskei government is continuing relentlessly with its inhuman actions to stifle trade unionism. We deplore the security legislation in Ciskei. We will continue to resist and reject all attempts to stifle or destroy trade unionism in Ciskei."

Fighters of the African National Congress (ANC), the foremost South African liberation

movement, carried out bomb attacks against two Ciskei "consulates" (in Johannesburg and Pretoria) in solidarity with the struggle in the Ciskei.

The recently formed United Democratic Front (UDF) also pledged its support to the SAAWU and the bus boycotters. Established in August as a broad front of political, social, union, and cultural groups to fight the policies of the apartheid regime, the UDF now encompasses 530 organizations, with a combined membership of more than 2 million.

Speaking at a news conference convened by the UDF in Johannesburg in late October, SAAWU President Thozamile Gqweta laid responsibility for the violence in the Ciskei directly at Pretoria's feet, stressing that the Ciskeian administration was merely a "creature of the SA regime, a junior partner in the exploitation of the masses."

The policies followed by Lennox Sebe in the Ciskei are fundamentally the same as those pursued in all the Bantustans. Misery, political repression, and antiworker policies are the norm.

An editorial in the June 20 *Sowetan*, a mass circulation, Black-run newspaper in Johannesburg's sprawling Soweto township, declared, "There is poverty even in the verdant Venda and fear stalks the land as the leaders become more power drunk and more grasping. There is disease and starvation in the Ciskei, the Transkei and Venda and here are men getting such a lot of money for mismanaging the places. . . . The worst and the most bitter part for us is that some of that money comes from our pockets — we who are dead against these tin-pot kingdoms with their tin-pot dictatorships."

Even the most "enlightened" Bantustan fig-

ures, like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu, follow such a course.

Unlike Sebe and a number of other Bantustan leaders, Buthelezi has so far bowed to popular pressures and refused to go along with Pretoria's efforts to declare KwaZulu "independent." He has likewise won a degree of popularity by occasional demagogic denunciations of apartheid.

But Buthelezi's grip on KwaZulu is also based on political intimidation. He has consistently opposed the emergence of any political currents other than his own Inkatha YeNkululeko YeSizwe (National Cultural Liberation Movement), a Zulu-based formation that boasts several hundred thousand members.

### Murder in KwaZulu

This face of Buthelezi's policies was dramatically revealed in late October, when Inkatha thugs invaded the campus of the University of Zululand at Ngoye just before a scheduled address by Buthelezi. Wielding clubs, spears, and sticks, the goons stormed into the dormitories in the early hours of the morning, while most students were still asleep. Five were murdered, and more than 100 had to be taken to a hospital, 13 of them for intensive care.

The killings at the university sparked outrage and protest in many other parts of the country. Some 3,000 students held a protest demonstration at the University of the North and burned an effigy of Buthelezi. Black leaders throughout South Africa called a national day of mourning for the slain students on November 3.

Like the repression in the Ciskei, the crackdown in KwaZulu came in direct response to protests and defiance against the Bantustan authorities.

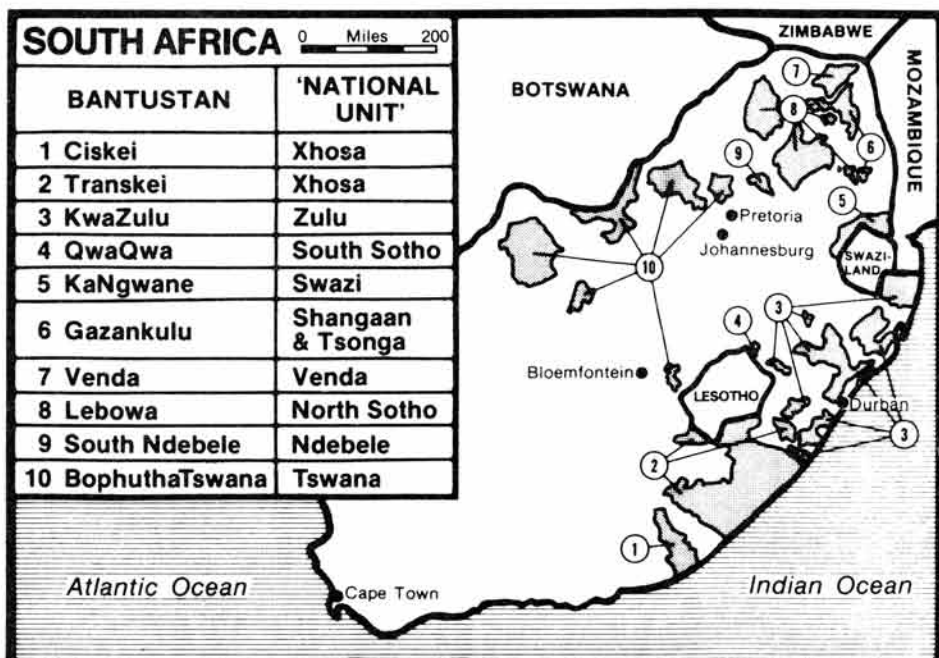
Students at the university who support the UDF — which is opposed to the entire Bantustan system — were particular targets of the attack.

Only weeks earlier, thousands of residents of Lamontville, a Black township outside Durban, demonstrated against plans to make it part of KwaZulu. "No to KwaZulu" and "Inkatha has nothing for Lamontville," declared the placards of young protesters.

Bus stops in Lamontville are prominently daubed with anti-Inkatha and pro-ANC slogans.

Similar attitudes are spreading among Zuluspeakers in general. Public opinion polls have found that the ANC, although outlawed for more than two decades, commands far more support among urban Zulus than does Buthelezi's Inkatha.

Thus, the repressive crackdowns in KwaZulu, the Ciskei, and other Bantustans are not reflections of strength, but of fear and desperation at the growth of the Black liberation struggle. That struggle is aimed at the very basis of white supremacist rule. And the Bantustan officials, functioning as policemen for apartheid, are directly in the line of fire. □



## Reservations of poverty

The Bantustans are artificial entities set up by the apartheid regime. They are impoverished and largely rural reservations in which much of South Africa's Black majority is forced to live, segregated from "white" South Africa and divided along language lines. Old people, children, the sick, and the unemployed are often deported to the Bantustans from other parts of the country. Many Black workers are also assigned to them and must commute to work in the "white" cities; some large urban townships for Blacks, located near major cities, are administratively part of one Bantustan or another.

In an attempt to justify its denial of political rights to Blacks in South Africa as a whole, the apartheid regime has for several

years followed a policy of declaring the Bantustans "independent countries." Those who are deemed "citizens" of these Bantustans are then officially designated as foreigners — in the country of their birth.

This "independence" is a total fiction and is opposed by the vast majority of Blacks in South Africa. The Bantustans, with almost no industry or exploitable natural resources, are economically dependent on the apartheid regime, which provides a large portion of their budgets.

This fiction, however, enables the racist regime to delegate some responsibilities to the Black Bantustan officials, who are in its pay. They function, in effect, as policemen for apartheid.



# Behind the revolution's overthrow

*Interview with New Jewel leader Don Rojas*

**By Steve Wattenmaker**

Don Rojas is one of the last leaders of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) still living to have spoken with Grenada's slain Prime Minister Maurice Bishop less than an hour before he was killed. Rojas was Bishop's press secretary, and prior to that editor of the island's main newspaper, the *Free West Indian*.

Rojas himself narrowly escaped death during the October 19 assassination of Bishop and other top leaders of the New Jewel Movement. Four days after the October 25 U.S. invasion of the island, Rojas and his family were rounded up by the occupation forces, interrogated, and then put on a U.S. Air Force plane bound for Barbados.

Allowed only a few days in Barbados, Rojas went on to Trinidad and then made his way to Canada. Speaking in Montreal at McGill University on December 1, Rojas recounted the events that led to the overthrow of Grenada's revolutionary workers and farmers government and described the subsequent criminal invasion by 6,000 U.S. marines and Army Rangers.

After the meeting I had an opportunity to ask Rojas to go into more detail on some of the points he made during his talk.

Rojas told the Montreal meeting that the assassinations of Bishop and the other leaders "provided a very convenient excuse for the United States to seize the opportunity that they had long been waiting for, that they had long been preparing for, to invade Grenada and destroy the Grenada revolution — to remove the 'virus,' as President Reagan described Grenada, to remove this massive 'virus' from the Caribbean once and for all.

"And it is perhaps one of the most bitter ironies of this whole crisis," Rojas continued, "that the opportunity was provided for them — served up on a platter with all the trimmings — by a group of immature, unscientific, and, in many respects, opportunistic elements within the New Jewel Movement who proclaimed themselves to be the most militant and anti-imperialist faction of all."

Rojas described the massive scale of the U.S. invasion — one heavily armed marine for every 18 Grenadian citizens — as being like "trying to crack a nut with a hammer." He also rebutted the Reagan administration's justifications for the invasion, exposing each one as a total fabrication.

Nor, said Rojas, was there any truth to the claims that the Soviet Union or Cuba was responsible for the conflicts within the New Jewel Movement leadership. He stated that there was "absolutely no involvement by these two countries or the parties of these countries



Flax Hermes/IP

Don Rojas speaking at conference in Grenada in April 1982

in the internal frictions of the New Jewel Movement."

"If there was any outside interference it would have come certainly, in my view, from the Central Intelligence Agency using an opportunity of friction inside the party to manipulate, to divide, and ultimately to destroy the party and the revolution. But history alone will provide those answers."

If Bishop and the other leaders had not been assassinated October 19, Rojas explained to the McGill audience, "the Americans would not have been able to invade and overcome Grenada in five or six days. Because they would have met with the resistance of a united people, a people determined to defend their sovereignty, their dignity, and their independence."

Instead, he noted, "what they met on Oc-

tober 25 was a traumatized people, a demoralized people.

"Nonetheless, the young soldiers of the People's Revolutionary Army — many of whom themselves were misled and manipulated by the opportunist elements posing as ultrarevolutionaries — fought courageously, were wounded, or lost their lives."

The U.S. military, diplomatic, and political presence will dominate Grenada "for quite some time to come," Rojas said. Right now, "the groundwork is being prepared for the return of Eric Matthew Gairy — the infamous pirate, the bloody dictator who ruled Grenada for 25 years."

Rojas commented during his Montreal talk that while he is not "simplistically optimistic" about what the future holds for Grenada and the New Jewel Movement, he does not believe



"the revolution had been destroyed — set back, seriously set back, yes.

"My optimism rests in the belief that the impact of four and a half years of this revolutionary experiment in a new form of socio-economic development for the Caribbean — an experiment that brought pride, a new sense of patriotism and dignity to the Grenadian people — the impact on the collective consciousness of the Grenadian people, in my view, is not going to be very easily wiped out.

In fact, he said, "there are already signs of growing discontent among the Grenadian people. They are now realizing, very painfully, that the so-called rescue mission turned out to be more than that. It turned out to be an occupation. It turned out to be a denial of Grenada's right to independence and self-determination."

Rojas concluded his talk by declaring that "in spite of all the pain," the invasion of Grenada is providing an impetus to the national liberation struggles around the world. "In that positive development I find hope, I find optimism. The struggle will continue, and I am convinced that victory is certain."

Later, I was able to ask Rojas a number of questions:

*Question. You said in a recent interview that the events that led to the overthrow of the People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada represented a fundamental error of judgment and personal ambition. Can you go into the political evolution that led to the events of October 19?*

*Answer.* I think that the roots of the crisis that overcame the party and the revolution can be traced as far back as July 1982. At that time, Bernard Coard resigned from the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement. While resigning his party positions, he retained his state posts of finance minister and deputy prime minister. He resigned, according to him, because he was not satisfied with the style of work and the priorities the Central Committee was addressing itself to. He was not more concrete than that.

Then he was requested by the Central Committee to come up with a concrete and adequate explanation for his resignation. Apparently, he refused to do that.

This led some people on the Central Committee at that time to take the position that Bernard Coard could not be allowed simply to refuse arrogantly to address or to elaborate on his resignation. Others on the Central Committee took a more soft-line approach on how to deal with Bernard's refusal to explain his position to the Central Committee.

You might say they even took a sentimental approach. It's ironic that these same elements accused people who were seen as supporting Maurice Bishop of taking a sentimental approach. Some of them even went so far as to say that Comrade Fidel took a sentimental approach in his response to the house arrest and murder of Maurice Bishop.

A number of those who took a more soft-line approach to Coard's resignation came out of the OREL, the Organization of Revolutionary Education and Liberation. They had in a sense been weaned by Bernard and saw him as a mentor of sorts.

OREL described itself as a revolutionary Marxist organization. I don't think they characterized themselves as a party as such.

When the New Jewel Movement was formed in 1973, OREL merged with MAP and JEWEL and became an integral part of the New Jewel Movement.<sup>1</sup> But they always maintained a kind of clique, an OREL clique, within the New Jewel Movement during the 1970s and even after the 1979 revolution.

Between October 1982 and September 1983, Bernard used the opportunity to consoli-

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### **The catalyst that triggered the crisis was a proposal for joint leadership of the party between Bernard and Maurice . . .**

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date his influence and his authority within the party and to advance the OREL people within the Central Committee to very influential positions. Three of them were elevated to the Political Bureau.

In retrospect I think that Bernard very cleverly used that period to use his prestige and influence within the party to develop and line up forces behind him.

He did this in a very systematic way. So when he decided to make his move for leadership of the party, he had already consolidated quite a power base within the Central Committee and within the full membership of the party.

Although this problem had its roots as far back as July 1982, the catalyst that triggered this crisis was a proposal presented by the OREL people in the party for joint leadership of the party between Bernard and Maurice. This was proposed at a special meeting of the Central Committee in mid-September 1983.

There was absolutely no indication prior to this meeting that this proposal was in the works. None at all. Certainly the rank-and-file party membership did not know about it, nor did Maurice himself. There had not been the slightest hint that this proposal would be made.

And looking at it in retrospect, it had to do with the kind of game plan that had been worked out by Bernard and his people. When Liam James introduced the resolution, it came as a complete surprise. The resolution called for Bernard to be invited to return to the Central Committee and the Political Bureau and to be part of the joint leadership.

1. The Movement for Assemblies of the People (MAP) and the Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education, and Liberation (JEWEL), two organizations formed in Grenada in 1972, participated in the founding conference of the NJM in March 1973.

At the Central Committee meeting of September 16 when the sudden proposal for joint leadership of the party was introduced by Liam James and supported by other of Coard's people on the CC, it was stated by them that the "crisis" within the revolution was caused primarily by Maurice's so-called weak leadership of the Central Committee. It is noteworthy that [Foreign Minister Unison] Whiteman and [Agriculture Minister George] Louison argued that collective leadership implied collective responsibility and that the blame should be shared by all and not be heaped on Maurice alone or on any other single comrade.

Furthermore, they correctly pointed out, along with Maurice, that an analysis of the problems in the revolution, in the party, and in the country in general must also take into account objective material conditions and the state of relations between the party and the masses. How much the problems in the material sphere had to do with weak management and planning of the economy, low levels of productivity and inefficiencies within the state sector, difficulties with the capital projects, etc. — aspects of the process that Coard was directly responsible for — was conveniently overlooked.

Then, after Maurice was put under house arrest, less than four weeks after the Central Committee meeting, they accused him of "one-manism" and "personality cultism," a charge diametrically opposed to the earlier one of vacillation, indecision, and weak leadership. This inconsistency can only be interpreted as opportunism.

This joint leadership proposal, as originally presented in the Central Committee, would not have worked. Maurice saw that very clearly. His position to the Central Committee and to the party was that he did not have any problems with the proposal in principle — that if it

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### **The joint leadership proposal was impractical because the Grenadian people would not have accepted it . . .**

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was a majority decision of the party, he would abide by the principle of democratic centralism and majority vote on this issue.

But he would have liked more discussion of the practical application of this joint leadership proposal. He had difficulty understanding exactly how it was going to work, as did many members of the party. It certainly had no precedent in Grenada in our party or, as far as we knew, in any left party we had relations with.

And he felt, quite frankly, that the way it had been proposed would have effectively removed him from influence in the top decision-making organs of the party.

In my view, if the proposal had been implemented as originally outlined, it would not have meant sharing power or equal distribution of power between the two. It would, in fact,

have meant that Bernard would have become the de facto leader of the party.

Under their second proposal, Maurice would remain as prime minister and Bernard would become leader of the party. But in our context the party is the instrumentality that leads public policy. The party is the force that charts the direction for the revolution. If the proposal had been put into effect, the real power in the country would be transferred from Bishop to Coard.

The office of prime minister would have assumed the kind of symbolic and ceremonial character that the office of governor-general [Paul Scoon] had on Grenada until the Americans appointed him the new petty dictator.

The joint leadership proposal was also impractical because the Grenadian people would not have accepted it, due to Bernard Coard's lack of popularity among the Grenadian masses. A lot of the image that the masses of workers and farmers had of Coard was in fact distorted, but some was also accurate; and Coard's image was a reality you had to deal with. It was something that could not have been changed very easily or quickly.

Bernard had an image as a very bright man, ruthless and not particularly compassionate, and not really the kind of political leader who had struggled for the masses and made sacrifices for them the way Bishop and Unison Whiteman and the rest had. In 1973, for example, Bishop and the others were brutally beaten by Gairy's Mongoose Gang, almost to the point of death. During the 1970s there were numerous acts of violence and harassment against them. Bernard was teaching at the University of the West Indies off the island and thus was not subjected to that, was not a victim of Gairy's terrorism in the way that Maurice and the others were.

During this period many Coard supporters in the party said that this new proposal would be

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## **There was no fundamental ideological difference between Bernard Coard and Maurice Bishop . . .**

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strictly an internal party matter, that it would not necessarily be carried out to the streets.

Now, in my view, an issue as fundamental as who was to lead the New Jewel Movement could not conceivably be kept a strictly internal party matter. That would be a naive deception, and the Grenadian people would not have accepted such a proposal under any circumstances.

After that Central Committee meeting, in late September, Maurice, George Louison, Unison, and the other comrades on the official delegation left for the trip to Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Until Maurice returned from this trip I don't think he perceived the extent of the plot that was being prepared by people very close to him.

When we got back, indications were clear

that the situation had deteriorated considerably and was perhaps out of Maurice's control by that point.

In Maurice's absence, Bernard Coard had been acting prime minister. He was running the state, running the country, running the party. When Maurice returned to Grenada, contrary to tradition, members of the Central Committee failed to show up at the airport to



"Bernard Coard very cleverly used his prestige and influence within the party to line up forces behind him."

welcome him back. On this occasion Maurice was met only by [Minister of National Mobilization] Selwyn Strachan.

We arrived back on a Saturday. Yet all day Sunday and all day Monday none of these comrades came to brief Maurice. Bernard Coard, as acting prime minister, had a responsibility to give Maurice a report on what had taken place during his absence. Liam James, as head of security, also had a responsibility to report in. But none of these people checked with Maurice.

*Q. Could you comment on reports that what lay behind the differences in the Central Committee were deep ideological differences between Bernard Coard and Prime Minister Bishop?*

*A. I will try to clear the air on this question of ideological differences between Coard and Bishop and between those who supported Coard or were loyal to Coard and those who supported Bishop or were loyal to Bishop.*

I am dismayed that there has been so much filth, so much simplistic interpretation on this question, mostly in the bourgeois press. It is not surprising that they would try to paint Maurice Bishop as the "moderate" and Bernard Coard as a so-called hard-line Marxist, pro-Soviet, and so forth.

This is clearly an attempt to use the overthrow of the Grenada revolution and the death of Maurice Bishop to taint the image of

socialism, the image of revolutionary movements around the world.

These same elements who were describing Maurice as a moderate were a few months ago describing him as a dangerous Marxist, a totalitarian, a dictator. There's a lot of hypocrisy in that.

In my view, there was no fundamental ideological difference between Bernard Coard and Maurice Bishop. No fundamental difference on ideological principles, no difference whatsoever on the ultimate objectives of the revolutionary process — that is, to create a socialist state in Grenada.

There were, probably, some nuances or minor differences on approach and questions of methodology or tactics and maybe on leadership style. But there were no differences on fundamental issues.

In my view, the contradictions that existed within the party at the time were secondary contradictions, which could have been settled peacefully.

But somehow, in all of the obfuscation that took place, they became elevated to the point that the focus on the primary contradiction — which is the contradiction between the revolution and imperialism itself — was lost. And because the focus was lost, the dangerous consequences to the revolution itself of the approach that Bernard and his people were taking were either overlooked, ignored, or misunderstood. I'm not sure which of the three is the most accurate.

Bernard and his people said they were calling for a more Leninist orientation for the party. But there was no attempt to arrive at a consensus as to exactly what this meant. What did putting the party on a more Leninist footing mean in reality?

Maurice and the rest of the comrades had absolutely no difficulty in accepting the concept if it meant a more disciplined and a more organized approach to party work; to the norms of party life; to study; to the application of the fundamental principles on which the party was built; to an understanding of democratic centralism; to an adherence to the principle of criticism and self-criticism.

If that is what it meant, then I don't think it would have met with any resistance, certainly not from the rank-and-file party membership.

But I think Lenin was being used as a cover.

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## **The call for a more Leninist orientation was misused to cover up a bid for power . . .**

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It appears that the call for a more Leninist orientation was misused to cover up what was in its essence a bid for power.

Bernard and his people also said they were dissatisfied with the pace at which the process was evolving. That again was a debatable question. I don't think they were taking a dialectical, scientific approach to how the pace





Wayne Carter

"Maurice Bishop was perhaps the most modest and least arrogant of all the top leaders."

of a revolutionary process is determined. It is not determined only by the subjective factor. It is determined by a balance between the subjective and the objective, determined by that dynamic that plays out over time.

In my view, the pace of the revolutionary process was the correct one. There were numerous considerations that needed to be part of a serious and mature analysis of the present stage of the revolution, the pace at which the revolution was evolving, and so on.

We had to consider the question in the context of a phased approach to the construction of socialism — particularly in a country like ours with its legacy of colonialism, neocolonialism, and Gairyism.

We had to take into account that we were surrounded by hostile, proimperialist forces. We had to consider the geopolitics of a region that U.S. imperialism considers its backyard.

I believe that the revolution was still in its national democratic, anti-imperialist stage, and was moving into a socialist-oriented stage of development. With the party controlling state power in the interests of the working people, the process of transforming the property relations and production relations from capitalist to socialist had begun.

This was a process that was going to be protracted — just like the struggle against imperialism itself, just like the struggle for national liberation, just like the anti-Gairy struggle was a protracted struggle. So, too, the

struggle to build socialism in Grenada would have to be a protracted struggle.

It would have to take into consideration such factors as the balance and correlation of forces within the region, the balance and correlation of forces in the world. The Grenada revolution

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### **We had a saying in the party that ultraleftism is the right hand of imperialism . . .**

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could not be developed in isolation from what was going on around us, from what was going on in the world.

But somehow the notion that this process was not going fast enough entered into the ideological discussion in the party and led to a kind of cleavage. Some people said we needed to push it forward more rapidly. Others argued for a more rational, scientific, and less idealistic assessment of this question.

It is ironic that up to about a year ago, Bernard himself used to caution against the dangers of ultraleftism. We had a saying in the party that ultraleftism is the right hand of imperialism. He also used to point out — quite correctly — that ultraleftism serves more to raise the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie than that of the working class.

In my opinion, ultraleftism also transfers the

initiative for advancing the class struggle away from the working class to the forces of reaction. It allows them an opportunity to become more overtly aggressive and place the working class on the defensive.

For example, in 1980 Coard correctly accused the Budhlall grouping of ultraleftism.<sup>2</sup> (Those Budhlalls, by the way, are now rabid anticommunists. The two brothers are now walking the streets of Grenada spouting anti-communist and antiprogressive tripe.)

Bernard also used to champion the necessity at this particular stage in the revolutionary process of forming tactical alliances between the working class and certain patriotic elements within the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie. This was necessary because the fundamental class character of our society is petty bourgeois. Even the class composition of the party itself was petty bourgeois basically — radical petty bourgeois people who had evolved beyond their own class and became proletarianized.

Bernard himself used to push the position of the necessity to build these tactical alliances. This was, in fact, one of the five priorities in the line of march of the party for this period.

Then a few months later, we hear Maurice Bishop accused of being petty bourgeois. We hear Unison Whiteman accused of being social democratic, of representing the right wing within the party. This was the first time we heard that there was a right wing within the party. We never knew there was any sort of right wing within the party.

All these charges, none of which was substantiated with a shred of evidence, were being used in a kind of convenient, opportunistic, Machiavellian way to achieve Bernard's objective of becoming leader of the party.

They also accused Maurice of cultism, of one-manism, again without substantiating those charges. That was perhaps the weakest charge of all. The people who knew Maurice Bishop knew him to be perhaps the most modest and least arrogant of all the top leaders of the party. He was the most accommodating and probably the number one adherent to the principle of collective leadership.

On countless occasions, when proposals were brought to Maurice, he would say that before a decision was made he had to get the collective wisdom of the Political Bureau or the Central Committee. Or he would say, "Why don't you bounce the idea off of Bernard and the other comrades," Unison and Strachan and so on. So this charge of one-manism was ludicrous. Party members just could not accept it. It didn't hold any weight at all.

The charge that he was becoming dictatorial

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2. In the course of a campaign against large-scale marijuana growers in April 1980, groups tied to the growers tried to stir up opposition to the government. Some of these groups, including one headed by Kenny Budhlall and his brother, adopted a leftist guise, trying to undermine the government by accusing it of not moving fast enough on social reforms, being corrupt, etc.



was also totally false.

*Q. Were these charges against Maurice Bishop ever presented to the party during this whole period?*

A. The day after Maurice was put under house arrest a meeting of the entire party was called, presumably to discuss it. We all thought certainly the point of the meeting was to vote on the question and come up with some consensus within the party, some line of march to explain to the masses why Maurice Bishop was being placed under house arrest.

That was a very long meeting — five and a half or six hours. But unfortunately the meeting ended without a vote being taken on the proposals. And there were not only the proposals on joint leadership, but further proposals to expel Maurice Bishop from the party altogether, to court-martial him. Very serious charges were leveled against Maurice that were not substantiated by one shred of evidence during that meeting.

Also, the party was told that Maurice was put under house arrest because he had authorized the spreading of a rumor that Bernard was trying to kill him. He was not under arrest, they said, for violating a principle of democratic centralism by supposedly refusing to abide by a majority decision of the Central Committee, but rather because he had allegedly spread this rumor.

Maurice spoke in his own defense at that meeting for over 40 minutes. He accepted criticism, as he had on previous occasions, for a number of weaknesses within the party and within the process. I don't think I ever heard any of those other leaders — and I certainly

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### **Maurice's hope was that this system of councils would become institutionalized as organs of people's power . . .**

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never heard Bernard Coard — criticize themselves at a party forum. And this was in front of the whole party.

But Maurice said, to use his own words, "With every ounce of honesty that I can muster, I will not accept responsibility for spreading this rumor that you are alleging."

He said, "If I really wanted to cause dissension and confusion within the party, I could have chosen much more creative ways to do it than to spread such a vulgar rumor."

But no vote was taken, and there was no guidance given as to what the line should be.

We asked, "Even if we accept those charges to be correct — and there was a lot of evidence that pointed the other way — what should be the unified party line when we go out there to-

morrow to explain to the Grenadian masses that their leader is under house arrest?"

The next day, when party members themselves took to the streets — there had been no official announcement that Maurice was under house arrest — they found it exceedingly difficult to explain the situation to the masses.

The people's spontaneous reaction was general confusion, a state of dismay, a state of anger. That Friday morning, hundreds of people gathered around the *Free West Indian* office. They were in an agitated mood. It proved very difficult to convince the masses that Maurice had violated a Central Committee decision and so on.

The response from the masses was, "Now look, man, don't give us all this crap. You lock up the man, why do you have him locked up? If you charge him with all these so-called crimes, then give him a chance to talk to us. We want to see him and hear from him. We know the man from a long time ago. He struggled with us. He struggled for our cause. He was beaten up to the point of death by Gairy's Mongoose Gang in 1973. Where was Bernard Coard when Maurice was being beaten up in the streets? Or when Maurice's father was shot in 1974? If Maurice did anything wrong the masses will deal with it."

Selwyn Strachan went down there to try to talk to them and made the huge error — Selwyn has made many errors in the past — of an-

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## **Massacre, flight . . .**

[In response to a question at the Montreal meeting, Don Rojas gave the following account of his experiences from the day Maurice Bishop was freed from house arrest on October 19 until Rojas left Grenada on October 29, four days after the U.S. military invasion.]

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At the time Maurice was killed, I was carrying out a task he himself had given to me. He told me to go to the telephone company in the city and to get word out to the world the people had freed him and to communicate a number of other things he wanted the world to know on that day.

First of all, that Grenadians had the capacity to solve their own problems and there was no need for any outside interference or intervention.

Second, to dispel rumors that the Cubans were involved in the conflict. He wanted that to be made very clear. Right-wing provocateurs, some of them CIA agents who had been flown into Grenada on the day before Maurice's death, had been circulating a lot of anti-Cuban, anticommunist lies to the masses.

Third, he wanted to call on Grenadians abroad — Grenadians living in New York,

Toronto, London, and Trinidad — to support the revolution at this time, to express in whatever form they could their solidarity with the revolutionary process.

And finally, he instructed me to call on working-class organizations, progressive trade unions, and other revolutionary groups throughout the Caribbean to make statements of solidarity.

So I went to the telephone company. The telephone company had been controlled by Coard and the others, who had forbidden Grenadians to make any international calls. When we got there the building was barricaded, the door locked. But I talked to the workers inside. I told them I was sent by the prime minister to carry out a task and without any hesitation they let us in. They were very sympathetic to Maurice.

We first called the Caribbean News Agency in Barbados, which has the facility to get news out onto the wire internationally. We were able to make about three or four international calls. Then the shooting took place at the fort. From the telephone company we could hear the shooting and see people jumping off the high walls of the fort — mass chaos, mass hysteria.

I had been at the fort before I left to carry out the task at the telephone company. So it is quite possible that had I not taken

Maurice's advice, I would have been wiped out, too.

About 15 or 20 minutes after the shooting started we were told to evacuate the telephone building very quickly because the soldiers were coming down to "recapture" it. So we moved.

Immediately, I went into hiding because I knew it was only a matter of time before they came for me. And, to be sure, at 2:00 a.m. — after Hudson Austin made the announcement that Bishop and Unison and the others were assassinated and put on the curfew — a carload of armed men came to my house to arrest me. I wasn't there, of course, but in lieu of me they took my wife.

They held her in prison for five days. I must say that she was not ill-treated, but she was interrogated. Throughout that whole period my house was under surveillance, and an active search was made for me in the neighborhood where I was living.

During that period I was supported and fed by patriotic Grenadians who were loyal to Maurice. They released my wife from prison on the night before the invasion. At 10:00 p.m., about three hours after they released her, they came to the place she was staying looking for me — thinking that by that time I had gone back to rendezvous with her. I wasn't there.

nouncing that Bernard was now prime minister of the country. Selwyn was literally chased out of town by the people. They were so angry.

He went the same day to the international airport to try to talk to the workers there. Their response was, "No, we don't accept what you say. We want to see and hear from Maurice Bishop himself, and don't come back unless you bring Bishop with you."

When they talked to the workers at the electricity plant they got a similar response.

*Q. Do you think there were opportunities to avoid the ultimate outcome as these events you describe were unfolding?*

A. What happened in the weeks before, during, and after Maurice's house arrest was that leftism ran amok. By that I mean that these comrades had completely lost any sense of connection between what they were doing, what they were saying, and objective reality.

Bernard could have put checks on this avalanche if he had acted in a responsible and mature Marxist manner. He could have cautioned that what was happening was threatening the very survival of the revolutionary process.

I think things deteriorated very rapidly in that two-week period. The party lost virtually all support among the masses. Many rank-and-file members of the party also became alienated and disillusioned. Many were bullied into

silence by Bernard's demagoguery. It was a very tragic development in that respect.

It had become so mad that when Louison and Whiteman were trying to negotiate with Coard and Strachan for a peaceful solution to the impasse, Bernard went so far as to tell Louison that they were prepared to lose five years of the revolutionary process because they were convinced that losing five years now would gain them ten years somewhere down the line. I can't understand that kind of logic, but this was the line that was taken.

Louison said to Coard, "The people are going to continue to manifest their disapproval of this. What are you going to do? How will you respond?"

Coard answered, "Well, the people can march, they can demonstrate, and we won't stop them. But they'll get tired. Gairy let them march and demonstrate almost daily for two months in 1973 and 1974. The same happened in Trinidad in 1970. The masses will get tired, and life will return to normal. And we will continue the revolutionary process on a more Marxist, more Leninist footing."

This was the kind of madness to which the situation had deteriorated.

Look, without the people there could be no revolution. If you don't have sections of the party and sections of the armed forces with you, and you don't have the working people with you, how will you conceivably continue

to build the revolution? It defies logic. It defies history. And it defies the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

I think the crisis could have been avoided to some extent if Bernard and the people close to him had exercised some common sense, some wisdom.

Coard had a lot of influence and authority within the New Jewel Movement. He was a very able man intellectually, very bright, an excellent organizer, a man in possession of good qualities. But he was also a man driven by a deep sense of personal ambition and a quest for power.

Maurice would never have made the kind of errors Bernard did about relations with the people. In retrospect we really have to take a hard look at how ideologically developed Coard was. If he was really the kind of mature

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### **There was such serious demoralization within the armed forces that a mutiny would have broken out in a matter of days . . .**

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Marxist-Leninist he was purported to be, then I don't think he could have made such a fundamental error as to miscalculate the response or the mood of the Grenadian masses and take a

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## **. . . and invasion**

This was *six hours* before the invasion. And, of course, by then everyone knew the invasion was coming.

The invasion took place the next morning. At precisely 5:40 a.m. the first paratroopers landed. For the first day of the invasion, I had no idea where my wife and children were. I didn't know whether they were safe or killed in the invasion.

Fortunately, the second day we were able to link up again, and we survived the experience of full-scale war — jet fighters flying very low over your house, the house shaking and the widows rattling, artillery shells exploding in your yard, M-16 and AK-47 bullets flying by the windows.

For the children, particularly, it was a terrifying experience. People literally slept under their beds. This went on for days.

During a lull in the fighting on Thursday, the American military came into the neighborhood where we were hiding and swept the whole place, ordered everybody out of their homes. Then they conducted a room-by-room search of every house, presumably looking for Cuban fighters. They didn't find any.

I happened to be living in one of the [cottages near Radio Free Grenada] that was strafed. Fortunately, my wife and children

had escaped from the cottage on Wednesday by a mere 30 seconds before the shells began to fall. But two very good friends of mine, Grenadians, were killed inside their cottages by the strafing.

Their excuse for the strafing was that there were Cubans in all the cottages. In fact, the vast majority of people who occupied those cottages were non-Grenadian internationalist workers from the Caribbean — Guyana, Trinidad, and other countries. There were also some Grenadians and a group of 14 or 15 Cuban doctors and dentists living in 2 or 3 of the cottages.

When we were able to get back to our cottage — after much pleading — to gather some clothes, we found our door kicked down and all the furniture in disarray. They had searched the house. The beds were overturned. They were literally looking for Reds under the beds. All the houses in the neighborhood were in a shambles.

Then on Friday afternoon, the American troops came for a second time. They evacuated everybody from the same area, saying there was going to be fighting there soon. They herded hundreds and hundreds of us living in the southern St. George's area down to the Point Salines airport site.

At the airport Grenadians were separated from Americans, and non-Grenadian

Caribbeans were put into another batch. At that point they were about to evacuate the Americans. My wife and children, who happen to be American citizens, had the choice of leaving, and I asked the American authorities to accompany them. Although I gave them "humanitarian" reasons, that didn't seem to convince them after they found out who I was — that I was Maurice Bishop's press secretary.

So the military captain sent for a State Department official. Two of them actually arrived. They sent my family over to Barbados and held me back for interrogation. I was warned that I better cooperate with them or they wouldn't let me join my family.

To add insult to injury, later when I went back to pick up something from my car before leaving on the plane, I started to give my car keys to a Grenadian friend. But I was told by the State Department person that I should leave the keys with him. I asked what for and he said the car was now U.S. Embassy property. So my car was commandeered like many other Grenadian's cars.

Then I was escorted onto the plane by the State Department official who sat beside me the whole way to Barbados.



position of contempt towards them.

Unfortunately Coard and his people did make these errors. They let their own ambitions, I suppose, and their egos get the better of rational analysis on this question. Bernard in particular allowed an avalanche of rampaging ultraleftism within the party to grow out of control.

And it grew to the point where, objectively at least, it created the conditions for imperialism to find a convenient excuse to move in and crush the Grenadian revolution. Comrade Fidel correctly warned Coard, Strachan, [Gen. Hudson] Austin, and the others of this likelihood in his statement condemning the killings the very day after they occurred.

In my view, the massacre at Fort Rupert and the draconian curfew that followed were not acts of class warfare, justifiable on the grounds of principle or historical necessity. Instead, like the invasion itself, they were crimes against the Grenadian people and the Grenada revolution. But only the Grenadian people and not the occupation forces or their puppet have the right to dispense revolutionary justice to the perpetrators of those monstrous crimes.

*Q. You said earlier that in your view the revolutionary process in general was developing at the proper pace. Do you think that was also true with respect to the development of the mass organizations, the parish councils, and so on?*

A. As one of the central leaders of the party, Maurice himself was very strong on the question of creating institutions in the party, in the mass organizations, in the zonal and parish councils through which the rank-and-file workers and farmers, the women, the youth, the students would have an opportunity not only to express their views, but to contribute to the making of policy.

The system of councils, despite problems and difficulties, was working quite well up until the invasion. It was, of course, an experimental system. In the history of Grenada and the Caribbean there were no precedents. It was

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## **The class struggle cannot be carried out by a party or an army that has alienated itself from the people . . .**

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a system being closely monitored and subject to modification depending on how it was developing.

It was certainly Maurice's hope that this system of councils at the local level, the village level, the parish level would become institutionalized as organs of people's power. It was our hope to have it become part of the ultimate legal framework of the revolution as part of the new people's constitution we were preparing.

Organizationally there were still weaknesses in the organs of popular democracy such as the



Unison Whiteman (center) leading October 19 march that freed Bishop from house arrest. He, along with Bishop and four other top leaders, was murdered by supporters of Coard at Fort Rupert later that same day.

zonal and parish councils. Weaknesses not so much in terms of the willingness of people to participate in these organs, but more in the way they were structured. For example, in some cases there would be meetings without agendas. In some cases there would be meetings that were not chaired.

The people's reaction was, "Why should we come to this meeting, sit here, and do a whole lot of rambling? We can identify the problems in our community. Let's look for the solution in a structured way."

So these pressures were coming from the people themselves. It was very good, a very healthy development.

Looking at it in hindsight, the process of decentralizing power inside the community was moving faster than the process of decentralizing power inside the party itself. For example, as I said before, the proposals for joint leadership were never in fact voted on by all the rank-and-file party members.

Some of the problems in the party were discussed at the Central Committee meeting in mid-September of this year. The meeting analyzed a breakdown in the internal functioning and structure of the party, a breakdown in internal discipline inside the party.

There were feelings that comrades in the party were being overworked. Comrades were feeling that there were double standards operating in the party, that some comrades who deserved to be disciplined for not pulling their weight were not being disciplined because of who they knew in the party leadership.

These were all problems that did exist within the party. But I don't think the problems were insurmountable. I think a more rational

approach to organization, to the distribution of tasks, to strengthening the key organs within the party — these kinds of measures could have been taken to eliminate many of the problems.

What ended up making that Central Committee meeting so extraordinary was not this examination of the state of affairs in the party, but the proposal for joint leadership that came out of the blue near the end of the meeting.

*Q. How could the Coard faction even hope to continue to hold power after Bishop's house arrest and subsequent assassination?*

A. I think that even if the invasion did not take place, Bernard Coard, General Austin, Strachan, [Ewart] Layne, James, and other members of the Central Committee who comprised that faction would not have been able to continue to develop the revolutionary process as we knew it.

The party by itself, as a numerically small party, could not have continued to build the revolution even if it had the support of the military. And even that was questionable after the events of October 19. There was such serious demoralization within the armed forces that a mutiny would have broken out in a matter of days.

They would not have been able to rule the country, because they would have had a country without people, without the revolution. A situation would have developed in Grenada where the working people abandoned all of the enthusiasm, the energy, the effort, and the voluntary labor they put out over four and a half years to build the revolution.

The Revolutionary Military Council could not have mustered more than 2 percent support



after the events of October 19 and the curfew. The economy would have ground to a halt. Grenada would have been totally and completely isolated from the region. The sanctions that had been announced by CARICOM [Caribbean Community] and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States surrounding Grenada would quickly have begun to have an effect in a small country like Grenada. All sea and air commercial traffic had been cut off. Grenada was isolated from the world.

There would have been more demonstrations, I believe, despite the threats. Working people would have gone to their work places. But I doubt very much if they would have produced. There would have been all kinds of passive resistance. There would have been no school. Perhaps students would have gone to school at the point of a gun, but certainly they would not have functioned in school.

So economically, socially, politically, and diplomatically the regime could not have survived. They certainly could not turn to Cuba for any assistance, because the Cuban Communist Party and Fidel had made it clear in the strongest possible terms that they disapproved of what took place on October 12 when Maurice was put under house arrest and when he was assassinated on October 19.

The regime would have been left without friends, without neighbors, and most fundamentally without a people.

It is noteworthy that the 15 members of the RMC and Coard, Strachan, and Austin all either surrendered to the Yankee invaders or were captured without resistance. This was the same group who, in a last futile attempt to rally

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## **Fidel Castro and the Cuban Communist Party had absolutely no involvement in this crisis . . .**

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the masses to resist the invasion on the morning of October 25, called on the Grenadian people to fight "to the last man, woman, and child."

*Q. How would you summarize some of the most important lessons to be learned from the overthrow of the workers and farmers government in Grenada?*

A. In my view the faction led by Bernard Coard made a number of fundamental miscalculations.

One of them was that they failed to correctly assess the mood and consciousness of the Grenadian people at that particular time. That is a cardinal error.

They fell victim to subjectivism in their approach to dealing with the people. One of the lessons we have to learn from this is that the class struggle cannot be carried out by a party or an army that — by its own actions — has alienated itself from the people.

Their unchecked, unscientific, infantile ultra-leftism also opened the doors to counter-revolution inside and outside the country. The

right-wing forces inside the country had begun to manifest a certain boldness even before Maurice was killed.

This was made evident by the demonstration of students, for example, who went to the airport site on Tuesday, October 18, and shut it down for a brief period. Among the placards were slogans such as "C for Coard, C for Communism, C for Corruption."

This was a very dangerous indication that the right had begun to move and to seize the opportunity of Maurice's house arrest to stir up anti-Cuban, antisocialist, anticommunist, and counterrevolutionary sentiments among certain sections of the masses.

In the spontaneous demonstration of Wednesday morning itself, when the people went to Maurice Bishop's house and liberated him, some of these right-wing provocateur elements were very active inside the crowd, trying to whip up anti-Cuban and anticommunist sentiments.

[Trade union leader] Vincent Noel, myself, and some other comrades picked this up very quickly and brought it to Maurice's notice as we were moving down Lucas Street to the fort. He was very concerned about this. This was less than two hours before he was killed.

Maurice told me that I should try to go to the telephone company and make some calls to the outside world. He wanted the point made very clearly that President Fidel Castro and the Cuban Communist Party had absolutely no involvement in this crisis and that the Grenadian people could solve these problems by themselves, without outside interference or intervention.

So it was clear that right-wing elements had in fact begun to mobilize very actively inside of Grenada from the day Maurice was put under house arrest. This is just to give some evidence of the theoretical point that Bernard's actions objectively provided the condition for rightist opportunists to misguide and mislead the Grenadian people.

There is just one thing I want to read for you. This is a quote from a speech Maurice Bishop made on Budget Day in 1982. I want this quote to be understood in the context of the charges of one-manism, cultism, and arrogance that were leveled against Maurice. And we can contrast it with the lack of public statements by Bernard Coard complimentary to Maurice Bishop over the years.

Here is what Maurice Bishop said:

"But I also want to say that it would not have been possible, certainly not in the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Trade, to have got this incredible amount of work, to have had these comrades come up with these tremendous amounts of energy, to have had them display all the creativity and initiative that they have had; none of that would have been possible if they did not have a really first class, a really extraordinary leader, a comrade there to guide them at all times, to help them with their conceptions at all times, to help ensure that they are staying within the broad framework of the policies and guidelines and programs elabo-

rated by our party and government, a comrade there to ensure that when they were about to collapse that he could himself help to take up the slack because nothing that they were engaged in doing was strange to him. He, himself, was the greatest worker of all of them, a comrade who sleeps regularly two or three hours a night, and for that reason a lot of us in the party and government try to put little handcuffs on him, to restrain him without success, because of his total obsession with the economy, with the country, with building this country as rapidly as possible; and comrades now again I ask you to recognize the tremendous, outstanding work of Comrade Bernard Coard, our minister of finance."

Finally, allow me to express some personal thoughts on the priorities, tasks, and challenges that now confront Caribbean revolutionaries and progressives.

First, it is imperative that we begin a process of scientific and dispassionate analysis that

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## **We must continue to call vigorously for immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Grenada . . .**

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would identify and explain the serious errors made by the NJM, separate the subjective and objective factors responsible for these mistakes, draw and extract lessons and conclusions from that analysis, and incorporate them into the ongoing refinement of revolutionary theory and its creative application to revolutionary practice.

We must let the positive symbols, achievements, and example of the Grenada revolution continue to guide and inspire us as we press on with the struggle against imperialism and its handmaidens — racism, colonialism, neocolonialism, and fascism.

We must not be demoralized by the tragic setbacks of October 19 and October 25. Rather, we must strengthen our resolve, our optimism, and our confidence as we continue to call vigorously for immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Grenada and for an end to the U.S. colonization of the country. We must demand an end to the campaign of harassment, intimidation, and victimization against the NJM and supporters and sympathizers of the revolution. We should also condemn the reactionary campaign throughout the entire Caribbean to exploit the Grenada events to crack down on every progressive force in the anti-imperialist and labor movements.

At the moment, we should put a lot of our energy into support work for our comrades in Nicaragua who face an imminent U.S.-backed invasion, perhaps even involving direct U.S. forces. Now is the time for unity of all revolutionary and progressive people around the world. It is a time to rise above factionalism and sectarianism and come together in a broad anti-imperialist united front for peace, justice, and social progress. □

# Dictatorships on the defensive

*Working class takes lead in upsurge against military rule*

By Fred Murphy

• *Chile* — A crowd of nearly half a million gathers in a Santiago park on November 18 in a peaceful but spirited rally demanding an end to the Pinochet dictatorship. The regime tolerates the huge protest, which was supported by some 150 organizations. "Six months ago it was not conceivable that people would go out in the streets," says Christian Democratic leader Gabriel Valdés. "Now we are seeing that the spirit is there. We are going to mobilize step by step."

• *Uruguay* — In one of the largest political gatherings in the country's history, more than 200,000 persons rally in Montevideo on November 27. Similar actions are held in six other cities. The protest against the military dictatorship of Gen. Gregorio Alvarez caps a three-month wave of work slowdowns, hunger strikes, student marches, and pot-banging demonstrations repudiating the regime.

• *Argentina* — Following an election campaign punctuated by a general strike and rallies for the two major candidates that repeatedly involved hundreds of thousands of persons, civilian President Raúl Alfonsín takes over from a discredited military junta on December 10. Alfonsín has pledged to repeal the "amnesty" the generals granted themselves for the murder and kidnapping of thousands of Argentines during their rule. He also claims he will raise wages and resolve the country's deep economic crisis. "If the new government doesn't give the people what legitimately belongs to them," the head of Argentina's trade unions warns Alfonsín, "the workers will shut down the country as many times as necessary."

• *Brazil* — Congressional deputies defy the president, Gen. João Baptista Figueiredo, and vote down a wage-control bill demanded by the International Monetary Fund. The military regime declares a state of emergency and rams a slightly modified version of the measure through Congress. Twenty thousand shoe workers and 60,000 auto workers immediately down tools to protest this attack on their living standards. The auto employers, fearing a social explosion, rapidly agree to ignore the new law.

• *Bolivia* — President Hernán Siles Zuazo, swept to power a year earlier after a near-insurrectional general strike forced an end to a series of military dictatorships, decrees on November 17 a 60 percent currency devaluation and sharp price hikes on milk, bread,

gasoline, and other necessities. Spearheaded by the country's tin miners — who have already won majority self-management in the nationalized mines — the trade unions launch a 24-hour general strike as a warning to Siles. Meanwhile, rumors spread about plans for a new military coup backed by the country's capitalists and the U.S. embassy, who are deeply concerned about Siles' helplessness in face of the growing power, organization, and class consciousness of the working class and peasantry.

This panorama of five South American countries in the closing weeks of 1983 points up the rapid and dramatic shift away from unchallenged military rule that has taken place in these lands during the past year and a half. In country after country, the U.S.-backed dictatorships installed during the late 1960s and early 1970s have either been removed or forced onto the defensive through mobilizations of the working class and its allies. A ten-year cycle of popular defeats and rule by naked terror is drawing to an end. A new period of open class conflict and confrontation with imperialism has begun.

What has led to these changes in countries where the colonels and generals had their jackboots firmly planted only half a decade ago?

## Origins and aims of military regimes

In the early 1960s, in face of the challenge posed by the Cuban revolution, U.S. imperialism sought to foster economic development and stable bourgeois-democratic rule in Latin America through the so-called Alliance for Progress. But these proved to be utopian aims; the U.S. scheme could not meet the aspirations of the masses of workers and peasants for a better life and freedom from imperialist domination. Its failure was reflected and confirmed in the consolidation of a string of brutal military dictatorships — Brazil in 1964–68, Bolivia in 1964–71, Chile and Uruguay in 1973, Argentina in 1976.

Acting within the framework of the "national security doctrine" put forward by the Pentagon, the military rulers in these countries waged an internal war against an enemy variously labeled "subversion," "terrorism," or "communism." The immediate targets were the trade unions and political parties based among the workers and peasants. These were destroyed, forced deep underground, or placed under military control. Their activists were exiled, jailed, or "disappeared." Also victimized were intellectuals, cultural figures,

priests and nuns, and even the leaders of bourgeois political parties.

## Terror and 'shock treatment'

No method was too inhuman to apply in this unequal struggle. Beatings, physical and psychological torture, kidnappings, the burning of books and newspapers, even the holding of infants as hostages were among the tactics in this systematic drive to "immunize" entire societies against progressive ideas. The victims numbered in the scores of thousands.

Having terrorized the working class into retreat, the military rulers in most of these countries proceeded to implement economic policies designed to sharply boost the profits of the imperialists and the biggest local capitalists. Tariff barriers and foreign-exchange controls were largely scrapped, opening the way to the crippling of national industries built up in the 1950s and 1960s, to double- or triple-digit inflation, and to the unchecked outflow of wealth. Publicly owned enterprises were auctioned off to private investors. The forced curtailment of trade-union activity brought sharp cuts in wages. Social spending was slashed to the bone.

The theory behind such "shock treatment," most drastically applied by the University of Chicago economists who advised the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, was that the elimination of inefficient sectors of the economy and the spurring of mineral and agricultural exports would open the way for renewed economic growth on a sounder basis. In the expectation that this would indeed occur, massive loans to finance imports and grandiose projects were secured from banks in the imperialist countries. These bankers, in turn, viewed the military rulers as good risks and pressed them to borrow still more. Most of the money went into real-estate and financial speculation or imported luxury goods rather than productive investment.

## Crisis of capitalism

It is now obvious that the dictatorships have quite spectacularly failed to achieve the goals set by the imperialists and their local bourgeois clients. Despite the heavy blows, the masses were not crushed. And the shock treatment contributed not to economic growth, but to economic crisis and collapse.

What the military rulers ran up against was the 1981–82 capitalist depression and the new upsurge of revolution in Central America and the Caribbean.

Curtailed industrial production in the imperialist countries sharply reduced the demand for raw materials such as Chilean copper, Boli-



vian tin, and Brazilian iron ore. Prices dropped accordingly. The worldwide slump likewise cut sales of other commodities like Argentine and Uruguayan beef, Brazilian coffee, and so on. Rising protectionism further curtailed the export of manufactured goods from these countries. Meanwhile, interest rates, fuel costs, and the prices of consumer goods and machinery imported from the imperialist countries remained high.

The result was a series of acute balance-of-payments crises. Argentina and Bolivia went into default on their foreign debts. The Chilean banking system collapsed. Brazil, with its \$90 billion debt, the world's largest, avoided bankruptcy only because its imperialist creditors repeatedly allowed it to reschedule payments out of fear for the stability of their own financial apparatus.

All this meant redoubled pressure on the living standards of the workers and peasants. The imperialist banks curtailed credit to Latin America across the board. The bankers' watchdog, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), demanded austerity measures as a condition for new loans. Real wages and social services were cut further. Currency devaluations spurred inflation that in most cases was already out of control. Owing to tight credit restrictions and falling consumer demand, small businesses and industries producing for the domestic market suffered widespread bankruptcies, throwing hundreds of thousands out of work. Small farmers faced disaster owing to falling commodity prices and curtailed access to credit for seed, fertilizer, and machinery.

Coming on top of the earlier blows from the dictators' terror machines, such economic hardships could simply have demoralized the masses further. But additional factors were at work.

In Nicaragua, the destruction of the Somoza regime and its U.S.-trained National Guard by the armed workers, peasants, and urban poor in 1979 had proven that, no matter how brutal the dictator, it is possible to resist and win. A similar example had been set in Iran, where a massive insurrection toppled the CIA-installed shah the same year. In El Salvador and Guatemala, other U.S.-backed dictators were facing armed popular rebellions, while in Grenada the Gairy tyranny had been felled and replaced by a workers and farmers government like the one in Nicaragua.

These victories against Washington and its client regimes came on top of earlier major blows to imperialist domination in Indochina and southern Africa. At the same time, the political prestige of the Cuban revolution and its leadership was enhanced as a result of Cuba's aid to anti-imperialist struggles in Africa and Fidel Castro's outspoken defense of the interests of the semicolonial world in his capacity as chairman of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries.

While developments such as these were imbuing the workers and peasants of South America with fresh hope, the economic crisis was eroding the dictators' social bases. Middle-class sectors that had initially accepted military rule because it brought "stability" were now being driven into bankruptcy and hence into opposition. Local capitalists adversely affected by the dictators' free-market policies began taking their distance from the regimes.

As jobs were lost and living standards came under increasing attack, large numbers of people began drawing the conclusion that they had little left to lose — that it was better to risk one's life struggling than to perish slowly from hunger and destitution. In country after coun-

try, masses began taking to the streets chanting slogans like "*¡Se va a acabar, la dictadura militar!*" (The military dictatorship is going to end!)

### Argentina: three general strikes

In Argentina there was an additional factor — the military confrontation with British imperialism in April–June 1982.

The Argentine junta's decision to use armed force to restore sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands was taken at a time when the workers movement was already beginning to revive. Only days before, tens of thousands of workers had battled the police in downtown Buenos Aires. By rallying the Argentine people behind the recovery of a British colonial outpost, the junta hoped to gain legitimacy and dampen the growing opposition.

This was a miscalculation. The Argentine masses took to the streets to demand an uncompromising defense of the Malvinas against the British fleet, and they refused to set aside their demands for an end to dictatorship. The junta's ignominious surrender on the islands became one more reason to oppose military rule.

After a few months of disorientation brought on by the Malvinas defeat, the mass movement revived and took the offensive. Huge general strikes shut down the country in December 1982 and in March and October 1983. Street demonstrations involving tens of thousands demanded justice in the cases of the up to 30,000 Argentines "disappeared" by the armed forces in the 1970s. A strike wave in August and September 1983 involved some 2.4 million workers.

The military hierarchy itself was riven by splits and recriminations over the Malvinas defeat and the economic disaster. Fearing the



Part of November 27 rally of 200,000 in Montevideo, Uruguay, against military rule.

situation could get completely out of control, the bourgeoisie's political representatives pressed for early elections and an accelerated transition to civilian rule.

The junta had little choice but to oblige. The voting was held October 30, preceded by an election campaign in which massive numbers of Argentines were able to take to the streets without fear for the first time in nearly eight years. Small leftist parties emerged from clandestinity to open public headquarters and hold rallies that attracted thousands.

The bourgeois Radical Civic Union (UCR) emerged with an absolute majority of the votes. Its presidential candidate, Raúl Alfonsín, stressed themes of human rights and democracy and forcefully rejected the military's attempt to "amnesty" itself for crimes committed during its unsuccessful terror campaign to stamp out all dissent.

Defeated in the election was the bourgeois-nationalist Peronist movement. Despite their continued control over the trade-union apparatus, the Peronists were unable to fully mobilize the working-class support they have historically enjoyed. Identification of many top Peronists with the right-wing paramilitary terror that preceded the 1976 military coup contributed heavily to their defeat, as did the party's failure to present any economic program different from the Radicals' vague nostrums.

In coming months the Argentine workers will be watching to see how Alfonsín fulfills his contradictory promises to uphold democratic rights, improve living standards, honor Argentina's massive foreign debts, and cut government spending. With unemployment at a record high, inflation hovering around 1,000 percent, and real wages less than half what they were in 1975, the patience of the working class is going to wear thin rapidly.

The impact of the 1982 Malvinas War extended beyond Argentina. That country's confrontation with British imperialism, in which the U.S. government openly sided with London, helped to spur political consciousness among the masses throughout the continent.

#### **Bolivia: miners take the lead**

As the Malvinas conflict unfolded, a popular upsurge against military rule was gathering steam in Bolivia. The first of a series of increasingly powerful general strikes called from underground by the Bolivian Workers Federation (COB) took place March 28-29, 1982. The immediate demand was for revocation of austerity measures decreed the previous month, but the movement rapidly took on an antidictatorial character. In September, an indefinite general strike that opened with a march of 100,000 persons in La Paz, the capital, forced the generals to convene the elected Congress they had dissolved by force in 1980 and relinquish the presidency to Hernán Siles Zuazo. Siles had been elected to the office on three occasions in 1978-80; each time a new military coup had blocked him from taking office.

The new government was based on a coalition called Democratic and Popular Unity (UDP), originally made up of Siles' bourgeois-nationalist MNRI, the Communist Party, and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR).<sup>1</sup> The COB leadership turned down an offer from Siles to join the government and adopted a wait-and-see attitude.

The broad support the new regime initially enjoyed among the workers and peasants eroded quickly as Siles implemented the austerity measures the military dictatorship had been unable to impose. Strikes around economic demands resumed in March 1983, along with protests by housewives and students.

In April, the COB and its most powerful component, the tin-miners union (FSTMB), launched a political offensive. A COB conference called for "workers majority comanagement" in state enterprises, including the nationalized tin mines; workers control in private workplaces; and "cogovernment," or parity representation for the COB at all levels of state administration.

These demands did not remain on paper. On April 19, the miners union occupied the headquarters of the Bolivian Mining Corporation (COMIBOL), which administers the nationalized mines, and proceeded to implement the call for self-management. In the countryside, peasants blocked roads to show solidarity with the miners.

Siles declared the occupation illegal and denounced it as "anarcho-syndicalist" and a "violation of the constitution." But after a two-month standoff, he was forced to issue a decree appointing a new COMIBOL directorate with a majority of workers representatives.

Meanwhile, the national peasant union (CSUTCB)<sup>2</sup> had held a congress and raised demands for peasant comanagement of all government agriculture programs. It also adopted a resolution declaring that Bolivia was not yet "a true democracy, because the working-class and peasant majority does not have real participation in the decisive political mechanisms."

#### **'Anarcho-syndicalism'?**

In early August the COB presented Siles with what it called a "national liberation" program of political and economic demands, backing it up with big street demonstrations of workers. In addition to the earlier calls for workers control, the COB now demanded outright rejection of any talks with the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund, suspension of foreign-debt payments, and dominant worker participation in all state decision-making bodies. "The COB cannot join the government to act as Siles Zuazo's tail, and simply to legitimize his past and present mistakes," COB leader Juan Lechín declared. "If it joins, it must be to carry out its own program."

The Bolivian Confederation of Private Businessmen was alarmed and issued a sharp denunciation of "anarcho-syndicalism that seeks to cogovern the nation in open violation of constitutional provisions." U.S. Ambassador Edwin Corr chimed in with a warning that "private enterprise is the best way to guarantee a democratic system."

Siles offered a compromise aimed at co-opting some COB leaders into a minority role in his cabinet. The COB rejected this, and Siles in turn rejected the COB's demands, asserting they were tantamount to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Since then Siles has proceeded to take further austerity measures in line with the demands of the IMF. But he is doing so from a position of weakness. His regime's origins in a popular upsurge and its social base among working-class and peasant sectors preclude it from launching a frontal attack on the organizations of the masses.

For these same reasons, his government is distrusted by imperialism, by the Bolivian ruling class, and by the military hierarchy. Still, the latter hesitate to launch a new coup, fearing that this could touch off an uncontrollable mass upsurge. They recall the way the miners and peasants rose up in 1952 and destroyed the old army, and they are not anxious to repeat that experience. Given the militant traditions of the Bolivian masses, their strong trade-union organizations, their disillusionment with Siles, and their rich political experiences over the past year, a new upsurge could well sweep to power a workers and peasants government.

#### **Peru and Brazil: regimes in retreat**

The right-wing forces opposing Siles are also aware that the situation in countries bordering Bolivia is not auspicious for new military adventures at seizing power.

In Peru, there are signs that the masses are regaining the initiative against the elected government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry. The ruling party there suffered a crushing defeat in municipal elections in late November. The United Left (IU), a bloc composed of most of Peru's working-class parties, captured the city government in the capital, and the bourgeois-nationalist opposition party APRA<sup>3</sup> gained a big plurality nationwide. Belaúnde felt compelled to sack his finance minister and reverse his earlier stand against any probe of human-rights violations in the army-occupied province of Ayacucho.

A further measure of the ferment in Peru is the persistence in Ayacucho and neighboring

1. MNRI — Left Revolutionary Nationalist Movement. The MIR originated as a radical petty bourgeois grouping but moved steadily to the right. Its representatives resigned from the government in January 1983, and it has since left the UDP altogether. The Communist Party, which has two ministers in Siles' cabinet, has a considerable base in the trade unions but has lined up with the government at every turning point in the class struggle since Siles came to power.

2. CSUTCB — United Confederation of Working Farmers of Bolivia.

3. APRA — American People's Revolutionary Alliance.





Chilean copper miners: key role in struggle against Pinochet dictatorship.

Andean provinces of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrilla movement.

In Brazil, the emergence of a powerful and militant trade-union movement among the industrial workers during the past five years has been key to forcing the military rulers to cede more and more democratic rights to the masses.

Now the Brazilian dictatorship faces an unprecedented social crisis; the so-called economic miracle of the 1960s and 1970s has run out of steam. Discontent spurred by IMF-imposed austerity measures exploded in five days of angry protests by unemployed workers in the major cities in April 1983. In July, a general strike shut down São Paulo, Brazil's industrial center. Supermarkets in Rio de Janeiro and other cities have repeatedly been sacked by crowds from the desperately poor shantytowns.

The bourgeois opposition parties in Brazil, already in power in several key state governments, have drawn closer to the regime in face of the crisis. In order to spur such collaboration, General Figueiredo has offered to hold direct presidential elections to choose his successor. As a result, the Workers Party (PT), based on the militant trade-union currents, is more and more seen by the masses as the political expression of their growing impatience with military rule and austerity.

#### Chile and Uruguay: protests every month

It was in Chile and Uruguay that the relationship of forces shifted most abruptly against the dictators in 1983. Both countries have been under the military boot since major

defeats were dealt the workers and peasants ten years ago. But General Pinochet and the ruling junta in Montevideo now find themselves badly on the defensive. The first sizeable street protests since 1973 began in Chile in March and in Uruguay in May, rapidly burgeoning into sustained mass movements for an end to military rule.

The monthly Days of Protest against Pinochet's rule in Chile were initiated in May by the copper miners and other union formations that make up the National Workers Command (CNT). Following a near-general strike in June, a bloc composed mainly of bourgeois parties, the Democratic Alliance (AD),<sup>4</sup> emerged and tried to bring the mass movement behind its banners. But the Days of Protest the AD called in July, August, and September tended to escape its control. The jobless youth of Santiago's shantytowns repeatedly took to the streets to build barricades and confront the regime's armed forces. The collapse of Chilean industry wrought by Pinochet's Chicago-school advisers has created a mass of angry, unemployed workers ready to fight not only against military rule but for "bread and jobs" as well.

The August and September street battles left some 36 protesters dead, dozens wounded, and hundreds arrested. While deploying troops and police, the regime also tried to entice the AD into accepting a scheme for a prolonged tran-

4. The AD includes the Christian Democrats, the Radical Party, the Social Democratic Party, and one faction of the Socialist Party. All are bourgeois formations with the exception of the SP.

sition to civilian rule. But no sooner had an abortive dialogue between Interior Minister Sergio Jarpa and the AD gotten under way than a new coalition emerged that better reflected the demands and interests of the masses.

The Democratic People's Movement (MDP), made up of a wide range of neighborhood and trade-union organizations as well as leftist currents like the Communist Party and Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), took the lead in organizing the October Days of Protest, which the AD refused to support. After failing to gain any serious concessions from the regime, however, the AD resumed its backing for mass protest and called the huge rally of half a million held on November 18. Pinochet still refuses to yield any significant concessions, and discussions are reportedly under way among the MDP and CNT on plans for a nationwide general strike.

Events have followed a similar course in Uruguay, where Days of Protest have been held every month since August. While the bourgeois Colorado and National (Blanco) parties have lent their support to these actions, the lead in fighting the dictatorship has been taken by the Inter-Union Workers Plenary (PIT). This semilegal labor federation has organized demonstrations against austerity and military rule of up to 200,000 persons, as well as two brief nationwide work stoppages.

The upsurge of protests in Uruguay has brought to light deep divisions inside the ruling military junta of 26 top officers. One faction concentrated in the air force and navy is pressing to strike a deal with the bourgeois parties and proceed with elections already promised for November 1984. A narrow majority headed by President Gregorio Alvarez, an army general, aims to entrench military rule indefinitely behind an appointed civilian facade.

#### Workers take lead, gain allies

As the fight against dictatorship in all these countries has unfolded, the industrial and mining proletariat has more and more come forward as the spearhead of the struggle. Driven into action by the blows of depression and austerity, the workers have grasped the need to take on the military rulers and wrest the democratic rights required for effective resistance to such attacks on their living standards.

Acting through their own organizations and utilizing proletarian methods of struggle such as strikes and street demonstrations, the workers have at the same time rebuffed the bourgeois oppositionists' efforts to limit the fight to democratic slogans. The workers have insisted on demanding "bread and jobs" as well as "freedom." Thus the Bolivian workers, for example, were not demobilized by the restoration of "democracy" but have pressed forward to call into question the new regime's submission to the imperialist dictates of the IMF.

The workers have found important allies among other oppressed layers of the population. The Bolivian peasantry, which in the

1960s and 1970s was coddled or intimidated into accepting the so-called Military-Peasant Pact under the Barrientos and Banzer dictatorships, has now come forward as an organized and fighting ally of the working class. In Chile, the wheat farmers and cattle ranchers, self-employed truck drivers and small merchants who largely made up the social base of reaction ten years ago now face bankruptcy and have joined in anti-Pinochet protests. Students have played an especially important role in the demonstrations in Uruguay, where the slogan, "Workers and students, forward together," is often chanted.

The weakening or downfall of the military dictatorships and the reconquest of a series of democratic rights by the workers and their allies puts new tasks on the agenda. The next period will be one in which the working class and peasantry measure strength with the bourgeoisies and imperialism in open class conflict.

Opportunities are opening for new layers of vanguard fighters to come forward, linking up with the experienced revolutionary cadres who have drawn the lessons of the defeats suffered over the past two decades and of the gains and victories scored since 1979. It is now possible to make use of the democratic conquests to rebuild revolutionary working-class organizations, gain a hearing and fresh support among wider layers of the proletariat and its allies, and chart a course in the ongoing social and economic struggles that points toward the conquest of political power by the workers and peasants.

#### **Bourgeois parties have no solutions**

The ruling classes and imperialism are well aware that such questions are now on the order of the day in a series of South American countries. That is why they are seeking to divert the masses from a course toward power by pushing forward the bourgeois-nationalist or liberal parties of the past. Some of these formations still retain some credibility among the masses, owing to their persecution by the military regimes or to the memories they evoke of social measures taken when they were in power decades ago.

Thus, for example, a faction of the old Revolutionary Nationalist Movement is back in power in Bolivia, where in 1952 it led a popular revolution against the old oligarchic regime. The Radicals of Argentina, who had not won a majority in a freely contested election since 1928, now find themselves thrust back into government. The Christian Democrats of Chile, though they hailed the 1973 coup, now seek a leading role in the anti-Pinochet upsurge.

Such a tactical ploy by the rulers has narrow limits and is rather risky for them. The bourgeois opposition parties are finding that they have serious difficulty controlling a popular upsurge once it is set in motion. Should they hesitate and seek compromises with the dictators, they can find themselves discredited and outflanked by working-class and popular



Police grab protester during 1983 May Day demonstration in Santiago, Chile.

forces. If they do come to power, as Siles Zuazo has found in Bolivia and as Alfonsín will quickly learn in Argentina, the mass expectations they have fostered cannot be fulfilled. The structural crisis of their economies and the pressures of imperialism preclude this. Because the bourgeois liberals cannot break out of the capitalist straitjacket, radical working-class forces can rapidly strip them of their base among the masses.

Hence any prolonged stabilization under bourgeois-democratic forms of rule is out of the question in South America. Regimes of this type will find themselves being smashed to bits between the hammer of imperialism's drive to extract more value from their semicolonial economies and the anvil of working-class and popular resistance to that pressure. The liberal governments fostered by the Alliance for Progress in the 1960s ran up against a similar contradiction, but today the crisis is far more acute and the stakes are much higher.

#### **Confrontation with imperialism**

The imperialists recognize this: if today they are intervening mainly through the IMF and the subtle pressures of the State Department, tomorrow they will not shrink from using military force if they judge it necessary for defending their vital interests. The U.S.-spon-

sored coups of the past decade and a half and the British attack on the Malvinas have already proven this point. Washington's invasion of Grenada and its current wars in Central America are driving it home. In this way, the imperialists are helping to confirm for the peoples of the entire continent the truth of Fidel Castro's words on July 26, 1980:

"The Guatemalan experience, the Salvadoran experience, the Chilean experience, the Bolivian experience, what have they taught us? That there is only one path: revolution! That there is only one way: revolutionary armed struggle! That is the thesis Cuba defended when it said to the people: they are deceiving you.

"The oligarchy, reaction and imperialism use all these so-called constitutional mechanisms, the so-called representative democracy, to deceive the peoples. Even when the overwhelming majority of people through the democratic, or so-called democratic mechanisms, vote against a reactionary government and in favor of a progressive government, or even a democratic one, there's a coup d'état. Like in Chile, in Bolivia. And the peoples learned their lessons and saw that there was only one road to liberation: that of Cuba, that of Grenada, that of Nicaragua. There is no other formula." □



# P'eng Shu-tse: 1895–1983

*Veteran Chinese revolutionist dies*

By Will Reissner

P'eng Shu-tse, a revolutionary Marxist fighter since he joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1920, died of a heart attack on November 28, just days after his 88th birthday. He is survived by his comrade and companion of 58 years, Chen Pi-lan.

Born into a peasant family in Hunan province on November 24, 1895, P'eng was one of the earliest recruits to the Chinese Communist Party. He joined the Socialist Youth League in 1920, shortly before the party's formation.

In 1921 P'eng was sent to Moscow to study at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, and he remained there until 1924. While in the Soviet Union, he served as secretary of the Moscow branch of the Chinese Communist Party and attended the Fifth Congress of the Communist International.

Upon returning to China in the summer of 1924, P'eng worked in the CCP's Shanghai Regional Committee. At the Fourth Congress of the CCP held in January 1925, P'eng was elected to its Central Committee and to the five-member Central Standing Committee (Political Bureau). He also served as chief editor of the party's newspaper and of its theoretical magazine.

P'eng was also director of the Central Department of Propaganda. In that capacity he began collaborating with Chen Pi-lan, editor of *Chinese Women*, a monthly party magazine. Soon after their collaboration began, Chen Pi-lan recalled four decades later, "understanding each other perfectly, we decided to live together."

## Revolution of 1925–27

In 1925–27 China was convulsed by a revolutionary upsurge involving workers, peasants, and students and other elements of the petty bourgeoisie.

The increasingly Stalinized Comintern counseled the young CCP to subordinate its struggle to that of China's national bourgeoisie and to work as a junior partner of the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) of Chiang Kai-shek.

After Chiang began repressing Communists in Canton in March 1926, P'eng convinced the CCP Central Committee of the need to break with Chiang.

In late April 1926 Central Committee members met with Comintern representative Michael Borodin to discuss this perspective. But Borodin, armed with the prestige of the Soviet Union and substantial material resources, convinced the Central Committee to change its decision and reaffirm the alliance with Chiang on Chiang's terms.

In July 1926 at a plenum of the Central

Committee, P'eng and CCP General Secretary Ch'en Tu-hsiu proposed ending the practice of CCP members working within the Kuomintang and urged the substitution of party-to-party relations between the two. They also called on the CCP to carry out its stated policy of being the leadership of the workers and peasants in the revolutionary process.

When this proposal was referred to the Comintern, it was rejected.

P'eng's view was expressed in a 1927 article entitled "Is Leninism Applicable to the National Peculiarities of China?" in which he argued that the workers of Shanghai could play the same role in the Chinese revolution that the Petrograd workers had played in the Russian.

P'eng wrote: "the Chinese revolution is a national democratic revolution at present, but this revolution is absolutely not limited to the ideas of nationality and democracy; it will certainly turn gradually in the direction of socialist revolution."

He added that "it should be finally understood that the national revolution is not the last stage of the revolution; it is only a road leading to the socialist revolution."

Whereas the Comintern was advocating a "bloc of four classes" between the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and bourgeoisie, P'eng called for the establishment of "a revolutionary regime of democratic dictatorship. That means a regime for the masses in their majority, composed of workers, peasants, and petty bourgeois, in which they participate directly, thus controlling the government in order to carry out their interest in striking down all the elements of the counterrevolution and in enforcing a revolutionary dictatorship over them."

## Comintern line brings disaster

In March 1927 the workers in Shanghai staged an insurrection and took control of the city. Workers streamed into the trade unions and the CCP. But in line with the Comintern's advice, the CCP did not follow the model of the Petrograd soviet, but organized a "provisional government" with the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeois elements did everything they could to paralyze the provisional government and opened the way for the entry of Chiang Kai-shek's troops into Shanghai on April 12, 1927, leading to the slaughter of thousands of workers and CCP members.

Following the Shanghai massacre, the Comintern called for a coalition between the CCP and the "left-wing of the Kuomintang," led by Wang Ching-wei. This policy was endorsed by the Fifth Congress of the CCP, which opened shortly after the Shanghai massacre.

Leon Trotsky, who had closely followed events in China from Moscow, argued for an end to the CCP's policy of subordination to the Kuomintang. But the CCP congress was prevented from learning of Trotsky's views by the Stalinist faction leading the Comintern.

P'eng, though unaware of Trotsky's views, had developed a similar analysis. With Ch'en Tu-hsiu, P'eng felt that the new line of subordination to Wang Ching-wei's "left" Kuomintang faction could lead to disaster for the CCP. Ch'en proposed that the CCP withdraw from Wang's organization and lead the workers and peasants independently. When his proposal was rejected by the Comintern, Ch'en felt obliged to resign as party leader.

Shortly thereafter, Ch'en was proven correct when Wang's forces slaughtered CCP members in Wuhan in July 1927.

Following Wang's blow, the Comintern abruptly switched its China policy from tailoring the bourgeoisie to extreme left adventurism. At its August 7, 1927, Central Committee meeting, the CCP placed the blame for the previous debacle on Ch'en Tu-hsiu, despite his opposition to that policy.

The new leadership then launched a call for armed rebellion, and from August to December, Communists organized revolts by workers and peasants. This led to the arrest and massacre of many CCP members.

P'eng opposed this swing from a rightist to an ultraleft adventurist policy, as did Ch'en Tu-hsiu. Ch'en wrote letters to the Central Committee in August and September 1927 criticizing the adventurist course.

When the Comintern learned of the opposition by P'eng and Ch'en, they were sent special invitations, personally signed by Stalin and Nikolai Bukharin, to attend the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in Moscow in 1928. Both declined to attend, fearing that the purpose of the invitations was to get them out of the country and eliminate their influence in the CCP.

## Trotskyist movement launched

In early 1929, from students who had just returned from Moscow, P'eng learned of the struggle taking place inside the Soviet Communist Party and of the positions of the Left Opposition led by Trotsky. The students gave P'eng two of Trotsky's writings on China — "Summary and Perspectives of the Chinese Revolution" and "The Chinese Question After the Sixth Congress."

P'eng then decided to fight for the line of the Left Opposition in the CCP, and he gave Trotsky's documents to Ch'en Tu-hsiu, who also agreed with them.

Ch'en and P'eng then called on the Central Committee to discuss the lessons of the revolution's defeat and asked it to publish Trotsky's documents on China for reference.

Within two months, Ch'en and P'eng had gathered about 50 CCP members in the Left Opposition. But under directives from the Comintern the CCP began expelling the oppositionists. Ch'en Tu-hsiu and P'eng Shu-tse

were the first to be expelled.

While Ch'en and P'eng were organizing a left opposition grouping, students who had recently returned from the Soviet Union were also organizing Trotskyist groups and issuing publications.

A unification conference of the Chinese Trotskyist movement took place in May 1931 and the Communist League of China was established.

But shortly thereafter, a number of leading members were arrested. P'eng escaped several hours before police raided his home, but he lost all his documents, books, and belongings.

Despite this setback, the Communist League jumped into the big movement against Japanese imperialism that developed after Japan's invasion of Manchuria in September 1931 and Shanghai in January 1932.

It published its first open weekly at that time and through that recruited a number of rank-and-file members of the CCP. Several dozen important industrial cells of the CCP came over to the league, including the CCP's postal, power-plant, and textile workers cells in Shanghai. These cells, which had made up half the CCP's membership in Shanghai, enabled the Communist League to lead workers there in several important strikes.

#### Imprisonment

P'eng played a leading role in the Communist League's work during that period. But on October 15, 1932, he, Ch'en Tu-hsiu, and eight other league members were arrested.

Their two-year-long public trial, the only time communists received an open trial under the Kuomintang, was closely followed by the press.

Charged with violating the "Emergency Law Governing Treason," P'eng responded in court that the real treason was the Kuomintang's lack of resistance to Japanese imperialism and its abolition of civil liberties and democratic rights.

Ch'en and P'eng were sentenced to 13 years imprisonment, and the other defendants got five year terms.

The prison years were years of personal difficulty. In addition to P'eng's worries about how Chen Pi-lan and their daughter would survive, differences developed between Ch'en Tu-hsiu and P'eng while in prison, leading to the end of their personal friendship. In addition, P'eng's younger brother, who was held in the same prison, died of an illness that went untreated for lack of money.

Despite these personal blows, P'eng remained unshaken in his political views and continued to study Marxism in prison.

P'eng and Ch'en were released in 1937 when the prison was destroyed by Japanese bombers.

#### Resistance to Japanese

Following his release, P'eng returned to Shanghai. At that time the resistance to Japanese imperialism was at its height. He set to work to reorganize the movement and called



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a provisional conference of the remaining comrades, including those just released from prison, to get the Communist League into the thick of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Soon after the provisional conference, a dispute broke out between P'eng and Ch'en Tu-hsiu over Ch'en's call for all-out support to Chiang Kai-shek's leadership of the war against Japanese imperialism. Ch'en then broke with the Communist League (he died in 1942.)

In 1938 the Communist League was a founding section of the Fourth International.

As the outbreak of World War II approached, an ultraleft tendency in the Communist League developed, which argued that if war broke out between Japan and the United States, Chinese resistance to Japanese imperialism would become part of an imperialist war. In that case, this tendency argued, Chinese Trotskyists should adopt a policy of "defeatism" toward the war of resistance led by the Kuomintang.

This position was a mechanical application of the one taken by Lenin, Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, and other revolutionary Marxists in the imperialist countries during World War I that "national defense" in an interimperialist war meant in reality only the defense of the interests of the ruling class.

P'eng led the fight against this line and his views were overwhelmingly accepted by the August 1941 national convention of the Communist League.

The ultraleft grouping left the organization just after the outbreak of war between the United States and Japan.

Japanese repression in Shanghai became much more intense following Japan's December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and the

U.S. entry into the war. A number of the league's cadres were arrested, and others had to flee Shanghai.

P'eng, however, was able to stay in the city and escaped arrest. Using a pseudonym, he got teaching appointments in two universities as a professor of Chinese and Western history and philosophy. He was able to present a Marxist analysis in his classes, while avoiding any open reference to Marxism, and influenced a number of young students who would become the foundation of the Trotskyist movement in China in the postwar period.

#### Advance of revolution

With the end of the war, the Communist League of China was able to publish two open magazines. *Seeking the Truth* was a theoretical and political magazine edited by P'eng, while his companion Chen Pi-lan edited a magazine for youth and women.

The Communist League began to grow rapidly at the end of the war and established cells among workers and students in Shanghai, Canton, Hong Kong, and other cities.

At its third national convention in August 1948, the organization changed its name to the Revolutionary Communist Party.

As the offensive by the CCP-led People's Liberation Army gained victories against Chiang Kai-shek's forces, the RCL held an emergency conference. The delegates decided that all members should join the Chinese Communist Party, the Communist Youth League, and the mass organizations of workers and peasants in order to support and encourage all progressive measures taken by the CCP.

In addition, knowing of the execution and imprisonment of the Trotskyists in the Soviet Union after Stalin consolidated his hold on power, the conference decided to move the RCL's Political Bureau to Hong Kong to prevent its arrest if the CCP came to power.

This decision was carried out, and P'eng, Chen Pi-lan, and other Political Bureau members arrived in Hong Kong at the end of 1948, set up a print shop, and resumed publication of the party's journal.

#### Hounded by British

The British colonial rulers of Hong Kong, however, had the Trotskyists in that city under strict surveillance due to their leadership of various strikes.

When Hong Kong police discovered the location of the RCL's printing operation, they arrested and deported two of the comrades in charge. About a dozen other Trotskyists were also arrested and deported.

P'eng and Chen escaped arrest but had to remain constantly on the move. It became clear that they could not function effectively in Hong Kong under those circumstances, and it was decided that since P'eng was the main target of the police dragnet, he and Chen Pi-lan should leave the colony.

#### Role in Fourth International

After spending a year in Vietnam, they ar-



rived in Europe in 1951. P'eng began participating directly in the international activities of the Fourth International and served on leading bodies of the Fourth International for many years.

One of his first contributions to the movement during these years was his 1951 report to the Third World Congress on the victory of the Chinese Communist Party. He stressed that this victory "has marked a great and even a monumental change in modern Chinese history." This report and other writings from his years in exile were collected and published in 1980 in *The Chinese Communist Party in Power* (Monad Press, New York).

In 1953-54 the Fourth International underwent a split into two bodies known as the International Secretariat and the International Com-

mittee. P'eng played a leading role in the latter.

But as it became clear that the differences between the two had narrowed, P'eng was a strong advocate within the International Committee of an early reunification of the Fourth International.

He waged a long struggle within the International Committee against the sectarianism of Gerry Healy of the British Socialist Labour League (now the Workers Revolutionary Party), who bitterly opposed reunification.

When the reunification of the Fourth International took place in 1963 (without the participation of Healy's SLL), P'eng remarked "for me, during my stay in Europe this is the happiest event of the past ten years."

P'eng made contributions to the Fourth International's understanding of developments such as the establishment of People's Communes in China, the Cultural Revolution, and the factional struggles between Mao and Liu Shao-chi and Mao and Lin Piao.

Although advancing age forced P'eng's retirement from activity, the 1979 world congress of the Fourth International elected him a consultative member of the International Executive Committee in recognition of his long record of service.

From the time P'eng joined the revolutionary Marxist movement at the age of 25 until his death at 88, he never regretted his decision or wavered in his commitment, despite the many years of personal hardship, imprisonment, exile, and setbacks. □

## DOCUMENTS

# Defend the Palestine national movement

*Editorial from 'International Viewpoint'*

[The following appeared as an editorial in the November 28 issue of *International Viewpoint*, a fortnightly journal published in Paris under the auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

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The bombing of the Palestinian camps in North Lebanon and the siege of Tripoli by Syrian troops and dissidents of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) could result in the liquidation of the PLO as the unified and representative organization of the Palestinian national movement. The PLO as such an organization — over and above its many links of dependence with different Arab regimes — constitutes a relatively autonomous political force in the regional conflicts. This is inconvenient for more than one force on the regional political scene. Throwing the Palestinian resistance out of North Lebanon can be seen as completing the work started by the Israeli armed forces in the south of the country with its June 1982 invasion and siege of Beirut. Zionist leaders make no secret of their satisfaction at the new weakening of the PLO.

The Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza occupied territories instinctively understood that it was another deadly blow against their struggle. Their demonstrations against Syrian aggression at Tripoli, more than a defense of Yassir Arafat and his policy, show a desire for unity, for defending the PLO as the only instrument of effective struggle for their national demands. This sentiment is expressed in the communiqué issued by the professional associations (lawyers, doctors, etc.) of the occupied territories denouncing "the Syrian conspiracy against the independence of the PLO" and calling for "democratic discussion inside

the organization and for respecting the decisions of the Algiers Palestinian National Council meeting" which reaffirmed Yassir Arafat as chairperson of the PLO.

The open division of the PLO and the civil war in its ranks is the "delayed" political price for its defeat in Beirut and strikingly contradicts Yassir Arafat's claims that this military defeat could be transformed into a political victory at the negotiating table.

The positions taken by the leaders of the dissidents inside the PLO since the beginning of 1983 reflected legitimate criticisms and concerns, widely shared among Palestinian fighters after the evacuation of Beirut. Above all they represented a sharp opposition to diplomatic operations personally undertaken by Arafat.

Given his own interpretation of the Palestinian National Council's (PNC) resolutions from the February 1983 Algiers meeting, Arafat in fact in March, through personal talks with King Hussein of Jordan, engaged in negotiating a "protocol agreement" that constituted a threefold violation of the PNC decisions. That is, Arafat gave up the demand for inclusion of the PLO in any negotiations with Israel. He abandoned in practice the right of the Palestinian people to establish its own sovereign state, prior to any form of association with Jordan. And finally, he only explicitly mentioned the Reagan plan among the various projects that could lead to a negotiated solution. This protocol which, to all intents and purposes, was accepted by Arafat, was rejected on April 10, both by the PLO Central Committee as well as by the Central Committee of his own organization, the Fatah.

The public declarations of Abu Musa and Abu Saleh, spokespersons for the dissidents,

also draw on the strong desire of PLO members for a democratization of the PLO leadership structures, against bureaucratization, the influence of "chiefs," and the personal power of Arafat, and even for a more scrupulous control over the organization's finances.

However, by going from legitimate criticism to armed rebellion under the patronage of the Syrian regime and with Libyan support, the PLO dissidents rushed into a politically suicidal adventure. Whatever the immediate outcome of the confrontation among Palestinians, this political line is likely to result in the destruction of the PLO as a united organization of the Palestinian national movement. However, the existence of such an organization is vital for the resistance and struggle of a people hounded out of its own homeland and condemned to dispersal and life in refugee camps in different Arab countries.

A "new PLO" formed in Damascus under the political and military tutelage of Hafez al-Assad would only be a pawn in the overall negotiations on the situation in the region.

The political trajectory of the dissident Palestinian officers is not, however, surprising. After the Beirut defeat and the dispersal of Palestinian fighters in a half-dozen countries, the only chance for a renewal of the PLO lay in a transfer of its center of gravity to the occupied territories and the mass organization of the population there, who had not directly suffered the Beirut defeat.

However, an opposite path was taken. By responding to Arafat's diplomatic concessions just by a reaffirmation of the principles of the movement and a return to the pre-1974 tradition of the "armed struggle," the uprooted dissidents of the South Lebanese refugee camps were inevitably pushed to turn to Damascus for

the material support they needed for their struggle.

However, for a long time Syria, like the other Arab states of the region, has shown in practice what its notion is of defending the Palestinian cause. It has always sought to subordinate the activity of the Palestinian liberation movement to its own interests. That has been a constant thread in its policies — from setting up an armed Palestinian organization directly controlled by Damascus (the Saika) to intervening, alongside the Lebanese Phalangists in 1976, against the Tell Zaatar Palestinian camp, and then more recently its blocking of arms supplies during the 1982 Beirut siege, and finally today to its military involvement in the siege of Tripoli.

For Syria, the important thing is holding the maximum number of cards in the regional diplomatic game — that is, a part of Lebanese territory and the Palestinian movement. Its objective is to bring the greatest possible influence to bear in the negotiations and extract the best possible price for any rapprochement with the United States. That is, it wants to pressure Washington to force Israel to make substantial concessions, particularly over the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

In such a framework there is hardly any place for even a “relatively” independent Palestinian movement. The Pan-Arab ideology of the Ba’athist party, which holds power in Damascus, is a cover for its real diplomatic interests in the region. It dissolves the specificity of the Palestinian liberation struggle in the overall Arab cause, whose banner is supposedly carried most resolutely by the Syrian regime.

As the commentator of the *Financial Times* (October 18, 1983) notes:

“Their [the Israelis’] invasion, and the subsequent military and political imbroglio, have gradually forced the Americans to recognise the special nature of Syria’s historical relationship with Lebanon, and the consequent need for Washington to engage in real diplomacy with Damascus if there is to be any chance of stability in Lebanon.”

Since Robert McFarlane was named as American special envoy for the Middle East, these diplomatic relations are said to have improved to the point that, according to the Syrian foreign minister: “they [the Americans] admit that the Syrian military presence in Lebanon is different in kind from that of Israel (because it was invited in by the Lebanese government in 1976), and they admit that Syria is not a Communist country nor a Soviet puppet.”

However, the United States is not maneuvering in a vacuum. Israel remains its strategic ally in the region, whatever tensions Washington may have with the Zionist regime. In this complex situation each force can raise the stakes. Reagan may be led, for a time, to step up pressure against Syria. The deployment of American forces in the region could lead to a “punitive expedition.” This could be a means of enabling the U.S. to further improve the relationship of forces on the ground, in order to either obtain a satisfactory negotiated agreement or to roll back Syrian ambitions.

In the short term, the struggle against imperialist and Zionist plans and against the specific maneuvers of the Syrian regime mean that defending the Palestinian national movement — i.e., the unity and integrity of the PLO — is

a priority. Concretely this means demanding an immediate halt to the fighting between Palestinian forces and defending the Palestinian fighters against Syrian aggression.

This position implies no particular allegiance to Arafat himself, nor support for his past policies (which are largely responsible for the dead end in which the Palestinian resistance got trapped) and even less a blank check for future policy. In fact, Arafat could be tempted to try to get out of his predicament by starting negotiations again with Hussein of Jordan. The European governments and reactionary Arab regimes would be favorable to such an approach.

The fighting between PLO factions can still be stopped on the basis of maintaining PLO unity and reaffirming the national right of Palestinians to return to their homeland, for self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state under the leadership of the PLO. Outside of these widely recognized elementary principles, many gaps and ambiguous formulations of the Algiers PNC leave the door open to all sorts of interpretations, including the plan for a Jordanian-Palestinian federation within the framework of the Reagan plan — that is, the establishment of a Palestinian homeland directly subordinated to the Jordanian state.

Today these questions cannot be resolved. They must be dealt with democratically in an extraordinary PLO congress. Such a congress is being demanded by several sectors of the PLO as well as by the population of the occupied territories. But the pre-condition for preparing such a congress is the lifting of the siege of Tripoli by the Fatah dissidents and Syrian and Libyan troops. □

# Iran regime vs. the Tudeh Party

## *Position of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE)*

[The following appeared as the lead article in issue No. 8 of *Khabar Nameh* (Newsletter), published irregularly in Tehran by the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE), one of the organizations in Iran affiliated to the Fourth International. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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On February 7, 1983, the country’s news media reported that some of the leaders of the Tudeh Party (TP) of Iran had been arrested on charges of spying and forging documents.<sup>1</sup> Officials of the Islamic Republic also announced that these arrests and charges had to do only with this particular group of TP leaders and

would not affect the party as such. The TP could, they said, proceed with its legal activities after reapplying to the Ministry of the Interior for permission.

It should not go unmentioned that the legal activities of the TP were already being hampered through the ban on the party’s central organ, *Nameh Mardom* (People’s Letter), and through unpublicized arrests of its members.

After the initial wave of arrests of TP leaders, the news media reported on April 30 that further detentions had taken place. Televised broadcasts of the confessions of certain imprisoned TP leaders began and were followed up with anti-TP propaganda. The party was then officially declared illegal. Officials of the Islamic Republic ordered TP members to report by June 15 to Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran) headquarters or to offices of the Prosecutor of the Revolution around the country.

Further charges such as “conspiring to overthrow” the Islamic Republic and “theft and

possession of arms and ammunition” were added to the earlier ones of giving economic and military information to the Soviet Union and forging documents.

Around the same time, 18 members of the Soviet embassy in Iran were expelled from the country by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These expulsions — along with the trampling of the Soviet flag beside the flag of the Great Satan [the United States] at demonstrations — became the subterfuge with which the agents of imperialism and the capitalists and landowners sought to cover up imperialism’s criminal role as the main enemy of the Islamic Revolution.

Simultaneously with the second wave of arrests and the televised confessions by TP leaders, all the news media of the Islamic Republic launched a massive anticommunist and anti-Marxist campaign. Banner headlines in the newspapers announced, “Marxism has reached an impasse.”

1. The Tudeh (Masses) Party, traditionally a pro-Moscow formation, is Iran’s largest and oldest workers party. For other views on the Iranian government’s attacks against it, see articles by Mehdi Assar, *Intercontinental Press*, June 13, p. 312, and Michel Rovere, *IP*, July 11, p. 397.



Because of the TP's unpopular record and current policies, some who unknowingly equate the TP with Marxism have been attacking Marxism instead of the TP. On the other hand, the capitalist forces and their lackeys have been trying to use this opportunity to step up their antisocialist campaign and thereby divert the attention of the masses of workers and toilers from their destructive actions.

After the first arrests and announcements of charges, it would have been logical for the competent public courts to hear the charges and witnesses and clarify publicly the various aspects of the cases. Instead, the course of events took the form of a political propaganda campaign, with confessions and recantations by the TP leaders being broadcast two months after their arrests.

Even though the country's leaders had limited the charges and arrests to certain individual TP leaders and had exempted rank-and-file party members from all prosecution, the arrests suddenly spread to other TP members. Under the impact of the propaganda, a fullscale political suppression was carried out.

In other words, political freedoms were constricted. This chaotic situation has its roots in the mistaken response to the bombings and imperialist terror — that is, the policy of executions.<sup>2</sup> Such conditions are favorable to the capitalists and big landowners.

The country's officials stress that the action taken against the TP is not going to lead to limitations of political freedoms or obstruct the legal activities of other parties. But developments such as the following go counter to such announcements and assurances by officials regarding the guarantee of freedoms explicitly stated in the constitution:

- The unofficial and secret arrests of members of the People's Fedayan Organization (Majority).
- The arrest and imprisonment of Bahram Ali Atai and Mohammed Bagher Falsafi, leaders of the Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) who have been jailed for 16 months now.
- The imprisonment for more than six months of Babak Zahraie, HKE spokesperson and editor of the socialist weekly *Kargar*. He is prohibited from receiving visitors and correspondence.
- The imprisonment for more than six months of HKE member Sohaila Farhangi.

The office of the Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolution has not yet filed charges against any of these persons.

It should also be mentioned that the claim, "Marxism has reached an impasse," has been aired at a time when HKE leaders are being

held illegally and when various kinds of harassment against this genuine and independent socialist movement continue. This alone shows that the claim "Marxism has reached an impasse" is a baseless one. Moreover, it can be said without any doubt that in the final analysis such harassment benefits the enemies of the revolution and amounts to dealing a blow against the anti-imperialist struggle of the Iranian people.

Although Mohammed Bagher Falsafi and Bahram Ali Atai were arrested a year before the arrests of the TP leaders, and Babak Zahraie two months before, not only have no charges ever been brought against them and no hearing organized in their cases, but not even a single word about their arrests has been published by any of the country's mass media.

The arrest and silencing of these revolutionary socialists of Iran, rather than proving that "Marxism has reached an impasse," corresponds more to a situation where a non-Muslim proclaims, "Islam has reached an impasse" while at the same time keeping militant Muslims in jail. Or it is like proclaiming the "impasse of Islam" on the basis of the existence of the dependent regime in Saudi Arabia.

Unlike the arrests of the HKE leaders, those of the TP leaders are based on several charges. But the fact remains that these charges have been made the basis of a distorted anti-TP propaganda campaign even before being brought before a court. The banning of the entire party and the jailing of its leaders have clearly inflicted heavy damage on political freedom. Such freedom is indispensable for the discussion and resolution of the fundamental problems of the revolution.

Of course, because of the historical record and unpopularity of the TP and its leaders, the charges against them seem completely logical and natural to popular opinion and particularly to militant Muslims. This is a truth that is completely understandable. But neither the TP's political record nor the existing atmosphere of hostility toward it can substitute for a correct approach to the TP with the aim of solving the problems facing the revolution.

This remains completely evident several months after the arrests of the TP leaders, their "confessions," and the banning of the party. Despite the adoption of repressive measures against political parties, the problems and difficulties of the revolution have come to the fore more than ever and have shown that the origin of the pressures on the revolution lies in the animosity of imperialism and in the chaotic social relations of capitalism.

Problems such as land and agriculture, housing, high prices, economic planning, and so on are in fact becoming more critical every day, despite the explanations offered by government ministries on the basis of certain statistics. The need to deepen the revolution in the direction of social change is thus more and more evident.

The creation of an unhealthy atmosphere through political bans upheld by the country's tribunals — even if such bans are intended to

safeguard the interests of the revolution — can only benefit the capitalists and big landowners.

It is said in the news media's propaganda that "the greatest conspiracy" yet against the Islamic Republic has been neutralized through the arrest of TP members and leaders and the banning of that party. The "great" dimensions of this "conspiracy" have yet to be made clear. During the few short years of our revolution, we have had concrete experience with the question of conspiracy: the Nozheh coup d'état conspiracy and the plot in which Sadegh Ghotbzadeh took part are good examples.<sup>3</sup> While not all the facts have been made available, the people have still learned a lot about how these conspiracies took shape and where they originated. It was a good education for the Iranian people regarding the roots of counterrevolution in Iran. The facts about these conspiracies point up the historical reality that the main axis of counterrevolution in Iran has always been imperialism and its economic, social, and political basis — capitalist social relations. That is, the capitalist class and the big landowners, their political representatives, and the remnants of their agents in the state bureaucratic institutions left over from the old regime.

The bureaucracy in Moscow and the TP (whose policies flow from the interests of that bureaucracy) cannot be the axis of counterrevolution. This is because the ruling bureaucracy in the Soviet Union lacks an exploitative economic and social basis and because the TP as a political organization can only be described as a party isolated from the masses.

The condemnation of the TP and its leaders before public opinion on the basis of political propaganda is a simple task. Anybody can play the "hero" in that scene. What is important is to open up the country's political atmosphere for a discussion on the revolution's problems, and to help organize the workers and toilers so that the revolution can become deeper and more real. Creating an atmosphere of this kind can bring about the best possibilities for confronting the slanders and propaganda of the imperialists.

The "proof" of the charges against the TP — based up to now on the confessions and recantations of its leaders — has provided the imperialist propaganda apparatus with another excuse to portray these "confessions" as the result of torture and intense pressure. The imperialists take advantage of the imprisonment of the TP leaders and present this as "independent" evidence proving their claims that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a regime of "terror and fear." At the same time, the leaders of the imperialist countries — that is, the real enemies of the Iranian revolution — expressed hope at the Williamsburg summit conference

2. A wave of bombings and assassinations during the latter half of 1981 claimed the lives of more than 1,000 officials of the Iranian government and the ruling Islamic Republican Party (IRP). The IRP regime's main response to this imperialist-inspired terrorism was to launch a campaign of repression in which hundreds of persons were jailed and executed, unauthorized public meetings were banned, and most socialist and working-class periodicals were forced to halt publication.

3. In July 1980 the Iranian government broke up a large-scale U.S.-backed attempt at a military takeover by army officers and followers of the shah's last prime minister, Shahpur Bakhtiari. Another coup plot headed by ex-Foreign Minister Sadegh Ghotbzadeh was foiled in April 1982.

that the Islamic Republic was moving in the direction of capitalist and proimperialist solutions, in view of the regime's policies toward the TP leaders and the Soviet diplomats.

Likewise, the expulsion from Iran of 18 Soviet embassy employees was, in the eyes of public opinion, indistinguishable from the expulsion of Soviet embassy employees from European countries on the pretext of "espionage" at a time when antinuclear-weapons struggles are at their height in Europe and North America. The governments there aim to divert public attention from such struggles and stir concern over the "Soviet threat." Thus Iran's action was reflected on the international level as approval of the imperialists' anti-Soviet propaganda.

The course of the Islamic Republic's policy since the time of the arrests has not helped to neutralize the imperialist propaganda against the Islamic Revolution. The response to such propaganda has been perfunctory; the country's officials have made speeches and statements justifying and describing the arrests and the ways the confessions were obtained.

The interests of the revolution thus demand that the present policy, which lends credence to the imperialist propaganda and does not help to advance the revolution, be halted. What is called for is to turn away from the present practice of political clampdown and instead open the way for the workers and toilers to discuss the problems of the revolution and organize themselves to solve these problems.

Our emphasis on the need to adopt a correct policy toward the TP is in accord with the international interests of the revolution; it is not the result of sympathy for the leaders of the TP. Neither revolutionary socialists nor militant Muslims can feel any sympathy for the TP leaders. Besides having a historical record of crimes against the nationalist movements that opposed Pahlavi autocracy and imperialism, the TP leaders have also shown in practice in the present revolution that they are incapable of breaking from the policies of the ruling bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and participating in the anti-imperialist movement of the Iranian people with an independent policy based on the masses of workers and toilers.

Despite being isolated as a result of its past record and present policies, the TP remained a tool for sowing illusions and divisions among the ranks of the toilers. This party, following the conservative policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy toward the Iranian revolution, went so far as to go along with Moscow's support for [Iraqi President] Saddam [Hussein]. The TP in effect began propagandizing in opposition to Iran's just war against Saddam/imperialist aggression.

In other words, the TP stood against the toilers of Iran (at least on the level of propaganda) on the question of the war — the question that draws the line between revolution and counter-revolution in Iran.

The TP's position on the war has in effect put it outside the anti-imperialist union of the Iranian people. Therefore this party cannot

enjoy our sympathy and solidarity.

In the present revolution, revolutionary solidarity takes shape along the lines of struggle against imperialism. And in the current war situation, such solidarity can only be expressed on the basis of unconditional support for the victory of the Islamic Republic of Iran. What is more, this lack of solidarity toward the TP is most intense among the movement of revolutionary socialists, who have been among the main targets of poisonous propaganda and slanders by the TP leadership and by the Moscow Stalinists.

We must tell our militant and Muslim brothers in the factories, fronts, and revolutionary institutions (*nahads*<sup>4</sup>) who continue their struggle with hearts full of hatred for imperialism: The TP's role is like a thorn in the side of the revolution. But the present course of policy against the TP amounts to going after the revolution with a hammer rather than using tweezers to extract the thorn. Such a policy can damage the revolution and its international prestige more than it can hurt the thorn. More than anything else, it can be used by the capitalists and landlords to stir up an atmosphere of arbitrary arrests for use against revolutionary socialists and militant Muslims.

Banning the TP on the pretext that it was necessary to destroy a "spy organization" distorts the problem of Stalinism in Iran, which the TP represents. It is therefore the wrong way to proceed.

Because this policy does not help to advance the revolution, it cannot provide the impetus for uprooting Stalinist policies and the illusions in them that exist in Iran.

Soviet intelligence agencies like the KGB could indeed have agents inside the TP. But rather than being a vehicle for transmitting information to the Soviet Union, the TP is a political organization whose policies follow those of the Soviet bureaucracy, which are based on its need to safeguard its special interests and privileges.

The TP is not an organization that was created on the basis of the conspiracy of a few individuals. On the contrary, the TP, like other pro-Moscow communist parties, is an organization that is the manifestation of the political influence of Soviet society in the world. Therefore, the TP is above all a political party that cannot be dissolved through the discovery of a "conspiracy" or of "spies." Nor can it be destroyed by announcing its prohibition.

The TP's reason for existence cannot be sought in "conspiracy," nor can it be called a "spy organization." Rather, the reason for its existence should be sought in the contradictory nature of Soviet society and in the undifferen-

4. In Iran, the word *nahad* (institution) is used to refer to the mass organizations and quasi-governmental bodies thrown up since the overthrow of the shah's regime. These include the Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran), the Mobilization Corps of the Oppressed (Baseej-e Mostazafin), and the Reconstruction Crusade (Jihad-e Sazandegi).

tiated projection of this contradiction into Iranian public opinion.

### The victory of the October Revolution and the emergence of Stalinism

Soviet society is the result of two contradictory trends in the first half of the present century:

1. The First World War, which took place in order to redivide the world market, confirmed the dead end the capitalist system had reached in practice. During this war, the capitalist system broke down at its weakest link — Russia. The victory of the Russian revolution was achieved through the coming to power of the workers', soldiers', and peasants' soviets in October 1917. At their head stood the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. The political power of the capitalists and big landowners over the workers and peasants was overthrown. With the victory of the Russian revolution a new era opened in the world history of humanity.

This revolutionary change put economic planning in the place of capitalist anarchy and overturned capital's sway over labor through the confiscation of big capital, the nationalization of the land and its distribution to the poor peasants, and the establishment of a state monopoly of foreign trade.

These new economic and social relations, although first established in a backward country like Russia, were the spearhead of a gigantic and historic force that transformed backward Russia into one of the world's greatest industrial powers in just 66 years. Ills of capitalist society such as unemployment, illiteracy, and poverty were uprooted. Culture and hygiene were placed at the disposal of all. The Soviet economy was rescued from the reach of the ruinous crisis of capitalism.

2. The First World War deepened the crisis of capitalism. Besides the gigantic impact of the victory of the October revolution, this crisis brought with it a wave of workers revolts in European countries. The most important of these took place in Germany. But because they lacked the necessary leadership these revolutions were defeated one after the other. As a result, the wave of world revolution subsided, and the Russian Revolution remained isolated.

In the situation of isolation, poverty, and economic backwardness inherited from the Tsarist regime, and as a result of the loss of many of the best vanguard elements of the working class in the civil war, the pressure of nonproletarian classes and social layers began to bear down on the Russian working class. Though constituting a small minority of society, the working class was the main social nucleus of the new economic relations. Still, it could not bear up under the pressure. It left the political scene, and political power fell into the hands of a petty-bourgeois layer that had established itself in the state bureaucracy and taken control over the party. The defeat of the revolution in Europe, leading to the victory of fascism, further strengthened the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.



This bureaucracy, which monopolized political power through the destruction of workers (soviet) democracy and the massacre of an entire generation of the cadres of Lenin's party, appropriated for itself special material and social privileges. Stalin arose as the central figure in this bureaucracy.

Aiming to extend its privileges, the Stalinist bureaucratic caste put an end to the internationalist outlook of the Russian Revolution and replaced it with various theories, such as "socialism in one country," "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, and so on. It focused its efforts on maintaining and extending its material privileges at the expense of the workers and toilers of the Soviet Union.

But despite all this, the bureaucracy has not yet been able to destroy the social relations of the planned economy that form the basis of the workers state. Thus it is like a parasite that feeds upon the relations of public ownership and the achievements of the Russian Revolution.

Despite the conservative, counterrevolutionary policies of the bureaucracy ruling over the workers state, and the resulting damage to the planned economy, the fundamental achievements of the Russian Revolution, based on relations of nationalized property, have not only been amazing but continue to be an important aid to the revolutions and anti-imperialist struggles that are facing military and economic aggression from imperialism. Surely our Islamic Revolution would face much more difficult conditions if the markets of countries like the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China did not exist. It is no wonder that the Cubans, who have faced the most intense imperialist economic blockade for more than 20 years, are more conscious than any other nation of the importance of the Russian revolution and its fundamental achievements.

The key to understanding the mortal effects of Stalinism and the internal development of the Soviet Union on the international workers movement is that despite the crimes and betrayals of Stalinism against the struggles of the toilers, many of the world's militant workers who have rebelled against warmongering, unemployment, poverty, and other capitalist ills are attracted to the economic and social achievements of the Soviet Union. Lacking knowledge of the historical facts and of the origins of the internal contradictions of Soviet society, they view Stalinism as the cause of these achievements, placing an equals sign between it and the October Revolution and seeing it politically as a solution to their problems.

Because the bureaucracy ruling over the Soviet Union is but the expression of the political supremacy of a privileged caste over nationalized property relations and the workers state, it does not possess its own specific ideology and culture. Rather, in order to hide its parasitic nature from the working class, the Stalinist bureaucracy tries to identify itself ever more closely with the fundamental economic relations of the society and their revolutionary origins. Under this banner, the bu-



Tudeh Party leader Nureddin Kianuri, now under arrest.

reaucracy makes use of Marxist-Leninist phrasemongering. As a result, it has become still more difficult to differentiate between Stalinism and the economic relations originating from the October Revolution.

#### **The emergence of the Tudeh Party and its role in the last Iranian revolution**

The Tudeh Party was founded and was able to grow in Iran at the end of the Second World War, after Reza Khan's flight<sup>5</sup> and at a time when the Soviet Union had emerged victorious against fascist Germany. The presence of the Red Army in Iran contributed to the TP's growth, but this was the result of the Red Army's prestige from its victory over fascist Germany. In fact, those who joined the TP were filled with hope that this party could help them to make changes that could bring about results in Iran similar to the achievements of Soviet society. So the best fighters of the old generation came together in the Tudeh Party and made it the largest communist party in the Middle East. They were unaware of the fact that the TP was only disseminating a class-collaborationist policy under a Marxist banner.

When the time came for action, the TP leadership collaborated with the Ghavam al-Saltaneh government,<sup>6</sup> buying time for the

capitalists, landlords, and imperialists, and betraying the national movements of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. A few years later, the TP helped to sow divisions in the movement for nationalization of the oil industry, thereby dealing a blow to the unity and organization of the workers and toilers of Iran. As a result of this division in the working class, the political representatives of liberal capitalism (the National Front) became the sole force in the nationalist movement. The dissipation caused by their treacherous policies paved the way for the bloody coup d'état of August 1953 and the beginning of 25 years of repression.

The spread of anticapitalist overturns in Eastern Europe and the victory of the Chinese revolution after World War II delivered heavy blows against imperialism. While these developments took place under the banner of Stalinist parties, they also dealt blows to the theory of "socialism in one country" and became the basis for disputes between the Soviet bureaucracy and the ruling bureaucracies in those countries. As a result of the conflicts between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and later between the Soviet Union and China, the monolith of Stalinism was cracked open.

The next anticapitalist overturn came with the victory of the Cuban revolution. It occurred outside the sphere of influence of the Soviet bureaucracy, that is, without the influence of the pro-Moscow party in Cuba, thus dealing an important blow to the prestige of the

5. Reza Khan, or Reza Shah, ruled Iran from 1920 to 1941. He was forced by British imperialism to flee into exile owing to his friendly relations with the German government. He was replaced on the throne by his son, Shah Reza Pahlavi, who was overthrown in the February 1979 insurrection.

6. Ghavam al-Saltaneh was appointed prime minister in 1946. In face of a mass upsurge, Ghavam took

office with a demagogic platform asserting friendship with the Soviet Union. He then proceeded to crush the revolutionary governments that had arisen in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.

ruling Soviet bureaucracy. The emergence of the Castro leadership was a hopeful sign that independent leaderships were coming forward in the workers movement, examples of which we see today in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The unfolding of the world revolution through the spread of anti-imperialist struggles and the emergence of nationalist leaderships such as those in the Palestinian movement, Libya, and other forces struggling against imperialism shows the further decline of Stalinism.

On the other hand, the rise of antibureaucratic workers struggles in the Eastern European countries — the latest example of which is the Solidarity movement in Poland — has delivered another fatal blow to Stalinism.

Because of its history of betrayals of social movements in Iran in 1951–53, and because of the divisions among and discrediting of Stalinist parties on a world scale, the Tudeh Party has been almost totally isolated among the progressive and militant elements of the present generation that grew up after the 1953 coup.

The victory of the February [1979] insurrection failed to bring the TP out of this isolation, owing especially to the conservative policies of the Kremlin rulers with regard to the Iranian revolution. The leadership of the Islamic anti-imperialist movement, which was outside the TP's area of influence, limited the party's opportunities for overcoming its isolation.

The thoroughly conservative policies of the Soviet bureaucracy toward Iran stirred memories of the TP's betrayals. The party's position on the [Iran-Iraq] war after Iran's victories over Saddam made the TP still more hated among Muslim militants.

The Soviet Union's military intervention in Afghanistan, moreover, not only did not help to advance the revolution in that country or in Iran. Rather, the mistaken notion took hold in Iranian public opinion that the Soviet Union was on a par with U.S. imperialism. The phrase "the two superpowers" was coined and popularized. This also did not help in solving the TP's problem of its isolation among the workers and toilers.

The various contradictory aspects of Soviet society have been reflected in the minds of the Iranian people in different ways at different times. These aspects will continue to have their effects, and negligence of any kind regarding this reality can still prove harmful.

In the post-World War II period, the achievements of the Soviet Union on the economic level, together with its victory over fascism, concealed the nature of the bureaucracy from people's attention. Failure to differentiate these achievements from the parasitic nature of the bureaucracy made the struggle against Stalinism quite difficult. As a result, the TP was the sole contender for leadership of the workers movement; this led to the August 1953 coup d'état.

But in the period since the 1953 coup, the mounting discredit of Stalinism on a world scale and inside Iran has led to a situation in

our anti-imperialist movement in which the achievements and the foundation of the planned economy in the Soviet Union have been overshadowed by the counterrevolutionary actions of the ruling bureaucracy. By labeling the Soviet Union "imperialist," the blind struggle against the TP has been encouraged.

#### How can Stalinism be uprooted?

The reality of the Soviet bureaucracy's counterrevolutionary policy should not and cannot detract from the reality of the dynamics of the planned economy that still exists in the Soviet Union. Its achievements originate in the October revolution.

As long as there are poor peasants in Iran, as long as there are people who suffer from unemployment, as long as poverty is a social disease, as long as culture remains beyond the reach of the majority of the people because of illiteracy, and as long as health care is not a right but a luxury — as long, in a word, as the anarchy of capitalism has not been transformed into the order of an economy planned in the interests of the workers and toilers — Soviet society will retain its attraction for militants who seriously want to struggle for the elimination of these problems. This is especially so since Soviet society is so near to us geographically. Hence the blind struggle against the TP can turn into its opposite in a different situation and become a tool for the development of the TP.

More than four years after the revolution began, a solution to the crisis resulting from imperialist domination — which became intensely apparent with the February insurrection — still requires facing the question of decision-making in the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

As a result of the February insurrection, the occupation of the Spy Den [the U.S. embassy], and the advances in the war, the capitalist class has been heavily damaged and politically discredited. But its influence at the governmental level has not been cut off; it remains a fundamental obstacle to the advance of the social revolution in Iran. In this situation, the notion that the TP has been destroyed and will not revive is only an illusion. Propaganda to that effect can only foster illusions.

The road toward uprooting Stalinism in the workers movement is not open so long as the privileged bureaucracy dominates the Soviet Union and claims to represent the economic and social gains of Soviet society. Nor will it be open so long as we have not taken steps in the direction of leveling the unevenness between the Iranian revolution and the Russian Revolution — steps toward solving social problems such as land for the peasants, the elimination of unemployment, inflation, poverty, and illiteracy, the lack of health care, and so on. This is only possible through the mobilization and organization of the workers and toilers.

Does this mean that conspiracy and spying are not part of the activity of Stalinism? On the contrary: the ruling bureaucracy always prefers negotiation with imperialism, conspiracy, and

espionage to advance its aims, rather than class struggle to advance the interests of the workers. The bureaucracy, if it so chooses, can have small circles of conspiracy and espionage even inside parties. But it cannot create political parties simply on the basis of its will. The creation and development of political parties, including the TP, is, as we have seen, based on historical movements, social forces, and the reflection of these in the minds of the people.

Thus hatred for the TP and the struggle against Stalinism in Iran can have no meaning separate and apart from the anti-imperialist struggle and the deepening of the revolution. As the past four years have shown, the struggle against imperialism and its local agents — the capitalists and landowners — is only possible and can only open up the prospects for advancing the revolution through the mass mobilization and organization of the workers and toilers.

It is clear that the present policy, insofar as it is carried out on the pretext of fighting "the treachery of the TP" and the destruction of "the party of spies," bears no relation to historical reality and the need to advance the revolution. This policy can only mean continuing to limit the free activities of political parties. It does not encourage the organization and mobilization of the workers and toilers in order to wage a decisive struggle against imperialism and its local agents.

Since the arrest of the TP members and the banning of that party have had no direct effect on the workers' organizations in the factories and in revolutionary *nahads*, the political significance of this ban and its aftermath is belittled by many militant Muslims. In many instances, because of the hatred that exists toward the TP, they even agree with such measures. Moreover, in recent weeks the widening discussion on the economy has overshadowed the question of the banning of the TP and has concealed its importance. But not only will reversing the present trend of limitations on political activity place obstacles in the way of the capitalist and landlord circles, it can also help the present discussion on solving the economic and social difficulties.

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